**AN ACTIVITY THEORY PERSPECTIVE ON TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION
IN A UNIVERSITY BUSINESS EFL CLASS IN THAILAND:
A SOCIOCULTURAL CASE STUDY**

by

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There is a need for classroom research that examines the impact of task-based instruction on second/foreign language learning in a real classroom practice (Skehan, 2007) . Using the quantitative data obtained from a pre-test, an immediate post-test, and a one-month-later delayed post-test with Thai FL learners of English for business purposes, this study investigated how and to what extent a task-based course using sociocultural approach in a Thai university classroom helped students improve and retain their business English ability. Considering each learner as an active agent with unique historical bearings and learning motives and goals, this study also used the qualitative data obtained from five focal participants to address the question of what *activities* looked like in task-based instruction. Using a case study and activity theory as analytical framework, the qualitative data were collected from a questionnaire, stimulated recall interviews, researcher's observation notes, the post-task interviews, and the final interview. The quantitative results revealed a significant difference between the scores of the pre-test and the post-test implying that there was an improvement in the business English ability of the subjects in those six tasks. A significant difference was also found between the scores of the post-test and the delayed post-test implying that there were both the retention and an increase of their business English ability. The significant improvement of the students' test scores resulted from task familiarity, task internalization, and the influential roles of motives and *affect*. The qualitative

findings showed that (1) the participants' *activities* differed across tasks and time.   (2) Four patterns of assistance were found, but they were *not* stable within pairs and across tasks. The pairs that demonstrated patterns of Collaborative and Expert/Novice were more successful than Dominant/Dominant and Dominant/Passive. (3) Participants' successful performance were mostly reported as being influenced by themselves as *subjects*, *objects* that motivated them to complete the course, the teacher and their partners in *division of labor*, and the *tools* they used to complete the tasks. They were less influenced by the *rules* and the *community*. (4) Students joined the course with similar and different motives, goals, and motivation. They shifted and were transformed.

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1.0   CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

To enhance students' communicative language ability and skills in performing various business English tasks such as greetings and making introductions, telephoning, giving business presentations, describing products, and writing business letters, task-based instruction is commended as an appropriate approach f or classroom teaching and learning (Chen, 2005; Donna, 2000; Ellis, M. and Johnson, 1996). Task-based instruction is a second/foreign language teaching approach which takes a strong view of communicative language teaching (Ellis, 2003). In this type of instruction, teachers employ *tasks* (see the definition provided later in this chapter) as the central units in the syllabus with its primary focus on meaning, rather than on forms, and *tasks* are used by teachers as tools for communicative acts. Through learning *by* communicating in task-based instruction, as opposed to learning *for* communicating, students have greater opportunities for communicative language experience and intellectual growth (Ellis, 2003 ; Nunan, 2004). It is also extensively acclaimed by research that tasks create the conditions for second language acquisition (SLA), and that doing tasks enable learners to develop the language and skills in line with their own internal syllabuses (Ellis, 1 998). In addition, task-based instruction is advocated for foreign language teaching contexts, including Thailand, where there are limited occasions outside classrooms   for students to gain authentic communicative experience (Ellis, 2003). As for business English, M. Ellis and Johnson (1996) state that valuable class time should be spent on language learning tasks. Despite its pedagogical benefits, task-

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based instruction literature to date shows that there is an urgent need for classroom research that examines the impact of task-based instruction on language learning for both general and specific purposes. In his review of research and theories related to task-based instruction, Skehan (2007) concludes that there is a strong need to relate task-based research to pedagogic situations, saying, "task research needs to be conducted within pedagogic contexts to establish whether or not the research findings have relevance to classroom reality" (p. 289). Moreover, since most of the research into tasks to date is short-term or cross-sectional, Skehan calls for more research with a longer timescale or longitudinal research that "probes directly whether the effects that can be produced in the short-term have implications for acquisition over time" (2007, p. 289). The present study aims to address these two urgent needs.

Task-based instruction has attracted the attention of SLA researchers and language teachers for the past 20 years. However, task-based language teaching has not been sufficiently researched or investigated empirically in terms of its real classroom practice in foreign language learning contexts (Jeon & Hahn, 2006; Van den Branden, 2006). According to Van den Branden (2006), crucial questions have risen about the effectiveness of task-based instruction in the classroom such as whether it works as well as predicted or hypothesized in eliciting students' language production, interaction, negotiation of meaning and focus on form, all of which are believed to foster SLA. Currently there are two main SLA theoretical accounts on task-based instruction, the psycholinguistic and the sociocultural theory perspectives (Ellis, 2003). While there is more task-based instruction research conducted within the psycholinguistic model for second language learning, task-based instruction research within the sociocultural theory perspective is still relatively sparse (Ellis, 2003), but it is receiving increasing attention (Willis, 2005). Task-based instruction within the sociocultural theory involves students' participation and

self-regulation through private speech, mediation, imitation, internalization and the assisted interaction within their zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Ellis, 2003; 2005). Nunn (2001) argues that these constructs of sociocultural theory are facilitative for second language acquisition and highly compatible with task-based instruction. To explain his argument, Nunn asserts that the compatibility between sociocultural theory and task-based instruction includes three points that task-based instruction and sociocultural theory share; (1) an attempt to re-contextualize the classroom for meaning making, linking language structures and interpretation of language and the contexts they appear (rather than the decontextualized language teaching), (2) the focus of activity or tasks as a place for language development, and (3) a focus on meaning through the *use* of language. Nunn also contends that while tasks are used to re-contextualize the classroom for meaning making as it happens in the real world, sociocultural theory contextualizes the analysis of language and action converged to function in the goal-oriented activity of a task. Nunn then concludes that perhaps task-based instruction and sociocultural theory can be mutually supportive and beneficial for research, analysis, and instruction for learners in SLA. Ellis (2003, p. 185) states similar support for research on task-based instruction using sociocultural theory perspective,

> Sociocultural theory [for task-based instruction] is important because
> it helps to redress the current psycholinguistic imbalance in SLA
> by emphasizing the social and cultural nature of task performance.

Ellis's comment above reiterates what sociocultural theorists confirm from their research findings that learning is socially and culturally situated. However, to date no one has conducted research on task-based instruction using sociocultural theory approach in a classroom for business English teaching nor evaluated its impact on students' task-based performance.

In the next section, I present the purposes of the study, the research questions, data sources and the analytical tools, the sociocultural approach to task-based instruction, the activity theory framework as analytical tools, followed by the definitions of key terms, and the organization of chapters that follow.

1.1 PURPOSE OF STUDY

In light of the present needs for research as well as my personal interest in business English performance improvement for my Thai English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) students, the present study aims to investigate how and to what extent the implementation of a task-based instruction using sociocultural approach in a business English class at the university level in Thailand helps students become better in their business English task-based ability. In addition, it aims to address the question of what activities look like in a task-based course: how students assist each other while working on tasks, how different patterns of assistance affect task-based performance, what influence the participants' task-based performance, and what the participants' motives, goals, motivation, and the transformation are in a task-based course. The research findings not only contribute to the existing literature on how EFL students work together towards task completion in a task-based course, but also shed light on how sociocultural approach to English language teaching can better help second/foreign language teachers utilize tasks in the ways that will improve their learners' communicative language ability.

1.2   RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND DATA SOURCES

This study is guided by three Research Questions as follows;

RQ 1. Do students improve their business English ability after the task-based course?

RQ 2. Do students retain their improvement after the task-based course?

RQ 3. What does an activity look like when students complete each task in a task-based course? The sub-questions that constitute this Research Question 3 are:

Sub-Q a. How do students assist each other while working on tasks?

Sub-Q b. How do different patterns of assistance affect task-based performance?

 Sub-Q c. What influences the participants' task-based performance?

Sub-Q d. What are participants' motives, goals, motivation, and their transformation?

The data sources and the analytical tools that correspond with the Research Questions are presented in Table 1.1. They are presented in details later in this Chapter and Chapter 3.

Table 1.1 Data Sources and the Analytical Tools

Research Questions	Data Sources	The Analytical Tools
RQ 1. Do students improve their business English ability after the task-based course?	Task-based assessment: participants' scores from the pre-test and post-test	The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
RQ 2. Do students retain their improvement after the task-based course?	Task-based assessment: participants' scores from the post-test and delayed post-test	The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)
RQ 3. What does an activity look like when students complete each task in a task-based course?		
• Sub-Q a. How do students assist each other while working on tasks?	Videotape recordings, stimulated recall interviews, observation notes, and post-task interviews	Leontiev's (1981) Hierarchy of Activity System
• Sub-Q b. How do different patterns of assistance affect task-based performance?	Videotape recordings, stimulated recall interviews, observation notes, and post-task interviews	Storch's (2002) Patterns of Assistance (based on Activity Theory)
• Sub-Q c. What influenced the participants' task-based performance?	Videotape recordings, observation notes, and post-task interviews, the final interview	Engeström's (1987, 1999) Activity Theory Model
• Sub-Q d. What are participants' motives and goals and their transformation, if any?	The pre-instruction questionnaire, observation notes, post-task interviews, and the final interview	Tae-Young's (2007) Model of Motivation according to Activity Theory

1.3   SOCIOCULTURAL APPROACH TO TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION

Sociocultural theory and its five constructs namely mediation, regulation, internalization, imitation, and zone of proximal development was used as theoretical approach for implementing task-based instruction in this study. Sociocultural SLA, the label provided by Lantolf (2000), maintains that language learning is mediated by materials and signs such as language in private speech and the dialogic processes through scaffolding, inter-subjectivity, and collaborative dialogue that arise during working on tasks. According to sociocultural theory, while working jointly on the assigned tasks, students progress from (1) other-regulation (or *interpersonal mediation*, the term mentioned by Thorn, 2004) and (2) the regulation of objects (tasks, technology, and other materials or *tools mediation*) towards (3) self regulation (or *independent learning*). Lesson plans consisting of five steps namely the introduction task, the main task, the language focus task, the rehearsal task, and the transfer task (to be discussed in Chapter 2) were used as instructional model. Sociocultural theory, supported by activity theory, (Ellis, 2003) posits that learners shape the goals of any activity to suit their own purposes and understandings, then the task, as a workplan, is interpreted and reshaped by students in actual performance, and outcomes are diversified due to performers' orientation and interpretation (Coughlan and Duff, 1994; Roebuck, 2000). It is thus difficult to make reliable predictions regarding the kinds of language use and opportunities for learning that arise. Thus, sociocultural theory perspective on task-based performance implies that students should be allowed diversified task outcomes and different orientations to tasks as long as the tasks are completed.

1.4   THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

As analytical framework, activity theory, which is an overarching theory of sociocultural theory (McCafferty, Roebuck, and Wayland, 2001), is used in analyzing, describing, and explaining how certain communicative goals can be achieved in an activity system through mediation by tools, subjects, rules, division of labor, community, and goal-directed object, the six components in Engeström's activity model (see definitions later in this chapter). The general philosophy of activity theory can be characterized as an attempt to integrate three perspectives: (1) the objective, (2) the ecological, and (3) the sociocultural (Kaptelinin, 1996) in explaining any human activities. Activity theory is defined as "a philosophical and cross-disciplinary framework for studying different forms of human practices as developmental processes, with both individual and social levels interlinked at the same time" (Kuutti, 1996, p. 25). It posits that conscious learning emerges from activity, but is not the precursor to it (Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999) and the appropriate unit of analysis is tool-mediated goal-directed action (Zinchenko, 1985, cited in Lantolf, 2000). With an activity theory perspective, students' mediation, emergence of learning, and trajectories towards different task outcomes can be investigated as activities unfold in a natural context of classroom learning because it offers an interconnected system of physical and symbolic aspects of the environment within which the activity occurs (van Lier, 2002). In addition, activity theory is acclaimed as a useful tool for understanding who is/are learning, what is learned or being learned, why it is learned, and how it is learned (Engeström, 2001; Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999).

Activity theory provides terminologies and analytical framework that help researchers understand human activities. Blin (2004) points out that activity theory helps explain human and social practices in specific contexts. Derived from the theoretical works of Karl Marx by the

founders of the cultural-historical school of Russian psychology in the 1920s and 1930s and further developed by psychology and learning studies, within this theoretical perspective on learning through activity, the main unit of analysis is historically and contextually framed activity in which mediating artifacts have a central role. Leontiev (1978, 1981) was an activity theorist and researcher in the first generation of activity theory development.

According to Leontiev (1981), an activity consists of a goal-directed hierarchy of actions that are used to accomplish the object namely *activities*, *actions*, and *operations*. *Motives* are realized in specific *actions* that are *goal*-directed and carried out under particular *conditions*.

To answer the sub-question *a*. how students worked together on tasks, Leont'ev's (1981) hierarchy of activity systems, namely *activities*, *actions and operations,* was used to analyze and explain what was being done, how it was done, and why something was done as students engaged in language learning tasks. Table 1.2 shows three levels of human activity which is the layout of this framework.

Table 1.2 Leontiev's Hierarchy of Activity Systems

Three Levels of Activity	Unit of Analysis	Description
Activities	Motives	*Why* was something done?
Actions	Goals	*What* was being done?
Operations	Conditions	*How* was it done?

A.N. Leont'ev (1981) emphasized that an activity is the principal that dialectically relates the external-material, social activity and the individual development. Table 1.2 shows that the three levels are (1) the *activity level* which is the *motive* that reflects individual's social or material desires and needs; (2) the *action level* that is goal-directed behavior evoked by the motive; and (3) the *level of operations* that are the automatic or habituated actions in response to the immediate social-material contexts (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). This framework allows me to

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take the context and analyze it from the point of view of the whole interaction of the learner (the subject), the object (goal/objective), and the actions the learners take in a specific direction.

Storch's (2002, 2004) used activity theory to identify four patterns of ESL students' interaction: the Expert/Novice, the Collaborative, the Dominant/ Dominant, and Dominant/Passive by analyzing linguistic evidence (*i.e.,* the equality and mutuality of turns and contributions such as suggestions, explanations, and requests) as well as participants' goals and motives. To answer the sub-question b. on how different patterns of assistance affected task-based performance, I analyzed the patterns of students' assistance in the same way as Storch (2002, 2004) did. Then, I investigated participants' *nonverbal task engagement*. Adapted from Platt & Brooks (2002) and Li Jin (2007), I determined the level of nonverbal task engagement as *full*, *some*, and *few* engagement based on the approximate amount of engagement time on task for 85-100%, 60-70%, and 50% or less respectively.

The six components of Engeström's (1987, 1999) activity theory model guided the questions asked in the interviews to answer the sub-question c. of what influenced task-based performance. They are *subjects*, *objects* of activity, *division of labor*, the *meditational tools,* the *rules,* and the *community* (to be described later in this chapter and in Chapter 2).

Finally, to answer the sub-question d., Tae-Young's (2007) model of motivation, which is based on activity theory, was used. In this model, Tae-Young explains that according to activity theory, motivation is derived from participants' *need* coupled with *object* then, it develops to become *motive*. Then, a *motive* plus *goal* plus *participation* produces *motivation* of the second/foreign language learners. Tae-Young's model of motivation is presented in Figure 1.1.

Need + Object $\longrightarrow$ Motive + Goal + Participation $\longrightarrow$ Motivation
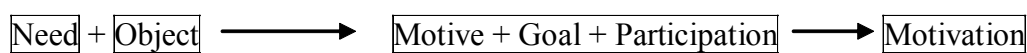
Figure 1.1 The Relationship between Motives, Goals, and Motivation (Tae-Young, 2007, p. 37)

This model was used to trace the participants' motives, goals, and motivation first at the beginning and finally at the end of the course.

1.5 DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS

There are eight key terms that are defined as follows;

1.5.1 Task(s)

Ellis's (2003, p. 16) definition of a t*ask* is used in this study;

> A *task* is a workplan that requires learners to process language pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional content has been conveyed. It requires primary attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources, although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance, direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. A task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or written skills, and also various cognitive processes.

Task-based instruction in this study refers to the teaching of business English as a foreign language that uses business tasks as the central unit in the syllabus with its primary focus on meaning. Tasks are used as tools by the teacher for participants' communicative acts.

The terms task-based *performance*, *ability*, and *skills* are used interchangeably and considered similar in meaning in this study.

1.5.2   Mediation

In this study, the definition of *mediation* provided by Ellis (2003) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006) is used. *Mediation* refers to learning as the result of using material *tools* or instruments (e.g., computer, books , writing instruments, etc), and/or through interaction with another person, and/or through the use of symbols or psychological tools such as language, literacy, pedagogical frameworks and conception of learning.

1.5.3   Regulation, internalization, imitation, and zone of proximal development

Students learn how to *regulate* each task using various types of tools. Lantolf and Thorne (2007) mention three types of *regulation*: *object regulation*, *other regulation*, and *self regulation*. *Object regulation* is the stage when learners need to use and manipulate objects in their environment. *Other regulation* includes both implicit and explicit mediation involving assistance, direction, and scaffolding by teachers and peers, among others. *Self regulation* refers to the ability to accomplish activities within a minimum of external support.

 Internalization is the process through which a person moves from carrying out concrete actions in conjunction with the assistance of material artifacts and of other individuals to carrying out actions mentally without any apparent external assistance (Lantolf, 2000).

 Imitation involves goal-directed cognitive activity that can result in transformations of the original model (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).

 Zone of proximal development or ZPD is the "distance between the actual developmental level --as determined by the independent problem solving and the level of potential

development --as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

1.5.4 Activities, actions, and operations

Activities refer to students' actual performance on task. In Leontiev's activity systems, at the *activity* level, *motives* or why something is done is explained. *Actions* refer to goal-directed behavior evoked by the motives. *Operations* refer to the level where the automatic or habituated actions are in response to the immediate social-material contexts (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

1.5.5 Motives, goals, and conditions

Motives are derived from *needs* since needs become *motives* once directed at specific object (Lantolf, 2000). A *motive* is a guiding or directed force for the subject towards an object in an activity (Tae-Young, 2007). In Leontiev's activity systems, *motives* come before goals and are considered more general conceptually than *goals*. *Motives* are what the students bring to class before their actual participation; whereas goals are attached to specific actions while operating on the assigned tasks under some constraints or affordances called *conditions*. Leontiev (1979) explains that (1) the level of *activity* is governed by its *motive/motives* such as that a man is engaged in a communal hunt because he wants to feed his family. (2) The level of *actions* is governed by their *goals* such as that a man performs the role of beater of which the goal is to scare the prey away from himself and toward the other members of the hunting party. Finally (3) the level of *operations* is governed by the *conditions* of the hunt. How he carries out the various

tasks involved in his role will depend upon the terrain, kind of game-animal sought, wind direction, the weather, the season of the year, etc.

1.5.6   Patterns of assistance

Four patterns of assistance in dyadic interaction identified in Storch (2002) are the Collaborative, the Dominant/Dominant, the Dominant/Passive, and the Expert/Novice. The Collaborative refers to a pair working together on all parts of the task with high mutuality or agreement and equality in terms of turns and contributions such as suggestions, explanations, and requests. The Dominant/Dominant refers to the pair that demonstrates the high level of equality but with low level of mutuality. Both participants contribute to the task but there is a high level of disagreement. The Dominant/Passive refers to the pair that has a domineering person and a subordinate one, thus the level of both equality and mutuality are low. Finally, the Expert/Novice refers to the pair that consists of the more knowledgeable other, who supports and encourages the other to participate. Thus, their level of mutuality is high but the level of equality is low.

The following definitions are those of the components in Engeström's (1987, 1999) Activity Theory model namely *subject*(s), *object(s)* and *goals*, *mediational t ools, outcome*, *community*, *rules*, and *division of l abor*, as provided by the Center for Activity Theory and Developmental Work (n.d), Ellis (2003), Kuutii (1996), Kaptelinin (2005), Lantolf and Thorne (2006), and Thorne (2004).

1.5.7 Subject(s)

Subject refers to the individual or groups of individuals, who are working towards some object to gain an outcome. In this study, a *subject* refers to a student, whereas *subjects* refer to groups of students.

1.5.8 Objects and goals

Object is defined as the target of a goal-directed action (Lantolf & Thone, 2007). It can be a material or psychological unit. It captures the mental or physical efforts of a subject to reach desirable outcome(s) in an activity system. *Object* motivates learners in a specific direction. For example, *objects* of the goal-directed *actions* may be to complete the tasks, learn vocabulary, and/or to master a grammatical rule.

Goals refer to the object-oriented target of actions and thoughts, or particular orientation learners take to tasks. The expressed *goals* may involve learning vocabulary, finding a good job, earning a grade A in the course, or passing the examination, etc. *Goals* are attached to specific actions. They are formulated and revised concurrently as one acts.

If students have a *goal* as to learn the new vocabulary, the *object* is the vocabulary itself.

1.5.9 Mediational tools

Tools refer to the instruments participants use in completing or accomplishing the tasks. *Tools* can be material or psychological such as the first language (L1), computers, textbooks, video-audio materials, concepts, diagram(s), friends, tasks, and even the teacher.

1.5.10 Outcome

Outcome refers to the particular result(s) of an action. In this study, it means the result of a task, once it is completed.

1.5.11 Community

Community consists of multiple individuals and/or subgroups who share the same general object(s) and who construct themselves as distinct from other communities. In this study, it includes classmates, a group or groups of students, who share the same general object of a task, parents and the university whose roles are the supporters of participants coming to the task-based course.

1.5.12 Rules

Rules refer to any formal or informal regulations that can facilitate or constrain the activity or task performance. *Rules* guide the subject to decide the proper actions to take with other community members. In this study, *rules* refer to task rules, scoring rubrics, and business etiquettes involved in each task, as well as cultural or social norms that may affect the orientation to tasks and task completion.

1.5.13 Division of labor

Division of labor refers to how tasks are divided horizontally between community members as well as any vertical division of power and status. In this study, *division of labor* includes the formation of groups as well as the relationship between students or students and others (i.e., the teacher, the parents) involving in the completion of tasks.

1.6   SUMMARY OF THE INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I have presented the purposes of the study. Then, I described the research questions, data sources and the analytical tools. I also presented briefly the sociocultural approach to task-based instruction, the activity theory frameworks, followed by the definitions of key terms used in the study. Task-based instruction is acclaimed as an appropriate instruction model for business English. Sociocultural theory and task-based instruction are contended to be compatible and a classroom-based research is needed to investigate how the implementation of task-based instruction using sociocultural approach helps students develop second/foreign language ability. I examined this in a business English class at a university in Thailand to investigate whether it helped students become better in their business English task-based ability. Moreover, I addressed the question of what activities looked like when students completed each task in a task-based course. The research findings aim to contribute to the existing literature on task-based instruction as well as shed light on how sociocultural approach to task-based instruction can better help second/foreign language teachers utilize tasks in the ways that improve their learners' communicative language ability.

1.7   THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHAPTERS

In Chapter 2 of this dissertation, I will discuss task-based instruction as well as the theories and research on task-based instruction that relate to the present study. The review is comprised of five main sections: (1) the definition of the term *task* used in relevant research and the rationales for using task-based instruction in second/foreign language teaching; (2) four main theoretical perspectives that underlie task-based instruction to date and a review of the published literature from each perspective and the summary of research findings; (3) a discussion on the current instructional models of task-based instruction; (4) a discussion on five constructs of sociocultural theory that I used as theoretical approach in my instructional model; and (5) activity theory as analytical tool.

Chapter 3 presents the research contexts and the research designs of the study. As for chapter 4, I provide the quantitative results, which are the answers to Research Questions 1 and 2. In chapter 5, the qualitative findings are presented to provide the answers to Research Question 3. In the final chapter 6, I discuss the research results and findings, present pedagogical implications, and provide recommendations for future research.

2.0   CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Task-based instruction is a language teaching approach, which takes a strong view of communicative language teaching. Using this approach, teachers employ *tasks* as the central units of syllabus design (Long & Crookes, 1992) or as the focal point of instruction (Willis, 1996) and the language use during *tasks* are the driving force for language development (Long, 1989; Prabhu, 1987). It is not a newly invented approach. Prabhu (1987), as one of the earlier advocates of task-based instruction, who put it into practice, used the task-based approach with secondary school classes in Bangalore, India, for his Communicational Teaching Project in 1979. The American Government Language Institutes switched to task-based instruction for teaching foreign languages to adults in the early 1980s (Leaver & Kaplan, 2004).

In recent years, there has been considerable growth in the literature on task-based language teaching and learning in second and foreign languages (Bygate, Skehan & Swain, 2001; Crookes & Gass, 1993; Ellis, 2000, 2003; Leaver & Kaplan, 2004; Nunan, 2004; Van den Branden, 2006; Willis, 1996, among others). In the literature on language learning, tasks have attracted interest from both researchers and teachers (Pica, 1994; Ellis, 2003). This is because tasks have been recognized as useful devices for eliciting learners' language. Littlewood (2004) claims that the task-based approach has reached the status of a new orthodoxy, stating "in current pedagogical discussion,….it is difficult to avoid the term 'task' as it once was to avoid the term 'communicative'"(p. 319). The first biennial international conference on task-based language

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teaching was held in Leuven, Belgium in 2005. The second one was in September, 2007 at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. The third one was at Lancaster University, Great Britain, in September, 2009. Apparently, task-based instruction is receiving increasing attention from the academic communities.

2.1   THE DEFINITION(S) OF THE TERM 'TASK'

There is no single definition for the term *task* (Shehadeh, 2005). The definitions provided in the literature range from general to quite specific. Ellis (2003), for example, presents a sample of nine definitions provided by researchers and practitioners in second and foreign language acquisition (see appendix A). Within the literature on task-based instruction, *tasks* can refer to a range of workplans that have the overall purpose of facilitating language learning-- from a simple and brief exercise type, to more complex and lengthy types of activities such as group problem-solving or simulations and decision-making (Wesche & Skehan, 2002). Shehadeh (2005) explains that definitions of the term *tasks* are so varied because the study and description of *task* has been approached from different perspectives and for different purposes.

Tasks have been employed extensively by researchers and teachers. For SLA researchers, tasks have been used to elicit samples of language use from learners to investigate how second language (L2) learning takes place as well as to document how learners structure and restructure their interlanguage over time. For language teachers, tasks serve as devices provided to learners to practice using L2 for communication. Language teachers who use tasks in their teaching recognize the importance of the opportunities for learners to experience using language to develop the L2 proficiency needed to communicate fluently and effectively. However, among

teachers and researchers, there is no complete agreement as to what constitutes a task or its

definitions (Ellis, 2003). The term has been used in a number of slightly different ways on

different dimensions. Definitions used as shown in appendix A have derived from a number of

dimensions, such as (1) the scope of task, (2) the perspective from which a task is viewed, (3) the

authenticity of a task, (4) the linguistic skills required to perform a task, (5) the psychological

processes involved in task performance, and (6) the outcome of a task (see Ellis, 2003).

Nevertheless, a consensus seems to emerge over the central characteristics of *tasks*

especially for pedagogic *tasks* (as opposed to purely research *tasks*). Scholars such as Ellis

(2003) and Willis (2005) agree that it is necessary to differentiate *tasks* from other devices used

to elicit learner language, such as an *activity*, an *exercise*, and a *drill*.

In the present study, I use the definition of the term *task* offered by Ellis (2003) as

follows;

> A task is a workplan that requires learners to process language
> pragmatically in order to achieve an outcome that can be evaluated
> in terms of whether the correct or appropriate propositional
> content has been conveyed. To this end, it requires them to give primary
> attention to meaning and to make use of their own linguistic resources,
> although the design of the task may predispose them to choose particular
> forms. A task is intended to result in language use that bears a resemblance,
> direct or indirect, to the way language is used in the real world. Like other
> language activities, a task can engage productive or receptive, and oral or
> written skills, and also various cognitive processes (p. 17).

I select this definition because I agree with Ellis (2003), who suggests that it is essential

that the definition encompasses all six criteria of features of *task* (described in Table 2.1).The

definition above clearly states how it differs from other terms such as an *activity*, an *exercise* and

a *drill*.

Table 2.1 The Six Criterial Features of a Task (summarized from Ellis, 2003, pp. 9-11)

Criteria	Explanation
(1) A task is a workplan.	(1) A task constitutes a plan invented by a teacher for learner activity. The actual performance of students may or may not match the teachers' plan.
(2) A task involves a primary focus on meaning.	(2) Learners' focus is on exchanging and understanding and communicating meanings rather than practicing of form(s), or pre-specified forms or patterns. The students are allowed to choose the linguistic and/or non-linguistic resources needed to complete the task.
(3) A task involves real world processes of language use.	(3) Learners engage in an activity such as that found in the real world such as completing a form or asking and answering questions for a purpose or a goal.
(4) A task can involve any of the four language skills.	(4) The workplan may require learners to read or listen to a text to display their understanding, to produce an oral or written text, or to employ a combination of productive and receptive skills.
(5) A task engages cognitive processes.	(5) The workplan requires the learners to employ cognitive processes such as selecting, classifying, ordering, reasoning, selecting, classifying, ordering, reasoning, and evaluating information in order to carry out a task. The processes may influence but do not determine the choice of language to be employed by the learners.
(6) A task has a clearly defined communicative outcome.	(6) The workplan requires a non-linguistic outcome of a task, which serves as the goal of the activity. The outcome determines when a task is completed.

Based on the above criteria, a *task* can be clearly distinguished from other similar terms that are incorporated into other teaching approaches. To summarize, a task is not an *exercise*, that requires learners to use language patterns or forms they have just been taught or been told to use. Willis added that a *task* is concerned with *pragmatic m eaning* (i.e., the use of language in context) but an *exercise* is concerned with *semantic meaning* irrespective of context. In addition,

a task's ultimate goal is *not* to have learners practice or *drill* some pre-specified forms or functions so that learners display their ability to produce those patterns. Moreover, a task is *not* an *activity* that has already been set for learners, such as role plays, for which they act out dialogues with already provided parts, because with this, the students do not have to express or exchange (i.e., communicate) their own meanings as they would do with a task (Ellis, 2003; Willis, 2005).

However, task-based instruction does not necessarily mean the total abandonment of grammar instruction. According to Willis (2005), although a focus on specific grammar rules or patterns will *not* generally come before the task itself, the use of tasks does *not* preclude language-focused study at some points, "because the grammar instruction could detract students from the real communicative purpose of the subsequent interaction" (p. 4).

Some examples of pedagogic tasks are picture-drawing tasks, information-gap tasks, oral presentation tasks, conversation tasks, completing a form, writing a check, making a reservation, following directions, and making a phone call, etc. For the present study, the selected tasks (described in Chapter 3) are derived from a business English-as-a–foreign-language context.

In business English teaching, a large number of tasks fall into what Littlewood (2004) categorized as *authentic communication tasks*, which are at the right end of the continuum. His continuum, illustrated in Table 2.2, shows ranges of tasks from the more exercise-like tasks at the left end to the most communicative tasks at the far right.

Table 2.2. The Continuum from Focus on Forms to Focus on Meaning (Littlewood, 2004, p. 322)

Focus on forms ◄──────────────────────────────────► Focus on meaning				
Non-communicative learning	Pre-communicative language practice	Communicative language practice	Structured communication	Authentic communication
Focusing on the structures of language, how they are formed and what they mean, e.g., substitution exercises, 'discovery' and awareness raising activities	Practicing language with some attention to meaning but not communicating new messages to others, e.g., 'question-and-answer' practice	Practicing pre-taught language in a context where it communicates new information, e.g., information-gap or 'personalized' questions	Using language to communicate in situations which elicit pre-learnt language, but with some unpredictability, e.g., structured role-play & simple problem-solving	Using language to communicate in situations where the meanings are unpredictable, e.g., creative role-play, more complex problem-solving and discussion
Exercises ◄──────────────── (Ellis) ──────────────► Tasks				
Enabling tasks ◄─────── (Estaire and Zanon) ───────► Communicative tasks				

As for the description of *authentic communication tasks*, Littlewood states that they are tasks which "learners use language to communicate in situations where the meanings are unpredictable such as creative role-play, more complex problem-solving and discussion" (p.321).

2.2   RATIONALE FOR TASK-BASED INSTRUCRTION

Task-based instruction has evolved in a response to a better understanding of the way languages are learned (Foster, 1999), that is, language is acquired *through* communication (Howatt, 1984). It is based on the research findings in SLA that learners do *not* acquire a target language in the order it is presented to them no matter how carefully teachers and textbooks organize it (Foster, 1999; Skehan, 1996). That is why what is taught is *not* necessary what is learned. It is *not* simply a matter of converting input into output (Skehan, 1996). Such assumption is perceived in the

teaching procedure of *presentation*, *practice*, and *production* approach or the PPP approach. Advocates of task-based instruction have rejected this conventional, rule-focused *presentation-practice-production* sequence.

To illustrate, in the PPP approach, teachers present the target language starting with the simple parts and gradually moving towards more complex parts, step by step, until the whole structure of language has been built up (Nunan, 2004). Learners must master each part and incorporate it into their knowledge of the target language. Teachers who use this approach first *present* to the learners a syllabus of structures--either in terms of a list of grammatical features or vocabulary and/or expressions (as in notional/functional syllabus)—and, through controlled practice, the students drill and/or practice these structures in the form of exercises, which aim to foster accuracy and fluency. Then, in the free *production* stage, fluent and accurate performances are expected from the students.

This PPP approach is seen as problematic by task-based advocates such as Willis (2005). She argues that this approach is problematic because the goal of the PPP approach, the final P (or the free *production*) is often not achieved, or if the students *produce*, their production cannot be really *free* because the students are required to produce forms or patterns that have been specified in advance from the previous stage. This explains why students at the *free production stage* choose either to conform to the teachers' expectations using the patterns already taught or to decline to incorporate the forms at all and complete the task successfully with a primary focus on meaning instead. Moreover, in this approach, errors are seen as evidence of poor learning, requiring more PPP treatment (Foster, 1999). The result is that, despite many years of learning, students of this approach graduate but are unable to communicate (Stern, 1983; Willis, 2005).

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Proposals for task-based instruction arose out of the conviction that it is *not* possible to specify what a student would learn in linguistic terms (Ellis, 2005). Prabhu (1987) was among the first task-based practitioners, who argued that it was necessary to discard the pre-selection of linguistic items in any forms, and instead, specify the content of teaching in terms of holistic units of communication, or *tasks*. Prabhu (1987) also claimed that it was possible to teach *through* communication rather than *for* communication.

In contrast to the PPP approach, in terms of syllabus design, the building blocks of task-based instruction are *tasks* themselves, not the grammatical structures (Long & Crookes, 1992). Task-based instruction does *not* rely on prior analysis of the language into its discrete points of grammatical items, structures, vocabulary and/or functions or expressions. The philosophy of task-based instruction is in line with the way languages are learned because learners do *not* first acquire language as a structural system and then learn how to *use* this system in communication, but rather *discover* the system itself *in* the process of learning how to communicate (Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004). Ellis (1998) explains that any pre-selection of language items to be taught is unlikely to match the learners' internal syllabus and that doing *tasks* enables learners to develop the language and skills in line with their own internal syllabus (Ellis, 1998). Task-based instruction gets learners involved immediately or almost immediately in working individually or together on tasks, and then, teachers should "let learners deploy whatever language they already have, and look for ways of building on that, of improving and expanding on their current language capabilities" (Willis, 2005, p. 15). This is in line with sociocultural concept of ZPD. For task-based instruction, errors are not necessarily the result of bad learning but are part of the natural process of interlanguage forms gradually moving towards the target forms (Ellis, 1994; Foster, 1999).

Task-based instruction is recommended for second and foreign language teaching for at least seven reasons. First, tasks provide a purpose for students to use language meaningfully. In many contexts, tasks are used for training learners for their future jobs (Basturkmen, 2006) . Some scholars such as Skehan (1996; 1998) suggest that by definition a *task* has some relationship to the real world. He elaborates that a task which requires personal information to be exchanged, or a problem to be solved, or a collective judgment to be made bears a relationship to things that happen outside the classroom in a way that differs from doing a grammatical *exercise*. Weshe and Skehan (2002) emphasize that task-based instruction highly contextualizes ne w language that is of particular relevance to the learners. This characteristic of tasks provides the motivating purpose for language learning. In this w ay, l earners' confidence can be developed because upon task completion, they can achieve communicative goals (Willis, 1996).

Second, tasks provide abundant opportunities for L2 acquisition (Shehadeh, 2005). In this regard, a task-based language classroom is the one where language learning opportunities abound. Van Lier (2004) states that when activity (in this sense, he means *tasks*) is used as the focal unit, "language is naturally supported *by* and supportive *of* social activity, and in these two senses, naturally scaffolded, that is within hum an a ctivity language gives and receives just as much support as it needed" (emphasis in original, p. 165). Input and interaction hypotheses propose that tasks are devices that create conditions for negotiation of meaning which contains comprehensible input. From this standpoint, tasks provide a context for activating learners' language acquisition process, thus, promoting L2 learning. Teachers can use tasks to foster the process of negotiating, modifying, rephrasing, and experimenting with language, the process involved in second language acquisition (Richards and Rodgers, 2001). In this sense, task-based instruction's focus is on the process rather than the product.

Third, task-based i nstruction t akes a holistic approach w here m eaning is cen tral, thus, language teaching can be meaning-based rather than grammar-based. It is also appropriate for a learner-centered cu rriculum. Thus, it is r ecommended as a better ap proach in si tuations where there are limited opportunities for communicative experience such as in many foreign language contexts (Ellis, 2003).

Fourth, task-based instruction is as sociated with *humanistic language teaching*, which emphasizes both t he affective an d cognitive dimensions of learning. In task-based classroom, students share with others, thereby, increasing self-esteem and motivation to learn (Ellis, 2003).

Fifth, according to sociocultural theory, tasks serve as meditational tool for creating an activity setting for learners to co-construct knowledge and interact socially, thus, stimulating language development to occur. This development is assumed to occur through other regulation (such as through scaffolding and collaborative dialogue), object regulation (i.e., task and language as object to manage or manipulate), and self regulation (i.e., independent learning through private speech and other meditational means).

Sixth, task-based instruction is particularly suited to teaching languages for specific purposes because of its direct relation t o purposeful, real world-related objectives (Lynch & Maclean, 2000). Teachers can use tasks that reflect the students' target language or professional workplace situations to motivate learners to learn. Thus, task performance is seen as a rehearsal for professional or social interactions in their future life. Basturkmen (2006) states that pedagogic tasks, which are derived from the real-world tasks, are appropriate for teaching language for specific purposes because they provide target language samples that draw from needs analysis of the target language situations.

Finally, task-based instruction also supports the trend of using tasks in communicative language testing such as the use of tasks in performance-based assessment (McNamara, 1996), tests of general language proficiency (Skehan, 2001), and the task-based tests for assessing specific purpose language ability (Douglas, 2000), which is particularly relevant to the present study.

2.3   MAIN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES
THAT UNDERLIE TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION

Researchers have approached task-based language teaching and learning from four main perspectives namely the interaction hypothesis perspective, the output hypothesis perspective, the cognitive perspective, and the sociocultural theory perspective. These perspectives are summarized and presented along with their rationales and main research findings. Then, I present my conclusion.

2.3.1   The interaction hypothesis perspective

The interaction hypothesis (Long, 1981; 1983; 1996) draws from the *input hypothesis* (Krashen, 1981, 1985, 1994), which, as its name implies, focuses on the role of the input to which learners are exposed. According to the input hypothesis, learners acquire an L2 incidentally or subconsciously if they can comprehend the input they are exposed to (Ellis, 2003). For the input to become comprehensible, it must be fine tuned to the learners' level of proficiency or i+1, where i represents the current level of proficiency and 1 means *one* level above the current one.

Long's *interaction hypothesis* places a similar emphasis on the comprehensible input but also claims that l earners acquire L2 when they obtain comprehensible input as a result of the opportunity to negotiate meaning when communication breakdown occurs (Ellis, 2003). This is how it relates to task-based instruction. According to this hypothesis, while working on tasks and when learners attempt to communicate, if learners need to negotiate meaning with their interlocutors to achieve comprehension, they are exposed to comprehensible input and have opportunities to exchange linguistic modifications for clarification. Then, L2 acquisition occurs because the negotiated modifications or interactive modifications of conversation make the subsequent interaction more understandable, which means it be comes comprehensible input (Shehadeh, 2005). Moreover, meaning negotiation serves to draw learners' attention to linguistic forms, while primarily focusing on meaning, which induces the *noticing* that Schmidt (1990) claims essential for L2 acq uisition to take place. In short, according to this perspective, the opportunity for learners to engage in meaning negotiation is facilitative for L2 acquisition. Thus, it is assumed that tasks that stimulate learners to negotiate meaning, such as information gap tasks, can provide the conditions necessary for L2 acquisition to occur. Some research (e.g., Ellis, Tanaka, Yamazaki, 1994; Ellis & He, 1999; Mackey, 1999) has demonstrated that negotiation does indeed appear to promote L2 acquisition (Shehadeh, 2005).

Research based on this interaction hypothesis perspective seeks to identify how different task types, variables and dimensions may affect the negotiation of meaning and interactive modifications on the part of the learners. Studies of Pica (1992, 1994) are seminal research within this perspective. Based on research conducted within this perspective, Ellis (2003) summarizes task characteristics hypothesized to make positive impact on L2 acquisition by

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means of the quantity of meaning negotiation that is likely to take place. Table 2.3 shows his summary.

Table 2.3 Task Types and Features That Have More a nd Less Impact on Learners' L2 Acquisition According to Research on the Interaction Hypothesis (based on Ellis, 2003, p. 96)

Task Types	Features with More Impact	Features with Less Impact
Information exchange	Required (information gap)	Optional (opinion gap)
Information gap	Two-way	One-way
Outcome	Closed	Open
Topic	Human-ethical	Objective-spatial
Task familiarity	Less-familiar	Familiar
Discourse domain	Narrative Collaborative	Description Expository
Cognitive complexity	Context-free Detailed information	Context-dependent Less-detailed information

To explain Table 2.3, research findings within this perspective suggest that the interactive modifications hypothesized to contribute to L2 acquisition are likely to be more frequent in tasks that (1) have a required information exchange, (2) involve a two-way (as opposed to one-way) exchange of information, (3) have a closed outcome, (4) are not familiar to the participants, (5) involve a human/ethical type of problem, (6) involve a narrative discourse mode, and (7) are context-free (i.e., the task does not provide contextual support for communication) and involve greater details (as opposed to the lesser one).

As can be seen, research in this perspective has contributed to an understanding of what task types and features most effectively promote L2 acquisition. Some task-based practitioners and researchers such as Ellis (2003) and Pica (2002) contend that tasks used in pedagogy include *gaps* so that learners find it necessary to interact, communicate, and negotiate for meaning to achieve comprehension, and then, acquire the language.

However, the interaction hypothesis has attracted considerable criticism such as the questions of when negotiation actually takes place and what the consequences are. Some criticisms involve questions regarding the negotiation of meaning itself (Ellis, 2 003). For example, Aston (1986) points out that confirmation checks and requests for clarification during negotiation of meaning can be realized as different functions in conversational discourse such as an expression of interest or encouraging a speaker to say more. Therefore, it does not always mean communication breakdown. It is also possible that some conversation exchanges that have been analyzed may not involve negotiation of meaning at all. Moreover, seeming success in a negotiation may not always mean that comprehension has been achieved. Instead, the interlocutors may simply want to avoid conflicts. Gass and Varonis (1994) have also found that sometimes negotiation does not lead to native speakers comprehending non-native speakers. They found that the success of negotiation depends partly on the communication strategies of the non-native speakers. Verplaetse (1993) found that native speakers' modifications have some detrimental effects on non-native speakers' participation in conversation as they can hinder non-native speakers' opportunities for production, thus "challenging the general premise that native speakers' modifications are primarily beneficial to non-native speakers" (Hall & Verplaetse, 2000).

Moreover, there is uncertainty as to whether comprehensible input leads to language acquisition because "comprehension can also be achieved by means of top-down processing based on world knowledge and inference from contexts; whereas, language acquisition requires bottom-up processing involving attention to linguistic forms" (Ellis, 2 003, p. 81) . Ellis then concludes that comprehensible input need not necessarily either facilitate or promote language acquisition.

Another criticism concerns the methodology used in research conducted with this interaction hypothesis perspective. Ellis (2003) states that the problem involves quantifying the amount of negotiation that takes place in a conversation during students' working on a task. Normally, this means counting the number of utterances that reveal the negotiation of meaning such as comprehension checks, confirmation checks or clarification requests. However, van Lier (1996) points out that counting the utterances in this way will not necessarily account for the *qualitative* aspects of discourse, which are also important for acquisition. He argues that this quantifying of isolated language features in order to perform statistical comparisons obscures rather than aids understanding of how interaction contributes to acquisition. The more appropriate approach to studying conversational exchanges, according to van Lier, is to treat discourses as holistic, collaborative, and dynamic, which is espoused by sociocultural theory of language development.

Despite the problems discussed above, Ellis (2003) argues that the interaction hypothesis has contributed a great deal to task related research. He explains that it offers a set of clearly defined discourse categories for analyzing the interactions. In addition, research offers evidence regarding which tasks better afford opportunities for the kind of discourse that will contribute to L2 acquisition through the negotiation of meaning.

2.3.2   The output hypothesis perspective

Swain (1985, 1995) initially proposed the output hypothesis to point out the important role of learner production, which was not acknowledged in Krashen's (1981) input hypothesis. She argued that evaluation of the French immersion programs in Canada revealed the insufficient effect of the comprehensible input alone for L2 acquisition. According to the output hypothesis,

learner output or the language that a learner produces in writing or speaking serves to promote L2 acquisition. According to Swain (1985), output provides three functions that contribute to language acquisition namely noticing, hypothesis testing, and reflection. First, when learners speak or write the target language, they are forced to move from semantic to syntax. That is, they focus on how meaning is conveyed by the arrangement of words rather than by the meaning of isolated words. By this way, production necessitates syntactic processing, forcing students to pay attention to linguistic forms so as to communicate effectively. Second, as learners produce output, they notice gaps in their knowledge of the language between what they can produce and what they want to produce. Then, in order to communicate, they must hypothesize about the language and how it might be produced for their communicative purposes. This, in turns, prompts them to stretch their current interlanguage ability in order to fill the gap. The language produced as a result of this stretched interlanguage is referred to by Swain as *pushed output*. Third, through the learner's output and the interlocutor's response to that output, the learner can reflect on, discuss and analyze the problems, and modify his or her language use thereafter. Some researchers such as Ellis & He (1999) and de la Fuente (2002) attempt to link learners' opportunities for output more directly to L2 development, especially in the area of vocabulary acquisition. In their experiments, the out put groups of learners outperformed the rest of the students at post-tests as far as productive vocabulary was concerned (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

Later in 1998 and 2000, Swain expanded her output hypothesis to include conscious reflection on linguistic forms as a function of output. She claims that by consciously attending to forms during language production, learners notice important grammatical aspects of the language and can potentially internalize these forms in the process of talking in or about the language with themselves or with others. This later phase of Swain's work (1998, 2000) has led her to

conclude that as students engage in output during *collaborative dialogues*, they can assist each other to reflect on the language, hypothesize about language construction, and, in the process, acquire the L2. For example, Swain & Lapkin (1998) have shown that students can solve linguistic problems jointly by negotiating target language forms during the process of achieving a communicative task goal by determining which forms to use in order to best convey their message accurately and coherently. It was also found from the post-test in this study that the solutions reached during the students' collaborative dialogues were retained in the learners' interlanguage system. Interestingly, in her later research on collaborative or peer-to-peer dialogues such as that of 1998 and 2000, Swain together with her colleagues has discussed her findings by incorporating sociocultural theory perspective.

Research on tasks conducted within the output hypothesis perspective has examined, among other things, how different task-types and dimensions can have an impact on the opportunities for learners' production (Shehadeh, 2005). Researchers have been able to demonstrate that task types do provide learners with a variety of opportunities towards modified output (e.g., Iwashita, 1999; Pica, Holliday, Lewis and Morgenthaler, 1989; Shehadeh, 1999; Swain, 1997; Swain & Lapkin, 1998). Iwashita (1999) for example, found that one-way tasks provide learners with greater opportunities to modify their output towards comprehensibility than two-way tasks. Similarly, Shehadeh (1999) found that a picture-description task (which is a one-way task) provides significantly greater opportunities than an opinion-exchange task (which is a two-way task) towards modified output.

If the learners' output was found to be important to L2 acquisition, then different task-types, variables and dimensions would have varying effects on L2 acquisition, because they have varying effects on the opportunities for the learners' output in the same way as on the

opportunities for negotiation of meaning and interactive modifications (Shehadeh, 2005). Sometimes, it can be seen that the output hypothesis perspective is placed together with the input-interaction hypothesis, where task-based research is explained (see Ellis, 2003; Van den Branden, 2006). Some scholars refer to the term input-output hypothesis when they discuss these theories together. Thus, the same criticism that attacks the input-interaction hypothesis would apply to the output hypothesis.

2.3.3 Skehan's cognitive perspective

The *cognitive approach* to task-based research is developed by Skehan (1996, 1998) to support his investigation of tasks. This approach is based on the way learners are believed to represent or access L2 knowledge (Ellis, 2000). According to this theory, learners, like native speakers, construct both an exemplar-based system and a rule-based system. The former involves lexical items and the formulaic chunks of language, whereas the latter involves the underlying patterns or structures of the language. The linguistic knowledge contained in the former system can be more easily and quickly accessed; therefore, learners draw from this system in occasions requiring fluent language performance. On the contrary, the latter system requires more processing from the learners, thus, it is used when learners face with the situations requiring more controlled, less fluent language performance. The latter system is needed when learners have to construct utterances creatively or in formal, appropriate ways.

Skehan's research has examined learner production. He distinguishes three aspects of learners' performance: fluency, accuracy, and complexity, which also become his task-based instructional framework for enhancing learners' L2 performance. *Fluency* refers to the learners' capacity to communicate in real time. *Accuracy* is the ability of the learners to use the target

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language according to its norms, and *complexity* to the learners' ability to use more elaborate and complex target language structures. Skehan argues that these three aspects of performance draw on different systems of language because language users vary in the extent to which they emphasize fluency, accuracy, or complexity. Some tasks predispose them to focus on fluency, others on accuracy, and others on complexity (Shehadeh, 2005). For example, to promote fluency, learners should be engaged in meaning-oriented tasks because fluency requires learners to rely mostly on memory, accessing and using ready-made chunks of language, and when problems arise, they will use communication strategies to get by (Ellis, 2000). In contrast, accuracy and especially complexity can be achieved by learners drawing on their rule-based system and thus require syntactic processing. Learners who need to improve accuracy and complexity are suggested to work on the form-focused tasks (Shehadeh, 2005).

Thus, according to this theory, it may be possible to influence different aspects of language acquisition (i.e., fluency, accuracy, and complexity) by providing opportunities for learners to engage in different types of production. Skehan's cognitive theory assumes that learners possess a limited processing capacity such that trade-offs between fluency, accuracy and complexity (Ellis, 2000, 2003). The research based on Skehan's cognitive theory, thus, has been directed at discovering what task features and variables promote fluency, accuracy or complexity in L2 learners. Table 2.4 summarizes the findings of Skehan's and others' research in this perspective that has investigated the effects of task design variables on learner production (Ellis, 2003, p. 126).

Table 2.4 Task Design Features Affecting Learner Production (Ellis, 2003, p. 126)

Design Variable	Fluency	Accuracy	Complexity
A. *Input variable* 1. Contextual support	Tasks with contextual support	Tasks with no contextual support	Tasks with no contextual support
2. Number of elements in a task	Tasks with few elements	--	Tasks with many elements
3. Topic	Tasks that generate conflicts, tasks that are familiar	--	--
B. *Task conditions* 1. Shared vs. split information	--	--	Shared information tasks
2. Task demands	Tasks that post a single demand	--	Tasks that post a single demand
C. *Task outcomes* 1. Closed vs. open tasks	Closed task	Open tasks	Open tasks with divergent goals
2. Inherent structure of the outcome	A clear inherent structure	A clear inherent structure together with opportunity for planning	--
3. Discourse mode	--	--	Narrative tasks> descriptive tasks, Argument >discussion, Narrative > argument

Note: > means greater than

To explain the Table 2.4, among the effect that task design variables have on three aspects of learners' performance, it appears that the greatest impact is on *complexity*. Tasks that elicit more complex language use are those where (1) the input does not provide contextual support, (2) the input contains many elements, (3) where the information is shared rather than split, and (4) where the output is open, rendering divergent outcomes. In addition, the table also shows that complex language is much more likely in some types of discourse, for example, narratives, than in other types such as description. There is also some evidence that some task design variables are more likely to promote *fluency*. These are tasks that (1) provide contextual

support, (2) are familiar to the learners (3) pose a single demand, (4) allow only closed outcome, and (5) have a clear inherent structure. However, tasks that promote *accuracy* are (1) tasks without contextual support, (2) open tasks, and (3) tasks with a clear inherent structure.

While this cognitive perspective offers a clear guideline regarding which task types and features influence learners' language performance, Skehan's cognitive perspective to task-based research has some drawbacks. Ellis (2003) points out that, *first*, the task features that have been investigated obviously overlap and their effects interact in complex ways, making it difficult to be certain about which features are responsible for the effects observed. *Second*, it is also apparent that the task features that influence learners' production are different from those that promote negotiation of meaning proposed by the interaction hypothesis. Therefore, "it may be impossible to claim that one task is more effective than another on psycholinguistic grounds" (Ellis, 2003, p.127). However, it can be concluded from research from this perspective that different kinds of task can contribute in different ways to L2 acquisition and performance. Together with findings from interaction and output hypothesis, Ellis (2003) also concludes that "particular tasks may predispose learners to engage in certain types of production but they cannot guarantee them" (p. 127). Furthermore, it is difficult to know the interactional effect that two or more task features would render to any or combination of aspects of fluency, accuracy, and complexity in the learners' performance.

2.3.4   The sociocultural theory perspective

Sociocultural theory proposes a contrasting view of L2 development from the three perspectives already discussed. The three perspectives namely the input-interaction hypothesis, the output hypothesis, and the cognitive approach, sometimes called *psycholinguistic perspective*, view

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tasks as devices that stimulate learners to communicate, and through the negotiation of meaning and interactive modifications during interaction on tasks, they acquire the new language. In addition, the design of tasks can influence or determine the language aspects learners are going to use and opportunities for learning that may arise (Shehadeh, 2005). In other words, what language aspects namely fluency, accuracy, and complexity that learners will acquire through working on tasks are predictable as the aspects can be determined by task features and task types (Ellis, 2000). According to this mainstream SLA perspective, tasks are seen as devices that provide learners with the data they need for learning. Ellis (2000) explains this view,

> "[a] task is a device that guides learners to engage in certain types of information-processing that are believed to be important for effective language use and/or for language acquisition…This perspective is *predictive*, and, in some cases, *deterministic*. That is, it assumes that there are properties in a task that will predispose, even induce, learners to engage in certain types of language use and mental processing that are beneficial to acquisition" (p. 197, emphasis added).

In contrast, sociocultural theory maintains that the same task can result in different activities by different learners and even by the same learners at different occasions (Couglan & Duff, 1994; Roebuck, 2000). This theory views task as a *blueprint*, whereas students' actual performance on task is called *activity*. In an *activity*, the outcomes are diversified according to learners' dynamic orientation(s), goal(s) and motive(s). In other words, the original design of the tasks can be altered in the process of the emerging activities and the outcomes can vary and cannot be predicted. The sociocultural theorists maintain that learners co-construct the *activity* they engage in when performing a task in accordance with their own socio-history and locally determined goals (Ellis, 2000). As a sociocultural theorist, Donato (2000) contends that learners shape tasks rather than that tasks shape the learners. He states, "tasks do not manipulate learners to act in certain ways", therefore, tasks are not "generalizable" (Donato, 2000, p. 14).

In addition, sociocultural theory espouses the *participation metaphor* of L2 *development* rather than the *input-output m etaphor* of information processing model of L2 *acquisition* proposed by the psycholinguistic perspective. Sociocultural theorists view that language development "is not so much a matter of taking in and the possession of knowledge" but rather of " the taking part in social activity" (Ellis, 2003, p. 176). This assumption comes from Vygotsky's (1981) genesis of cognitive development in his famous formulation,

> Any function in the child's development appears twice or on two planes, first it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane, first it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category (p. 163).

From this formulation, individual learning (i.e., intrapsychological) comes after social interaction with other people (i.e., interpsychological). In other words, external, social activities in which learners participate are the main source of cognitive development. Inspired by the works of Vygotsky and his followers such as Leontiev and Wertsch, the main focus of a sociocultural theory perspective to task-based instruction is on the investigation of how tasks are jointly accomplished by learners, and how the process of accomplishing a task can contribute to L2 learning (Ellis, 2003; Shehadeh, 2005).

The main tenet of sociocultural theory is that all kinds of learning including L2 learning involve *mediation.* According to Lantolf (2000) and Lantolf and Thorne (2006), m ediation in second language learning refers to (1) mediation by others in social interaction (i.e., *interpersonal mediation* or *other regulation*), (2) mediation by artifacts or *object regulation*, for example through tasks and technology, and (3) mediation by self through private speech or *self regulation*.

This is how language learning takes place in task-based instruction according to sociocultural theory. When learners interact with others in a social interaction, their cognitive processes are awakened (or become *conscious*), and dialogic interaction is an important trigger (or mediation) for language learning. To regulate mental behavior, the dialogue in L1 or L2, which is also called *verbal mediation* can be done through *private speech* or talking to oneself and/or through *collective scaffolding* and/or *collaborative dialogue*. Verbal mediation, especially dialogic, serves as the primary means by which learners progress from other regulation to self regulation, from appropriating the meditational means made available by others to independent use of the language. In other words, this theory claims that "interaction in L2 cannot be viewed simply as a source of *input* for autonomous and internal learning mechanism, but that it has a much more central role to play in learning" (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). In sociocultural SLA, language learning involves both developing the means for mediating learning (i.e., language as a tool), and the language itself is the object for reflection. As Swain (2000) puts it, language learning involves learning how to use language to mediate language learning. Other means of mediation during learners' participation in a task are writing (such as note-taking, journaling), gestures, textbooks, dictionary, technology and the task's procedures itself.

Although sociocultural theory is relatively novel in the field of applied linguistics, a number of studies has been conducted to provide evidence of how various means of mediation have an impact on L2 learning during and after task-based performance. For example, in his 1994 study, Donato demonstrated that learners were able to jointly produce a particular grammatical construction which they could not produce individually prior to the task. He found that scaffolding employed collaboratively, or *collective scaffolding*, by university students of French while performing an oral activity made possible this co-construction of knowledge. He

also provides evidence to suggest that internalization was taking place. The new structures on one occasion were followed by independent use of individual learners on a later occasion.

Based on Donato's (1994) study, Swain & Lapkin (1998) found that *collaborative dialogue* mediates language learning. Swain and Lapkin had students collaborate in a picture-sequencing task and found that through dialogue, the students regulated each other's activity and their own. Their collaborative dialogue provided them with opportunities to communicate and also to reflect on their own language use. Ultimately, they were able to achieve grammatical points that none of them was able to achieve individually. Thus, they co-constructed linguistic knowledge. In addition, the solutions students reached during such dialogues were retained in their language system as evidenced by a one-week-later post-test. Thus, based on these findings, it is assumed that social and dialogic interactions mediate learning, internalization, and knowledge.

Interpersonal interaction is not the only way in which language activity can mediate language learning. Self mediation through private speech is also possible. Private speech is "the abbreviation of interactive social speech into audible speech to oneself" (Frawley, 1997, p. 95). It serves to enable learners to gain control over language forms, which may be problematic when facing challenging tasks. Donato (1994) found that the scaffolded help his research participants provided each other triggered the use of private speech as a means of organizing, rehearsing and gaining control over new verbal behavior.

Lantolf (1999) also points out that private speech provides crucial evidence of the linguistic forms that learners have internalized from their environment. According to Lantolf (2003), students are capable of mediating their own learning on the intrapersonal level, but they

do it in ways that reflect their interpersonal experiences, from those activities valued and promoted by their particular community.

Other research conducted in sociocultural theory perspective found the important roles of orientation to tasks and metatalk, and the construct of zone of proximal development or ZPD on students' performance on tasks. Lantolf & Appel (1994) cite Kozulin's (1990, p. 251) interesting claim that "human subjects are sociohistorical beings and not abstract, idealized entities". Students bring with them cultural ways of thinking and learning as well as past experience to the task-based classroom, therefore, the way they view tasks and respond to them and to the expectations of their teachers will also direct their orientations in performing tasks. For example, Brooks and Donato (1994) describe how third-year high school learners of L2 Spanish used language to mediate their goals in a two-way-information-gap task. They found that metatalk or talking about tasks, such as how to start and proceed, served to help them externalize the goal and the end result. Their use of metatalk oriented themselves as to how they might have accomplished the task. In this way, they were able to regulate and make sense of their behavior, and accomplished the task. The zone of proximal development or ZPD comes from Vygotskyan perspective that "any notion of proficiency predicated upon solo, unassisted performance is profoundly inadequate" (Verity, 2005, p. 2). It is also an interactive space for potential growth through collaborative interaction with a more expert. It is also task-dependent as well as situation dependent, and cnn change in the very event of engagement in a social activity (Verity, 2005). With a constellation of factors involving in a task-based classroom, teachers may not be able to pre-determine the type of learning that occurs.

In conclusion, the sociocultural theoretical perspective looks at how learners approach and perform the task rather than at the inherent properties of the task itself because "performance

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on tasks depends crucially on the interaction of individual and tasks" (Appel and Lantolf, 1994, p.437). Learners set their own goals, procedures, and the way they collaborate in performing a task or activity. Therefore, tasks are considered something not already defined but to-be defined and re-defined by the students. Furthermore, learners may re-orientate to a task as the activity proceeds (Shehadeh, 2005). Another implication to task-based instruction from this theory is that it is essential to realize the social and cultural nature that can influence task performance. Learning is situated in the social context.

A sociocultural theory perspective on task-based research is not without criticism. Some critiques include the rejection of sociocultural theory to the assertion that task types and features can influence students' performance in certain ways. While realizing that, "task performances are necessarily always constructed rather than determined", Ellis (2003) argues, "it is not appropriate to reject *task* as a legitimate target for study to insist on the overriding importance of learner agency in determining activity" (p. 201), because to some extent the chosen tasks will influence the nature of students' participation. This criticism, however, has been responded by Lantolf (2005) saying, "despite the unstable nature of activities and the unpredictable learning outcomes of task-based performance, it does not mean that tasks, as cultural artifacts, do not exert influence on learners as they undertake to carry them out" (p. 346). Lantolf mentioned Throne's (1999) study as an example. The finding showed how French students' interaction via computer-mediated-communication (CMC) shaped learners' behavior. However, Lantolf argues, specific types of CMC do *not* foster specific types of learning, because "learning depends heavily on the significance individuals assign to the various activities they participate in", therefore, Lantolf suggests that teachers "can only compose the circumstances and conditions that promote

learning", but, "we cannot guarantee that it will happen at any given point in time or in any given way" (p. 346).

This diversification and unpredictability of task outcomes, however, can be beneficial because learners should be given room for creativity and innovation. I agree with Breen (1987) who states that it is a delusion if teachers think that a workplan can be implemented rigidly and exactly as planned, because real classrooms never follow pre-ordained paths, and are the better for it. Breen also contends that learners should be given room to interpret what is required, and take the activity in unforeseen, but satisfying, directions.

In summary, the psycholinguistic perspective to task-based instruction differs from sociocultural theory perspective at least in three main aspects as presented in the Table 2.5.

Table 2.5 Comparisons of Assumptions to Task-based Instruction Made by the Psycholinguistic Perspective and the Sociocultural Perspective

The Psycholinguistic Perspective	The Sociocultural Theory Perspective
1). The focus is on task types and features that can influence individuals to act in certain ways.	1). The focus is on how learners as agency of their learning jointly accomplish the task. They may have different orientations and goals.
2). A task is seen as potentially determining the aspect of language use and opportunities that arise.	2). It is difficult to make reliable predictions regarding the kinds of language use and opportunities that arise. Thus, a task is seen as emergent interactions and an opportunity for transformation and creativity.
3). The focus is on planning and sequencing tasks.	3). The focus is on how to use task as a meditational means as well as other necessary tools to complete the task and learn the language at the same time.

2.4   CURRENT INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS

For a ten-year period beginning in the mid 1990's, scholars have proposed a number of
pedagogical models for task-based instruction. Among these models, those receiving the m ost
attention in second-and foreign-language teaching circles are briefly described as follows;

2.4.1   Estaire & Zanon's (1994) model

The task-based framework proposed by Estaire & Zanon (1994) consists of three phases: first,
the *communication task*, which refers to a piece of classroom work which has a communicative
purpose, focuses the learner's attention on meaning rather than form, and results in a concrete
outcome. Second, the *enabling task*, the aim of which is to concentrate on forms; and the final
task, the *evaluation task*, from which an evaluation of both process and product can be drawn.

2.4.2   Gatbonton's (1994) model

Gatbonton (1994) promotes the importance of genuine communication activities as optimal
conditions in classroom learning. She emphasizes that tasks are genuinely communicative in
nature, are inherently and naturally repetitive for adequate pr actice and communicative needs,
and contain formulaic expressions for ach ieving communicative goals. H er three-phased m odel
consists of (1) *communicating ideas,* (2) *improving fluency and a ccuracy,* and (3) *increasing
knowledge of t he l anguage*. W hen assigned these types of tasks, students engage in language
analysis, and practice activities with an aim to consolidating their skills. To summarize,
Gatbonton (1994) uses t he production-presentation-practice sequence in her implementation of

task-based instruction. Similar to Estaire & Zanon(1994), her framework is comprised of the main task and the language focus task, but Gatbonton also incorporates task repetition for adequate practice.

2.4.3 Willis' (1996) model

Willis' (1996) model is the most well known instructional framework in task-based instruction. It has three phases: *pre-task, task cycle, and language focus*. The *pre-task phase* consists of two objectives: introducing and creating students' interest in a task, and activating topic-related words and phrases that will be useful in performing a task. The second phase, or *task cycle,* involves the task itself, plus planning and reporting, in which students present spoken or written reports of the work done. During this phase, students work in pairs or groups, and use whatever linguistic resources they possess to achieve the task goals. They also receive feedback, and plan reports of their tasks. Finally, the *language focus* phase concentrates on linguistic forms and practicing how to use them. Some specific language features, which occur during the task are identified and analyzed in this phase. A practice stage following these analyses enables learners to practice new words, phrases or patterns.

Table 2.6 Willis' Framework (1996)

Pre-Task Phase

INTRODUCTION TO TOPIC AND TASK
Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words and phrases, and helps learners understand task instructions and prepare. Learners may hear a recording of others doing a similar task, or read part of a text as a lead in to a task.

Task Cycle

TASK	PLANNING	REPORT
Students do the task, in pairs or small groups. Teacher monitors from a distance, encouraging all attempts at communication, not correcting. Since this situation has a "private" feel, students feel free to experiment. Mistakes don't matter.	Students prepare to report to the whole class (orally or in writing) how they did the task, what they decided or discovered. Since the report stage is public, students will naturally want to be accurate, so the teacher stands by to give language advice.	Some groups present their reports to the class, or exchange written reports, and compare results. Teacher acts as a chairperson, and then comments on the content of the reports.

Language Focus

ANALYSIS	PRACTICE
Students examine and then discuss specific features of the text or transcript of the recording. They can enter new words, phrases and patterns in vocabulary books.	Teacher conducts practice of new words, phrases, and patterns occurring in the data, either during or after the Analysis.

2.4.4   Skehan's (1996) model

In his 1996 article, Skehan proposed a model, which would allow teachers to implement task-based instruction systematically and on a principled basis. Outlined below in Table 2.6 are Skehan's methodological stages for task-based implementation.

Table 2.7 Skehans' Framework

Stages	Goals	Typical techniques
Pre-emptive work	Restructuring -- establish target language -- reduce cognitive load	Consciousness-raising Planning
During	Mediate accuracy and fluency	Task choice Pressure manipulation
Post task 1	Discourage excessive fluency Encourage accuracy and restructuring	Public performance Analysis testing
Post task 2	Cycle of synthesis and analysis	Task sequences Task families

Based on his cognitive approach, Skehan (1998, p. 129) proposes the following five principles that constitute a model for his task-based instruction as summarized by Shehadeh (2005, p. 46) as follows;

(1). Choose a range of target structures.

(2). Choose tasks which meet the *utility criterion*. Utility criterion refers to the use of a particular structure that helps the efficiency of the completion of task, although the structure could be avoided through the use of alternative structures or through the use of communication strategies.

(3). Select and sequence tasks to achieve balanced goal achievement.

(4). Maximize the chances of focus on form through consciousness raising.

(5). Use cycles of accountability (i.e., drawing learners to engage in evaluation).

Skehan (1998) argues that these principles meet criteria that relate to both effective communication (i.e., fluency and accuracy) and the development of L2 complexity: He states, "these [principles]…offer some aspects for the systematic development of underlying interlanguage and effective communicative performance" (p. 129).

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2.4.5 Ellis' (2003) model

The most recently proposed framework is espoused by Ellis (2003). Table 7 shows his framework or model of task-based instruction.

Table 2.8 Ellis' model

Design Features	Description
1. Goal	The general purpose of the task (e.g., to practice the ability to describe objects concisely; to provide an opportunity for the use of relative clauses)
2. Input	The verbal or non-verbal information supplied by the task (e.g., pictures, a map and a written text).
3. Conditions	The way in which the information is presented (e.g., split vs shared information, or the way in which it is to be used, e.g., converging vs diverging)
4. Procedures	The methodological procedures to be followed in performing the Task (e.g. group vs pair work; planning time vs no planning time)
5. Predicted outcomes	The product that results from completing the task (e.g., a complete table; a route drawn in on a map; a list of differences between two pictures). The predicted product can be 'open' (i.e., allow for several possibilities), or 'closed', (i.e., allow for only one 'correct' solution).
6. Process	The linguistic and cognitive processes the task is hypothesized to generate.

In designing task features, Ellis uses the model of (1) goal (2) input (3) conditions (4) procedures (5) predicted outcomes or product and (6) process as shown above.

Ellis (2003) uses the input-interaction-output perspectives as the underlying theories. Based on his model of task features, his task-based instruction involves first, a *pre-task phase* during which teachers provide or model input through listening or reading or demonstrating and/or eliciting language from students, brainstorming, or pre-teaching vocabulary. Second, the *main task* phase is when learners are working on the task. This is when students have opportunities for taking linguistic risks, incidental focusing on forms, scaffolding each other for a shared goal. Third, the *post-task phase* engages students in task repetition, discussing

problems, reporting and suggesting task improvement. Attention to forms is also included in this last phase. This phase affords the opportunity for students to review their errors, and the chances for teachers to use consciousness-raising tasks (i.e., inductive grammar analysis) to lead students' attention to forms.

In conclusion, the five models presented thus far mostly use a psycholinguistic perspective as the underlying philosophy. While Skehan and Ellis obviously use the psycholinguistic perspective as their underlying theories, they are primarily concerned with input, output, and task features in the implementation. For the other frameworks, Willis and Gatbonton use some of sociocultural theory's concepts--such as task repetition and meditational tools (e.g., note taking). Estaire & Zanon's framework neither presents an obvious preference for any perspective, nor emphasizes the main tenets of sociocultural theory. Ellis (2003) suggests that more research is needed on task-based instruction from the socio-cultural perspective. After reviewing the related literature, I concur with Ellis – more study is called for on the task-based instruction model that incorporates the tenets of sociocultural theory.

2.5   FIVE CONSTRUCTS OF SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

In this section, first, I state my reasons for choosing sociocultural approach for the task-based instructional model that I designed and implemented as the instructor in my study. I outline sociocultural theory's five central constructs, namely, mediation, regulation, internalization, imitation, zone of proximal development or ZPD (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf and Thorne, 2007).

Next, I present my task-based instructional model using sociocultural approach, while simultaneously offering a rationale to support my model.

2.5.1   Sociocultural theory and task-based instruction

My task-based instructional model was designed based on five key applications of sociocultural theory to second language development. Nunn (2000) contends that these constructs of sociocultural theory are facilitative for L2 acquisition, and are highly compatible with task-based instruction. My view is that a pedagogical approach based on sociocultural theory *culminates* in task-based instruction. In other words, through task-based instruction, all five constructs of sociocultural theory can be brought into focus with the ultimate aim of promoting L2 acquisition.

By participating in goal-directed tasks, where students need to use their second language, they appropriate or internalize the target language, and attain cognitive development, including language learning. Based on this theoretical assumption, I explain how sociocultural theory's five constructs are useful for task-based instruction and how to incorporate these constructs into a task-based course.

2.5.2   Five constructs of sociocultural theory and the application to task-based instruction

(1) *Mediation* is the main tenet of sociocultural theory. Human activity, including learning, always involves tools and sign systems (in Vygotsky's term, *cultural artifacts*) such as instruments, concepts, structures, diagrams and language. To achieve a goal in an activity, meditational tools always play a role. Figure 2 illustrates Vygotsky's basic mediation triangle.
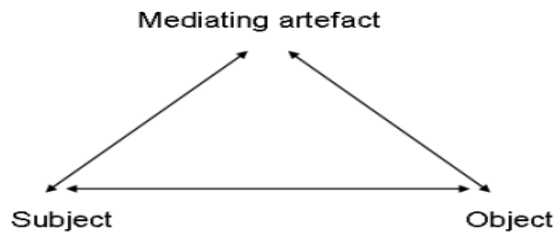
Figure 2.1 Vygotsky's Basic Mediation Triangle

According to Vygotsky, humans do not act directly on the physical world (i.e., object) but rather depend on tools or labor activity. Symbolic tools or signs (i.e., mediating artifacts, as shown in Figure 2.1), are also used to mediate and regulate our relationships with others and with ourselves, and thus change the nature of this relationship. Through culturally constructed artifacts (including gestures, as signs), human social and mental activity is organized (Lantolf, 2000). As symbol users and symbol makers, human experience the outer world through various forms of mediated experience. The child learns by modeling its behavior on that of its parents, peers, teachers, by interacting, alone and in collaboration, with written texts and other media to construct a version of the material and psychological realities of the external culture and society (Verity, 2005).

Lantolf (2000) and Lantolf & Thorne (2007) state that mediation in second language learning involves three types of mediation namely mediation by others in social interaction (i.e., *other regulation*), mediation by self through private speech (i.e., *self regulation*), and mediation by artifacts or cognitive tools such as language, tasks and technology (i.e., *object regulation*). Language is not only the means by which social interaction is accomplished, but also the cognitive tool by which learning can be mediated, and one's activity can be managed. In my task-based instruction, (1) I encouraged students to use a variety of tools to mediate their learning while completing the assigned tasks. For example, when they needed help, they could

ask me as a teacher and choose to discuss with their peers for *other regulation*. They could also use dictionaries, textbooks and computers for *object regulation*. I also encouraged students to use private speech in either L1 or L2 for *self regulation*. (2) I provided students with video, audio tapes, diagrams and charts as well as various choices of language to aid them in completing the tasks. (3) Students worked in self-selected groups, since research within this area (see Donato, 1988; Storch, 2002) has shown that students collaborate better when working with like-minded or familiar partners.

(2) Regulation One form of mediation is regulation. In this respect, Lantolf and Thorne (2007) explain that when learners participate in task, where their activity is initially subordinated or regulated by others, they acquire the language used by the other members of the community. Eventually, the learners will utilize this language to *regulate* their own behavior. Three stages of regulation are involved in this process. First, *object regulation* - the stage when learners need to use and manipulate objects in their environment. The second stage is termed *other regulation*, which includes both implicit and explicit mediation, involving varying levels of assistance, direction, and scaffolding by teachers and peers, among others. *Self regulation* is the final stage. This stage refers to the ability to accomplish activities with a minimum of external support.

Thus, three stages of regulation were planned in my task-based implementation. (1) For *object regulation*, I provided tools necessary for task completion such as the choice of language, video and audio tapes, charts, graphs, and diagrams. Tasks were distributed among individuals within the same groups, who were then responsible for selecting appropriate materials for their respective task. (2) For *other regulation*, I had students work in random mixed levels of proficiency. Bearing in mind that the terms *expert* and *novice* are rather fluid or uncertain as they can switch at any given point in time (Ohta, 2001), the experts and the novices scaffold each

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other, and co-construct knowledge in the process of completing each task. My students had opportunities to evaluate tasks and give feedback to each other. In this way, less proficient learners had the chance to strive for expertise. (3) For *self regulation,* I encouraged students to use private speech or think-aloud either in L1 or L2 as well as note-taking, and/or gesturing, while planning or working on tasks such as role plays for internalization.

(3) Internalization is the process through which a person moves from carrying out concrete actions in conjunction with the assistance of material artifacts and of other individuals to carrying out actions mentally without any apparent external assistance (Lantolf, 2000) . Internalization is also made possible through *consciousness.* Vygotsky argued that internalization is not only *participation in* but also *internalization of* culturally shaped activities that imbues humans with the ability to regulate or mediate their biological endowment (Lantolf, 2007) . Internalization is also shown through *transformation* of the social processes that learners carry out in conjunction with others, while they develop the ability to extend what was once guided activity to similar though not identical activities in order to function independently.

Applying to task-based instruction, internalization could potentially result from a variety of scenarios: (1) the students were assessed as a group, as well as individually. (2) The completion of each task required learners to use a variety of tools and meditated skills, such as computer literacy, writing and speaking, as well as scaffolding from teacher and peers, before they showed individual ability without external assistance to accomplish similar tasks. (3) Students were allowed to use either private speech or think-aloud in L1 or L2 to regulate their thinking, since private speech is "a means of internalizing the linguistic features available in the environment" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).

(4) Imitation: Lantolf & Thorne (2007) contend that imitation is not mindless mimicking associated with the audio-lingual method in language pedagogy. Rather, " it involves goal-directed cognitive activity that can result in transformations of the original model" (p. 207) . Vygotsky proposes that *imitation* is the key to internalization, that is to imitate the *intentional* activity of others. Therefore, *imitation* is not the simple parroting of utterances, but rather an intentional and self-selective behavior on the learner's part. Based on this important concept, (1) I had students work in groups to make presentations, and allowed them to imitate expressions and/or actions whenever they seemed appropriate from other groups or video already viewed to achieve the task goal. (2) I allowed the students to transform the tasks the ways they desired, while adhering to the end goal of completing the task. Transformation leads to internalization, as Vygotsky notes that we don't really understand something unless we are able to transform it (see Backhurst, 1991).

(5) Zone of proximal de velopment or ZPD is "the distance between the *actual* developmental level--as determined by the independent problem solving-- and the level of *potential* development --as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). The concept of ZPD goes beyond what traditional assessment has indicated about the level of individual ability. It is "the forward-looking through the assertion that what one can do today with assistance is indicative of what one should be able to do independently in the future" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007, p. 210) . ZPD can also be used as conceptual and diagnostic tool to understand students' emerging capacities (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). For Vygotsky (1978), ZPD is also his metaphor to explain that instruction/learning precedes or leads development. Applied to task-based instruction, (1) I had students see the importance of scaffolding one another and to appreciate the benefits of

working collaboratively to solve emerging problems. While directing this approach towards peer interaction, as the teacher, I offered appropriate assistance when necessary, such as implicit hints, clues, or if necessary, explicit instruction. (2) I also provided appropriate feedback, in the hope of nudging learners forward, beyond their current capabilities. Lantolf (2007) points out that language acquisition occurs at different rates, and with different degrees of proficiency, from one student to the next (Lantolf, 2007). Thus, providing more or less challenging tasks to fit their current, appropriate ZPD is important to their learning. (3) I will also have expert students help novices how to do tasks better. Students had opportunities to perform tasks with and without external assistance.

2.5.3   My task-based instruction model

My task-based instruction was constructed using sociocultural theoretical approach. The model is illustrated in Table 2.9.

Table 2.9 My Task-based Instruction Model

Steps of Tasks	Teacher's Role	Students' Role
1. Introduction task *Mediation & *ZPD	Introducing students to the main task	Viewing VDO, listening to audio tape, or reading, and discussing
2. Communicative task (Main task) *Mediation & Imitation	Helping students, providing assistance and tools	Discussing, and taking notes on corrected forms, giving – feedback to one another
3. Language focus task *ZPD	Promoting accuracy, guiding students to error corrections	Performing the main task - again and receiving feedback
4. Rehearsal task *Regulation	Promoting fluency and accuracy	Performing the main task – again and receiving feedback
5. Transfer task *Internalization	Simulating real-world tasks, promoting fluency, accuracy and appropriateness	Doing similar tasks (without assistance) and receiving evaluation

Note: The asterisks (*) mark main sociocultural constructs implemented in steps used in the model

My model of task-based instruction starts with the *introduction t ask,* which aims to provide contexts for and introduce students to the main task. Elicitation of students' schema knowledge, and awareness of language appropriateness, etiquettes, rules and norms are in this phase. Students are engaged in tasks such as *discussion or interviewing one another* – what I call *a talking departure* – where they discuss a business scene viewed from a video tape, listen to or view task modeling (i.e., examples of what task outcome will look like) or talk about a related scene or a written text. In this phase, students' learning are mediated by discussing (i.e., verbal mediation), by viewing the video models (i.e., motion pictures), and by linking former knowledge with new knowledge (i.e., ZPD).

Next, the *communicative* or *main task* involves learners in goal-directed, meaning-focused communication, including tasks such as co-construction of conversation, speech or written texts, decision making on the slides-presentation tasks, summarizing, and writing. A

great deal of *mediation* is implemented in this step of the teaching model such as verbal mediation during the students' co-construction of meaning, writing mediation occurs in the writing tasks where students take notes and write the drafts for role-play conversation and the resume´. Students *imitated* from the video models, audiotapes, and the expressions in the handouts.

The third phase of the *language focus task* aims to fix previously produced errors which may have occurred in the *communicative* or *main task* to promote accuracy. Elements necessary for successful communication for each task also serve as guiding rules for encouraging language appropriateness. In this phase, students' ZPD is activated as some grammar, vocabulary, expressions, syntax and pronunciation are corrected and explained.

The fourth phase, or *rehearsal task*, aims to improve learner performance from the *main task* with the ultimate aim of promoting fluency. Students perform the main task again once they know how to improve it with more accuracy. Using the scoring rubrics, they receive feedback from the teacher and peers, that is, from other groups or pairs. The scoring rubrics are constructed to encompass the three aspects of business English *fluency*, *accuracy*, and *appropriateness* (Donna, 2000, M . Ellis & Johnson, 1996). In this step, students learn how to *regulate* the task better (than when they do in the main task). The second attempt leads them to know how to better manage their tasks in more accurate, fluent, and appropriate ways. Regulation occurs with assistance from the teacher and peers.

Finally, the *transfer task* aims to simulate the real-world tasks that students may encounter in their future work life. This final task promotes fluency of performance and a sense of progress and achievement in communication in related situations. Transfer tasks aim to lead

students to *internalize* or *self regulate* the tasks. They perform tasks independently, with the teacher or with different partners or groups.

2.6 ACTIVITY THEORY AS ANALYTICAL TOOL

In this section, I explain how task-based instruction can be more clearly understood when investigated in light of activity theory perspective. First, I present the definitions of activity theory and discuss the insights it offers regarding an activity system. Then, I discuss why activity theory is beneficial for a task-based classroom investigation.

2.6.1 Activity theory

Activity theory is *not* a method or a theory in the usual sense of the term. Activity theory does not systematically allow predictability of phenomena, processes or outcomes. It does, however, provide a terminology and an analytical framework that help us to make sense of human and social practice in specific contexts (Blin, 2004). This theory posits that human behavior results from the integration of socially and culturally constructed forms of mediation into human activity (Lantolf, 2000). In addition, this theory privileges human agency in doing any activity. Lantolf (2000, p. 8) further explains that activity theory, "is not merely doing something, it is doing something that is motivated either by a biological need, such as hunger, or a culturally constructed need",….then "needs become motives once they become directed at a specific object".

Leontiev (1978) defines activity in terms of three constituents (i.e., subject, object, and tools) operating on three levels: collective activity, group or individual action, and automatic operation. According to Leontiev, an activity consists of a goal-directed hierarchy of actions that are used to accomplish the object namely *activities*, *actions*, and *operations*. Lantolf (2000) explains that *motives* are only realized in specific *actions* that are *goal*-directed (thus, intentional and meaningful) and carried out under particular *conditions* and through appropriate meditational means. *Activity*, then, can only be directly observed by others at the levels of *conditions* and *operations*. However, the motives and goals of particular *activities* cannot be determined only from the level of *operations*, because the same observable activity can be linked to different goals and motives and different concrete activities can be linked to the same motives and goals.

The relationship among activities, actions, and operations are dynamic as indicated by the bidirectional arrows in Figure 2.2.

<div align="center">

Activities   Motives
⇧ ⇩   ⇧ ⇩
Actions   Goals
⇧ ⇩   ⇧ ⇩
Operations   Conditions

</div>

Figure 2.2 Hierarchy of Activities, Actions, and Operations

The above maxim of activity theory is directly related to task-based instruction in that, in order for a *task* to be meaningful to a learner, it needs to be goal-directed and that goal needs to be realized. Students need to be able to grasp *how* a certain task relates to them, and that it does so in a meaningful way. In addition, a variety of task outcomes from students should be accepted as long as the tasks are satisfactorily completed. In certain instances, the students may not be

able to complete the tasks due to some conditions or limitations such as the unavailability or the inaccessibility of resources or materials or a lack of language knowledge. Moreover, task repetition is necessary. According to activity theory, with goal-directed practices and internalization, *activities* collapse into *actions*, and eventually into *operations*, as they become more routinized and requiring less conscious effort (Blin, 2004; Jonassen, and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999). Therefore, fluency can be achieved through working on similar tasks after students learn from the previous main task.

Activity theory also posits that other components in an activity system influence learning. They are rules, division of labor, and community, operating on the three levels of activities, actions and operations, identified by Leontiev (1978). This expansion of activity theory is suggested by Y. Engeström (1987, 1999, and 2001). The subject is not acting in isolation but is part of a community.

Task-based instruction is a challenging social event for both teachers and students. The class participants bring with them their socio-cultural background, including pre-conceptions of how language should be learned, as well as their own preferences and goals. They interact, negotiate, collaborate, and co-construct their knowledge together for task completion. Thus, for task-based instruction to succeed, it requires dynamic, attentive, engaging participation of everyone involved. Nardi (1996) notes that, it is *not* possible to fully understand how people learn and work "if the unit of analysis is the unaided individual with no access to other people or to artifacts for accomplishing the task at hand" (p. 69).

2.6.2 Rationale for using activity theory as analytical tool

There are three compelling reasons to use activity theory as an analytical framework for task-based research. First, it is a useful framework for investigating any activity in context (Engeström, 1996; Kuutti, 1996; Lantolf and Genung, 2002; Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Thorne, 2004). The theory aims to make sense of both individual and collaborative behavior and motivation within its socio-cultural setting as it conceptualizes the social context in which individual learning takes place (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). By definition, it is a framework for studying different forms of human practices as developmental processes, with both individual and social levels interlinked at the same time (Kuutti, 1996), because it sees that all human actions, especially mediated actions, as configurations of influences, both social and individual, within a dynamic system (Wertsch, 1995). This social event of task-based learning and teaching will also involve outside factors as much as the factors inside the language classrooms. These factors may involve prior experiences of students with the instruction or with the target language itself, perception and values of the target language culture, curricular orientation, and administrative policy of the institution. Thus, investigating task-based instruction through activity theory as analytical tool, which encompasses relevant contexts, should enable us to understand thoroughly the dynamic sociocultural activity setting such as task-based classrooms.

Second, activity theory takes goal-directed activity as the main focus of analysis. Lantolf and Pavlenko (1998) explain that activity theory sees mental behavior as action. The theory concerns all aspects of action such as *what* the person is doing, *how* the person is acting with objects and/or other individuals in the social environment, and *why* or what motives and goals underlying the activity are. Investigating learners' goals and motives are specifically important in task-based instruction because it is the motives that determine how learners respond to a

particular task (Leontiev, 1978). In other words, it is learners as human actors (i.e., agents or agency) that make a task-based activity possible, since "people act because something matters to them; that is, because something has meaning in their lives" (D.A. Leontiev, n.d., cited in Lantolf, 2004, p. 27). Thus, learners with different motives may perform the same task in different ways, and the same motive may result in different activities.

In this regard, Thorne (2004) contends that "through activity theoretical lens, one can look at orientations toward the activity at hand, as well as the varying roles that participants and artifacts play, without the blind spots that teacher[-centered], student[-centered], or technology-centered approaches tend to produce" (p. 53). In accomplishing a task, the individual students or groups of students act as *subject* or subject collective in an activity system (i.e., task-based activity) and work towards the *object,* which represents the orientation of the activity. This orientation is the driving force for the production or *outcome*. Thus, it is important to investigate learners' goals and motives through the lens of activity theory.

Third, activity theory is a tool for innovation and transformation of instruction. Through analysis of various aspects of instruction, activity theory can direct educators to how they can improve their instruction. Thorne (2004) contends that activity theory, especially Engeström's model, can be used as a research framework as well as a heuristic supporting innovation. Thorne explains that,

> activity theory does not separate understanding (research) from transformation (concrete action).That is, it encourages engaged critical enquiry wherein an investigation should afford an analysis that would lead to the development of material and symbolic-conceptual tools necessary to enact positive interventions" (p. 52)….and to enact innovations in the teaching and learning local to a given context (p. 53).

In this respect, Thorne (2004) gives an example of a case study of a peer revision in a Spanish foreign language program. This small-scale qualitative action research was conducted by

Jiménez and Spata (unpublished manuscript, n.d., cited in Thorne, 2004). Using Engeström's

model of activity theory, Jiménez and Spata found that the model was very useful, as it revealed

which components of the activity were successful and which needed improvement. For example,

they found that the result (or *outcome*) of the peer revision activity became more robust than

what they initially planned or expected. The model also showed them the areas that were likely

to improve if they change something to the activity system such as *division of labor* and *rules*.

Interestingly, what they found was not only the product (or *outcome*) of learning, but also the

evidence of learning in progress. Thorne (2004) concludes that activity theory enables

researchers to "define and analyze a given activity system, to diagnose possible problems, and to

provide a framework for implementing innovations" (p. 63).

2.6.3 Engeström's model of activity theory

Tracing the development of activity theory from its genesis, initiated by A. N. Leontiev (1978),

to its third generation, proposed by Y. Engeström (1987;1999), Lantolf and Thorne (2006)

contend that activity theory provides a useful framework for investigating second language

learning, since it privileges human beings as agents for their own learning. Taking from

Engeström's model of activity theory (see next page), Thorne (2004) elaborates that the theory

emphasizes not only human agency,

> but a human agency mediated by the *mediational means* at hand
> (technologies like computers and books, and also semiotic tools such as
> literacies, pedagogical frameworks, and conceptions of learning), the
> *communities* relevant to the situation, the implicit and explicit *rules* and
> *divisions* of labor in these communities, and the *object*, or orientation, of the
> activity system under consideration (italics added, p. 53).

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These six components of Engeström's model of activity theory is illustrated in Figure 2.3 and explained in details as follows;
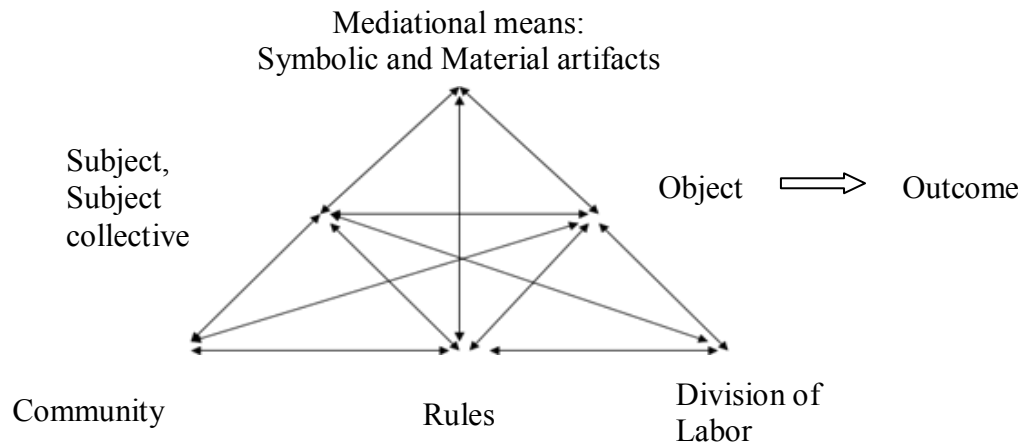
Figure 2.3 Engeström's Activity Theory Model (1987, 1999)

This diagram depicts the core features of an activity system. In this visualization, the unit of analysis is an *activity*, which is directed at an *object* which motivates activity, given that there is a specific direction. The *subject* refers to the individual or group, whose motives and goals are taken in the analysis of the activity. The *object* is the target of activity within the system. *Mediational tools* refer to internal and external mediating means or instruments which help to achieve the *outcome* of the activity. The *community* is comprised of one or more people who share the *object* with the *subject* (in terms of either supporting or impeding the activity). *Rules* from within or outside the activity system regulate actions and interactions within it. The *division of labor* involves how tasks are divided horizontally between community members as well as referring to any vertical division of power and status.

van Lier (2004) explains the usefulness of this model,

First there is the triangle of subject > object >mediating artifacts/tools; next there is the triangle of subject > object > community. Then other triangles can be traced that bring in other aspects of the context, such as division of labor, values and rules and so on. The idea is to represent *an interconnected system* of physical and symbolic aspects of the environment within which the activity occurs……… There is no doubt that this model is a very effective way of connecting learning activities with their context of enactment. It is particularly useful for showing inherent contradictions and tensions between different influences in the setting. (pp. 210-11, emphasis added).

Recently, a number of research in second language learning draw on Engeström's activity theory model in the investigating learning behavior that arises from mediational opportunities such as learning with computer-mediated-communication (or CMC) in Thorne's (1999) study, Yang's (2002) study on group work writing activity, mediational affordances in a drama activity in Haught's (2005) study, Tae-Young's (2007) study on second language learning motivation, and Jin's (2007) study on computer-mediated peer-response in an academic writing class.

Nevertheless, no researchers have yet directed a study on task-based business English instruction using sociocultural theory as underlying pedagogy, nor has anyone employed Engeström's model as analytical tool in describing and explaining task-based instruction so that we can better understand what contributes to the success or failure in the instruction.

2.6.4   Using Engeström's model as analytical framework

Engeström's model of activity theory is the main model used in this study to describe and explain how different students or groups of students in my task-based classroom accomplish each task. Using activity theory enables me to describe learners' *goals*, their *division of*

responsibility, the *rules* involved in completing the tasks, as well as enable me to describe relevant *community* and *outcome*.

Second, activity theory can be used as analytical tool for diagnosing problems that occur in a task-based classroom. Lack of sufficient ability to work on tasks, frustration or non -performance may occur. For example, if *subjects* (i.e., students) cannot or do not collaborate well, if the *rules* involving task criteria are too complicated, or if participants have conflicting goals. Yet, other obstacles may come from inadequate *mediational tools*, unsupportive *community*, or the lack of clear goals on the part of the learners. In addition, activity theory can serve as framework for improving, or initiating and implementing remedies as the result of the diagnosis. For example, the teacher may need to adjust the *rules* to make it less complicated. The analysis may suggest the teacher provide more *meditational tools* and scaffolding, among others.

In summary, I have explained that task-based instruction is better understood in light of activity theory perspective. Activity theory encompasses all relevant factors that involve participants in their endeavor to accomplish the tasks. It is not just only a research framework but also a heuristic model for supporting innovation. Therefore, it is appropriate for a task-based classroom investigation. Engeström's model of activity theory with its six components namely subject(s), meditational means, object and outcome, rules, community, and division of labor, can be used for describing and analyzing any activity in progress. It is also facilitative for diagnosing any problems that may occur. Owing to the diagnosis, the solutions and/or any innovations can be done in situ.

2.7 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER II

In this chapter, I have discussed task-based instruction, the definitions of the term *task* in SLA, as well as relevant theories and research. I also presented rationales for using task-based instruction and the current instructional models on task-based instruction. Five constructs of sociocultural theory, which will serve as theoretical approach for task-based implementation, are also discussed. In addition, I explained activity theory as analytical tool and how task-based instruction is better understood in light of activity theory perspective.

3.0   CHAPTER III: METHODOLODY

In this chapter, I describe the research site, the course context, and the profiles of participants including their motives of coming to the course. Then, I present the research design and procedures. Next, I presented the quantitative data sources and analysis including the test description and administration to explain how I obtained and analyzed the quantitative data. Finally, I described the procedures I used to obtain the qualitative data, the data sources, and the analysis.

3.1   THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

3.1.1   The research site

The university, where I collected data, is a private university located in central Bangkok with a yearly enrollment of approximately 5,000 - 6,000 students. It is comprised of eight Schools: Economics, Accountancy, Business Administration, Humanities, Communication Arts, Law, Engineering and Science. The university's mission statement contends that its ultimate educational goal is to become a leading university in education for business in Asia. Thus, English for business is deemed very important, reflected in six compulsory business English courses. At this university, each class often enrolls as many as 40-55 students. Other than in the

English courses, Thai is the language of instruction in all other classes. There are six compulsory business English 1-6 courses. English for Communication I and II offered at this university for first-year students are built around the current Test of English for International Communication or the TOIEC test (ETS, 2007), which aims at measuring "the everyday English skills of people working in an international environment" (www.ets.org , 2007). Currently, the English program at this university needs to serve large classes while simultaneously helping students to achieve respectable scores on the TOEIC test, important for students' job applications in Thailand. However, Douglas (2000) points out that the TOIEC test is mostly the grammar-vocabulary, non-communicative test rather than English for business performance-based test. For this reason, research on task-based instruction is critically important to the mission of the university's English program.

With eight years of experience teaching business English at this university, I was familiar with both the political and the social contexts of this educational institution. This experience is necessary in understanding my research participants regarding their academic, social, and cultural backgrounds. In addition, I am Thai, and share the same native language and culture with the research participants. Thus, I understand my students' struggles when learning English as a foreign language.

3.1.2 The course context and the profile of participants

The business EFL task-based course in which this study was conducted started with 20 first-year undergraduate students who applied for the course, passed a screening interview (see appendix B), and completed the pre-test (see appendix C). During the summer semester from March to

June, 2009, the class took place in a language computing lab, thus, each student had a computer with an internet connection during class. The participants mainly used the computers to listen to telephone conversation audiotapes, view the model role-play/presentation DVDs, search words from online dictionaries, submit classwork via email, and make PowerPoint slides for the Company Presentation Task. Initially, the participants were divided into two groups of 10 students each to make up two smaller classes for the convenience of data collection. One class, meeting Tuesday and Thursday, was labeled as Class A, and the other, which met Wednesday and Friday, was labeled Class B. Both classes received the same instruction. Before the course started, I also permitted Bonnie (a pseudonym—as were all the names used in this study), a student from the School of Communication Arts, to join class B even though she was not from the schools I targeted in the course advertisement because the course content could actually be used for *all* first-year students. In total, the course started with 21 participants. Later, 11 students withdrew from the course at different times for various reasons from family obligations to part-time job offers. A course-related reason was that the course was too difficult for some students. Furthermore, advertised as a pilot program for the research site, the course offered no letter grades or credits to participants; thus, those who quit may not have found the course a necessity. As an incentive, I guaranteed a letter of reference upon request by the condition of completion of the course for use in future job applications. Ultimately, there were four students left in Class A and six students in Class B who participated until the end of the course, twice a week for eight weeks. At the end of the course, a one-day exhibition called *Six How To's in Business English* was held by all participants, where they shared how to perform the six tasks with the public. The purpose of the exhibition was to have them put the knowledge into use by sharing what they learned. After that, the students took an immediate post-test, and one month after that a delayed

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post-test, which was the same set of tests. Joey chose to complete only 2 (out of 6) tasks in tests while Cindy did not appear for the tests at all. Thus, there were 8 subjects for the quantitative analysis. Owing to higher rate of attendance, the qualitative data I will present in Chapter V was obtained from five participants in Class B only. Based on the pre-instruction questionnaire, the profiles of participants in Class A and Class B are summarized in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

Table 3.1 Profiles of Participants in Class A

Participants' pseudonyms	Gen- der	Age	Schools & majors	Hometown	Previous English course grade	No. of yrs. In studying English	Previous experience in the English speaking environment
Mona	F	20	HM, *English	Bangkok	A	16 years	No
Tony	M	19	HM, *English	Samut-Songkhram	B+	11 years	No
Vicky	F	19	HM, *English	Nakorn-Ratchasima	A	13 years	No
Rachel	F	19	HM, *English	Bangkok	B+	15 years	No

Table 3.2 Profiles of Participants in Class B

Participants' pseudonyms	Gen-der	Age	Schools & majors	Hometown	Previous English course grade	No. of yrs. In studying English	Previous experience in the English speaking environment
Kelly	F	18	BA, International Business Management	Nakorn-pathom	D+	13 years	Yes, once a week for 2 yrs. at a language school taught by native speakers for speaking-listening skills.
Bonnie	F	19	CA, Broadcasting	Chaiyapoom	D	7 years	No
Sarah	F	20	HM, *English	Bangkok	A	12 years	Yes, once a week for 3 months at a language school taught by native speakers for speaking & listening skills
Joey	M	19	BA, Marketing	Petchaboon	F	16 years	No
Peggy	F	19	BA, International Business Management	Bangkok	D+	13 years	No
Cindy	F	20	BA, International Business Management	Rayong	F	16 years	No

Note: F= Female; M= Male; HM= School of Humanities, CA= School of Communication Arts, BA = School of Business Administration; *= English for Business Communication

Table 3.1 shows that Class A had one male studying with other three females. The age range was from 19 to 20 years. The academic background was 11 to 16 years of studying English, which is considered normal among Thai students, who usually begin studying English in the first grade. Majoring in English linguistics in the School of Humanities, they will focus on English for business communication in year 3. Their English ability was considerably better than

students from other Schools at this institute. No one in the class had previous experience in an English-speaking environment, as none had ever previously traveled to an English-speaking country or studied in an English-speaking school/college. Prior to coming to the course, their English course grades of A and B+ showed that their English background was very good to excellent (Note: A is the highest possible grade at this institute). Those who had an English language education from Bangkok, the capital, were assumed to have better English language ability than those who studied in other provinces. Two out of four students, Mona and Rachel, were educated in Bangkok.

Table 3.2 shows that Class B students' ages ranged from 18-20. There was one male studying with other four females. The majority of participants (4 out of 6) were from the School of Business Administration. Therefore, they were presumably interested in business English. Most students' course grades of D, D+ and F showed their poor English background. Bonnie had the fewest years (7 years) of English education whereas others had much more experience (12 to 16 years). Moreover, her major was not business and she was from an upcountry province. As for Sarah, who was an English major, she was the most proficient in this class with grade A from the previous English course. Two out of 5 students (i.e., Sarah and Peggy) were educated in Bangkok. Students in Class B previously earned grades at almost all levels from A to F, with Joey having the F grade. No participants ever studied English for business before. Although Sarah and Kelly had studied at English-speaking tutoring schools, the courses offered there were for *general* English, not English for business purposes.

Regarding their level of English proficiency, the participants' previous English language courses I & II used the course book *Hemispheres* (Cameron, et al, 2007), which was designed for high-beginner *general* English learners. Thus, their ability was presumably about the pre-

intermediate level of *general* English. The pre-test scores of all participants ranged from grades D to F (see the section on participants' scores later in this chapter) because, prior to instruction, they could not perform most tasks (4 tasks out of 6 tasks) including the Company Presentation (Task 3), Business News Reading (Task 5), Taking Telephone Messages (Task 4.2), and Writing the Resume´ (Task 6).

3.1.3 The participants' motives prior to the course

To examine their *motives* in coming to the course, in the pre-instruction questionnaire (see appendix E) and the follow-up interview, the participants were asked the questions of "what motivated you to come to the course?" and "what would you like to attain from the course?".

The findings reveal that the initial motives were of two main categories: *academic-related* and *life-related* motives. In the next page, Table 3.3 presents their *motives* for course participation in the order of their original ranked responses.

Table 3.3 Participants' Motives for Participants in the Task-based Course

Participants' pseudonyms	Motives	
	Academic-related motives	**Life-related motives**
1. Mona	1. To gain more knowledge and skills in English.	1. To receive a letter of reference.
2. Tony	1. To gain more knowledge and skills in English. 2. To be able to communicate in English in real life 3. To learn business English for use in a future job.	1. To be a companion to Vicky.
3. Vicky	1. To gain more knowledge and skills in English.	1. To use the summer time wisely.
4. Rachel	1. To gain more knowledge and skills in English.	1. To receive a letter of reference.
5. Kelly	1. To be able to communicate in English in real life.	1. To use the summer time wisely.
6. Bonnie	1. To gain more knowledge and improve skills in English. 2. To be able to communicate in English in real life.	-
7. Sarah	1. To learn business English for use in a future job. 2. To gain new knowledge and skills in English. 3. To prepare oneself for the next semester.	1. To use the summer time wisely. 2. To receive a letter of reference. 3. To meet old and new friends.
8. Joey	1. To be able to communicate in English in real life. 2. To learn business English for use in the future job. 3. To gain more knowledge and skills in English.	
9. Peggy	1. To gain more knowledge and skills in English. 2. To be able to communicate in English in real life 3. To learn business English for use in a future job.	1. To be a companion to Kelly. 2. To use the summer time wisely.
10. Cindy	1. To be able to communicate in English in real life. 2. To pass English II.	1. To be a companion to Kelly and Peggy.

All participants appeared to share similar *academic-related* motives. First, 8 out of 10 students desired to gain more knowledge and skills in English (i.e., an immediate need for *general* English class-related improvement). Second, 6 out of 10 students desired to be able to communicate in English in real-life situations (i.e., a need for *general* English use outside class). Then, the desire to learn *business* English for use in a future job, the teacher-researcher's ultimate goal and course objective, ranked last or was not in their list of desires at all (whereas the course advertisement was clearly stated as a *business* English course). Only two (from four responses) out of 10 students stated that they desired to study business English as their first and second in priorities. For the first-year students, this goal seemed to be the furthest-away need since they were not graduating immediately. However, business English was set as one of the main visions or goals of the research site. All tasks used in this study were accepted as appropriate for use in the university curriculum for first to second-year students and the content lessons of all tasks were approved to be taught at this institute.

Concerning the *life-related motives*, there were three main reasons that influenced their decision to come to the course: the social reasons (i.e., friends), the desire to use their summer time wisely, and the wish to obtain a letter of reference. For Thai students at this age, friends are often deemed important to their life decisions. However, these three non-academic reasons appeared quite equal in terms of the frequency count of 4, 4, and 3 respectively.

On the whole, the motives for most participants in this course did not align with the teacher-researcher's course objective, which was for them to learn and to be able to perform *business* English in six assigned tasks. By the end of the course, however, their motives appeared to shift and new *objects* emerged, which I discuss later in the section of sub-question *d*.

3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

In this study, I used a case study design, in which the researcher "investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context.." (Yin, 1994, p. 13). The particular case, which is the focus of this research, is the task-based business English class. According to Richards (2003), the aim of case study research is to provide a detailed description of the unit of analysis, which is students' actual performance on tasks towards task completion. In this study, I investigated the implementation of a task-based instruction in a business English class in Thailand, which included the information based on natural-occurring data and insights obtained during the implementation process, the assessment of students' performance and progress, as well as their achievement.

3.2.1 The research procedures

First, the advertisement about the course was either posted or announced at the classrooms at the research site. The eligible participants, aged at least 18 years old, were the first-year students in the Schools of Economics, Accountancy, Business Administration, or Humanities (whose major is English for Business Communication). According to the screening interview, they could not yet do the 6 business English tasks to be taught in this study, or if they could, they could do only 1 or 2 task(s) easily or with very little difficulty (see appendix B for questions asked). While outside-class factors contributing to participants' increased language ability could not be ruled out, these eligibility criteria had been established to ensure the trustworthiness of the evaluation of the task-based course, as it was designed for adult *beginning* business EFL learners at the university level in Thailand, who would be using business English after their graduation. The

screening procedures included calling-in or walking-in for an interview. The interview helped confirm subject eligibility and acquired verbal consent.

Then, the participants took the pre-test (see appendix C), which aimed to investigate the business English language ability in the six tasks <u>before</u> taking the task-based course. They were also aaked to complete the pre-instruction questionnaire (see appendix E), which aimed to investigate their language learning background <u>prior to</u> studying in this task-based course. The questionnaire asked about their letter grade of the previous English course, the number of years they had studied general and business English, and their current English language ability. They were also asked about English learning goals and how they attempted to achieve those goals <u>prior to</u> studying in this task-based course. Next, the participants took this pilot course for the period of two months and a half. The six task-based lessons were:

1. Greetings and Making Introductions

2. Welcoming Visitors

3. Company Presentation

4. Telephoning: Receiving Calls and Taking Messages

5. Reading Business News

6. Writing a Resume´

Each task-based lesson took 4 class periods or 5 hours per week. The overall class, questionnaires, interviews, and assessment schedule are shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 The Lessons and Research Plans

Weeks	Lessons / Tests	Details
Week 1	Advertise the course	Recruitment of participants with the screening procedures. Then, the pre-test and the questionnaire were given to eligible participants
Week 2	Lesson 1	Greetings and Making Introductions
Week 3	Lesson 2	Welcoming Visitors (followed by post-task interview 1)
Week 4	Lesson 3	Company Presentation (followed by post-task interview 2)
Week 5	Lesson 3 (Continued)	
Week 6	Lesson 4	Telephoning : Receiving Calls and Taking Messages
Week 7	Lesson 5	Reading Business News (followed by post-task interview 3)
Week 8	Lesson 6	Writing a Resume´
Week 9	Final exam week	The post-test (followed by the post-instruction questionnaire and the final interview)
One month later	No class	The delayed post-test

Each task-based lesson was taught by me using 5-step sequential model, which I designed and named "introduction task", "communicative task", "language focus task", "rehearsal task", and "transfer task" (as described in Table 2. 9).

The participants were videotaped while working on the assigned tasks 2, 3, and 5, which aimed to investigate tasks of various language skills. After capturing what happened during the activities, the recording was used in the stimulated recall procedure. The participants and I watched the videotape and they were asked the post-task interview questions (see appendix F) after working on 3 assigned tasks regarding how the tasks were preformed, factors that contributed to task completion, and other comments, if any. Tapes were then transcribed by the researcher.

Then, at the end of the course, the same set of test as the pre-test was used to investigate whether there was an improvement of the participants' business English ability. Then, one month later, the delayed post-test, which was the same set of test as the pre-test, was administered in the same manner as the post-test to investigate whether there was the retention of the improvement of the English ability one month after my task-based course.

Finally, the final interview (see appendix G) was conducted after the post-test. This interview aimed to evaluate the course regarding how the participants described their experience in the task-based course, their preferences between the courses they took and the task-based course, opinions and recommendations for the course. The interviews were recorded and transcribed and coded by the researcher.

3.3   THE QUANTITATIVE DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS

Quantitative information is needed to determine the learning outcomes due to the participation of the research participants in this task-based course. The participants' business English ability were evaluated using researcher-constructed, departmentally-approved assessment measures and the scoring rubrics (see appendix D). The scores obtained were used for analysis by the analysis of variance (ANOVA).

According to Ellis (2003), task-based assessment refers to;

> ….the assessment that utilizes holistic tasks involving either
> real-world behavior (or as close as it is possible to get to this)
> or the kinds of language processing found in real-world
> activities (p. 285).

Ellis (2003) states that there are two general approaches to designing task-based assessment: *the work-sample approach* and *the co nstruct-centered appr oach*. The former involves the analysis of situations to determine the tasks the test ta kers need to perform in th e real world and the language required to carry out those tasks. This approach is used to determine what a learner needs in certain tasks and what tasks are typical of that domain. The construct – centered approach to assessment design involves developing tasks that establish the test takers' language proficiency, which involves traditional tests of general language ability, for example, free composition, the oral interview, reading comprehension, etc.

In this study, I incorporated both approaches to developing assessment because selecting one of the approaches does not fit well with the nature of compulsory business English courses offered at the research site. This is in line with what Ellis, M. a nd Johnson (1994) state about business English for pre-employment students. That is the assessment should be based on the *general* English and *occupational specific* English goals (e.g., English tasks for Hotel staff). According to Ellis (2003), these two approaches of task-based assessment require *holistic* scoring and rubrics. Holistic rubric evaluates the overall performance and rates it in a qualitative manner (Blaz, 2001). According to Blaz (2001), good rubrics must be clearly defined, objective, and clearly understood by students so they can evaluate their own work and strive for excellence.

In addition, the classroom instructional tasks and assessment measures used in this study reflected both emloyment situations and English language ability in interaction with others in particular contexts. According to Bachman and Palmer (1996), authenticity is an important construct in a communicative test. The *situational authenticity* refers to the extent to which the assessment measures are perceived to share the characteristics of the target-language use tasks;

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whereas the *interactiveness* refers to the extent to which the assessment measures engage the same abilities as the target language use tasks.

Most of the assessment measures, rubrics, and rating scales used in this study are adapted from those standardized tests for business English such as Japan External Trade Organization-- Oral Communication Test (JOCT), and BEC (Business English Certificate) tests, which have been compiled as apppropriate business English tests in O'Sullivan (2006). Varieties of assessment measures (as opposed to single measures) were incorporated so as to evaluate students' communicative language ability across a range of language modality. See Appendix C for all tasks and items used in the tests. The Thai version tests were given to the participants so the answers were not duplicated from the questions.

3.3.1 The test description and administration

All tests were commented, cross-checked and corrected by two experts in task-based instruction and business English teaching at the research site before use. Dr. Tanisaya Jiriyasin, one expert, received a Ph.D. degree in English as an International Language, specializing in oral English task-based instruction. The other expert, Mrs. Sirirat Poomprasart, holds a Master's degree in Teaching English as a Foreign Language with ten years of experience teaching business and general English at this research sit. After the experts' approval, the test was submitted to the research site's University Board of Administration and was approved for use on July 15, 2008. Table 3.5 shows each test and its topics with details regarding the types of tests, the numbers of situations that appeared in the tests, time allotment for each task, total scores with percentages in proportion.

Table 3.5 Test Description

Assessment measures	Topics	Types of Tests	Numbers of situations and time allotment	Total Scores with percentages in proportion
Task 1	Greetings & Introductions	Speaking: Conversation	3 for 30 minutes	44= 16.60%
Task 2	Welcoming visitors	Speaking: Conversation	3 for 30 minutes	38=14.34%
Task 3	Company Presentation	Speaking :Presentation	1 for 30 minutes (plus preparation = 30 minutes)	63=23.77%
Task 4.1	Receiving Calls	Speaking: Conversation	2 for 15 minutes	28=10.57%
Task 4.2	Taking Phone Messages	Listening-Speaking-Writing	2 for 15 minutes	32=12.08%
Task 5	Reading Business News	Reading – Summarizing	1 for 30 minutes	36=13.58%
Task 6	Writing a Resume´	Writing	1 for 30 minutes	24=9.06%
			Total 13 situations =3.5 hours	**Total scores** 265=100%

As shown in Table 3.5, there were six tasks in each test that encompassed four language skills: speaking, listening, writing and reading. Three-and-a-half hours were given to complete all tests. The administration of the tests was conducted by the teacher-researcher in a quiet classroom at the research site. In the reading and writing tests, each test-taker was placed at a computer booth separated from each other. They were provided a computer to type on and a dictionary, as they had in class. The Company Presentation and the Writing Resume´ Tasks were open-book tests. The internet connection was blocked and they could not receive any outside assistance except when they used the company information on the assigned website for Task 3. The speaking-listening tests were conducted one-on-one with the researcher at an assigned time the following day. All speaking responses were taped and the presentation was video recorded; the written responses were printed and used as records for evaluation. The answer keys to the

tests were not disclosed to the participants. The pre-test was administered before the course to participants in both Class A and Class B. Following completion of the course, eight participants from both classes took the post-test followed by the delayed post-test one month later. Joey was the only student taking only the Reading Business News Task 5 and the Writing Resume´ Task 6. Since he did not complete all tasks, his scores were not included in any statistical calculations. However, due to the similarity of their pre-test scores and the previous English course grade (D and F), Bonnie and Joey's cases were compared for further discussion in Chapter IV.

After all tests were administered, scores were given by the three evaluators, including me as the teacher-researcher. The researcher began the evaluation process by presenting the scoring rubrics used in class to the other two evaluators. The rubrics were previously advised and approved by Mrs. Kay Holcomb, an American expert in business English, who holds a Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction and had forteen years of experience teaching business English at the Business and Science Department at Eastern New Mexico University in Roswell, New Mexico, USA. The other two evaluators were university EFL instructors at the research site. Dr. Tanisaya Jiriyasin possesses a Ph.D. degree in English as an International Language, specializing in oral English task-based instruction, and Dr. Darunee Dujsik holds a Ph.D. degree in Second Language Acquisition, specializing in writing and technology in language teaching. These two scorers and I decided to reduce some aspects of the rubrics used in evaluating Task 3, the Company Presentation, for more appropriate scoring. The other rubrics remained the same. Finally, I served as the first reviewer and evaluated all tasks. Dr. Jiriyasin served as the second reviewer, evaluating Tasks 1 through 4, while Dr. Dujsik served as the second reviewer for Tasks 5 and 6. The mean scores were calculated by dividing each stdent's total score by two. Quantitative analysis includes the repeated measures analysis of variance or ANOVA (see

Chapter IV). Since in the delayed post-test, most of the participants performed amazingly better than when they took the post-test, they were asked to indicate what motivated them to do better. A questionnaire was used (see appendix H) and the findings were presented in Chapter IV.

3.4   THE QUALITATIVE DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS

Four sub-questions that constituted Research Question 3 of what activities looked like in a business EFL task-based course with their data sources are as follows:

Sub-Question a. How did the students assist each other or the analysis of the *activities*?

Sub-Question b. What patterns of assistance affected their task-based performance?

Sub-Question c. What influenced the participants' task-based performance?

Sub-Question d. What were their' motives, goals, motivation, and the transformation?

The data sources that provide the findings for this first research question are shown in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Alignment of Data Sources and the Sub-Questions a-d.

Data sources	Sub-Q a.	Sub-Q b.	Sub-Q c.	Sub-Q d.
The pre-instruction questionnaire				×
Videotape recordings	×	×	×	
Stimulated recall interviews	×	×		
Researcher's observation notes	×	×	×	×
Post-task interviews	×	×	×	
The final interview			×	×

Note: Sub-Q= sub-question

3.4.1 The analysis of activities

To answer the sub-question a., I used the data obtained from the videotape recordings, the post-task interviews, and my observation notes. Leontiev's Hierarchy of Activity Systems was used to describe what the *activities*, *actions*, and *operations* were found in each task. The coding also included the *motives* (why was something done?), the *goals* (how was something done?), and the *conditions* (what was done?).

3.4.2 The investigation for patterns of assistance

To answer the sub-question *b*. on how different patterns of assistance affected task-based performance, I took two steps in my investigation. First, I analyzed the patterns of students' assistance in the same way that Storch (2002, 2004) used activity theory to identify four patterns of ESL students' interaction: the Expert/Novice, the Collaborative, the Dominant/ Dominant, and Dominant/Passive, all by way of linguistic evidence (*i.e.,* the equality and mutuality of turns and contributions such as suggestions, explanations, and requests). I labeled such evidence *verbal task engagement.*

The second step was the investigation of *nonverbal t ask engagement*. This was investigated because the *on-task behavior* can be either verbal or nonverbal or both. In this study, I found an important role for *nonverbal task engagement* in the success of participants in task including checking words from an online dictionary, composing the dialogue, checking relevant information from websites, working on the PowerPoint slides, viewing the model DVD, listening to dialogues, and nodding to the partners. Adapted from Platt & Brooks (2002) and Li Jin (2007), I determined the level of nonverbal task engagement as *full*, *some*, and *few* engagement based on

the approximate amount of engagement time on task for 85-100%, 60-70%, and 50% or less respectively.

3.4.3   The investigation of factors that influenced task-based performance

To answer the sub-question *c*. of what influenced task-based performance, I analyzed the data obtained from my observation notes, the post-task interviews, and the final interview. The unit of analysis was all five participants in Class B because each of them also ha influence on one another and the atmosphere of the whole class. The six components of Engeström's activity model guided the questions asked in the interviews and the coding.

3.4.4   The investigation of motives, goals, and motivations

3.4.4.1 The investigation of motives According to sociocultural theory, students chose to join in a class with a need or needs. Needs become *motives* once directed at a specific *object* (Lantolf, 2000). The *object* in this study was what the course had to offer them, which presumably matched with their needs, which led them to make the decision to join the course. Then, the objectification of a need transforms it into a *motive*, which is defined as *a guiding or directed force of the subject towards an object in an activity*. Motives relate to the *object* which includes the material or psychological target as it captures the mental efforts of a *subject* in the activity system (Tae-Young, 2007). Thus, to trace whether the participants' *motives* were shifted or changed due to the course, I drew conclusion from two-time investigations: Time 1 was the data from the pre-instruction questionnaire. The life-related motives are now classified further into social and incentive motives (similar to Lompsher, 1999). Time 2 was the data obtained from

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responses to similar questions asked after the post-test. The participants were asked the questions of "what motivated you to come to the course?" and "what would you like to attain from the course?" or "did you receive what you came for and why or why not?".

3.4.4.2 The investigation of goals In an activity, *a goal* is related to an action as a desire to attain some outcome. Activity theory recognizes *goals* as "they are attached to specific actions" (Engeström, 1999, p. 381). Thus, *goals* are conceptually smaller than *motives* since Leont'ev's perspective on hierarchy of the activity system, a *motive* functions in the *activity level* and a *goal* in *the action level*. To investigate the participants' goal-directed *actions* and the *goals* of why they operated on the actions stated, I drew conclusions from three post-task interview data: <u>Time 1</u> was from the Welcoming Visitors Task or Task 2; <u>Time 2</u> was from the Company Presentation Task or Task3 and <u>Time 3</u> was from the Reading Business News Task or Task 5 . The participants were asked the questions of "what did you do in the tasks?"and "why did you do it?".

Then, I investigated the data on *goals* according to higher mental functions' categories including *logical memory*, *selected/voluntary attention*, *reasoning*, *analysis*, *metacognitive problem solving*, and the *formation of concepts* (Vygotsky, 1981). Realizing that there are no clear cut boundaries between these categories since they involve cognitive activity in the mind and the brain of the learners, and they may also overlap each other. There might have been some *unexpressed goals* or the goals that the learners did not report. I analyzed them briefly according to what was expressed by the students. This analysis shed light on what learning strategies participants came about due to the task-based course.

3.4.4.3 The investigation of motivation According to activity theory, when a *motive* integrates a *goal* and sense of *participation*, the motive is transformed into a *motivation* (Tae-Young, 2007). Thus, *motivation* is social and relates to Engeström's expanded triangles of the rules, the community, and the division of labor. In this study, I used Tae-Young's (2007, p. iii) definition on *L2 learning motivation* as "an L2 learner's realization of the personal significance of an L2 related activity, resulting from the learners' sense of participation in L2 activity systems". Since transforming the *object* into an *outcome* motivates the existence of an activity (Kuutti, 1996), to investigate the motivation pattern of each participant, who came to the course with their unique learning history, background, needs, and L2 beliefs, to find out what motivated each participant to keep coming to the course, I made conclusions from the participants' responses to the question of "*what motivated you to keep coming to the course?*", and the responses such as "the more I……, the more I ……..... For example, Peggy said, " *The more I do the tasks, the more confidence I became*".

3.5   SUMMARY OF CHAPTER III

Task-based instruction and sociocultural theory have been claimed to be highly compatible, however, to date no one has conducted research regarding task-based instruction using sociocultural approach for designing a business English course in an EFL context. The questions have arisen concerning whther task-based instruction using sociocultural approach in implementation based on activity theory as descriptive framework yield some important insights for improving business English performance for students. This study aims to answer these questions. In this chapter, I proposed the research site, the course context, and the profiles of

participants. I also presented the research design, reearch questions, data sources, methods of

analysis, and the analytical tools. The rationales for incorporating both quantitative and

qualitative methods and tasks designed for assessment and data analysis were also included.

4.0   CHAPTER IV: QUANTITAVE RESULTS

The results of all quantitative data are presented in this chapter. First, I provide the inter-rater

reliability correlation between the first and the second raters (i. e., the test evaluators), which

indicated the scoring consistency. Then, I present the numerical results from the statistical

analysis of participants' scores from tests to answer Research Question 1 of whether the

participants' business English ability improved after the course, then, to answer Research

Question 2 of whether the students retained their ability one month later. The participants' scores

are presented in comparison by tests, by tasks, and by subjects.

4.1   THE INTER-RATER RELIABILITY CORRELATION VALUES

Using SPSS statistical program (version 17.0) to perform the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, I

found that the inter-rater reliability, the cosistency between two raters, for each task and test

revealed a high to very high (from .5 to 1) correlation, as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 The Inter-Rater Reliability Values by Tests and by Tasks (n=8)

The Inter-Rater Reliability Values by Tests and by Tasks		
Tests		
Pre-test	.985**	
Post-test	.983**	
Delayed Post-test	.915**	
Pre-test by Tasks	**Post-test by Tasks**	**Delayed Post-test by Tasks**
Task 1	.962**	.806*	.728*
Task 2	.973**	.975**	.858**
Task 3	-	.854**	.743*
Task 4.1	.983**	.894**	.945**
Task 4.2	-	.761*	.798*
Task 5	-	.928**	.781*
Task 6	-	.722*	.564

Note: *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)
The participants did not take the tests in the above items due to their inability

The correlation data indicates strong agreement between the two evaluators, especially in those categories in which a significant correlation was fond. The scores provided by all evaluators were consistent and, thus, relatively reliable. However, Task 6 had the smallest correlation value of any tasks in the delayed post-test (.564) which any significance was not found. When considering that its total score was the smallest when comparing with other parts of tests (24 out of 260, which was only 9.06% in proportion to the total), it is likely that the value was the result of the lack of variation in test sccores rather than the conflicting scoring between the evaluators.

4.2   THE RESULTS FROM THE STATISTICAL ANALYSIS
OF PARTICIPANTS' SCORES

In this part, I provide the results from the statistical analysis of participants' scores on all three tests, and then I present the participants' scores by tasks. Next, I provide the within-subject comparison of participants' scores. After that, I present the findings from the interview data stating reasons and motives for *doing better* in the delayed post-test. Finally, I compare scores between two interesting cases of Bonnie and Joey, who started similarly but ended differently.

4.2.1   The statistical analysis of participants' scores: the comparison by tests

To answer Research Questions 1 and 2 regarding the improvement of business English ability among participants following the course and of whether any improved ability was retained after one month, I performed the repeated measure analysis of variance (or ANOVA) using the SPSS statistical program (version 17.0) to measure the differences between students' scores at the pre-test, post-test and delayed post-test. The results in Table 4.2 show the means scores and standard errors of the three tests (of $n = 8$).

Table 4.2 The Mean Scores and Standard Errors of the Pre-Test, the Post-Test, and the Delayed Post-Test

(n= 8)

Tests	Mean	SD
Pre-test	17.81	11.34
Post-test	170.72	23.17
Delayed post-test	192.43	24.41

Table 4.2 shows that the mean score of pre-test was minimal when comparing to those of the post-test and the delayed post-test. The standard errors of the post-test and the delayed post-test were similar indicating the consistency of the results between the two tests.

Table 4.3 below presents the results of *pairwise comparisons* statistical analysis performed to seek the mean differences, standard errors, and the significant level using the *linear model* command, and then *the repeated measure* with *Bonferroni* procedure (Maxwell & Delaney, 1990).

Table 4.3 Pairwise Comparisons of Scores on Three Tests (n=8)

(I) factor1	(J) factor1	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.[a]
1	2	-152.906[*]	6.689	.000
	3	-174.625[*]	7.675	.000
2	1	152.906[*]	6.689	.000
	3	-21.719[*]	2.707	.000
3	1	174.625[*]	7.675	.000
	2	21.719[*]	2.707	.000

[*]. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level. $F_{(2, 14)} = 489.648$

The results in Table 4.3 show that the scores of $n = 8$ from three tests were statistically significant, $F_{(2, 14)} = 489.65$, $p < .0005$ (two tailed).

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To illustrate this further, Figure 4.1 is a visual representation and comparison of the total mean *raw* scores obtained from the three tests, followed by Table 4.4, which showed raw scores in numerical values from the total = 265 marks.

All test scores (*n*= 8)
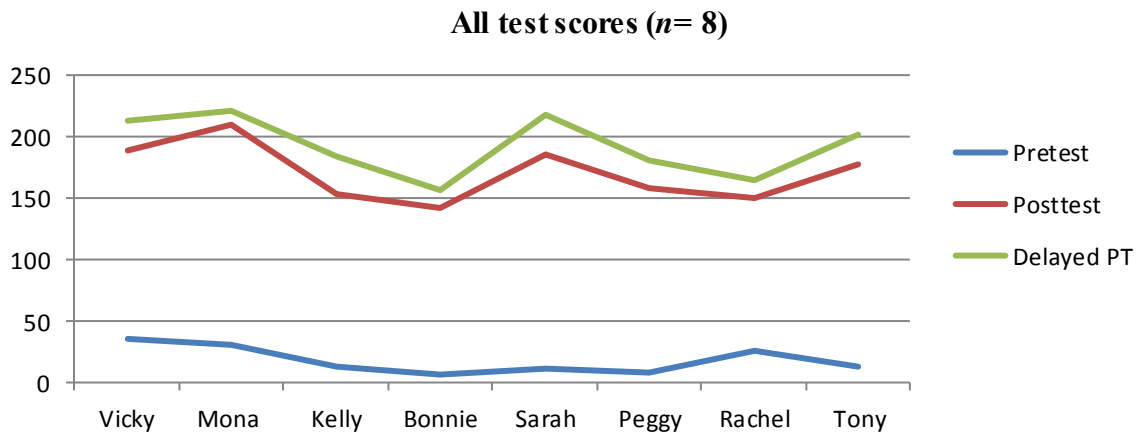
Figure 4.1 The Eight Participants' Raw Scores on Each Test

Figure 4.1 and Table 4.3 - 4.4 indicate that participants not only performed better on the post-test than the pre-test, but actually outperformed those scores on the delayed post-test. The increase was quite consistent among all eight participants considering the parallel lines between the post-test and the delayed post-test in Figure 4.1. To confirm this consistency of increase, I examined the correlation between each pair of tests. The paired sample correlation (or *t* test) was performed using the SPSS statistical program (version 17. 0) with the command of *compare means*, then *paired sample t test*. The results of this statistical analysis are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.1 Paired Samples Correlations of the Pre-Test, the Post-Test, and the Delayed Post-Test Scores (n= 8)

	Pre-test	Percentages	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	36	13.58	188.5	71.13	212.75	80.28
Mona	30.75	11.60	209.5	79.06	220.75	83.30
Kelly	13.25	5	153.75	58.02	184.25	69.53
Bonnie	5.5	2.08	142.75	53.87	157	59.25
Sarah	11.25	4.25	186	70.19	217.5	82.08
Peggy	8	3.02	158	59.62	181.25	68.40
Rachel	25.5	9.62	150	56.60	164.25	61.98
Tony	12.25	4.62	177.25	66.89	201.75	76.13
Mean	17.81	6.72	170.72	64.42	192.44	72.62

The high correlation (.950) between the post-test and delayed post-test as well as the significant level of $p < .0005$ (.000) shows that there was a consistency between the scores of the two tests.

In summary, the results above show that participants improved their business English performance considerably and were able to retain the improvement one month later. The significant increase of the delayed post-test scores from the post-test also indicates that students did not merely retain the performance, but increased their language ability.

4.2.2   The participants' scores: the comparison by tasks

When examining each participant's scores in each particular task, it was found that all participants did better the second time (i.e., in the post-test), but not everyone performed better the third time (i.e., in the delayed post-test). In some tasks, some participants received the exact same *mean* scores on both the post-test and the delayed post-test; while some participants scored less in their third attempt. The following figures 4.2 to 4.8 show the visual representation and comparison of mean scores of each participant by tasks followed by Table 4.6 - 4.12 showing the corresponding numerical scores.

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Task 1: Greeting & Introductions
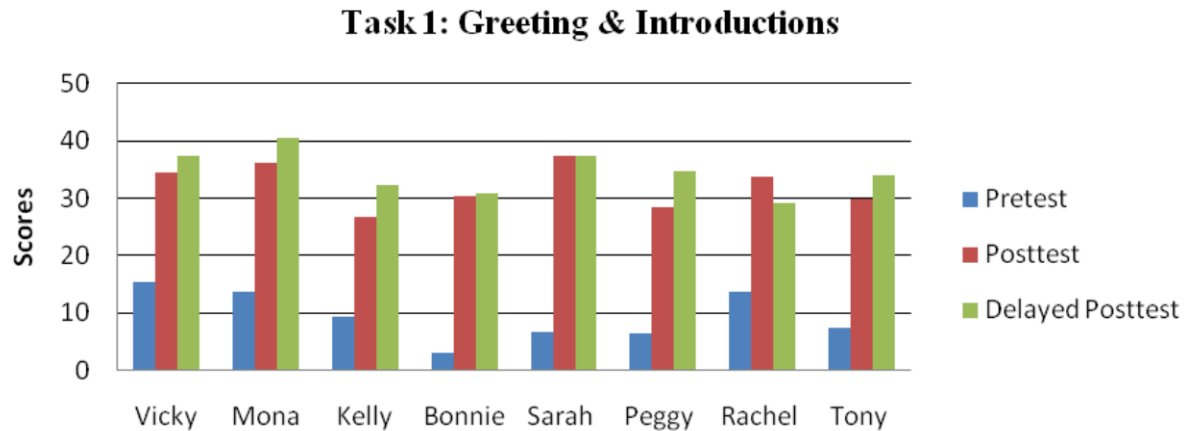
Figure 4.2 Tasks 1 Greetings & Introductions: Bar Chart

Table 4.6 Participants' Mean Scores and Percentages in Task 1 (from total =44 marks)

	Pre-test	Percentages	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	15.5	35.23	34.5	78.41	37.5	85.23
Mona	13.75	31.25	36.25	82.39	40.5	92.05
Kelly	9.25	21.02	26.75	60.80	32.25	73.30
Bonnie	3	6.82	30.5	69.32	31	70.45
Sarah	6.75	15.34	37.5	85.23	37.5	85.23
Peggy	6.5	14.77	28.5	64.77	34.75	78.98
Rachel	13.75	31.25	33.75	76.70	29.25	66.48
Tony	7.5	17.05	30	68.18	34	77.27
	Mean =	21.59	Mean=	73.22	Mean=	78.62

From Figure 4.2 and Table 4.6, it was found that in this speaking-conversation Task 1, only Rachel did not score higher on the delayed post-test, but scored 10.23% less. However, Sarah scored the same in the delayed post-test as in the post-test.

Task 2: Welcoming Visitors
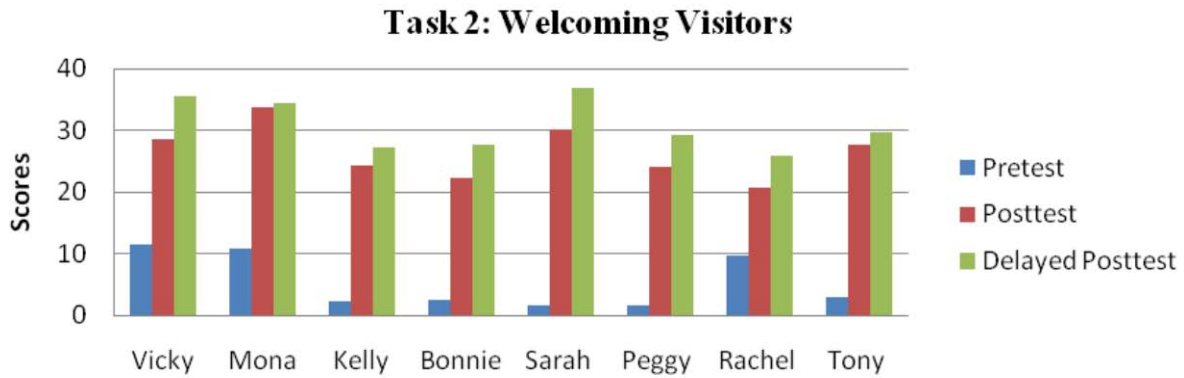
Figure 4.3 Task 2 Welcoming Visitors: Bar Chart

Table 4.7 Participants' Mean Scores in Task 2 (from total =38 marks)

	Pretest	Percentages	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	11.5	30.26	28.5	75.00	35.5	93.42
Mona	10.75	28.29	33.75	88.82	34.5	90.79
Kelly	2.25	5.92	24.25	63.82	27.25	71.71
Bonnie	2.5	6.58	22.25	58.55	27.75	73.03
Sarah	1.5	3.95	30.25	79.61	37	97.37
Peggy	1.5	3.95	24	63.16	29.25	76.97
Rachel	9.75	25.66	20.75	54.61	26	68.42
Tony	3	7.89	27.75	73.03	29.75	78.29
	Mean =	14.06	Mean =	69.57	Mean =	81.25

According to Figure 4.3 and Table 4.7, in Task 2, which was also a conversation task, all students improved from the post-test to the delayed post-test.

Task 3: Company Presentation
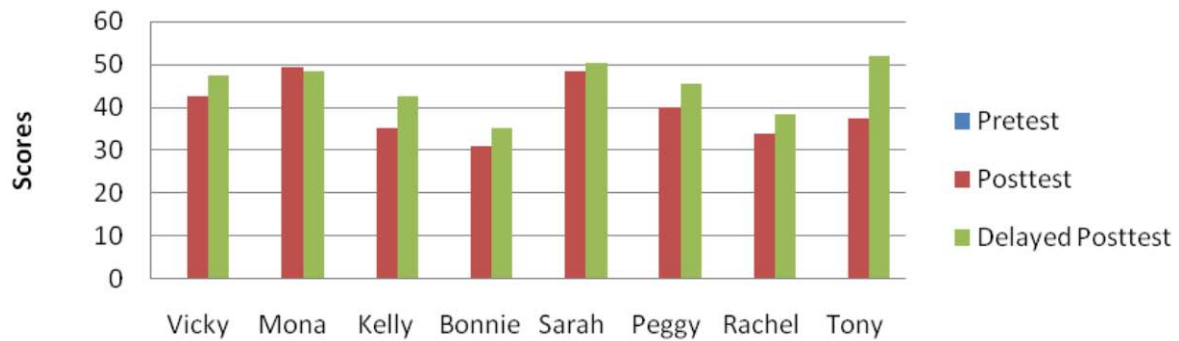
Figure 4.4 Task 3 Company Presentation: Bar Chart

Table 4.8 Participants' Mean Scores in Task 3 (from total = 63 marks)

	Pretest	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	0	42.5	67.46	47.5	75.40
Mona	0	49.5	78.57	48.5	76.98
Kelly	0	35	55.56	42.5	67.46
Bonnie	0	31	49.21	35	55.56
Sarah	0	48.5	76.98	50.5	80.16
Peggy	0	40	63.49	45.5	72.22
Rachel	0	34	53.97	38.5	61.11
Tony	0	37.5	59.52	52	82.54
		Mean =	63.10	Mean =	71.43

As shown in Figure 4.4 and Table 4.8, Task 3, a speaking-presentation task, only Mona scored less on the delayed post-test, with a small 1.59% decrease.

Task 4.1 Telephoning: Receiving Calls
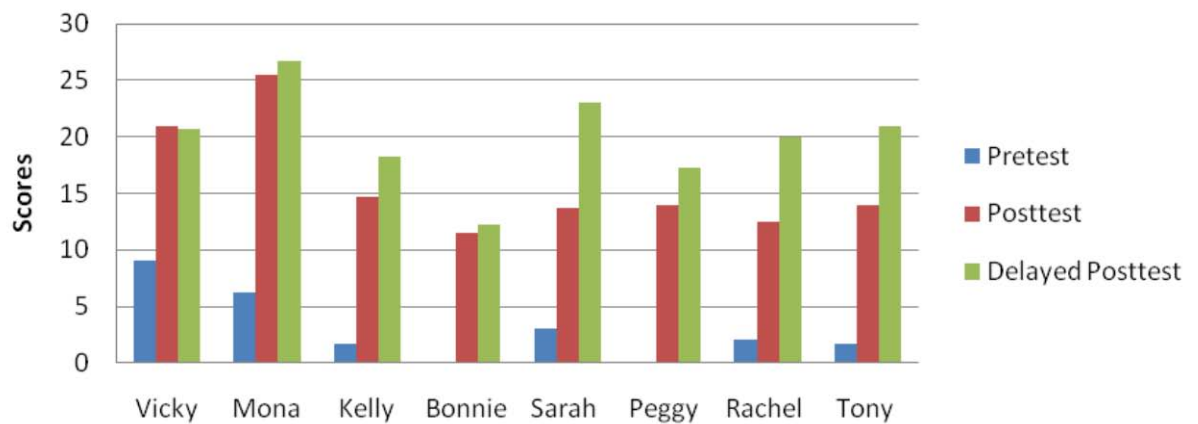
Figure 4.5 Task 4.1 Telephoning; Receiving Calls: Bar Chart

Table 4.9 Participants' Mean Scores in Total 4.1 (from total = 28 marks)

	Pretest	Percentages	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	9	32.14	21	75.00	20.75	74.11
Mona	6.25	22.32	25.5	91.07	26.75	95.54
Kelly	1.75	6.25	14.75	52.68	18.25	65.18
Bonnie	0	0.00	11.5	41.07	12.25	43.75
Sarah	3	10.71	13.75	49.11	23	82.14
Peggy	0	0.00	14	50.00	17.25	61.61
Rachel	2	7.14	12.5	44.64	20	71.43
Tony	1.75	6.25	14	50.00	21	75.00
	Mean =	10.60	Mean =	56.70	Mean =	71.09

Figure 4.5 and Table 4.9 show that in this conversation task, only Vicky did not score better on the delayed post-test, with a 0.89% decrease between the post test and the delayed post tests.

Task 4.2 Telephoning: Taking Phone Messages
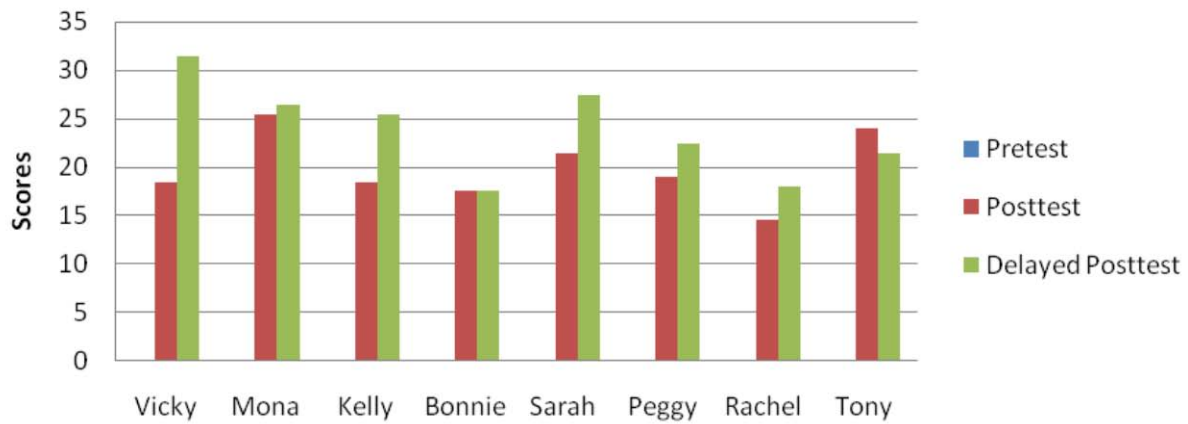
Figure 4.6 Task 4.2 Telephoning: Taking Phone Messages: Bar Cchart

Table 4.10 Participants' Mean Scores in Task 4.2 (from total = 32 marks)

	Pretest	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	0	18.5	57.81	31.5	98.44
Mona	0	25.5	79.69	26.5	82.81
Kelly	0	18.5	57.81	25.5	79.69
Bonnie	0	17.5	54.69	17.5	54.69
Sarah	0	21.5	67.19	27.5	85.94
Peggy	0	19	59.38	22.5	70.31
Rachel	0	14.5	45.31	18	56.25
Tony	0	24	75.00	21.5	67.19
		Mean =	62.11	Mean =	74.41

As shown in Figure 4.6 and Table 4.10, in Task 4.2, a listening-speaking-writing task, Tony was the only student who did not improve in the delayed post-test, scoring 7.81% less; whereas Bonnie had the same score on both the post-test and the delayed post-test.

Task 5 Reading Business News
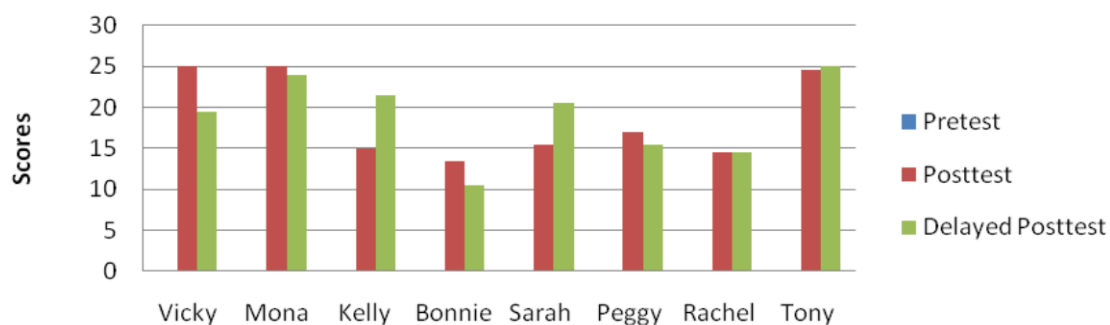
Figure 4.7 Task 5 Reading Business News: Bar Chart

Table 4.11 Participants' Mean Scores in Task 5 (from total =36 marks)

	Pretest	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	0	25	69.44	19.5	54.17
Mona	0	25	69.44	24	66.67
Kelly	0	15	41.67	21.5	59.72
Bonnie	0	13.5	37.50	10.5	29.17
Sarah	0	15.5	43.06	20.5	56.94
Peggy	0	17	47.22	15.5	43.06
Rachel	0	14.5	40.28	14.5	40.28
Tony	0	24.5	68.06	25	69.44
		Mean =	52.08	Mean =	52.43

According to Figure 4.7 and Table 4.11, in Task 5, the reading task, which was perceived as the most difficult task among the six tasks, 4-out-of-8 participants did not perform better in the delayed post-test. Vicky, Mona, Bonnie and Peggy scored 15.28%, 2.78%, 8.34%, and 4.17% less, respectively. However, Rachel scored the same in both the post-test and the delayed post-test.
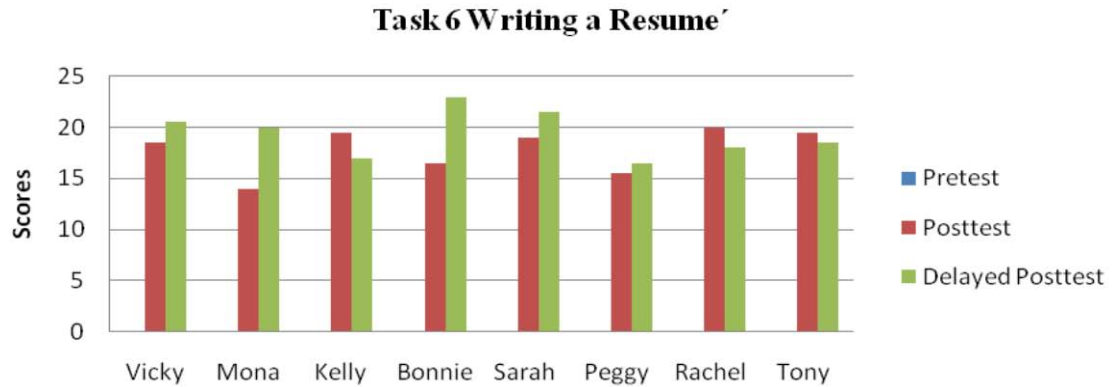
Figure 4.8 Task 6 Writing a Resumé: Bar Chart

Table 4.12 Participants' Mean Scores in Task 6 (from total = 24 marks)

	Pretest	Post-test	Percentages	Delayed Post-test	Percentages
Vicky	0	18.5	77.08	20.5	85.42
Mona	0	14	58.33	20	83.33
Kelly	0	19.5	81.25	17	70.83
Bonnie	0	16.5	68.75	23	95.83
Sarah	0	19	79.17	21.5	89.58
Peggy	0	15.5	64.58	16.5	68.75
Rachel	0	20	83.33	18	75.00
Tony	0	19.5	81.25	18.5	77.08
		Mean =	74.22	Mean =	80.73

From Figure 4.8 and Table 4.12, in task 6, a writing task, three students did not improve in the delayed post-test. Kelly, Rachel and Tony scored 10.42% , 8.33% , and 4.17% less, respectively.

To demonstrate the final numerical outcome of the course, I turned the raw scores into percentages and letter grades using the standard evaluation scales available at the research site. Table 4.13 shows the evaluation scales as mentioned.

Table 4.13 The Evaluation Scales with Letter Grades and the Percentages Used in this Study

Grades	Meaning	Number	Total Scores	Percentages
A	Excellent	4.0	400	88%-100%
B+	Very good	3.5	350	76%-87.5%
B	Good	3	300	63%-75%
C+	Fairly good	2.5	250	51%-62.5%
C	Fair	2	200	38%-50%
D+	Poor	1.5	150	26%-37.5%
D	Very poor	1	100	10%-25%
F	Failure	0	10	Less than 10%

Participants' total mean scores are presented again here in Tables 4.14 along with the corresponding percentages and the letter grades to compare the results of the final exams (i.e., the post-test and the delayed post-test) with the beginning scores (i.e., the pre-test).

Table 4.14 Participations' Scores in the Pre-Test, Post-Test, and Delayed Post-Test as Shown in Percentages and Letter Grades (from total =265 marks)

Par	Pre-test Scores	Percen-tages	Grades	Post-test Scores	Percen-tages	Grades	DelayedPT	Percen-tages	Grades
V	36	13.58	D	188.5	71.13	B	212.75	80.28	B+
M	30.75	11.60	D	209.5	79.06	B+	220.75	83.30	B+
K	13.25	5	F	153.75	58.02	C+	184.25	69.53	B
B	5.5	2.08	F	142.75	53.87	C+	157	59.25	C+
S	11.25	4.25	F	186	70.19	B	217.5	82.08	B+
P	8	3.02	F	158	59.62	C+	181.25	68.40	B
R	25.5	9.62	F	150	56.60	C+	164.25	61.98	C+
T	12.25	4.62	F	177.25	66.89	B	201.75	76.13	B+
	Mean = 6.72	= F		Mean = 64.42	= B		Mean = 72.62	= B	

Note: Par = Participants, V = Vicky, M = Mona, K = Kelly, B = Bonnie, S = Sarah, P = Peggy, R = Rachel, T = Tony, DelayedPT = Delayed Post-Test

According to the Table 4.14, not all participants did better in the delayed post-test in terms of the earned scores and grades. Three participants out of eight (37.5 % of total 8 participants), Mona, Bonnie, and Rachel, did not make a better grade on their second attempt of their final exams, but they received the same grades in both tests. In other words, the majority or 62.5 % of students (5 out of 8) received the better grades the second time. According to Kraemer

& Thiemann (1987), the statistical significance which is found in a number of *normal* subjects, that number of *normal* subjects is enough to find significance. Thus, the significantly statistical increase of performance according to scores between the post-test and the delayed post-test, can inform the effectiveness of the instruction provided to the subjects in this study. In other words, the results from this study can be applied to other *normal* business EFL task-based instruction situations at the university level in Thailand.

4.2.3   The participants' scores: within-subject comparison

Since not all students did perform better in the delayed post-test, it is interesting that the interview data confirmed the numerical data in this section that the Reading Business News task was perceived by participants as the most difficult. Table 4.15 shows the students' increased and decreased scores in the delayed post-test when comparing with the post-test. Only the decrease in the delayed post-test scores will be presented with numerical data in percentages. In other words, the shaded areas represent the increase of scores in the delayed post-test.

Table 4.15 The participants' Scores Within-Subject Comparison

Pseudonyms	Tasks						
	Task 1	Task 2	Task 3	Task 4.1	Task 4.2	Task 5	Task 6
Vicky				0.89%		15.28%	
Mona			1.59%			2.78%	
Kelly							10.42%
Bonnie					Same score	8.34%	
Sarah	Same score						
Peggy						4.17%	
Rachel	10.23%					Same score	8.33%
Tony					7.81%		4.17%

*Note***:** The shaded areas are where the participants had the gained scores from the post-test to the delayed post-test.

Table 4.15 shows that the participants could not do well on the Reading Business News Task 5 as fewer participants gained better scores on the delayed post-test. According to my observation notes, the average scores on the post-test and the retention scores shown on the delayed post-test were lowered after Task 4 may be caused by the time spent on peer collaboration, which was not as much as the time spent on Task 1 to 4 since there was not much class time left. This was confirmed by many participants, who said in the final interview that they were satisfied more with Task 1 to 4 due to a lot of time set aside for practices with friends.

4.2.4 The findings from the interview data: the reasons and motives for the better performance on the delayed post-test

To understand the reasons and motives why the participants performed better in total scores of the delayed post-test, I used a questionnaire (see appendix H), in which the respondents were allowed to state more than one reason. The participants including Joey (*n*=9) responded with seven different reasons. Figure 4.9 shows that the teacher factor (reasons 3 and 6) mostly

motivated the students to do better in their second attempt. The next reasons were themselves (reasons 5 and 7), followed by the test factor (reasons 2 and 1), and the letter of reference (reason 4) respectively. However, these reasons (except reason 4) appeared quite equal in terms of the frequency count signifying the equality in importance among the factors that may have related to their better performance.
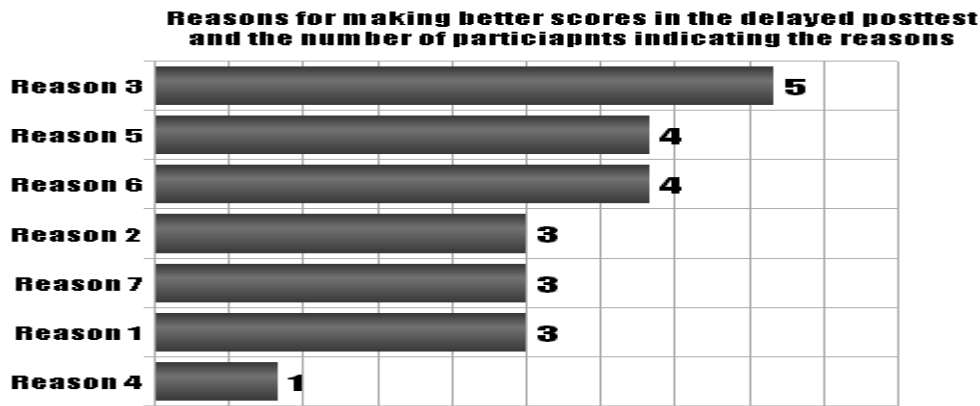
Figure 4.9 Reasons for Performing Better in the Delayed Post-Test and the Number of Participants

Indicating the Stated Reasons (n=9)

Note: Reason 1 = It is natural (the testing effect). It is my habit to review before the test. I felt relaxed before this test rather than the first one,
   Reason 2 = I could remember the test (the testing effect & students' memory),
   Reason 3 = I wanted the teacher to get good data for her dissertation (the teacher),
   Reason 4 = I wanted good scores to appear on the letter of reference (the tangible incentive),
   Reason 5= I wanted to make amends, to do better than last time (self improvement),
   Reason 6= I wanted to make the teacher happy that we could do it better (the teacher),
   Reason 7= It challenged my ability. I wanted to know if I could do it better (self improvement).

According to students' perception, participants' reasons/motivation for the better performance on the delayed post-test (as coded in the parentheses next to the responses) seem to derive from (1) the desire to please the teacher, (2) the desire for self-improvement, (3) the testing effect, then (4) the desire for tangible incentive of the letter of reference. This finding

confirms the importance of *affect* that could influence students' efforts fo language learning (Imai, 2007).

4.2.5   The comparison of scores: Bonnie and Joey

Similar to Joey in many aspects, such as similar pre-test scores (see Table 4.16 later in this section) and a previous course D grade, which was nearest to Joey's F grade, along with her last in rank in all tests among all nine participants including Joey, Bonnie proved to be quite successful after the course completing all tests and tasks with a fial course grade C+. Even though Bonnie and Joey began the course with similar aspects, they did not end similarly. Joey was unable to successfully complete most of the final evaluations (tasks 1-4). In an attempt to determine whether Joey's inability to do the speaking tests resulted from the lack of inter-personal regulation/relationship or his lack of prior language proficiency, I compare his scores with Bonnie's as follows:

Table 4.16 compares the scores of these two participants in the tasks that both of them completed.

Table 4.16 Bonnie's and Joey's Scores in Three Tests

Participants	Pre-test			Post-test		Delayed Post-test	
	Task 1 (Total = 44)	Task 2 (Total =38)	Task 4.1 (Total =28)	Task 5 (Total =36)	Task 6 (Total =24)	Task 5 (Total =36)	Task 6 (Total =24)
Bonnie	3	2.5	0	13.5	16.5	10.5	23
Joey	3.5	2.5	0.5	19	17	15.5	18

At the beginning of the course, Bonie and Joey held similar English language ability. My observation was that Joey's speaking ability was better than that of Bonnie when they started the course. Following instruction, Joey outperformed Bonnie on Tasks 5 and 6 in the post-test,

and again in Task 5 of the delayed post-test. This may suggest that *strong* English language ability is not a requirement for those interested in a task-based course. For these two cases, success seemed to involve the willingness to fully engage verbally and nonverbally in tasks with others in the community of practice and maximizing the opportunities and mediational tools that were available. The qualitative analysis of the case of Joey as well as other participants will be presented in the next chapter.

To summarize this chapter, I presented the inter-rater reliability which shows the correlation among evaluators. The values were found to be high to very high in all tests and almost all tasks. The significant improvement in scores between the pre-test and the post-test signifies that there was indeed an improvement in the business English language task-based ability of the participants after instruction. The increase in scores between the post-test and delayed post-test revealed that not only did students retain their improved business English task-based ability, but, in several instances, saw that ability actually increased. The better performance seemed to be influenced by or motivated by the desire to please the teacher, the desire for self improvement, the effect of the test itself, and the tangible incentive of letter of reference.

5.0   CHAPTER V: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

In this chapter, I present the findings from the qualitative data to answer Research Question 3, which involves the description of what activities looked like in a business EFL task-based course according to the activity theory perspective and analysis. First, I present the characteristics of five participants, from whom I collected the qualitative data. Next, I provide the findings that answer each sub-research question.

5.1   BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS
IN THE QUALITATIVE DATA

Since the beginning of the course, the participants were encouraged to work in pairs or groups of three. The participants in Class B, from whom I collected the qualitative data, usually chose the classmates with whom they wanted to work and were quite consistent in their choices. Mostly, there were two groups of (1) Kelly, Peggy, and/or Cindy, and (2) Sarah, Bonnie, and/or Joey. While Cindy usually did not stay the whole class or was absent for many tasks, Joey, a regular attendee, chose to work alone mostly. Therefore, most data from pair work was obtained from two pairs of Kelly and Peggy (labeled as Pair I) and Sarah and Bonnie (labeled as Pair II). However, since the whole class was composed of six students, who all had an impact on the class

atmosphere, I hereby present the background characteristics of all of them before I proceed to answer the research questions.

Now, I present the background characteristics of Kelly, Peggy, and Cindy, then, I provide the background characteristics of Sarah, Bonnie, and Joey.

5.1.1   The group of Kelly, Peggy, and Cindy

Kelly, Peggy and Cindy were close friends before they joined the course. They were from the same business School and major, the School of Business Administration, majoring in international business management. My opinion of Kelly and Peggy was that they should have had *fairly good* English proficiency around the grade level of C+ rather than the *poor* level of D+ that they stated in their academic background in the pre-instruction questionnaire. Asked why they received a D+ in their previous English course II, they pointed to delinquency rather than their true proficiency. While both were very attentive to all lessons and were regular attendees, Peggy was better in her English ability in terms of pronunciation and grammar according to my observation. Cindy had comprehensible pronunciation, but she was timid and usually did not express a lot of her English ability other than in rehearsed role-plays. Her English background was the poorest in this group with the previous grade F.

Kelly and Peggy felt somewhat dissatisfied with their previous English courses offered at this research site. According to Kelly, "*The [regular English] courses were not challenging. The teachers just followed the course book, showing the answers to all exercises in their lectures. That's it. The answers were fixed and I did not need to think. It was like spoon-feeding.*" (interview on 03/16/09). Kelly convinced Peggy and Cindy to join in the course with her. Peggy was actually the first person in the group who saw the advertisement on the bulletin board and

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told Kelly, but Kelly forgot it for a while. Peggy did not make a decision until Kelly asked her to come along. While Kelly and Peggy had similar personalities: very attentive to learning, energetic, and action-oriented, Cindy was rather passive, but congenial and full of smiles. When they all came, they usually sat next to each other and worked together. When interviewed by my research assistant as to why she joined the course, Kelly said, "*I first saw the teacher when she came to my summer class to advertise the course and I was impressed. She spoke English so fluently, and she convinced us that it was not too hard to be able to communicate in English like her. I saw her passion and sincerity to teach us. Moreover, I never studied all those tasks before. Even though I used to study a bit of English greetings and introductions, I never was able to do or know how to do them. If I could, the ability would be useful for my future job. Another reason was that this course was free of charge. It would be very costly to take a course like this somewhere else.*" (interview on 03/09/09). Peggy's initial motive in joining the course, however, was of social before academic (i.e., accompanying friends to the course). She said, "*It was because Kelly and Cindy came, so I came. It would be awkward to study English and performed in front of strangers. Although the course was interesting, without my close friends, I wouldn't have come.*" (interview on 03/ 09/09). Although Peggy became interested in the course before Kelly, her interest alone was not strong enough to motivate her to join the course. At the end, Kelly and Peggy succeeded in all tasks with the post-test grade C+ and the delayed post-test grade B, while Cindy, who was absent many times, did not come to take the final exams and did not stay for interviews, thus, I did not have any data from her. However, her case was quite interesting because whenever she came to class, she paid full attention to the lessons and showed task engagement, that could explain her ability to do the tasks in class quite well.

5.1.2 The group of Sarah, Bonnie, and Joey

Sarah, Bonnie, and Joey first met in this course. They were from different schools and majors. Prior to the course, Sarah had the strongest previous English course II grade A, while Bonnie and Joey were weaker with D and F grades respectively. All three were rarely absent. Sarah and Bonnie were cooperative in all tasks. Sarah's initial motive was to learn something *new* about English. When asked what motivated her to continue coming to the course regularly, she pointed to the course content, "*I did not want to stay home doing nothing. The course looked interesting. I wanted to learn new things. I wanted to improve my English and use my summer time wisely.*" (interview on 03/09/09). On the other hand, Bonnie was a much slower learner than Sarah. With her background from the upcountry, she was often concerned with her poor English ability and improving her English became her main *motive*, saying "*I am aware that I am not good at English and I would like to study more to improve it. My English is very poor.*" (interview on 03/09/09). As determined as Sarah, who was her usual partner in many tasks, Bonnie proved to be a successful learner completing all tasks with a fairly good final grade C+ despite her ranking last in all tests. Sarah ended the course with the post-test grade B and the delayed post-test grade B+, the third and second rank among all 8 subjects, when both Class A and B were combined.

Despite his previous F grade in English, Joey was actually more confident and possessed better English pronunciation than Cindy and Bonnie when it came to speaking English in front of the class. Their pre-test scores were very low varying from 5 to 8 (out of total 265) due to the inability to do the majority of tasks. Educated in the upcountry as Bonnie, however, Joey came from a rich family. He drove his car to class while others came by bus or lived nearby. His belief was that it was not his poor English proficiency that caused him to receive an F grade in the previous English course II, but it was because, "*I was absent from class several times*"

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(interview on 03/09/09). His motive to join in this course was related to his interest in improving his speaking ability and the desire to learn the course content. He said, "*The course topics that the teacher advertized were interesting. I am majoring in Marketing, so one day business English will certainly be useful to me. I would like to be able to speak English*" (interview on 03/09/09). Perhaps because his close friend resigned from the course after the first day, he tended to prefer being an independent learner. He said in one interview, "*I could work with anybody. I had no preferences in terms of partners in the pair-work. In fact, I preferred working alone. I like freedom in thinking.*" (interview on 03/09/09). Encouraged to work with others, he cooperated, but he usually removed himself from others after a while. According to his interview, it was not due to the gender difference from others in class, but his preference to work independently, that he liked working alone. From my videotape recordings, Joey enjoyed web browsing and was easily distracted by the computer in front of him. When I walked away from hia desk, he immediately went off-task to view non-English websites instead of working on tasks. When I disconnected the internet connection on all class computers while teaching, he withdrew to his personal laptop or his personal non-English book. He would be on-task for a llnger period of time when he used the computer to make the power-point slides or in role-plays rehearsal because he needed to stand up and perform before others. At the end, Joey could not complete the speaking tasks in all tests perhaps because those tasks required interactions and rehearsals with peers. He chose to perform only the reading and writing tasks earning scores of 43% and 75% respectively.

  The interview transcripts to be presented in this chapter use the following initials: K= Kelly, P = Peggy, C = Cindy, S = Sarah, B = Bonnie, and J = Joey. Thai language spoken is

italicized and the key words in the interview transcripts are highlighted in bold-type texts for clarity and quick read.

Next, I present the findings of sub-question *a.* regarding how the students worked together and what happened during their interactions on tasks and I attempt to explain why the interactions were carried out the way I observed.

5.2   THE FINDINGS OF SUB-QUESTION A: THE TASK ANALYSIS

In this section, the *activities* performed by two pairs of Kelly and Peggy (pair I), Sarah and Bonnie (pair II) are presented. The post-task interviews that followed the three tasks below provided data on the *motives* that were associated with the *object* of activities in each task and that influenced the *goals* of the pairs' *actions*. Figure 5.1 represents the order of how I will present the findings of sub-question *a..*
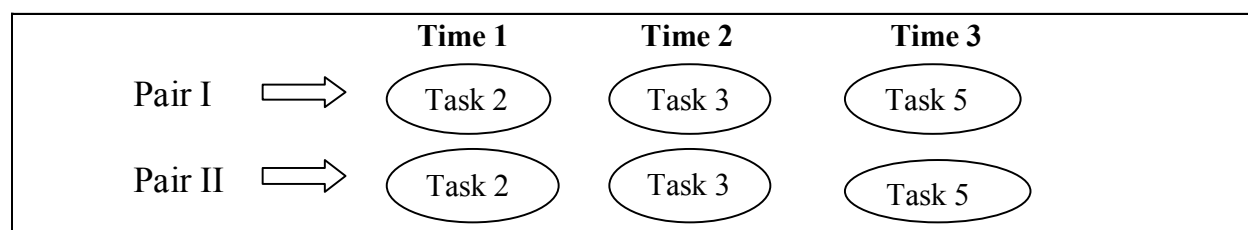
Figure 5.1 The Order of Data and the Presentation of Findings of Sub-Question a.

5.2.1   <u>Time 1</u> Task 2 (Welcoming Visitors): the analysis of the activity

Task 2 required that the students read the situation card, compose a dialogue, and perform a role-play. The situation was that a student was to welcome a foreign visitor at the airport, perform

greetings and introductions, offer some help, make some small talk, and then depart at the hotel.

Fifteen minutes was given for the planning and an additional ten minutes for rehearsals. Finally,

they w ere to submit their dialogue via email. Table 5.1 depicts what happened during this

activity. Then, the analysis of why the *activity* was carried out by each pair is presented along

with the post-task interview d ata. The sam e *operations* by these two pairs are presented only

once. The important points were underlined.

Table 5.1 Time 1: The activity system of Task 2

	Kelly & Peggy (Pair I)	Sarah & Bonnie (Pair II)
What was being done? (Actions)	Both pairs composed a dialogue, rehearsed, and acted out the role-play situation in front of the class. Then, they submitted the dialogue to the teacher via email.	
How was it done? (Operations)	1. Each of them viewed the model role-play on DVD and studied the script.	
	2. Kelly was the writer. They discussed and composed the dialogue in <u>Thai</u> on <u>paper</u>, then in English on the computer.	2. Sarah led the discussion. They <u>decided on roles</u> and composed a dialogue in <u>English</u> on the <u>computer</u>.
	3. When they had difficulty, they consulted each other, or an online English-Thai-English dictionary, or the teacher.	
	4. They <u>decided on roles</u> and <u>rehearsed it together</u>.	4. They <u>rehearsed individually</u> before coming to rehearse it together.

Why was the activity carried out in this way? (Goals & Conditions)

Pair I: **Task goals**: To appear smooth & fluent with real understanding.
          Relationship: Close friends
          Task conditions: Role-play, tools, & time
Pair II: **Task goals**: To appear smooth & fluent with few mistakes.
          Relationship: Classmates
          Task condition: Role-play, tools, & time

In this Task 2, even though all students composed similar dialogues of the same assigned situation, did the role-plays, and completed the same task, the two pairs engaged in quite different *activities*. The differences in *motives,* revealed in task *goals*, which were derived from their *beliefs* about language learning together with their decisions on how to handle the task *conditions* and the differences in *relationship* seem to explain the variability that was found.

According to the videotape data, both pairs started with planning how to operationalize the task, asking each other the question like "*what shall we do first*?".

Kelly and Peggy, discussed, made decisions, and came to an agreement that their *goal* was to appear smooth and fluent with real understanding of what they would say in their role play. Thus, their *motive* was about how they would like to see their role-play when it was performed. Therefore, with this *motive*, although they were allowed to look at their notes occasionally during their stage performance, they desired to use the notes as little as possible. Then, they figured out how they would operationalize the task to achieve this *goal*.

The following was their goal-directed *actions*. First, they chose to compose the dialogue in the Thai language. Then, they translated it into English. They believed it was easier to put ideas on content of the conversation in Thai first, then they would memorize better the English version once they understood it in Thai, then they would rehearse with confidence. Questioned what the reasons behind their task *operations*, Kelly and Peggy replied;

> K: *We would like to **perform smoothly** because we **really understood** what to say. We did not want to look at the notes that often when we performed*

> K: *Once we understood the conversation in **Thai**, it helped because we did not need to look at the notes all the time when we did the role play, because we knew what to say.*

P: *Looking at the notes is like reading, and reading did not help us to understand or memorize anything. **Good role plays** should come out of **real understanding** rather than memorizing or reading notes without real understanding of what we were saying.*

(Post-task interview 2, p. 2)

Questioned why they used Thai not English in writing the draft of the conversation, Kelly commented;

K: *It is **easier to write in Thai** first. I **worked faster in the Thai language**. Once we understood the conversation in Thai, it helped us to **move faster** and **in the same direction**. We had limited time.*

Interview: *Why did you choose to write on paper rather than on the computer?*

P: *It is **more convenient** for us **to hand over** the paper to one another across the computer booth when we got stuck and wanted to have it looked at closely while discussing on the content. Once we agreed on the content, and finished writing the draft for the dialogue, we could type it on the computer later **more easily and quickly**.*

(Post-task interview 2, p. 3)

Thus, for Kelly and Peggy, the *motive* to perform professionally, revealed through the *goal*-directed *actions* to act smoothly and fluently with real understanding, was actually induced by their *beliefs* that (1) the smoothness and fluency were the characteristics of a good conversation. Since looking at notes often would hinder the smoothness of the role-play, they chose to use the notes as little as possible. (2) The *actions* they took would enable them to really understand the conversation and memorize it better. This task *goal* was apparently linked to the course objective of coming to study business English and about how to converse professionally in business situations. Kelly confirmed;

K: *Well, while we did the task, we remembered that you (the teacher) taught us that how important it was to **appear professional**, so we had to look fluent and confident, then we could succeed in business. We agreed and we tried our best not to use the notes.*

(Post-task interview 2, p. 4)

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At the *operational stage* of activity system, due to the limited time *condition*, another sub-*goal* emerged that they had to finish in time. Thus, they decided to use the tools they were more familiar (i.e., Thai) and easier to regulate (i.e., L1 and the paper sheet). The *actions* they took showed their attempt to manage the task in the why that would allow them to reach their sub-*goal*. Using the Thai language and paper seemed to be their wise decisions, because they finished in time and did perform quite smoothly.

Their relationship also influenced their *actions*. They were close friends, so full collaboration occurred immediately. They discussed and composed the dialogue before assigning roles, and rehearsed together. Such full collaboration seemed to be very conducive to the successful task outcome. These *actions* were quite different to those of Sarah and Bonnie.

Since Sarah and Bonnie just met in this course, the collaboration did not happen right away but gradually. Besides, unlike Kelly and Peggy, whose English ability was quite at the same level, Sarah was a more fluent English speaker than Bonnie, so Bonnie saw that Sarah was the more knowledgeable other. Bonnie said,

> B: *I was fortunate that I paired with Sarah.* **I listened to her** *because* **she knew a lot more than me.** *Her English is much better than me. I needed to ask her often. My English is very poor.*

(Post-task interview 2, p. 5)

Thus, Bonnie was willing to follow Sarah's lead and suggestion regarding how to operationalize the task. Their *goal* was to appear smooth and fluent with an emphasis on accuracy, thus, they emphasized rehearsals, as shown in the following interview data;

> S: *We think* **lots of rehearsals** *were important for the performance to* **appear smooth and fluent.** *I let Bonnie type on the* **computer** *because* **she typed faster.** *We needed* **to save time for rehearsals.** *When we rehearsed, we could correct each other when we found mistakes. We would like our role-play to* **appear fluent with few mistakes.**

Thus, for Sarah and Bonnie, how they would be viewed on stage with accuracy seemed to influence the way they made decisions to spare time for rehearsals.

Bonnie's awareness of her poor English pronunciation also convinced her of the need for lots of rehearsals, she said:

> B: *I needed more time to **rehearse** because before this I rarely spoke or practiced English so **my pronunciation** was really bad. I needed to ask Sarah often for help with pronunciation. She showed me how to pronounce some difficult words so I could **speak correctly** in the role play.*

(Post-task interview 2, p. 4)

According to the interview data, Sarah and Bonnie's *goal* for accuracy seemed to derive from their *belief* that *accuracy* was the indication of good performance in language learning. Thus, their *motive* to do the task was about *how they would be viewed*, not *how they would like to view themselves* in their role-play when it was performed (as in the case of Kelly and Peggy). Perhaps, this *belief* came from their experience with previous grammar-based courses, where making fewest mistakes would make a *good* language performance. Thus, they saw that working on this task was the opportunity for them to practice how to improve the English speaking ability rather than the long-term *goal* of how to perform this business task in the future, which wah encouraged by this communicative course. This was not a surprise considering that Sarah and Bonnie were non-business majors.

With this *motive*, therefore, their goal-directed *actions* were operationalized after considering the task *condition* of time limitation, which included the fast moves such as the assignment on roles, then talking abnut content, then composing in the English version, and typing on the computer right away.

Since their relationship was not as close as the case of Kelly and Peggy, they decided on *roles* before *content* to avoid conflicts. Sarah said, "*we decided on **roles first**, so we would not have any problems about who would be responsible on what roles*" (interview 03/18/09). After the dialogue was complete, they agreed to rehearse independently before coming to rehearse together. Bonnie withdrew to another seat as if she feared that she would bother Sarah that much. Bonnie said;

> B: *I don't want to bother Sarah to help me all the time. I could **practice by*** > ***myself** after I understood the content and what role I was taking.* > (interview 03/18/09).

Anyway, despite her better English language ability, Sarah said, "*Without Bonnie, I could not finish in time and complete the task well*". Both Sarah and Bonnie agreed that they needed each other. In contrast, Kelly and Peggy did not need relationship adjustment. Compatibility and mutuality were prevalent between them.

In summary, in this conversation task, considering that mutual cooperation was required, the pairs had to collaborate. Challenged by limited time and the required role-play, on-stage performance, however, both pairs responded to the *task conditions* with different *goals* that could be traced to different *motives*. Then, they came up with different decisions on *operations*. The same *task* can result in different *activities*. This finding conforms to that found in the study of Coughlan and Duffs (1994).

5.2.2   Time 2 Task 3 (Company Presentation): the analysis of activity

Task 3 required that the students make a PowerPoint speech presentation to the class. They could choose to use the company information on the suggested business websites or on the task card. Only one presentation was required. The slides and speech preparation time was 45 minutes and

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the rehearsal time was 30 minutes. Table 5.4 depicts what happened during this *activity* followed

by the analysis of the data obtained from the post-task interview.

Table 5.2 Time 2: The Activity System of Task 3

	Kelly & Peggy (Pair I)	Sarah & Bonnie (Pair II)
What was being done? (Actions)	Students made PowerPoint slides, composed a speech that accompanied the slides, using information on a business company of their choices. Then, they took turns making the presentation in front of the class.	
How was it done? (Operations)	1. They planned to <u>make slides of their own,</u> composed own speech, then, chose the better one for the presentation.	1. They planned to work together: choosing information, <u>designing the slides and composing the speech collectively</u>.
	2. They began by <u>independently</u> watching the model video clips and studying the handouts.	2. They started by watching the model video clips and studied the handouts <u>together</u>.
	3. Kelly used the information from <u>the handout</u> whereas Peggy used the one from <u>the website</u>. They designed their <u>own slides</u>, then composed a speech that went with their slides <u>individually</u>.	3. They used the information from <u>a website</u>. <u>Bonnie designed the slides whereas Sarah composed the slides</u>. Then, they divided the speech into two parts, composed the speech <u>separately,</u> and rehearsed their parts.
	4. When they had difficulty, they consulted each other, checked an online English-Thai-English dictionary or asked the teacher.	
	5. They chose Peggy's slides and <u>rehearsed together</u>.	5. They <u>rehearsed individually before rehearsing together</u>.
	6. They <u>divided the presentation into two parts</u> and took turns making the presentation.	6. They were <u>responsible for their parts</u> when making the presentation.

Why was the activity carried out in this way? (Goals & Conditions)

Pair I: **Task goals**: To learn how to do the task and present the best showcase
          Relationship: Close friends
          Task conditions: Tools
Pair II: **Task goals**: To learn about how to do the task accurately and complete it in time
          Relationship: Close friends
          Task condition: Tools & time

This Company Presentation Task required a lot of work and time for both pairs. Finally, although they co-presented the slides in similar manner, they did not operationalize the task in the same way.

With the desire (i.e., *motive*) to learn and appear the best in their presentation coupled with the excitement about making their very first company presentation, Kelly and Peggy's *goal* was to present their best slides and speech. Thus, their *goal-directed actions* were making individual slides, composing own speech, and once they were completed, choosing the more interesting slides to rehearse together, and making the presentation together. They viewed that the task was challenging, so they were eager to learn.

> K: *After viewing the DVD of the model presentation, I thought it was* **challenging**. *We used to make the PowerPoint slides before, so it should not be that difficult Moreover, it sounded like* **fun to try** *my very first company presentation.*

> Interviewer: *What seemed to be challenging that you just said?*

> K: *Everything, making slides and making the presentation. One day if I was assigned to make a business presentation in class or in a real life situation,* **I would like to be able to do it.**

> Interviewer: *Why did you do the task separately instead of doing together as before?*

> P: *You (the teacher)* **have provided us everything** *so that we could do it. So we would like to try by ourselves, making individual slides. Besides, it was* **fun playing with the technology**. **It was challenging our ability**.

> K: *We would like* **to do our best** *in the presentation,* **to show the best**. *It was like* **a little contest.**

> P: *Yes. We would like to try individually because in the final exam,* **we would have to be on our own. In real life too**.

K: *We thought how about trying out, working separately since the beginning, but we still helped each other.. **The computer** in front of us was also tempting us to work independently all by ourselves. Besides, I could use my **creativity** and learn at the same time.*

(interview 03/31/09).

Thus, their *motives* were not only to learn how to do the task, but also to be able to do it individually. The *motives* seem to be induced by the attitude or *belief* that the task was beneficial for their future life and challenging to make efforts, coupled with the emerging sub-*goals* of desiring to have fun, playing with technology and using creativity. Indeed, computer and other tools such as DVDs and handouts provided for them were task *conditions* which influenced their decisions on how to operationalize the task individually and together later. Obviously, their *motives*, *goals,* and *actions* corresponded with the course objective of business English, which was supposed to be meaningful and useful in terms of business practice, motivating both in the short and the long terms, including the imagination of how they would like to see their presentation when it was performed, a challenging *contest*. It was also interesting that sometimes the pairs had a collective orientation to the task and sometimes they changed to an individual orientation even though they were working together, which conforms to the findings in the study of Donato (1988).

On the other hand, Sarah and Bonnie's *motives* were not to present their best but to present it accurately and complete the task in time. The *motives* seemed to be induced by their reactions to the task requirement and conditions rather than their own initiatives and creativity due to the nature of this business task. According to the interview data, time was their primary concern as much as the concern for accuracy. Sarah commented;

S:	*This task was quite difficult and time-consuming. The speech required lots of thinking and planning that had to correspond **correctly** to the slides too. So we decided to help each other as much as we could, because we had to have enough **time for practices**. **If we rehearse a lot, we would not make many mistakes when we made the real presentation in front of the class**.*

B:	*We would like to see that we had all the information required by the teacher so the presentation **would appear complete**. The model example of presentation in the DVD and the transcript in the handout were helpful as we had everything we needed. We would like to **see a good presentation** as much as we could within **limited time**. **Lots of speech rehearsals** were also important because it was during the rehearsals that we discovered where **to improve and correct our speech**.*

(Post-task interview 3, p. 1)

Like in Task 2, with the task *goal* of accuracy, therefore, much time was needed for rehearsals. The task *conditions* of limited time and having to make the PowerPoint slides led them to divide responsibilities. Bonnie worked on the slides, whereas Sarah composed the words on slides. Since Sarah never made the PowerPoint slides before; she let Bonnie use her talent regarding technology, saying,

S:	*I let Bonnie do the slides as she was more able than me. She used to work with the PowerPoint before, I never did. **We did not have much time**. We needed some time for **speech preparation**, which was **not easy**, although we had examples.*

Bonnie also commented;
B:	*I let Sarah plan on what to write on the slides, because her English is much better than mine, so we could use our talents. This way we could make a good presentation **within limited time**. Working together helped us to **finish faster** and simultaneously made us aware of what we needed to improve, to **make the presentation better**.*

(Post-task interview 3, p. 4)

Again, Sarah and Bonnie's *goal* for accuracy seemed to derive from their *belief* that *accuracy* was the indication of good performance in language learning.

The above interview data also reveal that due to the actual *operation* on task, Sarah and Bonnie realized the benefit of working together collaboratively that it not only helped speed up the *activity*, but they believed that it also helped improve the presentation quality.

The participants were very excited when making the presentation to the class. This time, Kelly and Peggy seemed to work for more of the *showing* than the *learning*, whereas Sarah and Bonnie worked for the *learning* and *finishing in time* than the *showing*.

Now that Sarah and Bonnie's relationship was closer, the collaboration was seen throughout their task *operation.* Such collaboration was conducive to their task completion on time. In contrast, Kelly and Peggy did not concern with time due to their prior experience with ability of making the slides, so they chose to work independently before collaboratively while consulting each other during the entire activity. Now Sarah and Bonnie felt more comfortable to work together, using ones' talents. Sarah commented;

> S: *I like working with Bonnie in this task because **she shared her talents**. She helped.*
> B: *I was glad that I could help. I learned from Sarah a lot too. **We came along very well**.*
> (Post-task interview 3, p. 5)

However, during the rehearsals, they worked independently before coming to rehearse together, implying that they had not yet completely oriented themselves as a collective to their work, which conforms to the findings in the study of Donato (1988).

In summary, the presentation task has its characteristic that involves varieties of *activities* from making slides, composed texts on slides, and speech presentation, allowing students to work either collaboratively or individually. Challenged by the presentation itself, limited time, and the ability to use technology, both pairs operationalized the task inspired by different *motives*, *goals*, and came up with *actions* involving decisions on how to regulate the task considering all *conditions* at hand such as talents and tools. It seemed that the larger the task was, the more varieties of *activities* they would appear.

5.2.3 Time 3 Task 5 (Reading Business News): the analysis of activity

Task 5 required that the students read a piece of business news (about 260 words) and fill in the boxes stating the main idea of each paragraph in Thai. It was similar to the retelling story task, but it was in the written form. The reading time was 20 minutes and the time for filling in the boxes was 10 minutes. After they completed the task, the teacher led the discussion and provided the answer keys to the whole class. Table 5.3 depicts what happened during this *activity* followed by the analysis of the post-interview data.

Table 5.3 Time 3: The Activity System of Task 5

	Kelly & Peggy (Pair I)	Sarah & Bonnie (Pair II)
What was being done? (Actions)	They read the business news together, discussed, and filled in the boxes on the worksheet stating the main ideas of each paragraph.	
How was it done? (Operations)	1. The pair started out by <u>reading the news together</u> and discussed its meaning while reading together.	1. Sarah convinced Bonnie that they <u>read separately the whole news article first</u>. Then, when they read it the second time, they discussed its meaning together.
	2. When they had difficulty, they consulted each other or checked an online English-Thai-English dictionary. When the meaning of some words were not found, they made guesses.	
	3. They filled the form on the computer.	

Why was the activity carried out in this way? (Goals & Conditions)
Pair I: **Task goals**: To understand the news article and complete the task with understanding
 Relationship: Close friends
 The task condition: Task difficulty & Time
Pair II: **Task goals**: To understand the news article and complete the task with accuracy
 Relationship: Close friends
 The task condition: Task difficulty & Time

In this reading task, both pairs collaborated almost all the time, but their *motive* and *goals* were slightly different, thus the *activities* they engaged were not exactly the same.

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This task was actually quite difficult. In the final interview, all eighth students reported that it was the most difficult of all six tasks due to a large number of unknown vocabulary and long sentences with complicated structures. In addition, this was the first time they read any business news. Thus, for both pairs, the task *conditions* included its difficulty and limited time.

Questioned what their *motive* in reading the news article was, Peggy and Kelly replied;

> P: **It looks challenging if we could understand it.** *I am worried, however, because I don't know many vocabularies.*

> K: **We don't have much time**, *but we* **will try our best to understand it.** *Thanks to the teacher, we could use the online dictionary and help each other.*

Interviewer: *How would you like to see your task when it is complete?*

> K: **Real understanding**, *being able to understand the news.*

(Post-task interview 5, p. 1)

Kelly and Peggy's *motive* was again linked to the *course objective* of studying business English and being able to do the task with real understanding of the task. However, in this task, they were concerned with limited time, thus, to achieve the *goal* of understanding the news and the *sub-goal* of understanding it as fast as possible, the *action* they desired to take was reading together from the start. The task *operations* included (1) discussing its meaning while consulting each other, (2) using the online dictionary, and (3) guessing some unknown vocabulary together. Peggy stated;

> P: **We felt more secure to read together from the start** *and discuss it whenever questions arose* **because the task looked very difficult**. *It was full of unknown vocabulary and long sentences. Sometimes,* **we had to guess the meaning** *because we could not find the meanings from the dictionary that fit.*

> K: *We had to guess but we thought it was ok. The teacher wanted us to try.* **We don't have to know every word to comprehend the main ideas of the news.**
> (Post-task interview 5, p. 2)

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Again, this pair's operations seemed to align with communicative language teaching in the way that its focus is on getting meaning across rather than grammatical accuracy. However, it seemed that they worked out of the uncomfortable feeling due to task difficulty. In other words, their task *operations* were induced by task *conditions*.

On the other hand, Sarah and Bonnie approached the task by first following Sarah's suggestion on how to read successfully from her previous general English learning experience, that was reading the whole news first, then, translating while reading the second time. Their *goal* again was not only to learn from the task and complete the task in due time but also to complete it with accuracy. Sarah convinced Bonnie that reading the whole news article first would help them understand the task better, then, they would understand the news more correctly.

> S: *I learned from my reading class that reading the whole story first would help us understand the meaning **correctly**. Understanding words in context is important. It may look like we were spending the double time, but it helped us **understand better**. When we came together to read it the second time, we could discuss what we were unsure of, compare and share our understanding in a **faster** manner, and finally we finished it with **a better understanding and with more correct answers**.*

Bonnie gave her opinion on how she operationalized this task.

> B: *The task was really difficult. There were so many vocabularies I did not know. **I believed Sarah knew how to read well**. I followed her lead.*

> S: *I am not good at reading business news either. I needed to discuss with Bonnie because I was not sure if my understanding was **correct**. Knowing all vocabulary did not mean you understand the meaning **correctly**. Some words can be translated with different meanings. Thus, **having a partner to work with was necessary for me.***

(Post-task interview 5, p. 4)

Thus, owing to task *conditions* of its difficulty and time limitation, Sarah and Bonnie's task *operations* were (1) separately reading the whole news first (2) reading again one more time

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together, (3) discussing, checking meanings of unknown words from the dictionary, and (4) giving the answers together.

In summary, although both pairs worked on the *same tasks*, in several steps or *actions* they took to accomplish the tasks, they obviously engaged in different *activities* (Coughlan and Duff, 1994, Ruebuck, 2000). The decisions they made varied according to the diverse task goals, their relationship, the ways they handled the task conditions (i.e., how to use the tools or whose talents), as well as their prior learning experience and/or beliefs on how to do the tasks well. Table 5.4 showed the summary of what influenced the differences in their *activities* of the three tasks.

Table 5.4 The Summary of Factors Involving Differences in the Activities of the Pairs

The observed tasks / The factors	Their diverse task goals	Their relationship	The decisions on how to handle the task conditions	Their prior learning experience/beliefs
Task 2	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**
Task 3	**yes**	**Yes, though it was not obvious**	**yes**	**yes**
Task 5	**Yes, though it was not obvious**	**yes**	**yes**	**yes**

Although *conditions* of the task affected the *operations* of the *subjects* or the way they approached the task, mostly it was the subjects, who determined how they handled the tasks or the direction of the *activities*. In other words, it was the participants who decided on how to respond to the tasks according to their task *goals* and *motives* on how they would like to see their task outcome. In doing so, some *goals* may or may not align with the goals/objectives of the teacher and the business course. Although both pairs succeeded with task completion, the pairs that had their *motives* and *goals* of being to perform the task in the future, which was aligned with the course objectives or goals seemed to do more than the pairs who did not (see goal-directed actions in sub-question *d*.). It seemed that the more they did the tasks, the more

experience due to engagement and understanding they gained, and the more they were able to do them.

5.3   THE FINDINGS OF SUB-QUESTION B: THE PATTERNS OF ASSISTANCE

Through the analysis of the videotape recordings, my observation notes, and the post-task interviews, the data revealed three important findings: (1) Contrary to Storch's findings in 2004, the patterns of assistance of the participants were *not* stable within pairs and across tasks. The patterns varied depending on with whom they partnered and how they handled the task conditions. Thus, in some instances, *experts* could become *novices* and vice versa (as in Donato, 1988; Donato, 2004) . (2) The pais that demonstrated the patterns of Collaborative and Expert/Novice usually showed *full* level of task engagement on both sides (even though it was nonverbally), hence, the patterns were very conducive to learning. (3) The participants who operated in other two patterns of Dominant/Passive or Dominant/Dominant could demonstrate any levels of nonverbal task engagement. Thus, they still could succeed in learning if the level of nonverbal task engagement was high. In other words, those pairs of Dominant/Passive or Dominant/Dominant, who showed *full* nonverbal task engagement could still accomplish the tasks even though their patterns of assistance may not *look* conducive to learning because they spent more time on tasks. With these findings, the *attendance score* that is normally given to students in a second/foreign language classroom may have to be reconsidered to include *task engagement* so as to reflect *true* participation. In other words, nonverbal participation is a form of engagement in learning.

To answer sub-question *b.*, the units of analysis were two pairs of students in Task 2, 3, and 5. My focus was on *Kelly* when pairing with either Peggy or Cindy, and *Sarah* when paring with Bonnie or Joey. Task 1 was added to display the unique differences found between the pair of Kelly and Cindy and the pair of Sarah and Joey. Table 5.5 summarizes the findings of this research question. The findings will be explained from the left column onto the right column.

Table 5.5 Patterns of Assistance and Levels of Nonverbal Task Engagement Found in Class B

Tasks / Pairs	Patterns of Assistance			
	Kelly & Peggy	**Kelly & Cindy**	**Sarah & Bonnie**	**Sarah & Joey**
Task 1		**Dominant/Passive** (with <u>full</u> task engagement on both sides)		**Dominant/Passive** (with <u>few</u> task engagement on Joey's side)
Task 2	**Collaborative** (with <u>full</u> task engagement on both sides)	-	**Expert/Novice** (with <u>full</u> task engagement on both sides)	-
Task 3	**Dominant/Dominant** (with <u>full</u> task engagement on both sides) **+ Collaborative**	-	**Collaborative + Expert/Novice** (with <u>full</u> task engagement on both sides)	-
Task 5	**Collaborative** (with <u>full</u> task engagement on both sides)	-	**Expert/Novice** (with <u>full</u> task engagement on both sides)	-

5.3.1   Kelly and Peggy: Collaboration

Due to their close friendship, the same major, similar English proficiency, and their shared goals of learning business English, Kelly and Peggy worked collaboratively in most tasks. I also found the full level of both verbal and nonverbal task engagement. For instance, in a 40-50 minute observation of Task 2, A large number of negotiations, suggestions and the giving/receiving of opinions and high equality and high mutuality were found. The following tapescript shows their

collaboration in the Welcoming Visitors Task 2, when they composed a dialogue offering help to

the visitor by asking whether he needed to make a call to someone upon arrival at the airport.

K: *What should we say about the telephone?* Would you like telephone?
P: *Yes, but I think we need* "to" *here* (pointing to the sentence)… *Like*… would you like <u>to</u> telephone?
K: (Look up at Peggy, nod and smile). *You're right, but don't you think we should say* "make a phone call" *like what I heard somewhere before*?
P: *Let me think.* (Look at Kelly) "Speak on a telephone?", "Would you like a phone?" *Or* "would you like a call?" *I don't know. I never heard of that* "make a phone call".
K: *How about asking the teacher?*

Later when they rehearsed the scene of meeting the guest/visitor:
K: *Speak as you understand. Once you walk to me, right? I will ask you first,* "Are you Mr. Anderson?
P: *Ok. And I will say,* "Yes, I am. Are you from B & G Company?"
K: *That's ok. Don't get too excited. Relax otherwise you would forget the line. Act natural. Next line is that I will offer help with the luggage.*
P: *Wait a minute, isn't that you have to introduce yourself first.*
K: *Ah yes. I forgot.* (Putting away the note) *Well. I will try not to look at the note this time. Please help correct my pronunciation, too.*
P. *Ok. You are doing great.*
(Transcript Task 2, p. 2)

However, their pattern of assistance changed in Task 3, the Company Presentation Task.

Since they decided to design their own slides separately and composed their own speech before

choosing the best one to rehearse together, their patterns of assistance appeared to be

Dominant/Dominant, with high equality and low mutuality two-thirds of the time spent. Later,

when they came together to rehearse, I found that the pattern changed to Collaborative for the

remaining one-third of the time while they discussed, made suggestions, negotiated, and gave

opinions. Thus, the mutuality shifted from low to high.

In task 5, Kelly and Peggy read together discussing, suggesting, and negotiating from the

beginning as already described in sub-question *a*. Thus, their pattern was Collaborative with *full*

nonverbal task engagement throughout the period of 30 minutes.

5.3.2   Kelly and Cindy: Lack of collaboration: Dominion/Passive

Kelly and Cindy were close friends, but Cindy was a much more timid and passive learner. When they worked in and performed Task 1 together, Kelly led the discussion most of the time, thus they appeared Dominant/Passive (with low equality and low mutuality). However, Cindy displayed interest and gave *full* attention to the task by using back channel cues such as "*Okay*," "*Whatever*", and " *I agree*". Unlike Peggy, Cindy offered very few opinions, suggestions, or negotiations but she cooperated fully with Kelly's suggestions. However, despite being close friends, few contributions on Cindy's part seemed to affect Kelly. Kelly commented:

> K: ***I did not get any new ideas from Cindy.*** *She usually agreed with me. Whenever I asked her questions, I got a few responses and opinions, whereas Peggy made suggestions, added to my opinions. I felt different when I worked with Cindy.*

Interviewer: *How did you feel?*

> K: *With Cindy, **I felt bored**. But it was better than working alone. I could help her too.*

Later, at the final interview, Kelly said,

Interviewer: *What made you satisfied when working on task?*

> K: *I liked it when Peggy and I showed what we thought about the task. Many times, we **discussed, negotiated on which expressions** were the best to use. It was fun. We shared. **We exchanged ideas**. I had opportunities to think and choose the best ideas.*

(interview 04/30/09).

However, Cindy's small contribution seemed to only slightly affect the class performance of the pairs. She performed quite smoothly even though she looked at notes often. Perhaps this was due to her full task engagement that she could perform so well. Although Kelly said she did not learn much from Cindy, my observation was that she was satisfied with the class performance.

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5.3.3 Sarah and Bonnie: Collaborative/Expert-Novice

Sarah and Bonnie got along well although they just met. Both perceived the benefits of working together—they both perceived that every task was novel to both of them and saw the need to help each other. Sarah knew more English and helped Bonnie a great deal on how to pronounce words correctly, how to use expressions, and the structure of English. She seemed happy to help while accepting talents, ideas and opinions of Bonnie. The pattern of assistance was mostly that of Expert/Novice with full verbal and nonverbal task engagement in all observed tasks.

In Task 2, a role-play task, Bonnie deeended on Sarah a great deal due to her poorer language ability especially in the areas of pronunciation. Clearly, Sarah, the expert in this task, took the leading role, making more suggestions about language, but also encouraged Bonnie by inviting her to give opinions. Bonnie felt comfortable to ask questions because Sarah, too, asked Bonnie some questions. The following excerpt was an example on the situation of welcoming a foreign guest at the airport:

> S: *What do you think? Would you like to be the host or the guest?*
> B: *I let you decide. Your English pronunciation is better than mine.*
> S: *But the host speaks more often here.*
> B: *Yeah. But I can be a host because I want to practice. Your English is better so maybe it is better that you will be the foreigner.*
> S: *Ok. No problem.*
> ...
> S: *I don't know English for "Is this your first visit to Chiang Mai?", what do you think?*
> B: *I don't know either. How about "Is this…first time... in Chiang Mai?"*
> S: *Good try. Let me check the DVD again.*
> B: *How do you pronounce this word* (pointing to the word "luggage" on the handout)?
> S: Luggage. May I help carry your luggage? *What do you think about other small talk here?*
> B: *I don't know. Uh..I will check the handout.*
> S: *Okay. I will compose here. You check for some more small talk from the handout.*

(Transcript Task 2, p. 4)

In Task 3, the Presentation Task, however, Sarah and Bonnie utilized the combination of Collaborative and Expert/Novice patterns (with full nonverbal task engagement on both sides). Since the beginning, worried about timing, they helped each other discussing and planning. The levels of equality and mutuality were high because they needed to talk about defining and structuring the task. Later, when they started to divide tasks using whatever talents each possessed e.g., Bonnie made the PowerPoint slides, while Sarah composed the texts, the level of mutuality was high, but equality was low, since they alternated taking the leading role. Interestingly, Bonnie became an expert in the areas where Sarah felt weak and vice versa. The use of different talents seemed to encourage Bonnie to become more confident in expressing ideas to complement Sarah's suggestions.

In Task 5, the pattern appeared to be that of an Expert/Novice relationship, in which Sarah led and Bonnie followed. Bonnie let Sarah lead when she was convinced to read the whole news first as to understand the context of the whole news article. Then, when they read the news again the second time, Sarah, who knew more vocabulary and sentence structures became an expert throughout the period of 30 minutes, as already described in sub-question *a*, with *full* nonverbal task engagement on both sides.

5.3.4   Sarah and Joey: Uncollaborative, Dominant/Passive

While Cindy was timid but cooperative, Joey was confident but inattentive. In Task 1, I asked Sarah to pair up with Joey with the hope that he would learn from her. It turned out that he did engage in the task but only when I was around. Otherwise, he went off-task working on something else, forcing Sarah to dictate the instructions on him of which part he was to work on and rehearse. Thus, the pattern was Dominant/Passive with Sarah being the dominant and Joey

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the passive. The level of nonverbal task engagement was limited (or few) on Joey's part but full on Sarah's part. The task ended with the unhappy feeling. Once Sarah commented:

> S: ***I felt good*** *when I was paired with Bonnie* ***because she cooperated***. *We helped one another.* ***I needed someone to help me think****... thinking together.* ***She shared*** *her idea and knowledge. When I worked with Joey, it was different.* ***He was not attentive to the lessons***. *He did not care to help. I would* ***feel bad and bored***. *I wondered why he did not help.*
>
> (interview 03/31/09).

His responses to questions posed by Sarah were also limited, with phrases like "*Yes*" and "*Okay*" rather than suggesting, giving opinions, or negotiating. When it came to perform the task, he mostly read from the notes that he wrote as draft. Thus, he was not considered successful when compared to Cindy.

In summary, similar to findings in Storch's (2004) research regarding the patterns of successful interactions, I found that the patterns of Collaborative and Expert/Novice were really conducive to learning when success found in the final test scores of the pairs that demonstrated such patterns. Other patterns of assistance were also useful only if full verbal and nonverbal task engagement were involved. The lack of consistency in patterns was observed as depending on how subjects handled the tasks and the characteristics of the partners.

5.4   THE FINDINGS OF SUB-QUESTION C:
WHAT INFLUENCED TASK-BASED PERFORMANCE?

The six components of Engeström's activity model guided the questions asked in the interviews. Of all five participants, the analysis rrvealed that (1) the performance of the participants were mostly influenced by themselves as *subjects*, the agency of learning, their *objects* of *activity* that

motivated them to complete the course, the teacher and their partners in *division of labor*, and the *meditational tools* or instruments that they used to complete the tasks. (2) The participants were less influenced by the *rules* (e.g., task rules, business etiquette, and scoring rubrics) and the *community* (i.e., other classmates, parents, and the university). (3) All of these factors were many times overlapped and influenced one another confirming that they were interrelated and mediated one another. For instance, in many moments, students' partners served three separate functions. First, they served as the *mediational tool* (to mediate their thinking and planning); second, as the *division of labor* (used to ease the burden of tasks, such as the time-consuming Company Presentation Task); and third as a *community* (for academic and emotional support). In certain situations, the teacher-researcher was the only *community* and means of *division of labor* they had, since the participants sometimes had to pair with her to perform role-plays. Finally, the teacher appeared to be the center of the activity system that held all factors together while she assisted and encouraged the students to move forward towards learning through tasks and working towards the course completion (*outcome*). Figure 5.2 summarizes the activity system of four participants (except Joey, a solo learner, which I will describe later), followed by the detailed explication of findings in each component:

Mediational Tools
• Tasks & Technology
• DVDs & Handouts
• L1
•Teacher & Peers
• Individual gestures

Subject
•The individual
student and
his/her motives

Object
• Learning 6 business
English tasks

Outcome
• Students'
ability in 6
business English
tasks
• Course
completion

Rules
• Task rules
• Business Etiquettes
• Scoring rubrics

Community
• Teacher
• Partners & Peers
• Parents

Division of labor
• Pairs
• Individual
• Classmates
• Whole class

Figure 5.2 The Activity Systems that Functioned in my Task-based Course

5.4.1   Subjects

According to the interview data, all five participants recognized that in order to be able to complete the tasks, they had to be responsible to come, learn, participate (or cooperate with others) and complete the tasks. Most of the tasks assigned were perceived by them as difficult, but those who succeeded all showed a willingness to learn. With varying social and life-related motives for learning, participants shared similar academic *motives* and *goals* that continued to motivate them (see the part of sub-question *d*. later in this chapter). Their continuing efforts appeared to be mainly derived from the realization that the tasks were useful to them. The sense of achievement and their increasing confidence played an equally strong role. The following interview data showed that they knew they were the agents of their own learning:

S: *It takes a lot of **effort** to do the tasks. **If you are lazy** or you are not really attentive to the lessons, **you could not do the tasks**. Some of my friends who quit said the course was too difficult for them but I think they did not feel that the course was useful enough to make an effort. Some of them had other interests in their life.*

B: *One of the important factors (that affected task performance) was myself. Some days, I came but I did not have enough sleep the night before, so I did not perform well. On those days, **I did not feel energetic, I felt moody, and lacked concentration**. But I came and learned because I wanted to participate.*

P: *The students who can do the tasks have to be **brave enough to perform.** Those who are shy may not want to take such a course. **If you don't want to perform, you cannot do the tasks.***

K: *I could do the tasks because **I attended to and determined** to do the tasks assigned. I felt fun and challenged. I felt that the tasks **were useful for myself and my future.***

Even Joey, who could not complete the speaking tasks in tests, commented:

J: *I was distracted by the computer in front of me,....and I liked working by myself.. I guessed that it was because **I did not coordinate with others** that much, **so I was not able to do the speaking tasks.***

   (Final interview 05/08/09)

In summary, the subjects who succeeded had to make an effort, be determined, willing to communicate, participate or cooperate, and perceived that the tasks were useful for them, as a result, had fun and were challenged to learn.

5.4.2 Objects

My main objective of the course was to help learners develop their business English ability in the six tasks taught. However, for the participants, since they signed the consent forms, they also accepted that upon the course completion, they would obtain a letter of reference as incentive. Thus, for the learners, two main motives that constituted the *objects* of this course were (1) learning business English from doing the six tasks, and (2) receiving a letter of reference upon completion of the course. While some students may not have expressed their desire for the letter, they received it anyway. Thus, two *outcomes* for both the teacher and the learners were expected: (1) students' ability in six business English tasks and (2) the course completion (as shown in Figure 5.2).

As the course went on, the analysis of the interviews revealed that new objects emerged for some students that actually helped them fulfill their initial *motives*. More details regarding participants' *motives*, *goals,* and *motivation* will be discussed later in this chapter (on sub-question *d)*.

5.4.3 Mediational tools

The tools in this course can be divided into four categories of (1) tasks and technology, (2) DVDs and handouts, (3) the teacher and peers, and (4) the individual's self mediation. The latter two categories were drawn from my observation, whereas the tangibility of the first two were more obvious to the participants, thus, they were mentioned in their interviews. The analysis of data revealed the following findings;

First, to complete the tasks, all participants were aware that the class materials provided

by the teacher to use as *tools* were useful and necessary. The following interview data showed

that all participants agreed with the important roles the tools (DVDs, handouts, and the tasks

themselves) played:

Interview: *What were the tools that helped you and how did they help to complete the tasks?*

> B: *The handouts.* ***They have both Thai and English****. So they look easier*
> *for me. I also like the pictures in the handouts.* ***They helped me***
> ***understand the content better****.*

> J: *They all helped very much because **I could always check and look at***
> ***what I need so as to complete the tasks.***

> P: *I liked the handouts. I took notes of what the teacher taught and I found*
> *out that I could take them out anytime **I wanted to check the information***
> ***I need***.

> K: *The DVDs helped me a lot **to understand the situations more clearly***.
> *They showed **pictures** of what happened and **voice and tones** of the*
> *situations.*

> S: *I like everything. DVDs helped me with **my listening skill** and the*
> *tasks helped with my writing skill like **the resume´** and **the***
> ***telephone message forms***.

   (Final interview 05/08/09)

When asked whether there was anything they would like to comment so as to improve

the material tools, all participants answered, "*No*". Bonnie and Joey explained more as follows:

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B*: No, **They are all complementing one another**…for example, the
    DVDs gave the pictures and the pronunciation, whereas the scripts
    in the handouts gave the model on what to say.*

J*: No. I like everything. **All of them are useful**…. For example, I
    could not do the speaking tasks without studying from the DVDs.
    Having the DVDs, however**, I could not speak without those tasks
    assigned by the teacher to work on.***

(Final interview 05/08/09)

Second, those helpful *tools* can be displayed in two categories of *object or material mediation* and *people mediation*. Table 5.6 showed these two categories of tools used in accomplishing the observed tasks by Kelly, Peggy, Sarah, and Bonnie, according to the priorities of use: *primary* (1st) and *secondary* (2nd).

Table 5.6 The Mediational Tools Usually Used in Accomplishing the Observed Tasks

Time	Tasks	Mediational Tools
1	Conversation Tasks (Task 2)	**1st Material tools and people**: DVD (video clips), handouts, the online dictionary and the partner(s) **2nd People**: The teacher or other peers
2	Presentation Task (Task 3)	**1st Material tools and people:** DVD (video clips), handouts, the online dictionary, the technology (the PowerPoint program), the internet websites, and the partner(s) **2nd People**: The teacher or other peers
3	Reading (Task 5)	**1st Material tools and people**: The online dictionary and the partner(s) **2nd People**: The teacher or other peers

As shown in Table 5.6, the four participants resorted to material tools as well as their partners first, then, if they still had difficulty they would turn to or request help from the teacher or other classmates nearby. The DVDs, handouts, and the online dictionary were popular tools as much as their partners. Perhaps, this pattern of using the tools showed that (1) for the task-based course to be successful, all these tools should be made available and ready for use by students,

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(2) the fact that the students use *their teacher* as *other meditational tool* later (after all other tools fail to help) seemed to make task-based instruction a *true student-centered* approach to communicative language teaching. Even in the case of Joey, who preferred working alone, the teacher as tool was not his priority. Once he had questions after other tools failed to help him, he then turned to the teacher. Table 5.7 showed his tools used in accomplishing the observed tasks:

Table 5.7 Joey's Mediational Tools Used in Accomplishing the Observed Tasks

Time	Tasks	Mediational Tools
1	Conversation Tasks (Task 2)	**1st Material tools**: DVD (video clips), handouts, the online dictionary **2nd People**: The teacher
2	Presentation Task (Task 3)	**1st Material tools**: DVD (video clips), handouts, the online dictionary, technology (the PowerPoint program), and the internet websites **2nd People**: The teacher
3	Reading (Task 5)	**1st Material tools**: The online dictionary **2nd People**: The teacher

(3) That the computer was used often and appeared to be their first tool in many tasks may imply that technology can be very facilitative in task-based instruction, relieving some teaching burdens off the teacher creating a student-centered environment. Despite its negative influence on Joey, who was easily distracted by non-task websites, the computer when used appropriately helped create participants' sense of ownership and creativity such that when they produced their own in making the PowerPoint slides making the task challenging and fun, rather than the fact that it was difficult and time-consuming. This tool obviously *mediated* or helped them overcome the difficulty of the tasks. Asked what task they like the best, some replied:

P: *I like the PowerPoint presentation task the most because it **helped me learn**. It was **the first creation** of my own.*

J: *I like the presentation task because **it was fun**. I never did the Power-Point slides for a presentation before. **I could do it now**.*

B: *I like the presentation task because **it was interesting**. **It made me think in English while composing the English words to say in the presentation.** It also gave me **chances to search for pictures and the English texts** from the internet websites I never did before.*

(Final interview 05/08/09)

Third, it is interesting to observe how important it was for the participants to have other people to help them learn. Even the most proficient learner, Sarah, professed that she needed to have a partner or classmate to consult with or to help her think:

Interviewer: *What caused you do the tasks well?*
S: **Lots of rehearsals**, *then I could remember.*
Interviewer: *Where was the better place to learn, at home or in class?*
S: *Classroom with friends.*
Interviewer: *Why was that?*
S: *Because when I had difficulty, **I could ask or consult my friends**, but at home I could not ask or consult anybody. Lots of rehearsals with my partners made me remember better. Then you needed no notes to hold on to. At least we needed to share ideas to each other. **Two heads are always better than one.***
(Final interview 05/08/09)

This might explain why an independent learner such as Joey missed an important tool that other participants used, that was their partners. This lack of *other regulation* may be the reason for his inability to do four speaking tasks in tests (tasks 1-4) while he could do tasks 5 (reading) and 6 (writing) thanks to other tools that were provided for use. Sometimes he attempted to ask me to rehearse the speaking tasks with him, but as the teacher, I had to give advice to others as well, thus, I could not be there for him all the time he needed and he did not ask peers to help. Since the teacher (as *a tool*) could not help him all the time, he was not able to

remember how to speak in conversation without reading the notes. In other words, he needed

rehearsals or practices with others before he came to the ttsts. This may imply that a key

ingredient in task-based instruction is other regulation. Without interpersonal mediation, learning

cannot happen fully. Being aware of this lack, Joey said in a final interview,

> Interviewer: *Did you get what you wanted from coming to this course*
>
> J: **I don't feel that I have achieved my goal of speaking English yet.** *I got something a little bit here and there, because I came regularly.*
>
> Interviewer: *What do you think was the cause?*
>
> J: **I did not work with others that much**. *If there was any, it was just a little. I preferred working alone. If I did not work with others like rehearsing or acting out in the role play, I don't think I could do it.*
>
> Interviewer: *What made you be able to do some tasks?*
>
> J: *I think it was because of* **the teacher**. *Whenever I didn't understand anything, I can ask her.* **The DVD, CD and handouts were very helpful** *because I could always go back and check them again by myself whenever I needed. However, all tools would become useless, if the teacher did not give us* **the set of tasks** *that I could work on, then I could not perform at all.*
>
> (Final interview 05/08/09)

Thus, for Joey, the sets of tasks, the material tools, and the teacher seemed to enable him

to work on the reading and writing tasks.

Fourth, the tasks also served as teacher's *tools* for students to plan and work on. The

students were well aware of what the teacher assigned: the role plays, the presentation, the phone

message forms to fill in, the business news to summarize, and the writing of a resume´. Thus,

performance on each task was simultaneously the *object* directed at by the students, the *outcome*

of what the students expected once the task was completed. The tasks were really the *tool and

the result*.

Fifth, self mediation using Thai language and gestures as meditational tools to regulate the task was seen in several tasks especially during planning and rehearsing. It was interesting to see that in some conversational tasks, while rehearsing, students stood up, murmuring to themselves, moving, acting and using handshakes in rehearsing as if it was the cue of what to say next in the real role-plays.

> Interviewer: *Why did you handshake every time you rehearsed?*
>
> K: *It was like we practiced and* **we knew what to say next** *after the handshake.*
>
> Interviewer: *So you are saying that making handshakes helped you as cue for what to say next?*
>
> K: *Yes, it was like* **a signal** *when we rehearsed.*
>
> (Post-task interview 04/01/09)

Moreover, in practicing long sentences such as "Don't forget to call me if you need help" or "Could I call you tomorrow to make an appointment?", some students used hand gestures in sequences as cues in remembering what to speak as shown in the following pictures.

Don't forget   to call   me   when you need help.

Could I   call you   tomorrow   to make an appointment?

Some students reported the usefulness of gestures and self-talk as follows;

P: *It helped me **remember** what to say.*

K: *I murmured to myself because **I tried to understand and rehearsed to myself**. It helped with me memorizing the speech and practicing pronunciation. It was like **talking to yourself** before actual rehearsing with friends.*

(Post-task interview 04/01/09)

5.4.4 Division of labor

In this study, *division of labor* refers to how tasks were divided horizontally among and vertically within community members, the relationship of those involved in the completion of tasks.

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The analysis of interview data, the videotape recordings of students' working together on tasks, and my observation notes show that there were 4 types of division of labor in this study, which I categorized as *partnering*, *working individually*, *needing help*, and *needing one another*. All these different types of division of labor contributed to the success of the course differently.

5.4.4.1 Partnering Partnering is defined as pairing with another student, which is a type of division of labor that was seen most often in Kelly and Peggy because they selected to become partners in almost every task. Partnering was very important and was echoed in their final interview;

> Interviewer: *What did you like when you did the tasks?*
>
> K: *I like it when the teacher assigned us to compose the conversation for role plays because I could share ideas with my friend (Peggy). It was fun.* **We exchanged ideas and knowledge**. *For examples, I did not know some parts but my friend (Peggy) knew it. We could share and learn from each other, helping one another to finish the tasks.*
>
> P: *I liked it when Kelly and I were given time to do* **a lot of practice, rehearsing the conversation**. *Kelly and I were very compatible because we were closed friend before this.* **I felt relaxed when working with her**. *We never had any argument or disagreement.*
>
> P: **One part of the reason why I came to class regularly was Kelly.** *Without her coming to class and wanting me to come to class, I would not have wanted to make it.* **It was because I was not a type of easy-to-get-along well with anyone**.

(Final interview 05/08/09)

Partnering was also important for Sarah and Bonnie. When asked what made for a successful task completion in their opinion, the following responses about *friends factor* were found;

S: *Partners are important. I felt good when I was paired with Bonnie more than others because **she cooperated. We helped one another**. I needed someone **to help me think**... thinking together. **She shared her ideas and knowledge.** When I worked with someone (Joey), it was different. He was not attentive to the lessons. He did not care to help. I would feel bad and bored. I would wonder why he did not help.*

B: *For me, **partners** played a very important role in task completion. I knew my English was poor so **pairing** up with the **friend** who was willing **to share wisdom and knowledge was a big help.** For example, Sarah, I could ask her anything. **She did not keep the knowledge just to herself.** I usually I had questions about vocabulary, expressions, what to say, what to do next in certain situations, she shared.*

Interviewer: *Why didn't you ask the teacher?*

B**:** *I was shy. I asked her sometimes, but I did not want to bother her often. She needed to help other students too. So I preferred asking friends. I like Sarah because she was willing to share her knowledge. **And I was glad I could help her too.** We helped one another. It helped me a lot to understand better and complete the tasks.*

(Final interview 05/08/09)

Therefore, having *compatible* friends to work with in tasks seemed essential in task completion for Thai ssudents as they received not only know ledge through shring and exchanging ideas but they also received interpersonal mediation of "*helping me think*".

5.4.4.2 Working individually That the participants were on their own was found in two major events: (1) when the students felt like working on their own either due to personal preference, such as Joey, or for individual practice using creativity on the PowerPoint slides such as Kelly and Peggy in Task 3 (Company Presentation) and (2) when they did the individual presentation task in tests. This type of division of labor had both positive and negative effects. It was negative for Joey, who preferred working alone, because it required rehearsals with partners so as to be

able to perform well on the tasks. Thus, Joey was *a loner*. Other than asking the teacher whenever he had questions with tasks, he rarely asked anybody. From my observation notes, he mostly checked the online dictionary and the handouts or other materials such as DVD and CD for help. If those tools could not help him, he often went off-task. He did not seem to associate with anybody during the break time or during lunch either. This *loner* type of division of labor also had a negative impact on the course. It affected the cooperative atmosphere that I encouraged the participants from the beginning of the course. However, since I allowed participants to work according to their learning style preference, Joey did not see it a requirement from the teacher to work with others. Thus, when he did not do the speaking tasks, he blamed me a little bit as being the cause of his failure, he said,

> J: ***The teacher was not strict at all. She was too relaxed with students****. We could do whatever way we liked. If there was no product, it was okay. If the teacher had been more strict, I might have been more active as required.*
>
> (Final interview 05/08/09)

It appears, therefore, that establishing rules of participation are necessary for ensuring that the division of labor within the activity system is carried out in a productive way.

The positive impact of working individually lied in the fact that in tests the students had to be able to work alone by themselves, thus as time went by, the need to depend on others to work on tasks should be diminished such as what I found from Peggy.

5.4.4.3 Needing help This type of division of labor involved a third person, who was not his or her immediate partner. He or she may be the partner of another classmate, the teacher, or even people outside of class. These individuals were needed for three types of situations: (1) when another student was needed to complete a role play situation such as in Task 1 (Greetings &

Introductions) when someone else had to be introduced to his or her conversation partner. (2) When students felt a need to ask questions when their partner could not provide the answers, they asked the teacher, other classmates, or even telephoned to friends outside class as they were allowed to do so doing task preparation. (3) When they were required to do the real task of calling a hotel to find out the price of a room and its availability. These three situations were all legitimate for asking for outside assistance. I encouraged them to do so because asking for help was natural in real business situations. The participants seemed to really enjoy the freedom and creativity in requesting the outside help. This type of division of labor also helped ease the teaching burden of the teacher, added excitement to the class, and added more opportunities for communicative practices. In my opinion, such an innovative type of division of labor should be included in a task-based course to make it attractive to learners and to make it a success. This innovation seems to support task-based instruction using a sociocultural framework that values human agency other than the tasks themselves. The following excerpts show how students appreciated this type of division of labor.

S: *I like it when the teacher encouraged us to use the language by **doing real telephone calls** to talk in English with the hotel receptionist. It was very exciting. **It helped me remember what I said until now.***

K: *It was fun to do the role-plays with friends from other Schools. **I felt like we were in the real business situations**. I was excited all the time. I am confident that if such situations occurred in my real life, I could do it.*

J: ***The teacher was dependable**. She was around. I could ask her whenever I had questions.*

B: ***The teacher did not leave us to work by ourselves**. She was always there to help us to be able to do the tasks. I feel that I am more able to use the language than before.*

Interviewer: *What did you like from coming to this course?*

 K: *I like the way the teacher gave **immediate feedback**, and I could **learn from mistakes of others**, that the teacher gave feedback.*

 S: ***I could always ask the teacher** when I had difficulty. **No need to fear.***

 (Final interview 05/08/09)

5.4.4.4 Needing one a nother This type of division of labor emerged when participants as combined classes (class A and class B) held a business English exhibition together. With the aim to find a venue for students to use the know ledge learned in class, at the end of the course, I reserved a large room for the public display of *Six How To's in Business English*. The exhibition was not a big success in terms of attraction due to the lack of enough promotion before the event and not many students came to the university during the summer; only about 15-20 visitors for the 4 hours of the display. However, the students were excited when people came and showed their interests in their tasks that were described or displayed on the posters at their stations. Each poster showed English expressions in specific business situations, the how to's such as speaking tips, how to read business news, and how to write a resume´. The students were assigned to stand near the posters and explained them if asked. After the exhibition, students commented;

B: *I was so excited because I needed* **to put the knowledge to real use.**
        I was impressed by the effort of the teacher and other friends.

    J: *The exhibition made me review what I have studied in class and pull out the*
        knowledge to show others. **It gave me opportunities to speak to the public.**
        I was excited seeing that the visitors were interested in my presentation.
        I was also impressed by the effort the teacher put to help us learn.

    K: *What I gained from the exhibition* **was the chance to share what I learned** *from*
        the course. **I felt confident that I could do it**. *I was impressed with all friends (in*
        this exhibition), we came together and helped one another. One time I could not
        answer a question asked by a visitor, **a friend helped me**. *That was what I was*
        impressed with the exhibition.

        (Final interview 05/08/09)

Thus, whole class instruction did not need to be confined to the lecturing by the teacher. Like other types of instruction, there would be times of lecturing for the teacher anyway. However, this type of division of labor was possible for task-based instruction that was designed to involve learners in their own learning and experience. While other types of foreign language

instruction such as the grammar-based instruction may find it difficult to incorporate such an exhibition due to limitation on real life topics. Apart from the learning experience that they gained from the exhibition, through working together as whole class, two interesting points emerged that moved the course to its successful end: (1) each student felt that he or she was an important part of the course and perceived that every part of the course was useful for them, and (2) the relationship between the students and the teacher was well established. These two emergent findings contributed in part to the success of the course. The following tape scripts of the final interview data showed some of the students' opinion towards the teacher. This opinion became an emerging *object* of their goal-directed action of wanting to help the teacher to complete her study at the research site.

> K: *I came regularly **because I wanted to study English and remained active in learning something during the summer** and I wanted to help the teacher complete her research….I came until the end of the course because I was impressed by the teacher's determination to give us knowledge.*

> B: *One of the reasons that kept me coming till the end of the course was the teacher. **She showed that she would really like to help us learn business English other than doing her dissertation**. She always encouraged students to think and learn. **Every time I came, I learned new things.***

> (Final interview 05/08/09)

5.4.5 Rules

In this study, *rules* including behaving properly in class, following task direction (task rules), adhering to the scoring rubrics, and observing business etiquette were found to affect students' task performance minimally and perhaps unconsciously. Through the analysis of the interview

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data and my observation, I found that (1) most participants realized that they were to follow the direction of each task and they seemed to adhere to the business etiquette taught in class. For example, although it was not required in the test, in the role play of welcoming visitors, Kelly remembered to add etiquette such as asking the visitor upon his arrival at the airport whether he needed to make a phone call or to exchange money. However, in the final interview when they were asked if the rules had any influence on the task completion, students did not express a lot of opinion that the rules were important.

> B: *If there were no rules, there would be too much freedom. They were requirements that determine what to do and we had to be able to do accordingly or better.*
>
> J: *They had affected my performance because they were requirements, the conditions that we had to follow. If I did not follow, it would mean I did not do the tasks.*
>
> K: *It helped us understand the same way.*
> P: *Without rules, we might have been drifted off.*
> S: *Rules affected me only a little. They were like boundaries. Without them, I might not have worked in the right direction.*
>
> (Final interview 05/08/09)

In other words, if there were no rules, there would be no boundaries on where to finish and how to complete what should be completed.

(2) The task scoring rubrics did not seem to be recognized as playing a role in students' learning. Due to limited class time, the students did not have many formal chances to use the rubrics to give feedback to one another. When I requested them to give feedback using the rubrics, or when I asked if they wanted feedback from me, they were exhausted of studying for the whole periods and so they declined. My observation was that rubrics looked troublesome to them in many occasions. The students seemed to ignore them as long as they completed the tasks

and everyone looked satisfied. Moreover, to save time, most of the feedback I gave was done verbally rather than on paper using the rubrics themselves. Therefore, the students seem to forget its role or they did not have enough experience with the rubrics to understand their value. In my reflection, participants need to be trained in how to use the rubrics and give scores/comments. I wondered how much more successful this course would be if there were *rules* on giving feedback/comments on the scoring rubrics *on paper regularly* by both the teacher and the students themselves. That is, for the rubrics to serve the function a community rule, they need to be actively and regularly incorporated into instruction and be used to inform the students their scores earned.

5.4.6   Community

Referring to the participants who share the same *object* or class objective, *community* in this study was found to include the teacher, the partners, peers and parents. In an attempt to discover if the university played any *community* role in this task-based instruction, I organized a business exhibition as mentioned previously using university facilities and including the university staff, such as university lecturers at this institute as visitors to the exhibition. However, its role was not recognized by the participants as evidenced by their responses in the final interview.

> Interviewer: *How did the university and its vision of promoting business*
> *English help you succeed in this course and tasks?*
>
> K: ***I did not know there was such a vision,*** *but I don't think it*
> *has anything to do with my coming to this course or the task*
> *performance.*
> B: *No, not at all.* ***I did not study business but I'd like to learn English.***
>
> S and J: *No, not at all.*
>
> (Final interview 05/08/09)

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For Thai students, parental, peer, and teacher supports are important for their lives and can have great impact on their education. Even though participants reported in the interview that their parents had nothing to do with the course completion and success in tasks, I observed that there was some influence. For instance, Sarah's mother encouraged her to come for the delayed post-test, which in fact was not a requirement for her and the letter of reference was written. Another example of the parental influence was Peggy. She could not attend one class because her parents did not allow her due to a political protest near the research site. Bonnie was also warned by her mother not to come home late and her mom used to call me to check if she came to class. Bonnie also discussed the financial support from parents,

B: *They paid me to come to study. That's it.*

(Final interview 05/08/09)

Thus, although parents are not in the immediate classroom community, they seem to play a role in and influence students' orientation to the course.

The teacher played four major roles of being a teacher, a facilitator, a friend as an encourager and a consultant, and a mediator scaffolding their learning. The following were the excerpts of what the participants said about their teacher's roles in meeting their needs.

K: *For me, **the teacher was an encourager**. She always tried to urge us to complete tasks and perform well. When I had questions, she did not answer me right away. She would ask me back some interesting questions to make me think or she let me say what I already knew so that I found the answers out by myself. **She did not blame me when I did not get it right.***

B: *The teacher encouraged me a lot. She wanted us to really be able to do the tasks. She did not just do her research. **She urged us to think, to be active**, to learn, and to remember.*

S: ***The teacher facilitated**. She provided handouts, DVDs, CDs for listening so I could study them by myself. Besides, I could ask her any questions whenever I had difficulty. So I didn't have to figure it out all by myself. I received the advice I needed. No confusion.*

J: *The teacher was the person **who I could ask anything** when I did not understand.*

P: ***The teacher didn't push any pressure on us**. The way she taught was like it was easy. It was like the way a bigger sister would teach her little sister or brother. It made me like to learn. No pressure like you must do this and that. She taught us step by step. I did not feel overwhelmed or confused. **She took care on details but focus on communication not the grammar.***

K: *I like the way **the teacher gave immediate feedback**.*

(Final interview 05/08/09)

According to my observation, peers, which included their partners and other classmates played four major roles similar to a teacher. They encouraged similar to a friend, gave advice similar to a teacher, scaffolded similar to a mediator, shared materials similar to a facilitator when his/her partner was absent the previous class, and shared ideas similar to a consultant. The following were the tape scripts of what the participants said about friend's roles in completing the tasks.

P: *When I composed the conversation with friends (Kelly and Cindy),*
I felt relaxed because we separated to think first and then we
combined thoughts and ideas. It was fun.

J: *I consulted friends but just a little.*

S: *When I paired up with the partner/friend who co-operated or*
*cared to help each other, **I would feel good**. I mean if he (Joey)*
engaged (in helping to do the tasks), not letting me think by
myself, I would not feel bored.

B: *Friends helped me a lot. I am not good at English **so I needed to***
***seek advice from friends** about how to say, or what to do, how I*
used this expression or this sentence.

K: ***Friends were important** because **we needed to share ideas**. There*
was time when at some points I did not know something but my
*friends knew. We exchanged ideas **so as to complete the tasks.***

(Final interview 05/08/09)

In summary, the *community* included the parents, partners and peers, and the teacher. Among these persons, the parental and university support was less tangible and obvious to the students. In other words, community inside class had more influence to participants' task-based performance in this study than the community outside the classroom.

5.5   THE FINDINGS OF SUB-QUESTION D:

MOTIVES, GOALS, AND MOTIVATION

There were five major findings as follows.

First, Five participants had both the same and different motives, which can be grouped into academic motives (AM), social motives (SM), and incentive motives (IM). As time went by, the participants' academic motives (AM) were mostly shifted from the desire to learn *general*

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English c ommunication to the desire to learn more *business task-specific English communication*. However, the busniness majors and non -business majors emphasized different aspects of learning experience. The business majors seemed to assign greater importance to long-termed, skill-oriented accomplishment, whereas the non-business majors emphasized gaining the English language knowledge of vocabulary and conversational expressions. Although there was a tendency of emerging fondness of business English among the non-business majors, they did not perceive the needs for continuing learning it for more skills for professional use. The emerging social motives (SM) seemed to imply the importance of *affect* as related to and sustained the motivation for L2 learning because it can be "the psychological resource to mediate development when learning is embedded in interpersonal context" (Imai, 2007, iii). The incentive motive (IM) seemed to become important when the first two types of motives were not attained as shown in the case of Joey. Moreover, non-business major students seemed to benefit less from the course as their motives and goals did not really align with the course objective.

Second, all participants reported that they were satisfied with the course because their academic motives were fulfilled in different degrees and aspects. Their satisfaction came from two major reasons: (1) their *realized* ability and increasing *confidence* to do certain tasks in both real and imaginary professional situations, and (2) the task-specific, *identifiable* knowledge gained from the course when comparing to the general English courses being offered at the research site. The activity theory analysis also revealed that the participants who could not achieve their academic goals fully were those who had difficulties collaborating with others and perhaps their learning *beliefs* reflected through their *actions* in the course were mismatched with the nature of the task-based course for business purposes rather than their poor proficiency background as in the case of Joey.

Third, business major students with collaborative participation pattern seemed to show more *rigorous* and *detailed*, *business-oriented* (or future oriented) *goal-directed actions* than non-business major collaborative students. The business-major independent student (i.e., Joey) showed business oriented, but *not* rigorous *goal-directed actions*.

Fourth, the analysis of *expressed* goal-directed actions showed that (1) a large number of higher mental functions were found as they were induced by *doing* the tasks, and (2) the same actions may derive from different goals and the same goals may be enacted in different actions.

Fifth, each participant had his or her unique *motivation* pattern, which apparently kept him or her interested in coming to the course in a discursive manner resulting in the course completion as one of the desired *outcomes* according to the objectives of the course.

Finally, the transformation that occurred due to the task-based instruction was evidenced by the changes of *ability* and the stated *beliefs* (i.e., *preferences*) in their language learning.

Below is the detailed description of the findings from data of each participant grouped as business and non-business major students. In this Class B, there were three business majors: Kelly, Peggy, and Joey. The non-business major students were Sarah and Bonnie. (Note: Sarah was not exactly business communication major until the third year, and according to follow-up interview, she did not show specific interest in her initial motives as to study business English per se).

5.5.1   Findings from business-major students

5.5.1.1 Motives Kelly, Peggy, and Joey were students from the same School of Business Administration. Kelly and Peggy majored in International Business Management and Joey in

Marketing. They all came with *some* interest in business English. Table 5.8 shows their initial

motives from the pre-instruction questionnaire data;

Table 5.8 Kelly's, Peggy's, Joey's Initial Motives according to the Pre-Instruction Questionnaires

Types of motives	Kelly's initial motives	Peggy's initial motives	Joey's initial motives
Academic motives	1. To be able to communicate in English in real life.	1. To gain more knowledge and skills in English. 2. To be able to communicate in English in real life 3. To learn **business** English for use in a future job.	1. To be able to communicate in English in real life. 2. To learn **business** English for use in the future job. 3. To gain more knowledge and skills in English.
Social motives	-	1. To be a companion to Kelly.	-
Incentive motives	1. To use the summer time wisely. 2. To save money.	2. To use the summer time wisely.	-

From Table 5.8, at the beginning of the course, Kelly, Peggy, and Joey did not have

business English as their primary motives. From a follow-up interview, Kelly was concerned

more with general English communication, whereas Peggy's main concern was having friends to

study with rather than coming to learn business English *by herself*. Joey was interested in English

communication (i.e., speaking) in particular. Next, I will present each of these 3 business major

students' unique motives, goals, and motivation patterns.

Kelly was a diligent, creative, fun-loving, business-minded student, whose initial

academic motive was about *general* English rather than *specific* tasks in English for business

purposes. Although she said, "*I was interested in the topics of tasks specified in the course

content advertized by the teacher*" (interview on 03/15/09), her stated academic motive at first

did not go beyond general English communication, saying, "*I wanted to be able to communicate

in English with friends in class with good knowledge of English vocabulary and with courage to*

speak. That was enough for me because I am just a first-year student. I did not know if I could

retain the knowledge I learned in this course until the day I graduate" (interview on 03/20/09).

However, after the course, Kelly's motives shifted towards desiring *to learn business*

English tasks, plus *vocabulary and grammar* in tasks, to *use the knowledge gained*, to *share it*

with friends, and *to use her creativity*. She also wanted to *help the teacher* complete her research.

Kelly's motives and trends are summarized in Table 5.9. The *objects* of her interest are

highlighted.

Table 5.9 Kelly's Motives at Two Different Times

	Time 1	Time 2
To learn **English communication skills**	AM	
To use the summer **time** wisely	IM	
To save **money**	IM	
To learn **business English tasks,** to learn- **vocabulary & grammar** & to be **creative**		AM
To **share knowledge** & **learn from friends**		AM & SM
To help the **teacher**		SM

Note: AM = the academic motive, SM = the social motive, IM = the incentive motive

At the end of the course, not only that her initial academic motives were fulfilled, Kelly

also perceived the social and other academic benefits of the course. To summarize Kelly's

preference in the course, Table 5.10 shows how her needs were fulfilled *after* the course together

with the course comparison. Interesting points are underlined.

Table 5.10 Kelly's Motives before the Course and the Course Comparison

Kelly's motives *before* the course	Whether her motives were fulfilled *after* the course
1. To be able to communicate in English in real life. (I wanted to communicate in class with good knowledge of English vocabulary and with courage to speak).	1. Yes, and now I am able to communicate in certain specific tasks and situations with confidence, not only in class but in real life too.
2. To use the summer time wisely. The course is free of charge.	2. Yes. My time was well-spent and I would pay if it was charged.
The Comparison	
The Regular English course	The Task-based Business English course
1. It was about the general language knowledge, thus it was not practical. It cannot be used in real life.	1. It was about interesting distinct tasks and it was a practical course that can be used in real/future life.
2. It was easy to forget the knowledge gained.	2. I could remember better the knowledge in tasks.
3. It was quite like spoon-feeding.	3. It was about scaffolding and learning from friends and the feedback given by the teacher.
4. It required less time.	4. It required more time.
	5. The tasks were fun and challenging. I could use my creativity.
	6. There were opportunities to learn from friends.
	7. There were opportunities to learn new English grammar and vocabulary.
	8. There were more opportunities of practices English incorporating both old and new knowledge.

Kelly was changed from being *unable* to being *able* to do most business tasks in this course, (except the Reading Business News Task 5), with *confidence* to communicate in English "*not only in class, but also in real life*". Other interesting quotes from Kelly's interviews are presented as follows;

> K: *I preferred the task-based course because the general English course did not offer* **practical knowledge that I could put into use in my real life**, *or when the time comes for me to use the knowledge I would forget, but* **the task-based course could help me remember better** *the knowledge learned.*

Interviewer: *What in this course helped you remember better?*

K: ***Activities*** *and* ***practices,*** *and* ***in-front-of-the-class performance****.
In the general English courses, I did not perform, I just listened
and followed a course book. It was like I did not have to think
at all. I was only spoon-fed. While in this course,* ***the teacher did not give
answers right away, but she asked questions to make us think****. She also
showed that there were many ways to say and use the language. I got the
chance to make it right.*

Interviewer: *Did you get what you wished for from coming to this course?*

K: *I did, and I also got something else…For example, if someone
assigned me to receive guests from the airport,* ***I think I can do it****.
At first, I only desired to be able to communicate in English in
general, but now in* ***the task specific situations****, I think I can do it.
I have* ***more confidence****…I also liked* ***sharing ideas with friends****. I
learned a lot from my partners and other classmates. I wanted to
study* ***grammar*** *too, and the teacher taught it such as* ***tenses and how
to pronounce the*** **ed-ending***. I liked it.*

Interviewer: *What made you keep coming, I mean, coming regularly?*

K: *The content that was* ***task-specific****. It was* ***interesting and
challenging****. I did not want to stay home doing nothing productive.
Now I could do lots of tasks with confidence. Besides, I wanted
to* ***help the teacher*** *complete her research.*

Interviewer: *What if the course was charged, would you take the course?*

K: *I would. First the name of the course is interesting. It is about* ***business
English tasks which will certainly be useful for me as business student.
I can put the knowledge of English that I learned into real use in the
future****. If the teacher did not teach this summer, my knowledge would have
been stagnant. I learned lots of things,* ***using English*** *that I learned and
practicing it a lot*, gaining* ***new vocabularies and expressions****.*

Interviewer: *Any comments would you like to add so that this course would be
improved?*
K: *Only about* ***the time****. Some tasks needed some more time.*

(Final interview 05/08/09)

To summarize, Kelly preferred task-based course in the way that it helped her to *be able to do* the task with confidence and with memory of the *practical knowledge* that she could use in the future. Some of the knowledge that she could identify were specific tasks-related knowledge, vocabularies, grammar, and business expressions.

Peggy was a progress-oriented, action-oriented, business-minded student, whose initial motives included *business English* but her academic motive was not strong enough to come to join the course by herself. However, after the course, Peggy's motives shifted towards desiring *to practice business English tasks to be able to do the tasks individually*, to continue *using the knowledge gained*, and to *learn from friends*. She also wanted to *help the teacher* complete her research. Peggy's motives and trends are summarized in Table 5.11. The *objects* of her interest are highlighted.

Table 5.11 Peggy's Motives at Two Different Times

	Time 1	Time 2
To come along with **friends**	SM	
To learn general **English** & **business English**	AM	
To use summer **time** wisely	IM	
To learn the **business English tasks** & continue to use the knowledge gained **through practices**		AM
To continue learning from **friends**		AM & SM
To help the **teacher**		SM

Note: AM = the academic motive, SM = the social motive, IM = the incentive motive

Peggy started the course with all kinds of motives. At the end, she not only stated that her initial academic motives were fulfilled, but she also perceived the benefits of *doing* and *practicing* the business English tasks, desired to learn from friends, and came to help the teacher. Peggy's preference in the course was summarized from the interview data in Table 5.12.

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Table 5.12 Peggy's Motives before the Course and the Course Comparison

Peggy's motives *before* the course	Whether her motives were fulfilled *after* the course
1. To gain more knowledge and skills in English.	1. Yes. Now I am <u>able to communicate in specific tasks</u> and <u>real situations</u> with <u>confidence</u>.
2. To be able to communicate in English in real life.	2. Yes. I realized that the task were not that difficult if we determined to learn.
3. To learn business English for use in a future job.	3. Yes. All tasks would be useful for my future. <u>I could use the skills in real business situations</u>. Now I really knew what I could make use of English.
4. To be a companion to Kelly.	4. Yes.
5. To use the summer time wisely.	5. Yes. It was worth the time spent & the effort.
The comparison	
The Regular English course	The Task-based Business English course
1. I did not really understand some of the *general* language knowledge taught in class.	1. I <u>really understood the business situations</u> and how to <u>do</u> the tasks by myself.
2. It was easy to forget, I needed to review again at home so as to remember.	2. <u>I remembered due to practices and performance.</u> There was no need to review that much before exam.
3. I could not identify specifically about what I learned.	3. <u>I knew what I knew</u> (or learned) and was <u>able to do the tasks.</u>
4. I was not taught business etiquettes or the knowledge gained on how to communicate in English was not as complete as a task should be.	4. I knew <u>more than the simple English knowledge</u>. I knew how to do the beginning until the end of the tasks taught.
5. I did not need to perform, just sat and listened to lectures.	5. I learned from <u>doing, performing, and practices</u>.

Similar to Kelly, Peggy was changed from being *unable* to *able* to do certain tasks (except the Reading Business News Task 5). She also gained *confidence* and *understanding* from being able to do the tasks *by herself.* Some interesting quotes from Peggy's interview are presented as follows;

    Interviewer: *What motivated you to do the task today?*

        P: *I would like to complete the task the teacher assigned and see whether I could improve myself. **I would like to be able to do it, not just only to pass the test***.

    Interviewer: *Would you do it differently if you had another chance?*

        P: *Yes, if I had **another chance**, I don't want to depend on anybody. I would like to **do it by myself without having to consult anyone***.

Interviewer: *Why?*

P: *If I could do it again, **I want to do it better** and do it by myself because **in real life**, if I have to do the task, **I won't have any friends** beside me.*

At the end of the course, Peggy stated,

Interviewer: *How much did you benefit from the course?*

P: ***I benefited a lot**. For example, at first **the Company Presentation Task** looked very difficult, but **after I did try doing it**, **I could do it**. It might not be very good but I could do it. **The Introduction Task** was another example. Before coming to this course, inside my head, **I knew only some expressions** like "hello", "good morning", that's it. The fact is now I knew more than these. Besides, before coming to this course, I didn't know any business etiquette such as how to address people in business contexts. **Now I learned a lot**.*

Interviewer: *If you can choose, which type of English course do you prefer, the regular English course or the task-based course ?*

P: ***I prefer the task-based course** because **I had chances to practice or to really do the tasks, so I could do them. But you have to be courageous to perform.** Once you try it (dong the tasks), **you will know you can do it**. It is unlike just listening to the lectures and imagine that you know it, but in fact you can't do the tasks at all.*

Interviewer: *If you can choose, which type of English course do you prefer, the regular English course or the task-based course ?*

P: ***I prefer the task-based course** because **I had chances to practice or to really do the tasks, so I could do them. But you have to be courageous to perform.** Once you try it (dong the tasks), **you will know you can do it**. It is unlike just listening to the lectures and imagine that you know it, but in fact you can't do the tasks at all.*

Interviewer: *If the task-based course is open for students to register next semester, will you take it?*

P: *It is likely that I will take it, because I want to **continue using the knowledge gained** from this **course to put it to perform again**. I don't want that the knowledge gained be just inside my head, **but I want to practice, so that I can actually do it in my real life when the time comes.***

Interviewer: *Were you satisfied with the course?*

P: ***I was very satisfied***. *Partly because **I can use the skills and knowledge gained in this course into real life situations**. First, **it changed me from having little basic knowledge of English to now I do have it.** I still don't know much, **but I know what I know.** Besides, **the course made me use the knowledge that I used to have** but I never put it into real use to really utilize it....I also liked **the feedback** the teacher gave us after the performance, so we knew what areas we should improve ourselves immediately.*

Interviewer: *So did you get what you expected from the course?*

P: ***Yes,*** *although I haven't yet spoken English like 100% fluently, but **I think I came up to the level that I felt really ok about it**. **I could do Introductions, and the Company Presentation. I knew I could do it.***

Interviewer: *What do you think enabled you to do the tasks?*
P: *It was because **I did practice speaking a lot** and I reviewed before the tests. The tests are not like normal tests. **You had to have real understanding in what you are speaking**. In regular classes, I had to memorize a lot, but in this course, **I had to perform, so I need to think a lot. I could not just memorize.** So I had to really understand the situations **so as to be able to speak** in the situations.*

Interviewer: ***Any comments*** *would you like to add so that this course would be improved?*
P: *Some tasks may be **a bit too difficult for some students**. But for me, **I'm ok with it (the course) because I wanted to learn and I enjoyed it because I had a chance to improve what I never could do before**. The course might not be good for those who don't want to or don't like to perform. Then, it might become difficult for them. I think if we determine to do something useful and try, we will not think that it is too difficult.*

(Final interview 05/08/09)

To summarize, Peggy preferred task-based course because she realized that *doing* the tasks was not that difficult and she could master them by *trying (i.e., taking risks), performing* and *practicing*. She could also identify specific knowledge gained from doing the tasks with *understanding* not just memorizing.

Joey was an independent, easily-distracted, business major, who came to class with his interest in the course content. The fact that his close friend could not make it after the first day and that he attended the class regularly conveyed that he was actually interested in the course. Finally, Joey's motives shifted from the desire to learn *how to speak English* to wanting to *learn business English tasks*. His social motive of coming to help the teacher also emerged as time went by with more *participation* and *involvement* in the course such as at class make-up time decisions during the political unrest in Thailand and at the preparation for the exhibition. Perhaps he realized that the course was useful for him as a business student, thus it was deemed worthy of time invested. The incentive motive that was emerged may be due to his desire to gain a tangible reward for his effort. His motives and trends are summarized in Table 5.13.

Table 5.13 Joey's Motives at Two Different Times

	Time 1	Time 2
To learn (business) **English speaking skill**	AM	
To continue learning **business English tasks**		AM
To help the **teacher**		SM
To receive **a letter of reference**		IM

Note: AM = the academic motive, SM = the social motive, IM = the incentive motive

At the end, his social motive did not yet include *friends* perhaps due to his independent style of learning preference. I did not help him see the benefits of working together that much. Finally, he desired to have a letter of reference, an incentive motive, which was not among his initial motive.

Interestingly, Joey realized the usefulness of the task-based course to the point that he compared the course with *a sport training session* that skipping a class would mean a lack of the benefit of that task or session. He was also satisfied with the course in the way that it gave him

practical knowledge about business practices that he could use in the future. Despite his preference in task-based course, as shown in Table 5.14, his *main* initial academic motive was *not* fulfilled *after* the course.

Table 5.14 Joey's Motives before the Course and the Course Comparison

Joey's motives *before* the course	Whether his motives were fulfilled *after* the course
1. To be able to communicate in English in real life.	1. No, <u>I am not yet able to speak</u> in English well as expected.
2. To learn business English for use in the future job.	2. Yes, <u>I learned business etiquettes, business culture, patterns, and expressions.</u>
3. To gain more knowledge and skills in English.	3. Yes, <u>I gained new knowledge</u> that I could use in real life situations.
The comparison	
The Regular English course	The Task-based Business English course
1. It was easier.	1. It was <u>harder</u> and required lots of effort.
2. It was not practical for future use.	2. It was <u>practical, useful for the future</u>.
3. There were lots of students in class, which reduced the time for practices and caused lots of distraction. I could not concentrate.	3. <u>The tasks helped me practice and rehearse,</u> With small number of students helped me attend to the lessons with more concentration.
4. It was easy to forget.	4. The tasks <u>helped me remember due to</u> the <u>doing of the tasks</u>.
5. I did not understand some lessons. I lost interest easily because the lessons were not specific to my interest, and I could catch up with the lessons by myself later or at home, if I want to.	5. Each task had its own beginning and end and the course was divided <u>by topics</u>. <u>I did not want to be absent.</u> I used to be absent once, and it was not easy to catch up or it was like I lost the total benefits from that lesson because the teacher would not return to the previous lesson.

Other interesting quotes from Joey's interview data are presented as follows;

Asked why he decided to join the course, Joey replied:

> J: *When the teacher came to my class to advertise her course, I was interested. **The course content was about something I could use in the future**. I would like to be able **to speak English**.*
>
> Interviewer: *Did you get what you wished for from coming to this course?*
>
> J: ***No. Not yet**. I would like to **be better in English speaking**.*
>
> Interviewer: *Do you know the reasons why?*
>
> J: *Because of the computer in front of me. **It distracted me**.*

Interviewer: *What was something that you obtained from coming to the course?*

J: *I learned more than the beginning **such as the speaking etiquettes in business settings, the cultural differences**, and **how to position myself** in business communication.*

Interviewer: *What kept you interested in coming to this course?*

J: ***The tasks were fun, such as the Company Presentation**.*

Interviewer: *Why?*

J: ***I never made PowerPoint slides before**. Now **I could do it**. I could use my **own creativity**.*

Interviewer: *What else motivated you to come?*

J: *I liked that the lessons the teacher taught were **task-specific**. It was like I had undergone **sport training sessions**. **If I skipped a class, it means I would miss a how-to for that task**. It was something **I could not study by myself at home even though I had all the materials**. Some tasks like **writing the resume´** would certainly be useful for my future.*

Interviewer: *Did you feel that pairing up with friends had any benefits?*

J: *Yes, I saw the benefit, but frankly **I still preferred working alone** if I could choose. **I would like to have freedom in thinking**.*

Interviewer: *What helped you be able to do the tasks?*

J: *First, **I came to class regularly**. Second, I could always ask **the teacher**. Whenever I had difficulty, I asked the teacher.*

Interviewer: *What about friends?*

J: ***I consulted them from time to time**, a little here and there. **More friends meant more distractions** because the class looked confused.*

Interviewer: *Did you see any benefits from having a partner to work with?*
J: ***Yes, but I still preferred to work independently**, but I knew I did not have enough background knowledge to work independently.*

Interviewer: *Did you feel satisfied with this course?*

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J: Y*es, **very much to the most***.

Interviewer: *Why?*

J: *First, **I could use my creativity** like using technology with the PowerPoint. Second, **I like freedom**. Nobody forced me to learn. Third, **the knowledge I gained from this course will be useful for use in real life** such as the business concepts in conversation. Although I did not practice or rehearse as I should have done in class, I think **I could remember something I could take to use**. For example, last week, I was introduced to a friend of a friend of mine. He is an American. **I could use some expressions that the teacher taught. I didn't make a fluent conversation and I was not sure if I was correct, but I could do it**. The tasks that the teacher told us to perform in front of the class were still **memorable.***

Interviewer: *What role did you see yourself in this course?*
J: *I saw that I was **a receiver**, and the teacher was **the giver**. I did my duty.*

Interviewer: *Anything else you would like to add?*

J: *I wonder if the teacher would give me **a letter of reference** because I did not complete every task on the test.*

Interviewer: ***Any comments** would you like to add so that this course would be improved?*
J: ***The teacher** should be stricter with her teaching and the assignments. **Some tasks were too difficult** for the first year especially Tasks 5 and 6. **The first four tasks are ok for me.***

(Final interview 05/08/09)

According to his interview, the speaking tasks (Task 1-4) were not that difficult for Joey. His independence style of learning causing lack of rehearsing with friends seemed to be the major reason that affected his inability to perform the speaking tests.

Although, like Kelly and Peggy, Joey perceived the usefulness of the course for his future, he could not identify what he gained in terms of *the ability* to do the tasks. His satisfaction did not come from the ability to do the tasks, but rather with the knowledge of

business expressions and etiquettes gained from his attendance. Nevertheless, he found the course *more memorable* due to performance in class than he could from the normal courses; thus, it was worth the effort to attend the class regularly. However, his language leorning *beliefs* seemed to mismatch with the nature of the course. They were the beliefs that (1) regular attendance would lead to learning the tasks, (2) he could not study well with others due to his poor English background, so he chose to study alone, and (3) he perceived that he was just a receiver coming to receive the knowledge from the teacher. These three beliefs seemed to mismatch with the nature of task-based course, in which participation means more than regular attendance and coming to receive the knowledge input. It involves task engagement and taking risks to do the tasks with others in the community of practice. According to my observation, his poor self esteem seemed to play a role in leading him into being an independent learner, since it may have caused the lack of self confidence to pair up with others, which kept him in the cycle of having poor self esteem and furthering the lack of self confidence. These *beliefs*, found in no other participants who completed the course, may explain why he could not move into *full* participation to benefit *fully* from the course.

5.5.1.2 Goals <u>Kelly</u>'s *goals* and actions that emerged due to the course were shown in Table 5.15.

Table 5.15 Kelly's Goal-Directed Actions

Tasks	Actions	Goals
Task 2 Welcoming Visitors	1. I spoke in the dialogue more than what was required by the teacher.	1. To make it complete and <u>more like a real-life conversation.</u>
	2. I reviewed, practiced, and rehearsed again.	2. To enhance the memory about what to speak in the conversation so as to speak with <u>real understanding</u> rather than memorizing.
	3. I and my friend(s) helped each other compose the conversation.	3. <u>To select the best ideas/language</u>, to share ideas/language, to learn from others, and to complete the task in time.
	4. I asked the teacher when I did not understand.	4. <u>To seek advice on vocabulary</u> and feedback.
	5. I viewed the model examples from the DVD and studied from the handouts.	5. <u>To understand</u> the patterns of the situations, the gestures, the tone, and the business etiquettes as well as to practice listening and imitate pronunciation.
	6. I read the conversational rules.	6. To understand correctly the etiquette of a business conversation.
Task 3 Company Presentation	1. I attended to the detailed requirement of the task such as how to start and end.	1. To make <u>a professional and to complete business presentation</u> using proper language.
	2. I remembered to use the connecting words.	2. To make <u>a well-flowed presentation.</u>
	3. I selected the pictures from the internet websites.	3. To make an interesting, <u>professional company presentation</u>**.**
Task 5 Reading Business News	1. I read the news several times.	1. <u>To familiarize myself</u> with the business news so as to really understand it and its main ideas.
	2. I listened to the feedback and corrected my answers.	2. <u>To learn from the mistakes</u> of myself and others to correct the mistakes I did.

From Table 5.15, Kelly's *goals* were quite detailed and oriented towards real-life business situations. For example, when she spoke in the dialogue more than what was required by the teacher, her goal was to make it complete and make it more like a real-life conversation. Other goals were also real life-oriented such as to speak with real understanding rather than memorizing, to select the best language, to understand the business etiquettes, and to make a

well-flowed, professional presentation. Interestingly, a large number of higher mental functions were found such as *selected/voluntary attention* when she and her partner selected the best ideas/language to compose the dialogue. It was *logical memory* when she rehearsed to enhance her memory of what to speak in the conversation so as to speak with real understanding. The *formation of concepts* was found when she viewed model conversations from the DVD to understand the conversation patterns, the gestures used, the tone of voice, and to imitate the pronunciation. It was *reasoning* when she attended to the detailed requirement of the presentation task such as how to start and to end the presentation with proper language.

Similar to Kelly, <u>Peggy</u>'s *goals* were quite detailed and real-life oriented. Table 5.16 showed Peggy's goal-directed actions.

Table **5.16** Peggy's Goal-Directed Actions

Tasks	Actions	Goals
Task 2 Welcoming Visitors	1. I composed the dialogue according to my understanding.	1. <u>To be able to remember</u> my dialogue to present it professionally with fluency.
	2. I rehearsed according to the understanding of *concepts* gained from my composition.	2. <u>To enhance my memory</u> about what to speak in the conversation so as to speak <u>with real understanding</u>.
	3. I did the task according to the teacher's advice.	3. <u>To be able to do the task</u>, to know if I could improve my ability.
	4. I consulted my partner and tried by myself.	4. To seek advice on ideas, concepts, grammar, and vocabulary.
	5. I used my prior knowledge.	5. To complete the task well.
	6. I used the DVD and handouts.	6. To really understand <u>the concepts</u> of what should be spoken and <u>how properly</u>.
	7. I rehearsed with my sister at home.	7. To have it <u>internalized</u> into my head.
Task 3 Company Presentation	1. I attended to the detailed requirement of the task.	1. To complete the task as required.
	2. I searched and selected the online information and pictures.	2. To make <u>professional</u> slides according to the <u>business practice</u>.
	3. I shared ideas and rehearsed with my partner.	3. To really understand <u>the concept of business presentation</u>.
Task 5 Reading Business News	1. I checked the dictionary for the unknown words.	1. To translate and understand the new words that appeared in the news.
	2. I listened to the feedback and corrected my answers.	2. To learn from the mistakes of myself and others <u>for future improvement</u>.

Like Kelly, Peggy's *goals* were largely aligned with business practices such as to present the role-play professionally, to really understand the concepts of business presentation, and to learn from others for future language improvement. Interestingly, many actions were like higher mental functions such as when Peggy composed and rehearsed her own dialogue according to her real understanding of the concepts of the task, it was the *formation of concepts and logical memory.* In Task 3 no. 2 was *voluntary attention, reasoning, and analysis* when Peggy searched and selected the online information to make slides according to business practices. When she consulted her partner to seek advice on ideas, concepts, grammar, and vocabulary, it was *metacognitive problem solving* and *reasoning.* When she rehearsed with her sister so as to put it into her head, it seemed like she was trying to *internalize* it, the how-to speak with business *concept formation.*

Joey's *goals* that emerged due to the tasks were summarized in Table 5.17.

Table 5.17 Joey's Goal-Directed Actions

Tasks	Actions	Goals
Task 2 Welcoming Visitors	1. I watched the DVD and studied the handout.	1. To understand the situations and to complete the task.
	2. I paid attention.	2. To understand the lessons.
	3. I performed in front of the class.	3. To check my understanding of the task & to have experience of doing the task.
	4. I read from my note in the performance	4. To remember the English words used in the conversation and to complete the task.
Task 3 Company Presentation	1. I made the slides.	1. To understand the lesson, to learn how to do the PowerPoint slides for the business presentation.
	2. I composed the language on slides	2. To complete the task as required.
	3. I presented in front of the class	3. To check my understanding of the task & to have experience of doing the task.
Task 5 Reading Business News	1. I checked the online dictionary for new vocabulary	1. To be able to translate and improve my understanding.
	2. I summarized the news.	2. To complete the task for the future

It was found from Table 5.17 that most of Joey's goals were business oriented but they were not varied and mostly geared towards *to understand the lessons and complete the tasks*. However, through learning and completing the tasks, Joey would probably used varieties of strategies such as *voluntary attention* (in selecting words and slides in the Company Presentation Task), *reasoning* (in the conversation and speech composition), *formation of concepts* (in writing a resume´), *meta-cognitive problem solving* (in summarizing the news) and *analysis* (in understanding the news and summarizing the main ideas).

In summary, for business major students (1) the large number of *higher mental functions* was found in goal-directed actions, although Joey did not show rigorous goals and actions perhaps due to his independent learning style, while Kelly and Peggy had *goal-directed actions* that aligned with business practices and involved friends such as learning, sharing ideas, and seeking advice from peers. (2) The same actions may derive from different goals. For example, Kelly and Peggy attended to the detailed requirement of the task, but Kelly did that to make a *professional* business presentation; whereas Peggy was just *to complete the task* as required. In the similar vein, the same goals may be enacted in different actions. For example, to understand the lessons, Kelly and Joey viewed the model examples from the DVD and handouts, whereas Peggy shared ideas and rehearsed with friends. The task-based course not only offered affordances for varieties of actions and goals as long as the tasks are completed, but it also induced varieties of higher mental functions that lead to language learning through mediation.

5.5.1.3 Motivation According to activity theory, motivation is motive + goal + participation, I came up with Kelly, Peggy, and Joey's motivation patterns, which can be summarized in Figures 5.4, 5.5, and 5.6 respectively.
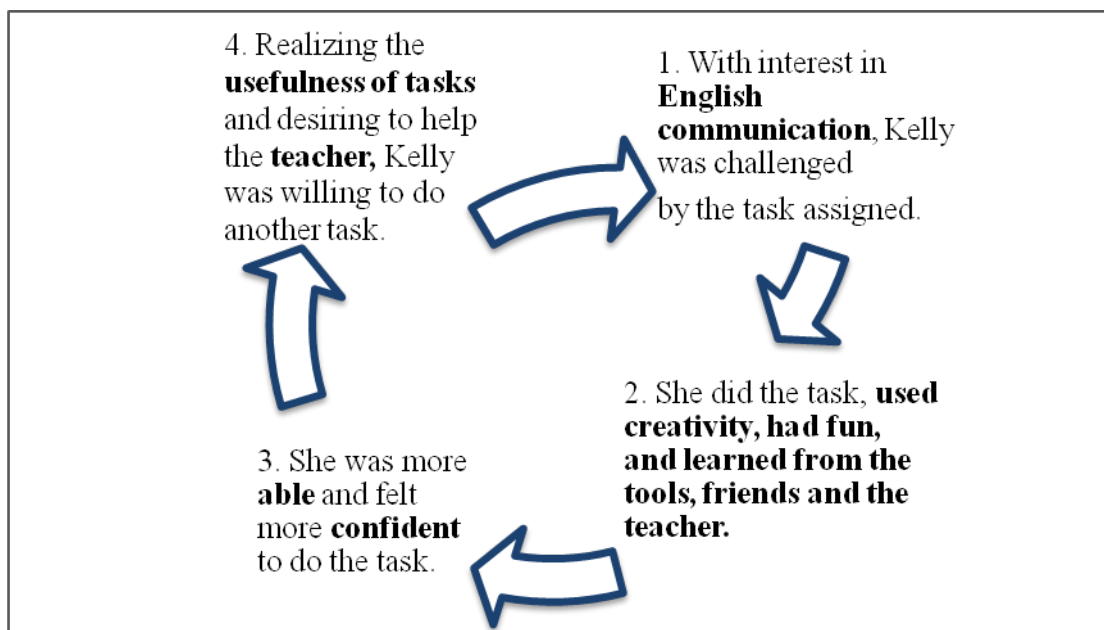
Figure 5.3 Kelly's Discursive Motivational Pattern

For Kelly, the *doing* of tasks led her to have fun, use creativity, and learning with and from others, leading to *the ability* and *confidence,* which kept her motivated to participate in the course. The objects of her learning included the use of creativity, having fun, and learning from tools as well as the teacher.
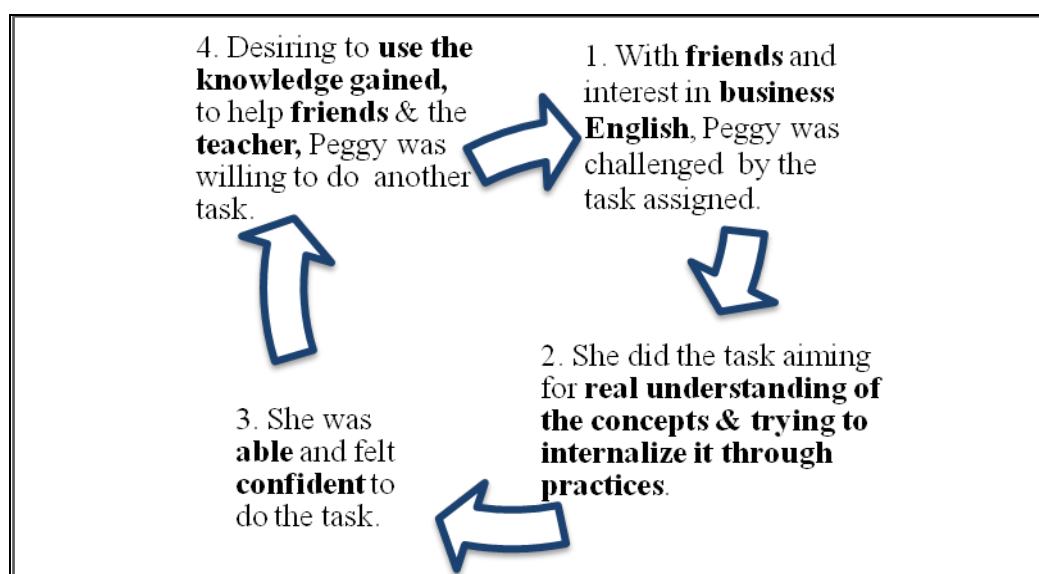
Figure 5.4 Peggy's Discursive Motivational Pattern

Peggy was first motivated by friends of the same academic interest in business English. Thus, she had both *academic* and *social motives*. Then, she did the tasks mostly with the mediation of *practices* in and outside class, her community of practice, aiming for *internalization* rather than *memorization*. The objects of her learning included the real understanding of concepts, the practices with friends and learning from tools as well as the teacher. Like Kelly, the results were *ability* and *confidence* in doing the tasks.
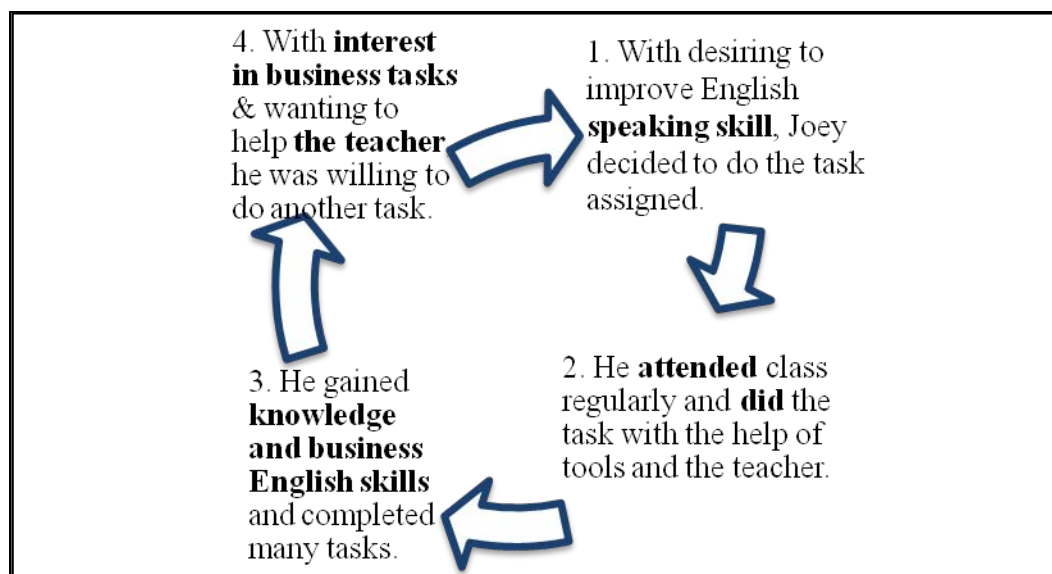
Figure 5.5 Joey's Discursive Motivational Pattern

Joey was interested first in speaking English, then after realizing the benefits of doing the tasks and learning about the tasks, he attended the class regularly. With the help of material tools and teacher, he moved *gradually* although *not fully* into the community of practice. The result was that he could complete the course like others, even though he missed the speaking tests. The emerged incentive and social motive seemed to help sustain his regular attendance and assisted him to overcome the difficulty of tasks and eventually completed the course. The objects of his

learning included the knowledge of business English and skills gained through learning from doing the tasks, tools as well as the teacher.

On the whole, for most business major students, motives and goals as well as motivation patterns seemed aligned with the course objectives yielding desirable results in the increase of average scores mostly gained and retained as well as the motivation that kept them coming until the course completion. They were also transformed from lacking confidence to having confidence, from not knowing to knowing, and from not being able to being able to do the tasks. They also tended to prefer learning English for business from the task-based instruction than the regular courses being offered at the research site.

5.5.2 Findings from non-business major students

5.5.2.1 Motives Sarah and Bonnie were non-business major students in Class B. Sarah considered herself an English major and Bonnie, a student from the School of Communication Arts majoring in Broadcasting, never thought of herself benefiting from the course as a business student. Asked if the university's vision of promoting business English influenced her in her motive to complete the course, Bonnie responded in the final interview, "*I never planned to do any business*". Table 5.18 shows Sarah's and Bonnie's initial motives prior to the instruction.

Table 5.18 Sarah's and Bonnie's Initial Motives as Stated in the Pre-Instruction Questionnaires

Types of motives	Sarah's initial motives	Bonnie's initial motives
Academic motives	1. To learn **business** English for use in a future job. 2. To gain new knowledge and skills in English. 3. To prepare oneself for the next semester.	1. To gain more knowledge and improve skills in English. 2. To be able to communicate in English in real life.
Social motives	1. To meet old and new friends.	_
Incentive motives	1. To use the summer time wisely. 2. To receive a letter of reference.	_

While Bonnie came for general English improvement, Sarah's initial motives included business English and other types of motives. However, in the follow-up interview, Sarah was actually interested in learning anything she never learned before about English, which was better than doing nothing at home. She might have been atttracted to the course by the advertisement about business English course, which was something related to her major in the future not her future professional life. Next, I will present the unique motives, goals, and motivation patterns of Sarah and Bonnie respectively.

Sarah was a proficient English major, non-business student, who came regularly. Her pronunciation and grammar were better than others in the same class. Her initial motives included all three types of motives: academic, social, and incentive. From the interview data, however, her real motive was actually to fill her free time and learn some new knowledge of English for her major. Thus, her academic motive was not actually business-oriented. At the end, she was satisfied with the course in the way that it helped her know more and get ahead of other friends who did not make it to this course rather than the satisfaction from the ability to use English in real life for business purposes. She also wanted to help the teacher complete her research. Her motives and trends are summarized in Table 5.19.

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Table 5.19 Sarah's Motives at Two Different Times

Sarah's Motives	Time 1	Time 2
To use summer **time** wisely	AM	
To learn **new knowledge of English**	AM	
To get **a letter of reference**	IM	
To continue to learn **business English tasks** & to **share** the knowledge with friends		AM & SM
To **get ahead** of future classmates		IM
To help the **teacher**		SM

Considering that she did not have a close friend in this class, Sarah's social motive with friends emerge as the result of her experience in doing the tasks with friends. Thus, her social motive was related to language learning rather than social gathering. Like Kelly, Joey, and Peggy, her desire to help the teacher seemed to come from her sense of gratitude in returning help to the teacher. Undeniably, the desire to help the teacher sustained their motivation, helping them overcome the difficulty of tasks, thus, having some influence on their decision to complete the course. As for Sarah's preference in the task-based course, Table 5.20 shows whether her initial motives were fulfilled *after* the course and the comparison between two courses.

Table 5.20 Sarah's Motives before the Course and the Course Comparison

Sarah's motives *before* the course	Whether her motives were fulfilled *after* the course
1. To learn business English for use in a future job.	1. Yes. The knowledge I gained from the course **was something I wanted to know** and I never knew before so my English knowledge is increased. I learned from all tasks.
2. To gain new knowledge and skills in English.	2. Yes. I **learned many new things** from the course.
3. To prepare oneself for the next semester.	3. Yes. I think I could use the knowledge from the course for use in **other future courses in my major** and I felt like **I got ahead of other classmates**.
4. To use the summer time wisely.	4. Yes.
5. To receive a letter of reference.	5. Yes.
6. To meet old and new friends.	6. Yes.
The comparison	
The Regular English course	The Task-based Business English course
1. I gained more grammar and vocabulary.	1. It is about speaking and conversation. I got **something stored up in my head for use in the future** because **it was business task-specific** or organized **by topics or tasks**. I gained new knowledge that I did not gain from the regular course. **It would be useful for my future**.
2. It was a basic easier course.	2. **It required more effort**. I could not be lazy. Some tasks such as the Presentation and the Resume were **quite too difficult** for the first-year students.

According Table 5.20, although Sarah liked task-based instruction, it was not attractive to her the way it did with business major students. While she realized the usefulness of tasks for her future, she still needed the short-term goal of gaining more grammar and vocabulary as the normal courses offered her. Thus, she stated that what she received from the task-based course could be used for other courses in her major and she felt that she got ahead of others rather than thinking that the benefits from the course could be used for her professional life as a Business Communication major. Perhaps, Sarah's first-year thinking or belief did not yet align with her major, or she was not made aware that task-based course was related to her major.

Some interesting interview quotes by Sarah are presented as follows;

Interviewer: *What was your main motive in coming to join the course?*

S: *I would like to **learn new things** that I never learned before. The course **content looked interesting** because I never learned all those topics before. It may help me **to prepare myself better for the next semester.** They are not too difficult and I could make use of some tasks in real life.*

Interviewer: *Did you get what you wished for from the course?*

S: *Yes, definitely. **I did learn a lot especially from the speaking tasks**. In fact, in some tasks like greetings and introductions, I used to study in normal English courses, **but it was not as deep and thorough** as in this course. **It made me know more than my other classmates**, who did not join this course. It is like you **get started before others**.*

Interviewer: *Did you feel satisfied with the course?*

S: *I feel satisfied because it is a good course. I never studied them before. I will have to study them again in the third year. **At least I have something prepared for future semesters. It also made me know more than other friends. Something in** the course is also practical. **I could use the knowledge for a future job such as writing a resume**. You could pull it out and study how to write one again in the future. Working with **friends** is also fun and **we learned from each other sharing ideas**.*

Interviewer: *What made you gain what you wish for?*

S: ***I came regularly**. I can review by myself.*

Interviewer: *What kept you coming to class regularly?*
S: ***My mom also told me to come and help the teacher.***

(Final interview 05/08/09)

It seemed that Sarah did not really feel interested in the course. Moreover, her social motive here was not necessarily to have a relationship with the teacher or other students in class, but to comply to her mother's encouragement.

Interviewer: *Anything else that made you keep coming to the course?*

S: ***It is something related to my major. When I graduate, I can say I have some tangible that I could make use of.***

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Interviewer: *Could you tell what you received from the course that you said useful and you achieved your goals?*

S: *Yes, **the welcoming visitors, the telephone conversation, the introduction, the news reading and other vocabularies that I can use in the future.***

Interviewer: *Why did you always do better the second time?*

S: *Because I wanted to gain new knowledge, and I did. **Once I came, I learned, I remembered and I found that they were not as hard as I thought. The more I did the tasks, the more I could do them.** Besides, I would like to see **the teacher** happy that I could do it.*

Interviewer: *How did you find them easier?*

S: ***I liked the tasks**. I think it is not that difficult. I could do it. With **effort, practices, and determination**, I could do them with ease now.*

Interviewer: *If such a course was open again for students to register, will you take it or pay for it?*

S: ***Yes, I will because I want to study something that is related to my major**. I don't want to stay home doing nothing. It is boring but when I come to study, **I get the knowledge**.*

Interviewer: *Will you recommend the course to others?*

S: ***I would** but I think they won't come since my friends are lazy, but I will recommend the course because it is always better to know English because it is an asset. **If you don't want to study business English, you can always get something from the course that you can apply for use such as when a foreigner requests for help, you can use expressions learned in this course.***

Interviewer: *If there was no recommendation letter, would you still come to the course?*

S: ***Of course, I would**. I did not expect it as the main goal, but I came for the **knowledge, the handouts and the information** that I can use later.*

Interviewer: *Any comments or suggestions?*

S: ***I think everything seemed to be already good**, only that some*

*tasks may have to be made **less difficult** and **included more grammar and vocabulary.***

(Final interview 05/08/09)

In summary, Sarah's motives were shifted a little bit from coming for *new* knowledge of English, which was task-based business English, to *learning business English tasks* out of her satisfaction with the course. She also *wanted to learn from friends*, to *get ahead of other classmates*, and *to help the teacher* (from after-the-delayed-post-test questionnaire data).

She recognized what she learned and could do. Finally, she added helping the teacher as a social motive for completing the course.

As shown in Table 5.20, although Sarah realized the benefits of business English, she did not see its relation to her beyond her immediate needs as a Humanities English major student learning English in normal classes, which was quite contrary to Kelly's and Peggy's motives. Sarah may have benefited less than Kelly, Peggy, and Joey in terms of English for business purposes.

Bonnie was a slow but determined, non-business major student. Majoring in Broadcasting in the School of Communication Arts, Bonnie never saw herself as a business English student even until the last interview. At the end of the course, asked whether the fact that the university's mission was that students excel in business English helped her achieve her goal in this course, she said, "*I didn't plan to do business, but I only would like to improve my English ability*". With some dissatisfaction with the regular English courses she had previously taken at the research site coupled with self awareness of having poor English ability, her motive was about learning general English rather than the business one.

Her motives and trends are summarized in Table 5.21.

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Table 5.21 Bonnie's Motives at Two Different Times

Bonnie's Motives	Time 1	Time 2
To improve her knowledge of **English**	AM	
To learn **English Communication skills**	AM	
To continue learning **English tasks, vocabulary & pronunciation.**		AM
To learn and make **friends**		AM & SM
To help **the teacher**		SM

Initially, Bonnie came with only academic motives. At the end of the course, her motives were achieved through continuing to come and learn. She changed from a reserved learner (coming as the only person from the Broadcasting major) feeling like *an outsider*, to being *an important person* in the course for the course completion and during the exhibition. My observation was that she seemed to embrace her new identity as a class participant and with this commitment, her motivation to attend the course was sustained. Her social motives were not just to *help the teacher but also to meet friends*. Friends and the teacher were new objects that sustained her motivation to participate in the course. Her peripheral participation became full legitimate participation.

Table 5.22 shows her initial motives that were fulfilled *after* the course and the course comparison.

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Table 5.22 Bonnie's Motives before the Course and the Course Comparison

Bonnie's motives *before* the course	Whether her motives were fulfilled *after* the course
1. To gain more knowledge and improve skills in English.	1. Yes, I really **gained more vocabularies, more knowledge about English expressions, speech patterns, how to speak and do** the tasks correctly.
2. To be able to communicate in English in real life.	2. Yes, I **could speak and do better** in the tasks assigned.
The comparison	
The Regular English course	The Task-based Business English course
1. I did not learn anything much.	1. I **really gained the knowledge** and had **real experience** of using English in business situations. I learned how to pronounce words, to gain knowledge about **business etiquettes and practices** in different cultures that could be used in real-life situations.
2. The lessons were easier. I followed the teacher and the book.	2. The lessons were **more difficult**, but I obtained **real understanding** from **performing** the tasks.
3. I did not have as many chances to practice the English language.	3. The course gave me **opportunities to practice the English language** and to **learn from simulated situations.**
	4. I obtained the **business English knowledge**, **friends, and knew the teacher**. My summer time was well spent.

From Table 5.22, Bonnie was dissatisfied with her English language ability and the previous English course, as she said, "*I did not learn anything much*". Therefore, when she found that task-based course was useful and meeting her academic needs, she kept coming to the course. Asked why she kept coming until the end of the course, although the course was not that easy for her, she said;

> B: *I don't know how to explain but it was not the same as the course*
> *I had been to. **It kept me want to continue learning**. I may not be able*
> *to do some tasks yet, **but I still wanted to continue learning, trying, and**
> ***attempting to be able to do them. The tasks were interesting.***

(Final interview 05/08/09)

Thus, for Bonnie, the fact that the tasks were *interesting*, *challenging*, and *helpful* seemed to be the major reason that attracted her to study. Actually her initial motive was not quite related to business English. She said;

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B: *I would like to improve my English*. *I knew* *my English was not good*
   at all. I came from the country side. Besides, I didn't learn much from
   my normal English classes here, *so when I heard that there would be*
   an English course available during summer, I decided to come to learn
   more English.

(Final interview 05/08/09)

At the end, she realized the usefulness of the course, as " *it helped me* *gain both*

experience and the knowledge" (Final interview 05/08/09).

Her behavior also reflected the shift from a reserved, aloof student to being a part of the

class, making the flyers for the exhibition, collaborating with friends and performing tasks with

more confidence.

Interviewer: *Are there any other reasons that kept you coming like meeting friends,*
   the letter of reference, or not wanting to stay home doing nothing?

B: *No, none of those*. *I wanted to come to learn, to* *improve myself*.

Interviewer: *Did you get what you wished for from coming to this course?*

B: *Yes, I did.* *I learned a lot of new vocabulary, culture and business*
   etiquettes. *I learned* *how to speak business English such as telephoning,*
   welcoming visitors, writing resume, and company presentation.
   The teacher taught us in a way that helped me *really gain the knowledge,*
   as I expected, because I wanted to improve my English. My
   English knowledge was really increased.

Interviewer: *Why do you think so?*

B: *It was because* *I previously did not know those vocabularies,*
   the patterns of speaking, the model expressions. *Now I really*
   know a lot. *Well, it is like I knew* *nothing at all before I came*
   to the course. *Now I knew how to perform, what to speak from*
   the lessons the teacher taught, to become better in speaking
   and doing the tasks.

(Final interview 05/08/09)

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Thus, the course changed her from not knowing to knowing both the knowledge and the how to do the tasks.

Interviewer: *Which course do you prefer, the normal English course, or this course?*

B: *I preferred this course because I felt relaxed. **I understood the lessons more.** I like that there were not many students.*

Interviewer: *What motivated you to come to this course regularly?*
B: *My experience here is different from the other courses I took. I **could really understand the lessons**. The teacher reviewed and we read, acted, and did the tasks. **The situations the teacher assigned us and set-up for us to do were like about to happen for real, so I now remember and I could do the tasks.***

Interviewer: *What else do you think help you to be able to do the tasks?*
B: ***The teacher and friends.** I am impressed that the teacher prepared all the materials for us and **her patience with me.** She knew I am a slow learner, **but she was kind, teaching me and others as if she did not work for her research alone**, but also teaching, encouraging, making us think, learn, and remember…and friends…I had to depend on them a lot. Sarah helped me and I learned from others. I am also impressed by the way we helped one another at the exhibition. I saw the dedication of the teacher and friends.*

Interviewer: *What would help you do better in the second task or the second time in your opinion?*

B: *I would like to **make amends** because the first time of mine was not good yet. **I learned from making mistakes**. Besides, I would like to make the **teacher** happy when she saw that I could do the tasks better. I would like her to get good data for her dissertation.*

Interviewer: *If such a course was open again for students to register, will you take it or pay for it, or will you recommend the course to others?*

B: *Yes, I will and will recommend it to my friends because **the knowledge gained in this course could be used for your future**.*

Interviewer: *Do you think the course is suitable for the first-year students? Will it work?*

B: ***Yes, I think it will work** because lots of students want to participate or practice English in class like this. They could make lots of*

friends and know the teacher.

Interviewer: *Don't you think some tasks would be too difficult for them?*
B: *No. I think it is ok for the first-year.*
Interviewer: *Any comments for class improvement?*
B: *No.*

(Final interview 05/08/09)

Although Sarah was more proficient than Bonnie and both were satisfied with the course, Bonnie seemed to express her eagerness to learn more than Sarah. In other words, it seemed that Bonnie's motivation to come to study was stronger than Sarah. Perhaps, her motivation mediated the difficulty of the course to the point that she said the course was suitable for the first-year students, whereas Sarah said half of the course (Tasks 3, 5 and 6) was still too difficult for them.

Overall, these two non-business students' motives were not quite aligned with the course objectives, thus, Sarah perceived that the course benefited her short-term goal as a university student rather than what lies beyond the classroom and Bonnie did not see that she would use the course in her real professional life.

5.5.2.2 Goals Sarah's ex pressed *goals and ac tions* were not that rigorous. Not many of them were oriented towards future business use.

Table 5.23 Sarah's Goal-Directed Actions

Tasks	Actions	Goals
Task 2 Welcoming Visitors	1. I did the task, using the tools, and following the teacher's instruction.	1. To be able to do the tasks in real life situations.
	2. I consulted friends.	2. To obtain ideas and solutions to some language difficulties.
	3. I adjusted my performance from observing others.	3. To improve my performance, to make fewer mistakes.
Task 3 Company Presentation	1. I practiced presenting the speech with my partner.	1. To appear fluent in the presentation with few mistakes.
	2. I shared ideas and worked together with my partner.	2. To pull ideas and finish in time.
	3. I used the DVD and the handout.	3. To learn from the examples provided.
Task 5 Reading Business News	1. I translated the news into Thai.	1. To see if I was correct.
	2. I consulted the teacher or friends when I did not understand anything.	2. To understand the news.
	3. I used the online dictionary.	3. To complete the task.

Although Sarah's *goal-directed actions* were not that detailed, some higher mental functions could be traced such as *metacognitive problem solving*, *reasoning*, and *voluntary attention,* when she did the task, using the tools in three tasks. When she shared the ideas and work together with her partner, there would be *voluntary attention, logical memory, and reasoning.* It is found that her goals were related mostly to immediate language learning rather than the professional future.

Bonnie's *goal-directed actions* for these 3 tasks are shown in Table 5.24.

Table 5.24 Bonnie's Goal-Directed Actions

Tasks	Actions	Goals
Task 2 Welcoming visitors	1. I practiced pronunciation with friends.	1. <u>To speak correctly</u> in the performance.
	2. I studied the handout.	2. <u>To understand the lesson, to seek for expressions, words,</u> from the examples provided for use in the dialogue.
	3. I and my partner helped each other sharing ideas and correcting if mistakes were found in the dialogue.	3. <u>To learn from each other</u> and work in the same direction with the partner in cmpleting the task.
Task 3 Company Presentation	1. I composed the speech with my partner.	1. <u>To choose the words that were easy to understand for use in the presentation</u>.
	2. I made the PowerPoint slides.	2. <u>To complete the task</u>.
	3. I prepared by rehearsing with my notes before presenting.	3. <u>To complete the task</u>, to avoid worries of making mistakes.
	4. I sought suitable pictures for the slides.	4. To help the audience understand the presentation.
Task 5 Reading Business News	1. I read the whole news article first and helped each other translating the news later.	1. <u>To understand the news, checking for any unknown words</u>. It was easier for translating later.
	2. I checked the unknown words from the dictionary.	2. <u>To understand its meaning</u> as to pick the right meaning

According to Table 5.24, Bonnie's goals were not very detailed and not gearing towards business practices. Most of the goals were simply *to complete the task*. However, higher mental functions could be traced from some goals such as *voluntary attention and reasoning* when she studied the handouts to seek for expressions or words from the examples provided for use in the dialogue. When she and her partner assisted each other sharing ideas and correcting each other if mistakes were found so as to learn from each other and complete the task, it probably involved *reasoning*, *metacognitive problem solving,* and *voluntary attention.* When she needed to guess the meanings of unknown words to complete reading the news task, it probably involved *analysis* and *reasoning*.

5.5.2.3 Motivation Sarah and Bonnie's motivation patterns can be summarized in Figures 5.6 and 5.7.

4. Realizing the new knowledge gained & wanting to help the teacher,, she was assigned another task.

1. With desire to learn **something new in English**, Sarah was assigned a task.

2. She **did the task to gain new knowledge** with the helps of friends, tools, and the teacher.

3. She was **able to do the task** & gained knowledge.
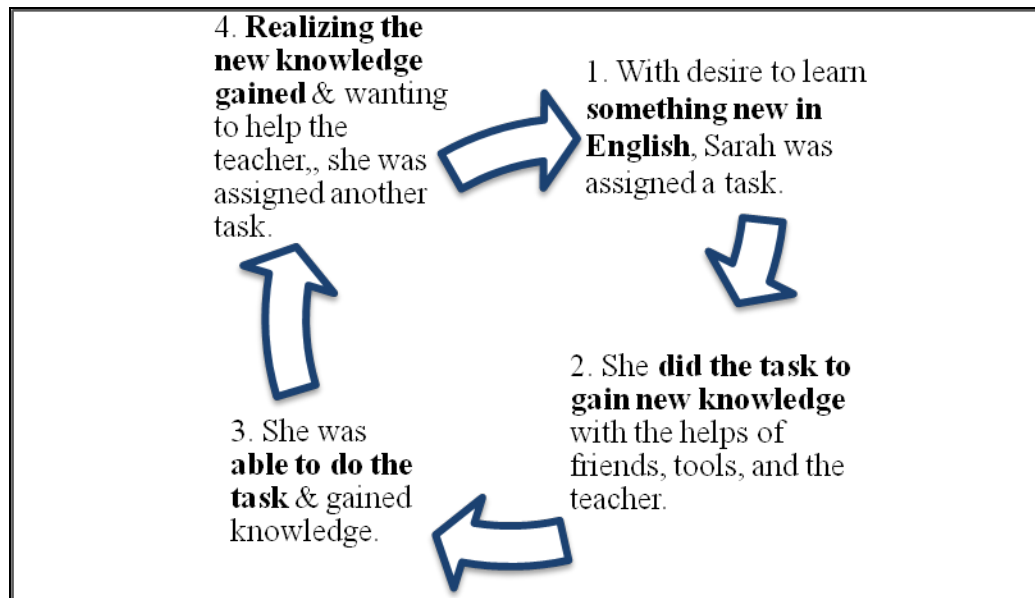
Figure 5.6 Sarah's Motivation Pattern

Sarah seemed to be motivated by knowledge rather than the ability to do the tasks. Thus, for Sarah, the short term goal of using the English *new* knowledge to get ahead of others seemed to motivate her rather than the long term goal of using the business English in her real life. Although this motivation did not align with the objective of the course, she successfully completed the course. The objects of her learning included the knowledge gained from doing the tasks, learning from tools as well as the teacher.
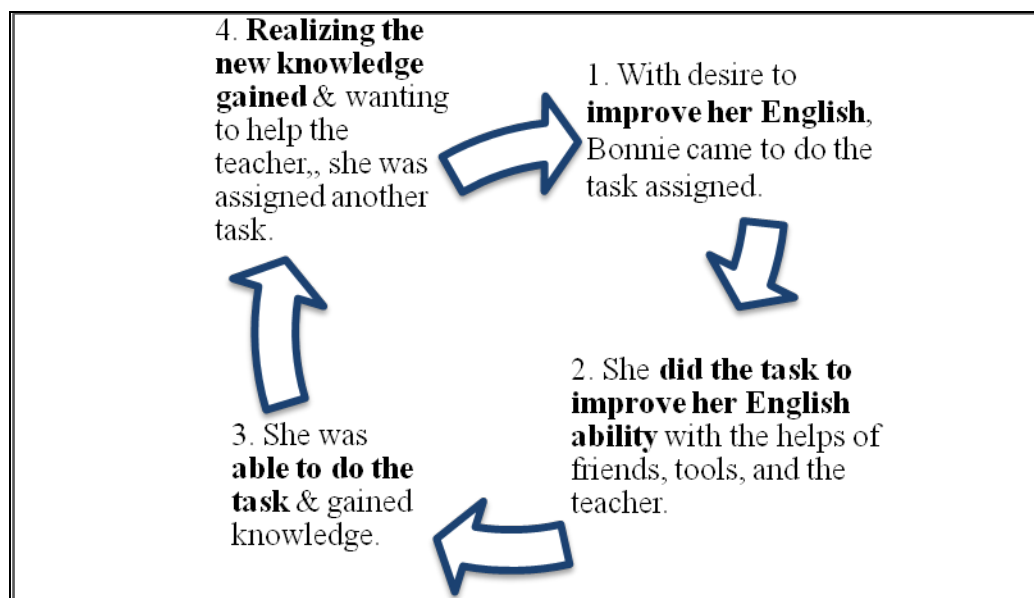
Figure 5.7 Bonnie's Discursive Motivational Pattern

Similar to Sarah, Bonnie was motivated by *knowledge* rather than *the ability* to do the tasks. Bonnie's motivation was about improving her English communication skills kept her coming to the course until its completion.

On the whole, for most business major students, motives, goals, and motivation did not seem to align with the course objectives of training and teaching learners concerning English for business purposes if their motives were of short term of gaining knowledge instead of gaining ability to use the language in real life. Again, the emerging social goals that sustained the regular attendance seemed to explain the importance of affects as described. The non-business students were also transformed from lacking knowledge to having knowledge and from not knowing to knowing. They also tended to prefer learning English for business from task-based instruction than the regular courses being offered at the research site.

In this chapter, I presented business and non-business students' motives, goals, and motivation. I argue that there were some differences between these two groups of students in

terms of motives, goals, and motivations, which showed different benefits the learners gained

from the course.

6.0   CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides discussions on the research results and findings in the context of previous studies, pedagogical implications, research implications on activity theory, recommendations for future research, and the limitations of the study.

6.1   DISCUSSIONS ON THE RESEARCH RESULTS AND FINDINGS

In this section, I discuss the quantitative results and the qualitative findings respectively.

6.1.1   Discussions on quantitative results

The quantitative results are summarized and discussed as follows;

(1) Regarding Research Question 1, the participants' business English language performance was significantly improved after the task-based instruction. Students' post-test mean scores in all six tasks increased from those of the pre-test. Thus, task-based instruction for business EFL using sociocultural approach did help improve Thai students' first-year university level business English ability in those six tasks. What this finding suggests is that task-based instruction using sociocultural approach has the potential to improve students' English language ability.

(2) Regarding Research Question 2, the participants' scores on the delayed post-test given one month after instruction significantly increased from those of the post-test given immediately after instruction. Thus, task-based instruction using sociocultural approach for business EFL enables first-year university Thai students to retain their business English ability in six tasks one month later. The significant increase also shows that the participants' ability in the six tasks increased from the time of instruction to the delayed post-test.

The increase in scores can be explained by (1) *task familiarity* and the *effect of testing* that was related to task repetition (2) *task mediation and internalization* leading to memory and ability retention, and (3) the influence of *academic motives*, *incentive motives*, and *affect* related to *social motives*.

(1) *Task familiarity*: The post-tests in this study assessed whether improvement and retention occurred after the instruction. By working with similar tasks in the lessons and in the tests, the subjects may have gained skills based on the on-going experience with testing. Additionally, the predictability of tasks and tests may have lowered students' anxiety and helped them develop strategies and skills to deal with the tasks (Skehan, 1998) which in turn created strong test performance.

The quantitative results of this study were consistent with Jiriyasin's (2006) study. Jiriyasin found that her Thai university-level students' oral English performance on a narrative task significantly improved in the post-test from the pre-test after task repetition. The improvement that she found was in increased fluency and accuracy in all levels of students and lexical complexity in the majority of students. Jiriyasin explained that the significant improvement of her participants' oral performance was due to the pre-task planning and task repetition. Lynch and Maclean (2000) also found that both high and low achieving learners

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benefited from the opportunity to recycle communicative content as they repeated complex tasks. They concluded that the task repetition may be a useful pedagogical procedure, because repeating the same task can help learners develop different areas of their interlanguage. Participants in this study also reported that task repetition was like a rehearsal for the types of interactions that they may encounter in the future.

According to activity theory, after task repetition, *operations* become automatized. Subjects conduct *operations* in order to complete the concrete *actions*. Initially, *operations* are "conscious actions with both orientation and execution phase. Overtime, the orientation phase is eliminated, and actions collapsed into an operation" (Jonassen and Rohrer,1999, p. 73). The present study found that in speaking tasks students showed increased *fluency*, because the subjects spent less time in task orientations and the operational composition of speaking became more automatic.

The test scores results corresponded to the course objectives. The course aimed to enable the students to gain skills in the tasks for use in their professional life. However, since the same set of test was used, the effect of testing may have occurred. Campbell and Stanley (1971) referred to *the effect of testing* as the effect of pre-test that caused students taking the test for the second time (i.e., the post test) to do better than those taking the test for the first time.

(2) *Task mediation and internalization*: The task-based classroom in this study was where various kinds of *mediation* occurred. The participants collaborated, solved the problems together, designed the role-play dialogues, composed slides and prepared the speech, rehearsed in pairs, performed in front of the class, listened to tapes, telephoned each other, and learned from feedback from others. In the reading and writing tasks, they consulted each other, translated the news and provided the answers together. Moreover, they participated in the class project holding

an exhibition together. Thus, they engaged in several types of mediation including *object* or *material mediation* (i.e., tasks, handouts, the DVDs, the audiotapes, and the computers), *interpersonal mediation* (i.e., collaboration, rehearsals, and scaffolding from the teacher and peers), and *self mediation* (i.e., when they did the tasks individually using both L1 and L2).

Haught (2005) points out that *acting* such as in role-plays and drama activities provided *affordances* for creativity, communicative language learning, and mediation through imitation and collaborative problem solving within their ZPD. Van Lier (2000) defines the term *affordance* as "the relationship between properties of the environment and the active learner" that signals for an opportunity for or inhibition of actions (p. 257). Haught (2005) explained that according to activity theory, language should be viewed as performance in a setting,

> Arguing that learning is an activity, language learning will be examined as performance. Viewing language as performance serves to demonstrate how language is highly contextual to sociocultural and institutional circumstances. (p. iv)

Haught contends that *imitation* in the recursive process of rehearsals for role-plays can be instrumental in the students' *understanding* and growing mastery of English. The present study found that the business majors' task goals were not only to complete the task following the model examples, but completing it with *understanding*. Finally, they came up with some creativity added to what they saw from the models, thus, they rehearsed by imitation not by copying and that was the evidence for transformation of the task. This may explain why in Tasks 1 to 4.1 where a lot of acting and stage performance occurred resulted in greater gains in the post-test scores. In contrast, in Tasks 5 and 6, the participants read lines and wrote scripts (i.e., reading and writing) during their performance due to time limitations of the task. Hence, time spent on verbal mediation was less frequent than in the first four tasks resulting in fewer gains in

the post-test scores (see Table 4.5). Among all types of mediation, verbal mediation used as private speech during collaboration has been observed as one of the main mediational tools used by participants in several studies. For example, Brooks and Donato (1994) found that verbal collaboration serves as object regulation, shared orientation, and goal formation. At the same time, it helped students focus on their language resources as well as sustained and initiated further discourse. Speaking also regulates cognitive functioning and systematic *concepts* that can result in enhanced *internalization* of the *concepts* being studied. Tasks in this study were designed to be tools for meaning-based, goal-oriented, and authentic activities within the business *conceptual* and *functional* framework. Each task was designed to help the participants learn the concepts underlying each of the six business tasks. Negueruela (2008) emphasizes that learning through concepts allows for L2 development.

Johnson (2004) and Negueruela (2008) explain that using the tasks as tools leads to the merging of language performance and language competence, since tools (i.e., tasks as *concepts* and *content*) and the results (i.e., the practice of *forms* and *vocabulary* through participation in the tasks) are not separated from each other. Thus, language performance and language learning co-occur. Tasks in the performance-based assessment in this study reflected the unified process between language *learning* and language *use* resulting in better performance in the tests because it was likely that language learning and language development occur due to the co-occurrence of developing competence through performance.

(3) *Motives*: Whether they are academic, social, or incentive, the *motives* influenced the participants' performance on tests because "motives generate goals for actions necessary for reaching the desire results" and "in some cases, goals may become motives or coincide with motives" (Lompscher, 1999). From the questionnaire data information obtained after the delayed

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post-test, it was found that the students performed better primarily due to four factors: (1) the desire to please the teacher (2) the desire for self-improvement (3) the effect of the test, and (4) the desire for good scores to appear on the letter of reference. Among the factors, the effect of the test was the factor outside the learners motivational profile. The other three factors were related to learners' motives that were based on socially constructed and fairly typical reasons for wanting to perform well in academic settings.

According to Lompscher (1999), there are three general types of inter-related motives in activity theory: *social learning motives*, in which people set out to communicate and co-operate with others: *self-related motives,* in which individuals are concerned with their own development and well-being; and *cognitive motives*, which is related to the desire to gain knowledge, skills, and ability.

Table 6.1 shows Lompscher's motives that match with the motives reported by subjects in this study for their improvement in the delayed post-test. It can be concluded that the students' better performance on the test could derive from *any or all* 3 types of motives together.

Table 6.1 The Comparison between Lompscher's Motives and Motives of the Students in Performing Better in the Delayed Post-Test in this Study

Lompscher's Motives	Motives of participants for test score improvement
Cognitive motives (or academic motive)	The desire for self-improvement
Social learning motives (or social motive)	The desire to please the teacher
Self-related motives (or incentive motive)	The desire for good scores to appear on the letter of reference

The tests, *authentic assessments,* used in this study may have shaped new motives for students to engage in the learning tasks since they focused on real-life situations and problem-solving. Finch (2002) stated that authentic assessment can be highly motivating, fostering long-term use of learning strategies, and helping students form realistic and challenging goals. The

delayed post-test may have also brought about new motives by creating in the students the desire to see if they could improve themselves, which in turn challenged them to do better and set new learning goals for themselves.

There was also an effect of the pre-test. Due to the pre-test, learners probably became aware of what they lacked in terms of the ability to do the tasks. Thus, they found the course interesting such as Bonnie, who said she realized that she had poor English after taking the pre-test. Thus, this awareness of the academic need to improve their English may have been transformed into the *academic motives* for *business English specific tasks* in the participants. In other words, the recurring motivation of students in this study may have been caused by the perceived *needs* for English or business English. Within activity theory, a need plus an *object* (i.e., business English ability in those six tasks, the letter of reference, and the desire to help friends and the teacher) becomes a *motive.* When *motive* joins the *goals* for actions towards the *objects* and the potential for *participation* in the community of practice, the result is *motivation*, according to Tae-Young (2007). In other words, *motivation*, resulted from the students' motives, goals, and social participation in the course, influenced the students' effort to do better. This interpretation is consistent with activity theory and evidence for understanding motivation in this way is clear in this study.

Imai (2007) found that *affect* or emotions become a psychological resource to mediate development when L2 learning is embedded in interpersonal context. Some emotions influenced the participants to perform better in tests. First, some participants spoke of *regret* and said that they did not do well the first time, so they wanted to make amends and improve on the delayed post-test. Second, participants showed *gratitude* on test days and did better out of their appreciation of the teacher's effort and determination to teach them in this task-based course.

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Thus, some of the students said that they wanted to please the teacher by their improvement. Third, the *sense of achievement* produced *pride* and the *sense of ownership* of the tasks, such as the Company Presentation, which in turn affected the subjects to do better in tests. All of these emotions seemed to play roles in mediating L2 learning and achievement in this study.

In summary, the significant improvement of the students' test scores in this study resulted from task familiarity, internalization of tasks due to mediation, the influential roles of motives, and *affect*. All of these factors were related to students' motivation to learn and improve their language in this task-based course.

6.1.2   Discussions on qualitative findings

The qualitative findings of Research Question 3 are summarized and discussed according to the findings from sub-research questions *a–d* as follows;

6.1.2.1 Same tasks, different activities According to the analysis of *activities* of the three observed tasks, the findings seemed to reiterate the findings in the study of Coughland and Duff (1994) that same *task*s resulted in different *activities.* It was found that the participants' *operations* on tasks in this study differed due to four factors: (1) students' diverse task goals, (2) students' relationships, (3) the ways students' managed task conditions, and (4) students' prior learning experience and/or beliefs on how to do the tasks well.

According to activity theory, learners ultimately decide how activities are carried out in terms of their goals, the resources they bring to tasks, and motivation (Couglan and Duff, 1994). The students in this study reflected this theory. However, what the present study added to Couglan and Duff's study in 1994 was that in addition to the diverse task goals and motives that

the students brought to tasks, their relationships also affected the ways they managed tasks. In addition, their prior learning experience and beliefs in how to manage tasks well also affected participants' *activities*.

Although the outcomes of both pairs, the business majors and non-business majors, in this study were quite similar in terms of success and task completion, they engaged in and constructed different *activities*. The business majors seemed to do more than the pairs of the non-business majors. Moreover, the business majors seemed to set more long-term goals including the wish to be *able* to do the tasks with *real understanding* (as in the role-play Task 2) and *professional creativity* (as in the presentation Task 3) than the non-business majors, who mostly aimed for *accuracy and completion in time.* Additionally, the business majors tended to use imagination in the situations where real language would be used. Thus, the business majors in this study seemed to have what Lompscher (1999) referred to as higher-level motives whereas the non-business majors seemed to have the lower-level motives and these motives affected how they worked on tasks.

Lompscher (1999) stated that *cognitive motive* is subdivided into lower- and higher- level motives. Lantolf and Genung (2002) summarize these motives as follows;

> The former (the lower-level) entail empirical thinking aimed at learning isolated facts, details, and surface relations and have a goal of obtaining a result. The latter (the higher-level) arise from intrinsic interest in learning the object itself and prompt the learner to want to know how to reach a given result rather than being satisfied by the result itself. While higher-level motives are more likely to lead to intensive and recurring cognitive activity, lower-level motives are more likely to result in short-term and more superficial activity. (p. 189)

The business majors in this study seemed to have intrinsic interest in learning the business tasks and want to know how to reach the given result of being authentic and professional rather than being satisfied by the completion of the task itself. Thus, their goals and

motives seemed to align with the course objectives. In one of the interviews, the business majors (Kelly and Peggy) also demonstrated that they were not concerned with grammar as long as they could communicate and completed the tasks. Their statement showed that their motives and goals reflected the *communicative purposes* of the task-based course in this study. Conversely, the non-business majors were more concerned with grammatical accuracy. Thus, at the end of the course, Sarah and Bonnie, two non-business majors, reported that what they gained from the course was *knowledge* of business English practices, vocabulary, and pronunciation; whereas Kelly and Peggy talked about *ability* and *confidenc*e to do business in English from their participation in the six tasks. Thus, although the course seemed to be able to accommodate the diverse task goals of participants in this study, those who have higher-leveled motives or business-oriented goals seemed to do more and benefit more from the course.

It was also found that if the pair were friends, they tended to work on similar goals. Thus, Kelly and Peggy completed tasks faster since the pairs–shared the same goals, and used their time, talents, and tools to the optimal results. Tasks would also be better understood, such as in the case of Sarah and Bonnie in the Reading Task 5, if the partners had prior learning experience with similar tasks that was appropriate to the completion of the task at hand. For example, reading the whole business news article first to grasp the main ideas correctly was a good reading strategy.

Indeed, although tasks characteristics as role-plays, presentation, and reading somewhat dictated the format of the task outcome, they did not determine the process of the *activities*, or how students perceived and handled the tasks. In other words, the task *operations* cannot be predicted (Donato, 2000) since they varied depending on the learners. Thus, learners in this study exerted their *agency* and worked on tasks according to their motives and goals, and their

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relationship. It was also found in the Company Presentation Task 3 that the larger the task was, the more varieties of *activities* were produced, which in turn led to a variety of mediation and patterns of assistance. This phenomenon implies that regardless of the outcome of the task, the activities initiated by the students could vary.

6.1.2.2 Patterns of assistance This study found four patterns of assistance as in Storch's studies (2002, 2004). They were the Collaborative, the Expert/Novice, the Dominant/Dominant, and the Dominant/ Passive. However, unlike what Storch found, the patterns of assistance of the participants in this study were *not* stable within pairs and across tasks. The patterns varied depending on (1) with whom they worked and (2) how they managed the task conditions. Again, this finding illustrates the importance of students' agency in their own learning. Thus, sometimes collective and individual orientations were found even in the same task such as in the Presentation Task 3 by Kelly and Peggy.

This finding is contrary to Storch's study (2004) in which she found that stability of assistance patterns within the same pairs and across tasks. This may be due to two major reasons. First, the business English tasks used in this study involved longer amount of time to complete than the tasks used by Storch, and thus, varieties of interaction patterns could emerge. In her 2004 study, Storch used a short composition task, an editing task, and a text reconstruction task in the context of one class period. In contrast, in this business English course, students worked over several hours completing tasks. Second, participants in Storch's study were of different nationalities and L1s; whereas in this study, students shared the same L1and some had established friendly relationship prior to the course. Thus, in this study L1 seems to serve as the mediating tool for the relationship allowing the adjustment, mutuality, and compatibility to occur quickly. From the sociocultural perspective, Brooks *et al.*, (1997) demonstrate that using the L1

can support emerging L2 use. They found that L1 can be an effective inter- and intrapersonal tool when learners are engaged in tasks. Researchers in sociocultural paradigm such as Antón and DiCamilla (1998), Centeno-Cortés and Jiménez-Jiménez, (2004), and Swain and Lapkin (2005) provide ample evidence for the many uses of the L1 in various kinds of L2 activity: planning writing tasks with partners, focusing attention, solving difficult math or spatial problems, discussing procedures for performing a task, making small talk, asking for assistance, and translating. The present study also found that L1 eased the difficulty the participants faced during working on tasks since they could use the Thai language to find solutions or solve any conflicts or seek help very quickly. Thus, collaboration emerged faster due to previously established relationships and solutions and the opportunity to use L1 to carry out tasks.

However, similar to Storch's (2004) study, it was found that the pairs that demonstrated patterns of Collaborative and Expert/Novice were more successful than Dominant/Dominant and Dominant/Passive patterns. This was because the former two patterns required more verbal mediation. Storch explains that it was because scaffolding, was more likely to occur when pairs interacted either collaboratively or in an expert/novice patterns. Thus, it was found that Kelly and Peggy, and Sarah and Bonnie demonstrated these patterns and were more successful in task completion than those who interacted using patterns of Dominant/ Dominant and Dominant/ Passive, such as Kelly and Cindy, and Sarah and Joey.

This study also found that the levels of *task engagement* played a role in the success and failure of task completion because those who demonstrated the patterns of Dominant/Passive or Dominant/Dominant could still succeed if they showed a lot of task engagement even nonverbally because it means they paid full attention to tasks. In other words, even though their patterns of assistance with the partners may not *look* conducive to learning, those pairs of

Dominant/Passive or Dominant/Dominant who showed *full* task engagement even nonverbally could still accomplish the tasks. However, they may spend longer time to complete the tasks whereas the pairs that collaborated worked faster towards the task completion. Joey, the independent learner, was an example. He could succeed in some tasks due to the availability of other types of tools and that was because he had full engagement in those tasks.

In this study, collaboration, was found to serve as the tool for dialogic mediation and co-construction of meaning necessary to complete the tasks. Collaboration also helped ease the cognitive load of thinking when facing a time-consuming task such as Presentation Task 3. Collaboration patterns was also found to lower anxiety caused by having to use, practice, and perform exclusively in the L2. As Sarah, the proficient student, said, "*Two heads are better than one*". It appeared that the successful pairs received both the academic and the emotional support from each other as they completed the tasks. This reflects the important role of culture in SLA. Thai students seemed to give priority to the academic, social, and emotional support from peers and the teacher during learning tasks. From my teaching experience, Thai students usually prefer working with others to working alone. Patricia SulliVan (2000) found that the collaborative work frequently associated in the second or foreign language classroom with pair work or group work should not be disassociated from social, cultural, institutional, and political settings of the learners. The active engagement of the Vietnamese learners in Sullivan's study also showed that culture played roles in language learning.

In terms of task engagement, Platt and Brooks (2002) found that *task engagement* became associated with the *transformation* of task, self, and group, and it should be taken into consideration when tasks are analyzed. They stated that according to the sociocultural perspective, meaning emerges and is constructed during dialogic encounters, in which,

task participants construct not only meaning, but also roles, voices, and the task procedures are established during the dialogic activity. Then, higher mental functions are developed due to mediation within their ZPD" (p. 371).

In this study, the majority of participants realized that they needed partners with whom to collaborate, consult, and practice. Peggy is a good example. She realized the importance of on-going task engagement, so she sought opportunities to practice outside class by rehearsing at home with her sister. She explained,

> P: *Rehearsing with my sister helped me put knowledge into use, putting knowledge out of my head. It helped me memorize what to say when it happened for real.*

> (Post-task interview 05/01/09)

Then, internalization and transformation seemed to occur with Peggy who loved to practice formally and informally, thus, she became more *able* to regulate the tasks by herself when initially she was reluctant to join the class.

> P: *Now I wanted to do it by myself.*

> (Post-task interview 05/03/09)

Thus, it seemed that later Peggy had intrinsic interest in the tasks to the point that practice at home became her outside-class activity and was one way she became engaged in the task of learning. According to Platt and Brooks (2002), *task engagement* signals the beginning of transformation. Wells (1999) also stated that there is the transformation in the individual in his or her capacity to participate more effectively in future actions of related kind. One month after the course, Peggy joined a similar business English course offered at the research site by *herself* (without Kelly) to further her study in business English and seek opportunities to use the knowledge gained from this study. Other students, Kelly, Bonnie, Sarah, and Joey also reported

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that they would like to use the language skills obtained from this course as opportunities arise. They also stated that they wanted to take the task-based business English course *again* if the next level course of the same instruction would be available in the future and would be *willing to pay* for it. Thus, participation in the course was actually related to *task engagement* of a certain level and could lead to transformation of the participants' initial reactions and goals for signing up for the course.

It was also found that students were not always willing to work with others such as in the case of Joey. This study showed that *willingness to participate* in the community of practice is important if success is to be expected. Independent learners, such as Joey, proved to be unsuccessful especially in the speaking tasks. This finding was similar to Vellenga (2008), who found that independent learner characteristics seemed to affect pragmatic competence due to gender differences. Since his close friend, a male student, resigned from the course after the first week, he may have felt alone. If he had had a close friend of the same gender to assist him in working on tasks and during task rehearsals, he might have been more successful because his close friend might have assisted him to participate in the community of practice. An important factor that seems to influence students' decision to work in pairs was *affect*. How students felt about working with others was also important to how they oriented themselves to learning in this study. It seems that the more compatible the partners are in terms of relationship, language ability, talents and interest, and orientation to tasks, the more likely the success of the task outcome and of the course itself.

6.1.2.3 Factors that influenced task-based performance The study found that (1) the performance of the participants were perceived as mostly influenced by themselves as *subjects*, the agency of their learning, their *objects* of *activity* that motivated them to complete the course,

the teacher and their partners in *division of labor*, and the *meditational tools* that they used to complete the tasks. (2) They were less influenced by the *rules* (e.g., task rules, business etiquette, and scoring rubrics) and the *community* (i.e., other classmates, parents, and the university).

This finding emphasizes the tenet of activity theory that in an activity system (i.e., the task-based course), the *subjects* or learners are the central, driving characters in defining the activity. The activity is initiated by them, by their intention and motives, without which the activity will not be possible (Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999).

Duranti. (2004) points out that *agency* in language learning refers to (1) the control over one's own behavior, (2) producing actions that affect other entities as well as self and (3) producing actions that are the object of evaluation. van Lier (2008) states that learning depends largely on agency, saying,

> Learning depends on the activity and the initiative of the learner,
> more so than on any "input" that are transmitted to the learner by
> a teacher or a textbook. (p. 163)

There is no activity without *object* (Lompscher, 1999). The intentions are directed at the object of the activity. For the task-based course in this study, main *objects* were the tasks and to complete the tasks was the *outcome*. Thus, the objects must have had significant meaning to the subjects. Those who quit the course may have not yet realized the meaning of the business tasks in their life at that moment. Thus, without credits to earn from the course, they did not feel obligated to take the course. Moreover, without time and support from parents, either financially or emotionally, some students quit because they had to take a part-time job or went to the provinces to be with their family during summer. Although the community inside class was realized by participants as having more influence on their task-based performance, the community outside class did have some influence. The *tools* available in this study either in the

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form of materials/instruments (i.e., handouts, DVD, audiotapes, and computers) or people (i.e., friends and the teacher) and people served as *division of labor* and provided the affordances for learning because they constituted the *community* of practice for learning to happen in this study.

Activity theory posits that there is the dynamic relationship between these six factors. Team members have negotiated roles based on skills, preferences, and availability of support. Tasks were the tools, the objects, and the outcome. Tasks generated division of labor, rules, and community. Indeed, for a task-based course to be successful, it was not knowledge transmission, but the knowledge that was socially constructed based on the intention, history, culture, and tools mediation of the people involved in the community of practice, in the process of learning. *Rules* could be formal and informal (Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999) and might not be recognized by participants, but the *rules* could be embedded in the scope of tasks themselves which served as boundary of each task. Since the task outcome (e.g., role plays and presentation) defined the division of labor, the task mediated the division of labor and vice versa. Culturally, Thai learners like to collaborate. Most Thai subjects in this study saw the benefits of working together and naturally supported their friends in their learning activity. They even supported their teacher in completing her study and with their feelings of gratitude. Thus, Thai students' characteristics in this study were compatible and favorable to the task-based course. However, their prior learning experience with a grammar-based approach and assessments based on accuracy could affect their learning potential in a communicative task-based course. That Sarah and Bonnie's focus on *accuracy* rather than *communication* seemed to limit their learning to just *tool-for-result* rather than *tool-and-result*. As for Joey, his belief that *regular attendance* (rather than *participation, collaboration,* and *engagement*) would lead to learning was actually wrong. Just being there in the class and receiving teaching input proved

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unsuccessful in the task-based course because according to activity theory, activity or active participation is a precursor to learning (Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999).

The findings of Donato and McCormick (1994) as well as Platt and Brooks (1994) seem to confirm the finding in this study that tasks socialized learners into constructing their own strategic learning through other- and self-regulation during tasks, The course reflected learner-centered environment as well as the participation metaphor of language learning.

In conclusion, the success of a task-based course in this study was related to community of practice. This task-based community had its sets of norms explicitly or implicitly that stated roles for each member and her/his different perspectives on the importance (or lack thereof) of the objective to be accomplished.

6.1.2.4 Motives, goals, and motivation This study reveals that each student joined the course with both same and different motives. Students with different motives often have different goals as the objects of their actions, despite the intentions of the teacher (Lantolf, 2000). The task-based course in this study was a pilot course, which offered no credits or grades, hence, students could exercise their own will to come or to quit at anytime they wanted. The study confirms that students played a major role in shaping the goals and ultimate outcomes of tasks set for them by their teachers (Lantolf, 2000). The success or failure of task-based instruction, then, actually depended very much on the students' motives and their orientations to the tasks and whether the course met their academic, social, and incentive needs and motives.

As they participated and realized that the course was beneficial for them, their goals were shaped and new goals emerged that inspired them to participate. If their initial motives were addressed and fulfilled, they were more likely to succeed and complete the course. However, motives, goals, and motivation of students shifted during the course.

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The incentive motive seemed to become important when the first two types of motives were not attained as shown in the case of Joey. This finding implies that grades and credits could still play a strong role in business English curriculum such as in an EFL context as Thailand, where English use in real life is far from the first-year students' imagination. However, incentive and social motives should not become primary motives of students, even though they could since the participants would ultimately act on their own will. This is because the students who succeeded and benefited most from the business EFL task-based course were the students who had academic motives, business-oriented as their primary intrinsic interest. The other types of motives could be beneficial if they served as the supportive, sustaining, motivational roles to the academic ones.

As time went by, the participants' academic motives shifted from the desire to learn *general English communication* to the desire to learn more *business task-specific English communication*. This finding corresponds to activity theory which posits that the transformed *object* is the motive of the activity (Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999). The finding that students' motives and goals could shift and new ones emerged as time went by shows that they are socially constructed. However, the tendency of motive shift towards the course objective was favorable to the course and could be used to differentiate between successful and less successful learners.

It was the ultimate goal or objective of the course to enable the participants to do the task by themselves. Wertsch (1985) states that *self-regulation* is when a subject has suddenly understood, mastered, or gained complete control and ability to function independently. It means that the learner takes over complete responsibility for carrying out the goal-directed task. Thus, *understanding* and *ability to do the tasks* by themselves correspond to both the goal of the course

and the higher-level cognitive motive of the business majors. To find out whether each of the participants obtained what they desired (i.e., motive), the interview data were analyzed with the findings displayed in Table 6.2. It shows participants' academic motives that correspond to what they desired and obtained according to the interview data.

Table 6.2 Participants' Academic Motives that Correspond to What They Obtained from the Course

Levels of academic motives		What participants desired (√) and obtained (+) or did not obtain (-)					Final grade in the delayed post-test
	Subjects	Lower-level academic motive		Higher-level academic motive			
Pre-instruction proficiency	Participants	Knowledge	Skills in general	Ability in doing the business tasks	Understanding	Confidence in doing tasks	
D+	Kelly**	√+	√+	+	+	√+	B
D+	Peggy**	√+	+	√+	+	+	B
A	Sarah*	√+	√+	+	+	+	B+
D	Bonnie*	√+	√+	+	+	-	C+
F	Joey**	+	√?	√-	-	-	-

Note: ** = business majors, * = non-business majors, ? = unknown due to lack of scores
　　　The shaded areas are where what participants desired coincided with what they obtained.

Table 6.2 shows that the business majors, Kelly, Peggy, and Joey, during the course, developed higher-level motive, whereas the non business majors, Sarah and Bonnie did not. Kelly desired knowledge, skills, and confidence, finally she obtained all of them plus ability and understanding. While Peggy desired knowledge and ability, she obtained both of them plus skill, understanding and confidence. Sarah and Bonnie, the non-business majors, desired knowledge and skills, they obtained both plus ability and understanding. Sarah also obtained confidence whereas Bonnie said she did not obtain it yet. Joey, a business major, gained only knowledge, while in fact he expected skills and ability. The Table 6.2 actually shows that to understand each participant' increased ability in the task-based course, considering only the final grade level may

not be sufficient. Perhaps, tracing students using genetic method for motives and desires as well as what they desired and obtained may inform more useful information for course improvement.

6.2   PEDAGOGY IMPLICATIONS FOR TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION

Based on the findings of the study, the pedagogical implications for task-based instruction are as follows.

6.2.1   Implications from the quantitative results

The increased scores of the subjects in this study are partly the result of task familiarity due to task repetition, thus *task repetition* should be incorporated in the task-based instruction because it can promote task internalization, increase learners' skills, memory, ability and ability retention. Moreover, it can motivate the participants to perform the tasks better.

Participation and *mediation* through verbal collaboration and engagement in goal-directed tasks, through using the tools (i.e., assisted materials and people), the rules (e.g., scoring rubrics), and division of labor (i.e., pair-work, group work or collaborative assistance) should be central to instruction so that task *internalization* can occur. According to sociocultural and activity theories, these elements contribute to language development. *Attendance score* should include *task engagement* so as to reflect true participation of the learners. Moreover, students need to be encouraged to reflect in their goals for learning and set new learning goals f or themselves.

According to the interview data, the relationship between learners, and between the teacher and learners should not be overlooked and good relationship should be maintained throughout the course. Imai (2007) contends that "emotions are not merely another facilitative or detrimental variable in one's cognitive or intellectual functioning and growth, but are intrinsic in learning and development" (p. 236). Participants come to class with different needs and goals. Thus, learners' pre-existing language needs and those that arise during the course should be addressed such as the need for *pronunciation* practice (in the case of Bonnie) and *tenses* (for Kelly) so that the course can actually serve these needs and goals. It means they could work on tasks and learn linguistic elements at the same time.

6.2.2 Implications from the qualitative findings

6.2.2.1 Same tasks, different activities There are four pedagogical implications from this study. First, business English tasks, short or long, should be treated as they are *the blueprints* for students' varieties of goal-directed *actions*. Although the tasks in this study seems to be able to accommodate students' diverse task goals and motives, those who have higher-leveled motives seem to benefit more from the course, thus, proper goal settings should be emphasized.

Although most participants reported that they enjoyed working on the long and time-consuming task such as Company Presentation, it is recommended that the task be broken into steps to save time. One example might be to provide ready-made PowerPoint slides of various companies so that the learners could choose and pay attention to language and delivery.

Second, according to activity theory, goals are directed at *objects* of activity and *objects* provide affordances for activity (Lompscher, 1999), thus, *tasks* designed for students to work on should be *object*-oriented. For example, a reading task has an objective of having the students

read business news article with understanding and can retell it in Thai. Therefore, tasks and scoring rubrics together should reflect the same objectives, then students could work in this same direction but they could come up with different or ientations. Lompscher (1999) states that learning activity and the learning *object* have to be considered as a *unity* because learning actions can fulfill their function only if they fit the object and goal. Lompscher explains,

> Learning activity should be based on learning needs and motives. This makes it possible to directly turn towards learning objects, achieve satisfaction from pursuing them, and from developing one's personality. ……Thus, learning activity is characterized by a certain level of independence, individual initiative, cognitive interest, efforts towards enhancement of competence (1999, p 15).

This means that leaning is maximized if the objectives of the course and tasks correspond with students' needs and motives. Since participants in this study reported their preference of task-based instruction over the traditional course because the ability gained from the course can be applied for use in real life and in the future, *tasks* should be organized using content and concepts that are relevant to the participants' short-term and long-term goals in their life.

Third, teachers should relinquish their control off students' activities. In other words, the *activities* that are initiated by the learners should be allowed and encouraged since they would engage in tasks more creatively, developing task ownership and goal-directed *actions* (i.e., language learning strategies) that match their interest and needs as they complete the tasks. The benefit of control relinquishment on the part of the teachers is confirmed by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol's (2004) study that Thai learners accomplished the tasks better when they were given opportunities to think and manage their learning by themselves. Thai students in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol's study also stated the same thing as Thai students in this study that they enjoyed ability to think independently, taking pride in their accomplishment,

remembering what they learned, gaining self-confidence, and feeling more curious about learning. Kelly and Joey reported that they liked the course because they were provided chances for creativity and freedom in learning. It is recommended that scores given to students should include creativity and innovation so that they will not focus on only completing the tasks.

Fourth, the task-based course should be where learners gain support from the tools provided to them, the scaffolding rather than spoon-feeding, and immediate feedback as well as encouragement so they can make efforts and learn within their ZPDs. Tasks then should not be too easy or too difficult. The instruction should be clear and non-linguistic outcome should be allowed as it is part of the tasks such as making slides in the Company Presentation Task. This is because learners would express themselves better with their own innovation.

6.2.2.2 Patterns of assistance There are three pedagogical implications from this study. First, since the Collaborative or Experts/Novices patterns of assistance proved to be the effective patterns for the task-based course, they should be promoted and the independent learning style should be discouraged by pointing the learners to the benefits of working together such as rehearsing the tasks and verbal mediation that occurs during collaboration will enhance internalization such as memory and learning retention.

Second, some students should be taught the relationship skill on how to work together since learning to share and collaborate may not occur naturally. They should get to know each other so that they can develop the trust and skills to work together. Some ice breaking activities might help them get to know each other better so they could work together more effectively. In addition, teachers may find it useful to discuss learners' beliefs and goals in business, task-based activities. Such discussion may raise the learners' awareness about how pair work, group work, task engagement can help them achieve their learning goals.

Third, *task engagement*, verbally and nonverbally, should be promoted. To encourage the students such as the case of Joey to engage more in tasks, tasks should be designed in the way that requires collaboration and full engagement. Jacobs (2006) suggests that the focus of using tasks in the classroom should be on how tasks promote cooperation among group members and how *interdependence* can be fostered when implementing the tasks. Students should be encouraged to take definite roles and feel *individually accountable* for their own and their group or partner's learning towards common goals. Scores may also have to be given systematically to collective work. The fact that Joey could do some parts of the tasks such as the Power-Point slides in Task 3 points out that he had learnt some skills that put him towards the direction of success, the skills have to be assessed as well. Moreover, official scores for task engagement should be given to students so as to reflect their true participation in tasks and in class.

6.2.2.3 Factors th at in fluence task-based performance The following are pedagogical implications from this study. Since every factor or component in activity systems namely subjects, objects, tools, rules, community, and division of labor influenced task accomplishment in this study, they should be considered as important. Some factors had more than one function and they mediated each other. For example, friends could function as tools, division of labor, and community at the same time. Tasks can be the objects to work on, the tools and the rules in themselves. Other than the tasks, subjects could be motivated by these factors as they participate in the course (Jonassen and Rohrer-Murphy, 1999). Peggy was an example in this matter. Some Thai students may be motivated by friends rather than by the course they take. All participants liked the material tools provided for them especially the DVD, the audio files, and the handouts. Thus, all factors should be considered as important as they contribute to the success of the course. Each factor is discussed in details as follows;

First, *subjects* are the central characters in accomplishing the tasks. Motivated b y the practicality of the business tasks in the course, successful participants in this study showed the willingness to learn and to communicate. Once they learned and benefited from the tasks, they came regularly, made efforts, and worked collaboratively towards course completion, therefore, these characteristics of the subjects were favorable to the course. They reported that the business tasks kept them interested and they were also motivated by learning, improving themselves, and accomplishing the challenging tasks (i.e., academic motives), by helping the teacher and friends due to good relationship (i.e., social m otives), and by obtaining good scores on the letter of reference (i.e., incentive motive). Thus, the course will be likely to succeed if these motives are fulfilled.

Second, the mediational *tools* in this course included (1) tasks and technology, (2) DVDs and handouts, (3) the teacher and peers, and (4) the individual's self mediation. For the success of the course, the tangible tools should be made available especially the DVD that shows model example of role plays and the presentation, because they were facilitative to participants' reflection on how to accomplish the tasks. L1 used as tools should be allowed during collaboration and throughout the course because it is used for regulating thinking as well as the means where communication and relationship could be established to enhance the learning.

Third, since it is important that participants know what is expected of them, *rules* such as scoring rubrics should be used regularly and systematically so that learners would know whether they progress in the right directions and how they can improve themselves. Then, their learning would be mediated by the rules more effectively. The fact that I did not reinforce using the scoring rubrics in peer-to-peer evaluation and in the evaluation by the teacher regularly may have resulted in less engagement and responsibility on the part of the learners such as Joey. In part, time limitation deprived the students from learning how to give feedback to one another. Thus, I suggest training them how to use the rubrics in peer evaluation and the rubrics should be simplified so that they would be user-friendly and students will not feel overwhelmed when using them.

Forth, all people involved in the *community* of practice should be supportive to the learners. Although there was almost no conflict in this course, if conflicts arise, they should be resolved quickly so that communication and compatibility can occur for the collaboration and success of the tasks and the course. Community outside class such as parents is also important for the success of the learners if they are supportive such as the cases of Sarah's mother and Peggy's sister. Teachers are the centre of the task-based classroom ann the course, whose

facilitation and supportive roles are important to other components of the activity system to take effects (see more teachers' roles on pages 54-55 and 137-143).

Fifth, *division of labor* related directly to interpersonal regulation. *Individual learning* should be realized as different from *independent learning*. The latter should be discouraged because it is not an effective style of learning in a task-based course. Group work and whole class division of labor can be facilitative to the course if they support the course objectives and serve the needs of students that may arise during the course. For example, when the participants held the exhibition to practice presenting the how to's of the tasks to the public together, they learned how to co-operate as the whole class and benefited from doing the exhibition task.

6.2.2.4 Motives, goals, and motivation There are four pedagogical implications from this study. First, most students came to the course with very *general motives* for the activity such as the desire to learn general English rather than English specific business tasks. For some students, their motives may not be strong enough or precise enough to enable them to deal with the tasks. In other words, motives for learning business English tasks for some students may not be precise enough to lead to any concrete actions in a task. Thus, helping students set their goals so that they come up with *precise motives* that align with course objectives are necessary so that students could benefit more from the course. Lompscher (1999) states, "goals are derived from motives. They stimulate and determine the character and direction of an activity. In other words, motives generate goals for actions necessary for reaching the desired result" (p. 8). Moreover, "the personal evaluation of reaching or failing a certain goal much depends largely on the relationship between that goal and the motive leading the whole activity" (Lompscher, 1999, p. 8). Thus, it is recommended that learners regularly reflect, evaluate, and reformulate their goals to be more precise.

Second, participants entered the activity systems (e.g., task-based course) with historical bearings (Engeström, 1987). Some beliefs (e.g., that only attending the course and receiving the teaching input was enough) need to be realized by students as unfavorable because the beliefs are mismatched with the course objective and could lead to less profitable learning experience due to improper goal-directed actions. Through the lens of activity theory, Storch (2004) found similar phenomena that learners' prior attitudes, beliefs, and the perceived roles they should play determined how they conduct the activity. Therefore, it is important to listen to learners as they are involved in problem-solving tasks and understand what it is that they are trying to accomplish.

Third, since this study found that the same actions may derive from different goals and the same goals may be enacted in different actions, the teacher may have to be very careful before judging whether an action of a learner is a learning action or not. An interview question can help the learners clarify the goals behind each action. For example, making slides may serve as a learning process (because the students think about the text on slides and the presentation as they prepare them) whereas for some, they may only want to play with technology.

In summary, it is essential for the teacher to investigate all factors that involve in the activity including subjects, tools, objects, rules, division of labor, and community. The teacher of a task-based business EFL course is recommended to examine whether he or she creates the learning environment that helps the learners recognize the usefulness of the activity or not. The learning environment of a task-based course should not only be meaningful, but also mediating, then, memorable and motivating to the students.

6.2.3 Research implications on using activity theory

This study found that activity theory is a useful tool in analyzing and understanding various aspects of a task-based classroom.

First, it allows me as researcher to thoroughly investigate the various components of activity namely subjects, tools, objects, rules, community, and division of labor. Since all these components or factors influence, interact, and mediate the learning of students, the theory gives a comprehensive view of educational activity of what happens when an activity could not proceed as it is supposed to or what goes wrong. For example, when a student does not seem to like the activity, it may not be because of the task, but because the partner she or he pairs up with is not willing to collaborate. Another example is when the pairs do not work well together, it may not be because of the differences in the proficiency level, but it may be because they just meet and need some time to adjust to each other. However, if the tasks are tailored to learners' needs and designed to be within their ZPDs, the success of the course is likely. Thus, the theory can explain what we observe more clearly and can help the teacher solve the problems that may arise more effectively.

Second, since the central focus of activity theory is the goal-directed activity, the theory allows the researcher to see changes of learners' motives and goals over time and to analyze contradicting goals between the teacher and the students and to see when goals and patterns of assistance are aligned with course objectives by the means of interviews and observations. Moreover, learners themselves can examine and re-examine their own goals by answering the questions of "what am I doing?", "why am I doing this?", and "how am I accomplishing my goals?", and finally "what should I be doing otherwise to perform better next time?". The question will be helpful because the learners' consciousness is raised. The responses can help

learners realize their *goals* and their corresponding *actions*. In this way, activity theory is a tool for the teacher to define, analyze, and diagnose problems that arise and to implement solutions and innovations if necessary.

Third, activity theory views learning as a consequence of certain kinds of mediated activity and includes microlevel (i.e., rules, division of labor, mediation) and macrolevel features of activity (i.e., subjects and objects and outcomes) in the analysis. Therefore, it is a very useful tool in researching and analyzing task-based instruction as well as a heuristic instrument for improving the instruction.

In summary, due to the usefulness of activity theory as mentioned, task-based instruction is better understood in light of activity theory.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Since some students did not reflect on and set learning goals, future research may include the interview protocol or questionnaire that requires students' precise responses on learning goals for each task. This will help them reflect and set more precise goals as in the following example;

Tasks	Actions	Goals	Consequences	It helps me realize the importance of..
Task 2	I rehearsed the role-play with a friend.	To be able to perform the role-play naturally and fluently.	I could perform the role-play more fluently and with confidence.	The rehearsals. The more I rehearse, the better my performance.

Research in this area will point out whether goal realization improves participants' performance or not. In addition, the study was conducted as an *optional* course, so the participants felt no pressure if they did not accomplish the tasks. The success of the course was

partly the result of incorporating sociocultural theory and activity theory as the pedagogical principles and framework in the implementation, in which all factors including the subjects were quite favorable to the cases studied. Although I believe that other Asian business EFL university leveled task-based classrooms will benefit from the findings of this study, more research are needed to confirm whether when the course implemented *formally,* it will be successful or not.

6.4   LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The results and findings of this study may be applicable only to the instructional contexts that resemble the EFL learning environment described here. This is because the study occurred in the business English classes where Thai participants were of the same L1 (note: Thai language was also used in the tests to avoid direct transferring of the questions asked to be used in the answers).

One limitation of this study concerns the fact that the same set of test was used to test participants' task-based performance on the main tasks *not* the transfer tasks. Thus, through task repetition in the delayed post-test, students performed *the main tasks* better. It may not mean that they could do well on the transfer tasks since the participants were not tested on them. In other words, *language learning* may occur but so as to be certain that *language development* does occur, future research should include the testing of the transfer tasks.

Another limitation of the study was the small number of participants. Only five subjects may not be enough to generalize the results and findings to other contexts. Although task-based instruction in this study is an interesting, potential approach to teaching *business-oriented tasks* offered in this course, that was because they were interesting to *the participants* in this study.

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Thus, its success primarily depends on the participants and how much all other components facilitate and sustain the learning motivation and cooperation on the part of the learners.

In conclusion, this chapter provides the discussion of the research results and findings. It also discussed the pedagogical implications on task-based instruction and research implications on using the activity theory and for future research. Task-based instruction is an interesting approach to teaching a business EFL Thai university level classroom. Its implementation is likely to be successful if sociocultural approach is used and activity theory principle/perspective is incorporated as analytical, heuristic tool for the instruction.

APPENDIX A

DEFINITONS OF TASKS IN TASK-BASED INSTRUCTION LITERATURE

1. Breen (1989)

A task is a structured plan for the provision of opportunities for the refinement of knowledge and capabilities entailed in a new language and its use during communication.

2. Long (1985)

A task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward. Thus, examples of tasks include painting a fence, dressing a child, filling out a form, buying a pair of shoes, making an airline reservation, borrowing a library book, taking a driving test, typing a letter, weighing a patient, sorting letters, taking a hotel reservation, writing a check, finding a street destination, and helping someone across a road. In other words, by 'task' is meant a hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between. 'Tasks' are the things people will tell you they do if you ask them and they are not applied linguist.

3. Richards, Platt, and Weber (1985)

A task is an activity or action which is carried out as the result of processing or understanding language, i.e., as a response. For example, drawing a map while listening to a

tape, and listening to an instruction and performing a command, may be referred to as tasks. Tasks may or may not involve the production of language. A task usually requires the teacher to specify what will be regarded as successful completion of the task. The use of a variety of different kinds of tasks in language teaching is said to make teaching more communicative..since it provides a purpose for classroom activity which goes beyond practice of language for its own sake.

4. Crookes (1986)

A task is a piece of work or an activity, usually with a specified objective, undertaken as part of an educational course, at work, or used to elicit data for research.

5. Prabhu (1987)

A task is an activity which requires learners to arrive at an outcome from given information through some process of thought, and which allowed teachers to control and regulate that process.

6. Nunan (1989)

A communicative task is a piece of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing, or interacting in the target language while their attention is principally focus on meaning rather than form. The task should also have a sense of completeness, being able to stand alone as a communicative act in its own right.

7. Skehan (1996)

A task is an activity in which meaning is primary; there is some sort of relationship to the real world; task completion ha some priority; and the assessment of task performance is in terms of task outcome.

8. Lee (2000)

A task is (1) a classroom activity or exercise that has (a) an objective obtainable only by the interaction among participants, (b) a mechanism for structuring and sequencing interaction, and (c) a focus on meaning exchange; (2) a language learning endeavor that requires learners to comprehend, manipulate, and/or produce the target language as they perform some sets of workplans.

9. Bygate, Skehan, and Swain (2001)

A task is an activity which requires learners to use language, with emphasis on meaning, to attain an objective.

APPENDIX B

THE SCREENING SCRIPT

Thank you for calling to find out more about my research study in Business English. My name is Ratikorn Sirisatit. I am an instructor at the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, as well as a Ph.D. student in the School of Education at the University of Pittsburgh, in the U.S.A.

My research title is " An activity theory perspective on task-based instruction in a university business EFL class in Thailand: A Sociocultural Case Study". The purpose of this research study is to investigate how and to what extent the implementation of a task-based instruction constructed within the sociocultural theory framework in a business English-as-a-foreign-language class at the university level in Thailand helps students become better in their business English task-based performance. The study also aims to address the question of what factors contribute to students' accomplishing the classroom tasks.

I will be offering a business English task-based course free of charge to adult Thai learners at [the research site] starting March 1st, 2009. There are 6 business English tasks to be taught. They are Greetings and making introductions, Welcoming visitors, Company presentation, Telephoning, Reading Business News, Writing a Resumé. If you become a

participant in this study, you will spend four periods or 5 hours per week for 8 weeks to complete my task-based business English course.

I will use the sociocultural approach to task-based instruction, a key part of which is the idea that higher order functions developed out of social interaction and mediation primarily through speaking, writing, and doing the tasks.

Do you think you might be interested in participating in this study?

{If No}: Thank you very much for calling.

{If Yes}: Before enrolling people in this study, I need to determine if you are eligible. I will need to ask you some questions about your age, the school you are in, and your ability to do the business English tasks that I will teach. Do I have your permission to ask you these questions?

{If No}: Thank you very much for calling.

{If Yes}: Are you a first-year student at the [research site]? Are you in the School of Economics, Accountancy, Business Administration, or Humanities majoring in English for Business Communication? Are you at least 18 years old?

{If No to all questions above}: Thank you very much for calling.

{(1) If Yes}: Then, have you ever studied business English before, and in particular, have you ever studied the 6 tasks that I will be teaching?

{(1.1) If Yes, but I have studied only a task or two} Can you do the tasks easily, with a little difficulty, with some difficulty, or with a great deal of difficulty?

{(1.2) Yes, I can do one easily and another one with a little difficulty, <u>or</u> I can do both easily or with little difficulty. For other tasks, I cannot do at all or with some or a great deal of difficulty} Then, you are eligible. Would you like to participate in this study?

{(2) If Yes: I have studied (or I can do) more than two tasks}: Can you do the tasks easily, with little difficulty, with some difficulty, or with a great deal of difficulty?

{(2.1) If the answers are: I can do them easily (or with little difficulty)} Sorry, then you are not eligible, because my criteria for selecting the participants are that they have never studied 8 business English tasks before, or if they have, they can do only a task or two, since the participants in this study need to be beginners in business English. Anyway, thank you very much for calling.

{(2.2) If the answers are: I can do two of them easily (or with little difficulty) but as for other tasks, I cannot do them at all or I can do them but with some difficulty or a great deal of difficulty} Then, you are eligible. Would you like to participate in this study?

<u>Note</u>: The chart I used in this screening script is presented below. It is the same as the one in the questionnaire to be used again for collecting the base- line data from eligible participants.

Task ↻	Ability Level ➲ (for each skill put a ✓)				
	Can do easily	Can do, with very little difficulty	Can do, but with some difficulty	Can do, but with a great deal of difficulty	Cannot do at all
1. Greetings and making introductions					
2. Welcoming visitors					
3. Company presentation					
4. Telephoning					
5. Reading Business News					
6. Writing Resume´					

C.1 THE TEST: THE ENGLISH VERSION

Pseudonym: _____

Task 1: Greetings & Introductions

<u>Directions</u>: Perform the following situations.

<u>Situation 1</u>. You are the Marketing Manager of a company. At a conference, you meet a business man from another country for the first time. To build a friendship connection, you (1) greet and do some small talk (2) introduce yourself (3) asking where he is from, (4) if this is his first visit to Thailand (5) exchange name cards and do some small talk (6) say it is a pleasure to meet him/her (7) make an excuse giving a reason for parting (8) say hope to see him or her again, and (9) say goodbye appropriately.

<u>Situation 2</u>. You are the Assistant Sales Manager of a company. At the company, you are assigned to greet and welcome Mr. Peter Anderson (performed by the teacher). He is interested in becoming the customer of your company. You (1) greet him, introduce yourself and welcome him to your company. (3) Take him to see your boss, Chamnan Sirikiet, who is sitting in the office nearby. (4) Make introductions for two people to know each other. (5) Tell your boss that he is interested in the products of the company.

Situation 3. You run across your former colleague of the same company but his branch in Hua-Hin is far away and you meet him (Alex Whitcomb) after a long time. Your branch is in Phuket. (1) Greet him (2) ask about business in Hua-Hin (3) say that business in Phuket is going well. (4) Make an excuse for parting telling Alex not to forget to call if there is anything you can help (5) Say goodbye.

Task 2: Welcoming visitors

Directions: Perform the following situations.

Situation 1: You are the Assistant Personnel Manager of accompany. You are assigned to welcome a guest to your company. You are to pick him up in the morning at the airport. His name is Mr. Calvin Henderson. (1) Ask to double check (2) greet and make self introduction and state your aim to come and pick him up. (3) Offer to help with carrying his luggage. (4) Ask if he has had a good trip or how his flight was (5) ask where he is coming from in Australia (6) if this is his first visit to Thailand (7) if he travels a lot, where or what countries. At the hotel, (8) say glad to meet him and (9) hope to see him again (10) say that you wish him a pleasant stay.

Situation 2 : You are a receptionist/secretary/assistant of a company. A foreign guest comes to see your boss (performed by the teacher). Your boss is expecting him. (1) Say that your boss is expecting him and he will be available in a moment. (2) Say you will inform your boss of his arrival. (3) invite him to sit at a place (4) ask if he would have something to drink. (5) say please wait a moment (6) excuse yourself to go check your boss' availability and come out and say that your boss is ready for meeting him and show the way.

Situation 3: You are receptionist/secretary/assistant of a company. A foreigner comes to visit your boss (performed by the teacher) (1) say "sorry" because your boss is away (2) state the reason (as learned in class) (3) ask to know his business and personal business information (name of company and telephone number) so as to call to make an appointment again tomorrow.

Task 3: Company Presentation

Directions: Make a company presentation using the outline below and the information provided in the box. (Preparation time 20 mins and 10 mins for speech).

- Welcome visitors
- Introduce yourself and your job
- Present your talk on:
- History of the company
- Products or services, present markets, and the strength of the company
- Head office & other offices,
  company structure & employees
4) Projects & future goals
5) Finally, ask for questions from the visitors in Q & A session.

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HOME: http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/Corporate_profile.asp

- History of the company
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/History.asp
- Products or services, present markets, and the strength of the company
  http://www.mama.co.th/All_Product/Index.asp
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/What_we_do.asp
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/Aword_and_Quality.asp
- Head office & other offices, company structure & employees
  http://www.mama.co.th/All_Product/Index.asp
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/Management_Team.asp
Others: http://www.mama.co.th/FAQ_EN/FAQ.asp

Task 4: Telephoning

Direction: Perform the following situations.

Task 4.1 Pick up the phone and say the phone conversation as stated in the boxes on the left. Word choices are up to you as you see appropriate.

Receive the call: greeting

(the teacher part)

Ask for his/her name.

(the teacher part)

Please wait.

Say sorry and he is not available for a reason.

(the teacher part)
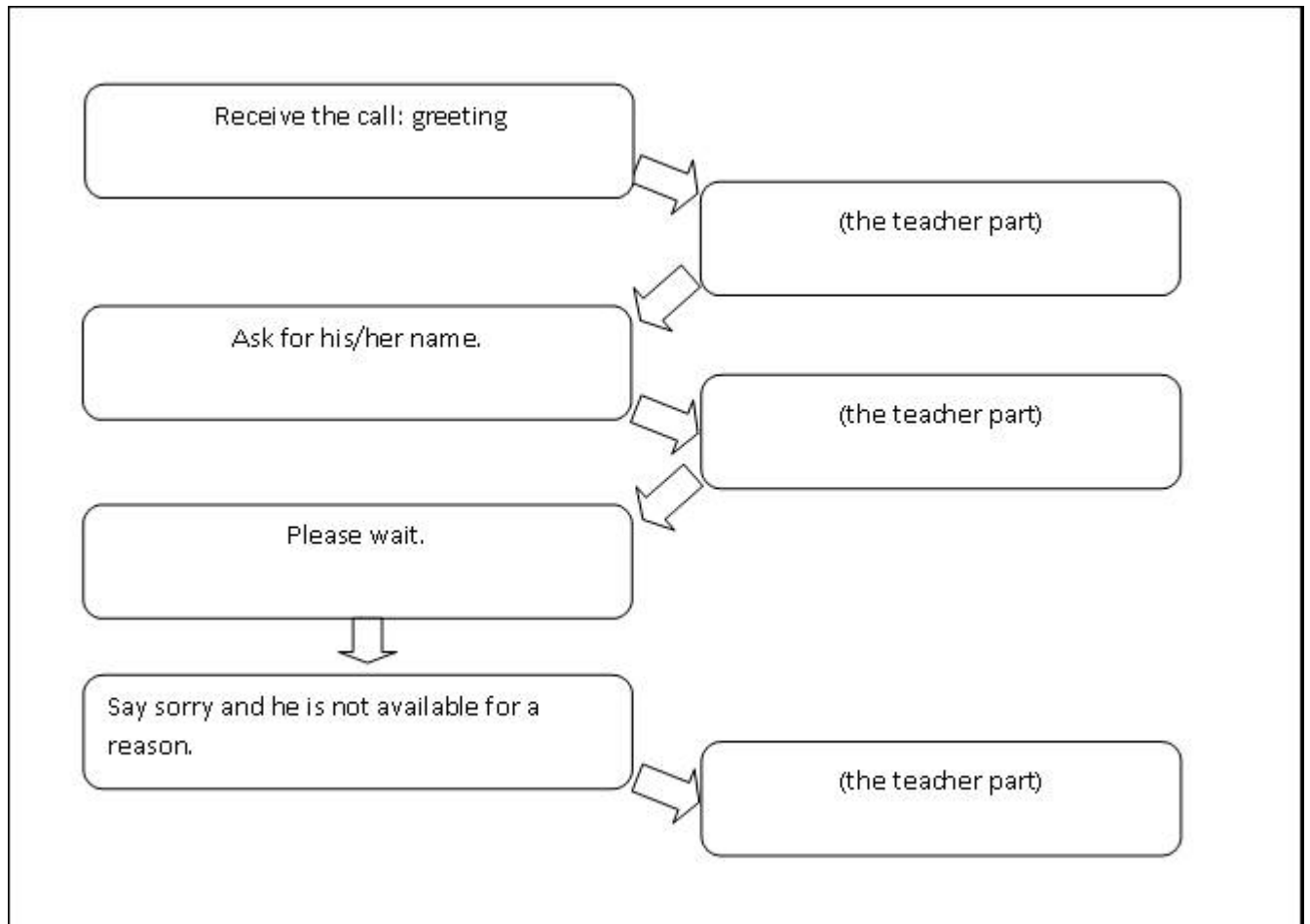
2) What would you say in the following phone situations

1. Say that the line is busy ask if he wants to hold.

2. Say that your boss is not available at the moment. He is in the meeting.

3. Ask the caller for the company name and business that he or she calls.

4. Ask for the caller's phone number.

5. Answer the question asked "Do you speak English" and say your name as you are speaking.

6. Say sorry because your boss is not in his office at the moment. Suggest that he calls back again tomorrow around 11 am.

7. Ask when is the proper time to call back.

8. Ask if the caller would like to talk to the secretary/assistant of the person he or she wants to talk to

9. Say that you are transferring the call to the correct line for the caller.

10. Ask for the spelling of caller's name and surname

Task 4.2. Taking 2 messages after receiving 2 calls using the forms below.

Message Form 1   Message Form 2

```
To _____          MEMO
         WHILE YOU WERE OUT          Message for              MESSAGE
Mr./Ms_____
                                     _____
Of _____  From _____
Phone
(_____)_____      _____
   ☐ Telephoned      ☐ Please Call   Message taken by
   ☐ Will call again ☐ Return Your call
   ☐ Urgent          ☐Called to see you _____

MESSAGE_____      ┌─────────────────────────┐
_____     │ ☐ For your information  │
_____     │                         │
_____     │ ☐ Will call back        │
_____     │                         │
_____     │ ☐ For action please     │
_____ _                              │                         │
                                     │ ☐ Please call back      │
                                     └─────────────────────────┘
```

Task 5: Reading business news

Direction: Read the following news and give the answers in the provided chart (30 minutes).

News Thai govt may raise taxes after revenues fall heavily

(P1) BANGKOK, May 5 (TNA) -- A sluggish economy coupled with heavy government spending particularly on social welfare, may force the Finance Ministry to raise taxes, permanent secretary for Finance Ministry Suparat Kawatkul said.

(P2) Tax revenues collected by the government during the first half of fiscal 2009 - October 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009 - declined significantly, Mr. Suparat warned.

(P3) During the period, excise tax collection fell more than 20 per cent year-on-year while revenue tax collection was down around 9-10 per cent.

(P4) Compounding this situation, corporate tax revenues are expected to fall drastically this August in line with the economic downturn, he said.

(P5) Already off by about 30 per cent year-on-year - almost equivalent to import tariffs collected by the Customs Department - value-added tax revenues are projected to decline further from next February, a decline Mr. Suparat attributed to the poor economy, slow spending by Thais and the drop in tourists numbers. This situation would improve significantly if international trade and tourism recovered, he said.

(P6) Mr. Suparat predicted if tax revenues fail to support government expenses and public debt then the government may have to increase tax levels across the board to 20 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) from about 15-16 per cent of GDP now. (TNA)

News: Answer Chart	
1. What is the resource of the news?	
2. What is the main idea of the whole news?	
3. What is the main idea of p 1?	
4. What is the main idea of p 2?	
5. What is the main idea of p 3?	
6. What is the main idea of p 4?	
7. What is the main idea of p 5?	

Task 6: Writing a resume´.

Direction: Using the example below and write or type a resume´ of your own. (30 mins).

KULTIDA CHAROENSUK

216 Ramkamhaeng Road

Huamark, Bangkapi, Bangkok 10240

Tel: 0-2735-1206 Email: kultidacha@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Business English Communication   (to be awarded) November 2009

Major: *English*;   Minor: *Marketing* , *Japanese*

GPA: *3.25 (second class honors)*

University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok

Related Coursework

Business Communication	Communicative Writing
Group Dynamics	Human Resource Management
Consumer Behavior	Introduction to Information System

Students' Business Knowledge Enhancement Program, UTCC   March – May 2008

     (Airline Industry Module): Certificate of Completion

EXPERIENCE

YMCA Thailand   June – October 2008

 Intern

- Prepared memos, letters, e-mails for supervisors
- Translated business papers
- Dealt with customers' requests

World Trade Center Conference, Bangkok   January 2007

Volunteer

- Assisted the Conference Program Director
- Set up the reception
- Sent out conference proceedings to participants

SKILLS

- *Computer*: Microsoft Office Word, Power Point and Excel, SPSS
- *Language***:** Fluent English and Thai, some Chinese
- *Others***:** presentation and ability to work in team

ACTIVITIES

- Member of English Club, UTCC

HONORS & AWARDS

- Second Price : UTCC English Speech Contest   February 2009

REFERENCES

Assistant Professor Dr. Supatra Aksaranugara   School of Education, Chulalongkorn University

Aj. Ratikorn Sirisatit   School of Humanities, the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

Aj. Vigunda Wongsuwat   School of Humanities, the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

Pseudonym: _____

Task 1: Greetings & Introductions

<u>Directions</u>: ให้แสดงออกในสถานการณ์ทักทายและแนะนำตัวต่อไปนี้

<u>Situation 1</u>. คุณเป็น Marketing Manager ของบริษัท(ตั้งชื่อเอง) ณ ที่งานสัมมนาทางธุรกิจ คุณได้
พบกับนักธุรกิจชาวต่างชาติที่มาสัมมนาด้วยกันเป็นครั้งแรก (อาจารย์แสดง) คุณต้องการผูกมิตรจึง (1) ทักทาย
เขา พูดถึงงานสัมมนาเล็กน้อยก่อน (เช่น ถามเขาว่าชอบงานสัมมนาหรือไม่หรืออื่นๆ) (2) แนะนำตัวเอง ถาม
ว่าเขา (3) มาจากไหน (4) มาเมืองไทยครั้งแรกใช่ไหม (5) อย่าลืมแลกนามบัตรกับเขา และชวนคุยอื่นๆบ้าง
ก่อนจะต้องจาก (6) ยินดีที่ได้คุยด้วย (7) ขอตัวไปก่อนโดยบอกเหตุผลด้วย (8) หวังว่าจะได้พบกันอีก (9)
กล่าวลา

<u>Situation 2</u>. คุณเป็น Assistant Sales Manager ของบริษัท(ตั้งชื่อเอง) ณ ที่บริษัทคุณได้รับ
มอบหมายให้การต้อนรับ Ms. Peter Anderson ซึ่งสนใจมาเป็นลูกค้าของบริษัท (อาจารย์แสดง) ให้คุณ(1)
ทักทายเขาและ แนะนำตัวเอง และพูดว่ามาพบเพื่อต้อนรับ (3) พามาแนะนำให้เจ้านาย ซึ่งอยู่ในอีกห้อง ชื่อ
คุณชำนาญ ศิริเกียรติ รู้จัก และบอกข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับลูกค้าว่าสนใจเฟอร์นิเจอร์ของบริษัท (นักศึกษาอีก
คนเป็น คุณชำนาญ ศิริเกียรติ <u>ซึ่งสอบด้วยตรงนี้</u>เพื่อแสดงการตอบกลับการถูกแนะนำเป็น) โดยคุณชำนาญ

(1) ตอบรับคำทักทายนั้นและ (2) ว่ายินดีที่ได้รู้จักและต้อนรับสู่บริษัท (3) ถามว่าชื่ออะไรอีกที (4) ถามเขาว่า มาจากไหน (5) วางแผนว่าจะอยู่นานเท่าใด

Situation 3. คุณพบเพื่อนร่วมงาน (colleague) ของบริษัทเดียวกันกับคุณ อีกครั้งหนึ่งหลังจากไม่ได้ พบกันนานมากๆ (แต่ต่างสาขา โดยคุณอยู่ที่สาขาภูเก็ต) เขาชื่อ Alex Whitcomb ซึ่งอยู่ที่สาขาหัวหิน (อาจารย์แสดง) ให้ (1) ทักทายเขา (2) ถามเรื่องธุรกิจที่หัวหิน และ(3) พูดถึงธุรกิจที่ภูเก็ตว่าก็เป็นไปด้วยดี (4) สุดท้ายให้บอกสาเหตุว่าต้องไปแล้ว บอกว่าอย่าลืมโทรมาหาถ้ามีอะไรให้ช่วย (5) กล่าวคำอำลา

Task 2: Welcoming visitors

Situation 1 : คุณเป็น Assistant Personnel Manager ของบริษัทแห่งหนึ่ง(ตั้งชื่อเอง) คุณ ได้รับมอบหมายให้ไปต้อนรับแขกที่มาเยือนบริษัทชื่อ Mr. Calvin Henderson (อาจารย์แสดง) ในตอน เช้า คุณขับรถไปรับที่สนามบินเพื่อพาเขาไปพักที่โรงแรมก่อนไปที่บริษัท ให้ (1) สอบถามยืนยันว่าใช่เขา หรือไม่ (2) ทักทายและแนะนำตัว อย่าลืมบอกว่ามารับ (3) เสนอช่วยขนกระเป๋า (4) ถามเขาว่าการเดินทาง (บินมา)เป็นอย่างไร (5) ถามว่ามาจากไหนในออสเตรเลีย (6) มาเมืองไทยเป็นครั้งแรกหรือไม่ (7) ถามว่า เดินทางบ่อยไหม ไปประเทศอะไรบ้าง เมื่อถึงโรงแรม (8) บอกว่าดีใจที่ได้พบกัน (9) หวังว่าจะได้พบกันอีก (10) บอกอวยพรการอยู่ที่เมืองไทย

Situation 2 : คุณเป็น receptionist/secretary/assistant ของเจ้านายบริษัทแห่งหนึ่ง มีชาว ต่างประเทศแวะมาที่บริษัทเพื่อขอพบเจ้านาย (อาจารย์แสดง) **เจ้านายรอเขาอยู่พอดี** ให้บอกเขาว่า (1) เจ้านาย กำลังรออยู่พอดี สักครู่จะให้เขาเข้าพบได้ (2) เดี๋ยวจะไปแจ้งให้ทราบว่ามาถึงแล้ว (3) เชิญนั่ง (4) ถามว่าจะดื่ม อะไรไหม (5) กรุณารอสักครู่ (6) เข้าไปเช็คแล้วกลับมาบอกว่า เจ้านายพร้อมให้พบแล้วเชิญทางนี้

Situation 3 : คุณเป็น receptionist/secretary/assistant ของบริษัทแห่งหนึ่ง มีชาวต่างประเทศแวะ มาที่บริษัทเพื่อขอพบเจ้านาย (อาจารย์แสดงเป็นชาวต่างประเทศนั้น) **เจ้านายไม่อยู่** ให้ (1) บอกว่าเสียใจ (หรือขอโทษ) (2) บอกเหตุผลที่ไม่สามารถให้เข้าพบเจ้านายได้ (ให้บอกเหตุผลเองได้ตรงนี้) (3) ขอทราบ ธุระ และรายละเอียดที่จำเป็นอื่นๆ(บริษัทและเบอร์โทร) เพื่อโทรไปแจ้งนัดหมายอีกครั้งพรุ่งนี้

Directions: ให้นำเสนอบริษัทต่อแขกชาวต่างประเทศที่มาเยือนโดยใช้ power point ตามข้อมูลที่ให้มาข้างบนนี้ ให้แจ้งผู้ฟังถึง outline และเวลาที่จะใช้ด้วยให้เวลาเตรียม15 นาทีและพูดไม่เกิน10 นาที

- Welcome visitors
- Introduce yourself and your job
- Present your talk on:
- History of the company
- Products or services, present markets, and the strength of the company
- Head office & other offices,
  company structure & employees
4) Projects & future goals
5) Finally, ask for questions from the visitors in Q & A session.

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HOME: http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/Corporate_profile.asp

- History of the company
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/History.asp
- Products or services, present markets, and the strength of the company
  http://www.mama.co.th/All_Product/Index.asp
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/What_we_do.asp
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/Aword_and_Quality.asp
- Head office & other offices, company structure & employees
  http://www.mama.co.th/All_Product/Index.asp
  http://www.mama.co.th/Company_EN/Management_Team.asp
Others: http://www.mama.co.th/FAQ_EN/FAQ.asp

Task 4.1 Direction: ให้พูดโทรศัพท์ในสถานการณ์ดังต่อไปนี้ 1) คุณรับโทรศัพท์แล้วจะพูดอะไรกับผู้ที่โทรมา
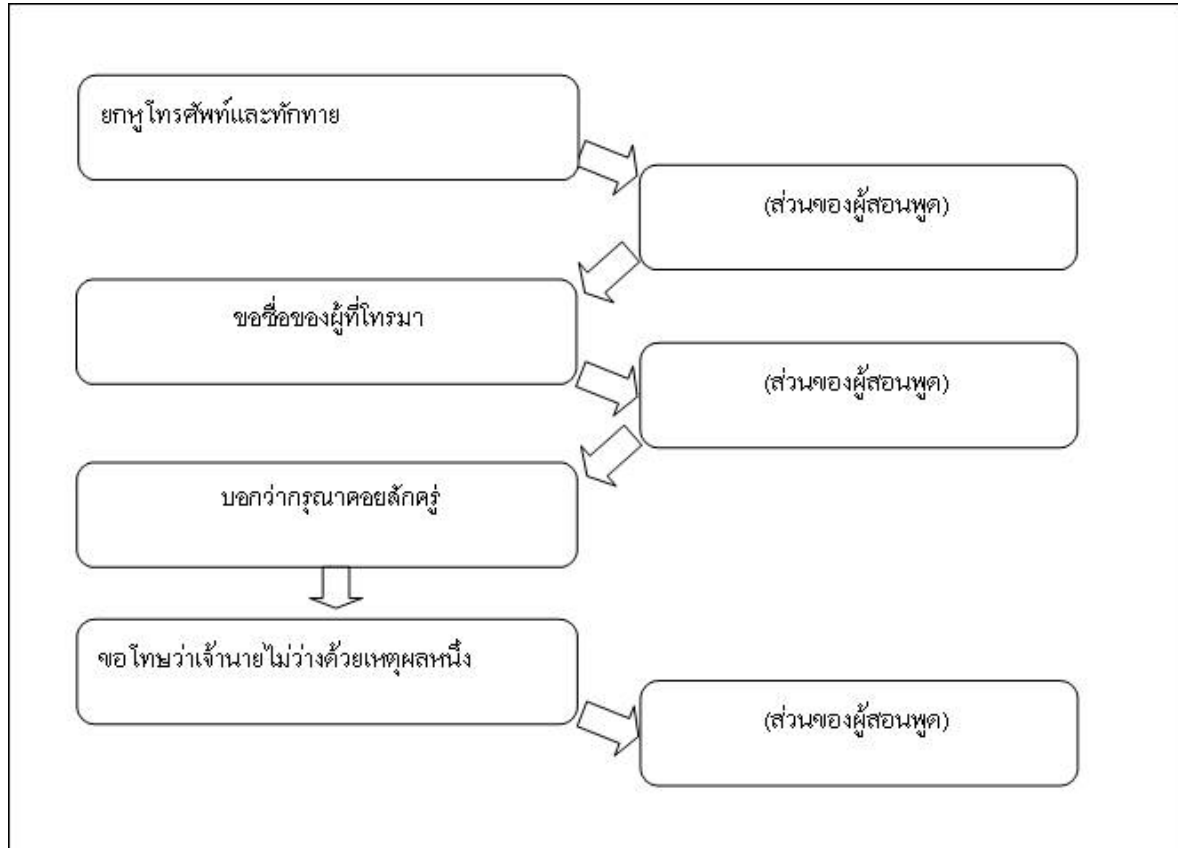
ต่อไปนี้

Task 4.2 Direction คุณจะ**พูด**อะไรในสถานการณ์การรับโทรศัพท์ต่อไปนี้

1. แจ้งว่าสายไม่ว่าง คุณจะถือหูรอไหมคะ
2. แจ้งว่าเจ้านายไม่สามารถมารับสายตอนนี้ได้ เจ้านายติดประชุม
3. ขอทราบชื่อบริษัทและ ธุระของผู้ที่โทรมา
4. ขอหมายเลขโทรศัพท์ (เพื่อแจ้งให้เจ้านายทราบ)
5. ตอบ Do you speak English? และบอกชื่อ ว่ากำลังพูด
6. ขอโทษค่ะ/ครับ เจ้านายไม่อยู่ที่โต๊ะตอนนี้ ขอให้โทรกลับมาใหม่พรุ่งนี้ 11 โมงเช้า
7. จะให้ทางเราโทรกลับไปไหม เมื่อไรดี
8. ถามว่าจะให้โอนสายไปยังเลขาหรือผู้ช่วยของเขาหรือไม่
9. กำลังโอนสายให้นะคะ/ครับ
10. ขอให้ช่วยสะกดชื่อและนามสกุล(เพื่อจดไว้)

2. <u>การจดข้อความ</u> ให้พูดตอบกลับทางโทรศัพท์กับอาจารย์ (2 ครั้ง 2 ข้อความ) โดยเขียนกรอกข้อความที่ฝากไว้ในแบบฟอร์มข้างล่างด้วย

Message Form 1   Message Form 2

To _____ **WHILE YOU WERE OUT** **Mr./Ms**_____ **Of** _____ **Phone** (_____)_____ ☐ Telephoned ☐ Please Call ☐ Will call again ☐ Return Your call ☐ Urgent ☐Called to see you **MESSAGE**_____ _____ _____ _____ _____	MEMO Message for MESSAGE _____ From _____ _____ Message taken by _____ ☐ For your information ☐ Will call back ☐ For action please ☐ Please call back

Direction: อ่านข่าวต่อไปนี้แล้วเติมคำตอบในชาร์ท (ให้ตอบเป็นภาษาไทย)

News Thai govt may raise taxes after revenues fall heavily

(P1) BANGKOK, May 5 (TNA) -- A sluggish economy coupled with heavy government spending particularly on social welfare, may force the Finance Ministry to raise taxes, permanent secretary for Finance Ministry Suparat Kawatkul said.

(P2) Tax revenues collected by the government during the first half of fiscal 2009 - October 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009 - declined significantly, Mr. Suparat warned.

(P3) During the period, excise tax collection fell more than 20 per cent year-on-year while revenue tax collection was down around 9-10 per cent.

(P4) Compounding this situation, corporate tax revenues are expected to fall drastically this August in line with the economic downturn, he said.

(P5) Already off by about 30 per cent year-on-year - almost equivalent to import tariffs collected by the Customs Department - value-added tax revenues are projected to decline further from next February, a decline Mr. Suparat attributed to the poor economy, slow spending by Thais and the drop in tourists numbers. This situation would improve significantly if international trade and tourism recovered, he said.

(P6) Mr. Suparat predicted if tax revenues fail to support government expenses and public debt then the government may have to increase tax levels across the board to 20 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) from about 15-16 per cent of GDP now. (TNA)

News: Answer Chart	
1. What is the resource of the news?	
2. What is the main idea of the whole news?	
3. What is the main idea of p 1?	
4. What is the main idea of p 2?	
5. What is the main idea of p 3?	
6. What is the main idea of p 4?	
7. What is the main idea of p 5?	

Task 6: Writing a resume´.

Direction: ใช้ตัวอย่างเพื่อเขียนประวัติส่วนตัวเพื่อการสมัครงานของคุณ (30 mins).

KULTIDA CHAROENSUK
216 Ramkamhaeng Road
Huamark, Bangkapi, Bangkok 10240
Tel: 0-2735-1206 Email: kultidacha@yahoo.com

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Business English Communication   (to be awarded) November 2009
Major: *English*;   Minor: *Marketing* , *Japanese*
GPA: *3.25 (second class honors)*
University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok

Related Coursework

Business Communication	Communicative Writing
Group Dynamics	Human Resource Management
Consumer Behavior	Introduction to Information System

Students' Business Knowledge Enhancement Program, UTCC   March – May 2008
         (Airline Industry Module): Certificate of Completion

EXPERIENCE

YMCA Thailand   June – October 2008
 Intern
- Prepared memos, letters, e-mails for supervisors
- Translated business papers
- Dealt with customers' requests

World Trade Center Conference, Bangkok   January 2007
Volunteer
- Assisted the Conference Program Director
- Set up the reception
- Sent out conference proceedings to participants

SKILLS
- *Computer*: Microsoft Office Word, Power Point and Excel, SPSS
- *Language***:** Fluent English and Thai, some Chinese
- *Others***:** presentation and ability to work in team

ACTIVITIES
- Member of English Club, UTCC

HONORS & AWARDS
- Second Price : UTCC English Speech Contest   February 2009

REFERENCES

Assistant Professor Dr. Supatra Aksaranugara   School of Education, Chulalongkorn University
Aj. Ratikorn Sirisatit   School of Humanities, the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce
Aj. Vigunda Wongsuwat   School of Humanities, the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

APPENDIX D

SCORING RUBRICS AND EVALUATION FORMS

<u>Tasks 1-2, 4.1</u>: Speaking tests

Scoring Rubric Definition Chart

Scores	Description (4 categories: **C**omplete & appropriateness, **F**luency and **A**ccuracy)
4 Very good	**C**: The sentence is complete, **all** correct and/or appropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is smooth and flowing. **No** hesitancy and/or rephrasing. **A**: **No (or very few)** errors in pronunciation or grammar that do **not** impede comprehension.
3 Good	**C**: The sentence is complete, **mostly** correct and/or appropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is smooth **for the most part**. **A few** hesitancies and/or rephrasing. **A**: A few errors in pronunciation or grammar **impede comprehension only a little**.
2 Fair	**C**: The sentence is **quite** complete, **somewhat** correct and/or appropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is **somewhat** smooth, with **some** hesitancy and/or rephrasing. **A**: Some errors in pronunciation or grammar **somewhat** impede comprehension.
1 Poor	**C**: The sentence is **not** complete, with **mostly** incorrect and/or inappropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is **generally** hesitant and **often** choppy, but showing some attempt. **A**: **Many** pronunciation and/or grammatical errors that **greatly** impede comprehension.
0	**No response**, skip or miss the part. Or there are some response(s) but **totally wrong** in meaning.

Answer keys and the evaluation forms for Task 1, 2, and 4.1

Task 1: Greeting & Introduction
Evaluation Form
(__Pre-test/___Post test /___ Delayed Post test)

Pseudonym _____ Evaluator/Rater's name _____

ITEM 1

Test sub-item & answer keys / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Additional comments (if any)
(1) Hi/Hello/Good …morning/afternoon/evening….. Do you like the/this seminar/conference?						
(2) (By the way/Well/Let me introduce myself), my name is …………….. I'm …(position)…from …(company)…						
(3) Where are you from?/Where do you come from?						
(4) Is this your first visit to Thailand?						
(5) Here is my name card. (+other small talks) What does your company do? / Do you like your job?/ What is the weather like in your country?						
(6) (It's) Nice meeting/talking to you.						
(7) By the way, I've got to go. I have a meeting/an appointment with my customer/ boss/ or I have to go to a meeting/the airport.						
(8) (I) Hope to see you again.						
(9) Goodbye /Bye						

ITEM 2

Test sub-items / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Additional comments (if any)
(1) Hi/Good …morning/afternoon/evening….. My name is …………….. I'm …(position)…						
(2) I'm here to welcome you (to our company) and take you to see my boss.						
(3) (knock ..knock) Good morning/afternoon/evening, Mr/Khun Chamnan, let me introduce/may I introduce/ I'd like to introduce/ this is... Mr. Peter Anderson. He is interested in our furniture. Mr. (Peter) Anderson, this is Khun Chamnan, the CEO of SF Company/my boss						

ITEM 3

Test sub-items / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Additional comments (if any)
(1) Hi/Hello Alex. It's been a long time/ Long time no see… How have you been? /How are you?						
(2) How is business in Hua Hin?						
(3) It is going well.						
(4) By the way, you have to excuse me, I have to go. I have an appointment with my friends/my boss etc. Don't forget to call me if you have anything I can help.						
(5) (Hope to see you again). Goodbye/Bye.						

Task 2: Welcoming Visitors Evaluation Form

(__Pretest/___Post test / ___ Delayed Post test)

Pseudonym of the test taker _____ Evaluator/Rater's name _____

ITEM 1

Test sub-items & answer keys Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Addtional comments (if any)
(1) Are you Mr. Calvin Anderson?						
(2) Hi/Hello/Good… my name is ……I am here to pick you up and take you to the hotel.						
(3) (Is that your bag/luggage?) May help you with/carry your bag/luggage?						
(4) How was your flight/trip?						
(5) Where are you (exactly) from in Australia?						
(6) Is this your first trip to Thailand?						
(7) Have/Do you travel(led) a lot? What countries have you been to?						
(8) (It's) Nice meeting you.						
(9) (I) Hope to see you again						
(10) (I hope you) Enjoy your stay in/visit to Thailand.						

ITEM 2

Test sub-items / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Additional comments (if any)
(1) Khun Chamnan is expecting you. He will be available shortly/soon/in a moment. / Just a moment please.						
(2) I will let him know that you have arrived/come.						
(3) Please have/take a seat.						
(4) Would you like something/anything to drink?						
(5) Please wait a moment.						
(6) Khun Chamnan is ready to see you now. Please come this way/ This way please.						

ITEM 3

Test item / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Additional comments (if any)
(1) I'm sorry.						
(2) Khun Chamnan is in the meeting all day/ He is with a customer today.						
(3) May I know/ Could you tell me your business and the company name with the contact number? I will call you to arrange/make an appointment tomorrow.						

Task 4: Telephoning Evaluation Form

(__Pretest/___Post test / ___ Delayed Post test)

Pseudonym of the test taker _____ Evaluator/Rater's name _____

Task 4.1

Test sub-items & answer keys	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Additional comments (if any)
(1) Good... ABC foods company. May I help you?						
(2) Certainly/ of course/ definitely, may I have your name, please?						
(3) Just a moment, please, Mr. Jansky.						
(4) I'm sorry, Mr. Jansky. Mr. Takahashi is on another line. May I take a message/ Would you like to take a message.						

Task 4.2

Test sub-items / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Additional comments (if any)
(1) The line is busy/engaged. Would you like to hold?						
(2) My boss/Khun Chamnan is not available at the moment. He is in the meeting (right now).						
(3) May I have your company name please?, and may I know your business?						
(4) May I have your phone/contact number?						
(5) Yes, (I do). (This is) NAME speaking.						
(6) I'm sorry. He/She/My boss is __not at his/her desk at the moment. Could you call (back) again tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock?						
(7) _(Just a moment) I'll check if he/she is in.						
(8) Would you like me to transfer the call to his/her secretary/assistant?/ Would you like to talk to his/her secretary/assistant?						
(9) I am connecting you now. / I am transferring you now.						
(10) Could you spell your name and last/surname please?						

Task 3: Company Presentation Scoring Rubric

Definition Chart

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Categories / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
1. Content coverage (see all areas in the Evaluation Form)	Complete **all or almost all (10-11)** areas of requirement	Complete **most (9)**areas of requirement	Complete **quite enough (7-8)**areas of requirement	Did **not** complete **enough (6 or below)** areas of requirement
2. Fluency (1) Ease of expression/speech flow	•Speech flows smoothly **all or almost all the time** •There are **a few (= about 2-4) pauses** or **uh-ahs** (that affect the flow of talk)	•Speech flows smoothly **mostly** •There are **about 5-6 pauses** or **uh-ahs** (that affect the flow of talk)	•Speech flows **somewhat** smoothly • There are **about 7-9 pauses** or **uh-ahs** (that affect the flow of talk)	•Speech does **not** flow smoothly **most of the time** • There are **10 or more pauses** or **uh-ahs** (that affect the flow of talk)
(2) Varieties of transitional words /connecting words (between sentences and/or between slides) **e.g., Then, and, next, now, so, let me talk about/draw your attention to, first, second, third**	•Use **a lot of (=7 or more) different** correct transitional words	•Use **a moderate amount of (=5-6) different** correct transitional words	•Use **some (=3-4) different** correct transitional words	• Use **a few (= only 1-2) different** correct transitional words
3. Accuracy (1) Grammar of speech	• Speech has **no or a few** grammatical errors **(= about 2 or 3 times)**	• Speech has **some** grammatical errors **(=about 4 -6 times)**	• Speech has a **moderate amount** of grammatical errors **(= about 7 to 9 times)**	• Speech has **a lot of** grammatical errors **(= more than 10 times)**
(2) Pronunciation (Comprehensibility)	• Speech has **no or a few** incorrect pronunciation. Listeners can understand **all or almost all (about 90-100%)** of the presentation.	• Speech has **some** incorrect pronunciation. Listeners can understand **most (about 80-90%)** of the presentation.	• Speech has **a moderate amount of** incorrect pronunciation. Listeners can understand about **60-70 %** of the presentation.	• Has **a lot of** incorrect pronunciation. Listeners **cannot** understand **most of the** (about 50% or less) presentation.

Task 3: Company Presentation Evaluation Form

(___Post test / ___ Delayed Post test)

Pseudonym of the presenter _____ Evaluator/Rater's name _____

Categories / Scales		4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	Total	Additional comments (If any)
1. Content coverage	√×						
(1) Has words of welcome: •greetings (good ………ladies & gentlemen)							
•self introduction (name & position)							
•welcome to ……(name of company)							
(2) Has the outline/ overview of the talk (the "outline" slide)							
•History (the slide)							
•Products (the slide)							
•Present markets (the slide)							
•Strength(s) &/or Award(s) (the slide)							
•Offices (the slide)							
•Company structure &/or employees (the slide)							
(3) Say thank you & has called for questions (for Q&A)							
2. Fluency							
(1) Ease of expression/speech flow						X2	
(2) Varieties of transitional words						X2	

Only one score is needed here_____/11

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3. Accuracy						
(1) Grammar of speech					X2	
(2) Pronunciation (i.e., easy to understand and to follow)					X2	
4. PowerPoint (Visual aids)						
(1) Pictures /Illustrations						
(2) Ease of reading (font/color/size/typo)						
(3) Misspellings /grammatical errors on slides						
5. Delivery						
(1) Eye contact						
(2) Overall impression of the presentation						
TOTAL /Grade						

Tasks 5: Business News Reading (Retelling Task)

Scoring Rubric Definition Chart

Scores	Description (2 categories: Completeness and Accuracy)
4 Very good	**C**: The answer is **complete**. **A**: The answer is **accurate in meaning**.
3 Good	**C**: The answer is **almost complete.** (80-90% complete) **A**: The answer is **mostly correct in meaning.**
2 Fair	**C**: The answer is **not complete, but makes (some) sense.** (60-70% complete) **A**: The answer is **rather correct in meaning**.
1 Poor	**C**: The answer is **not complete, with fragments, and/or does not make any sense** that show real comprehension. **A**: The answer is **almost all wrong in meaning**. **.** (50% and lower correct)
0	**No answer**, skip or miss the part. Or it is an answer but **totally wrong in meaning.**

Task 5: Reading Business News
Evaluation Form
(___Post test / ___ Delayed Post test)

Name of the test taker   Evaluator/Rater's name

Test item & answer keys Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 wrong/ no answer	Total	Additional comments (if any)
Item 1							
Item 2							
Item 3							
Item 4							
Item 5							
Item 6							
Item 7							
Item 8							

Task 6: Resumeˊ Scoring Rubric Definition Chart

Categories / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor
1. Format/ Layout	•Has **90-100%** consistency in the format for spacing, alignment, as well as in the fonts and styles (*i.e.*, bold, italic, or underline) making the resume attractive and easy to read. Font styles are used consistently and improve readability.	•Has **80-89%** consistency in the format for spacing, alignment, as well as in the fonts and styles (*i.e.*, bold, italic, or underline) making the resume **quite** attractive and **quite** easy to read.	•Has **70-79%** consistency in the format for spacing, alignment, as well as in the fonts and styles (*i.e.,* bold, italic, or underline) making the resume **somewhat neat to read**.	•**Mostly (50-50%) inconsistent** in the format for spacing, alignment, as well as in the fonts and styles (i.e., bold, italic, or underline) making the resume **unattractive and/or hard to read.**
2. Content	•Has **all 4 out of 4** important headings: education, experience, skills, and references with other headings such as activities, honor(s) and award(s).	•Has **at least 3 out of 4** important headings: education, experience, skills, and references with other headings such as activities, honor(s) and award(s).	•Has **at least 3 out of 4** important headings: education, experience, skills, and references, **with or without** other headings such as activities, honor(s) and award(s).	•Has **at least 2 out of 4** important headings: education, experience, skills, and references.
	•Looks **90-100%** relevant to the position sought and is presented in reverse chronological order.	• Looks **80-90% somewhat** relevant to the position sought and is presented in reverse chronological order.	• Looks **70-79%** relevant to the position sought and is presented in reverse chronological order.	• Looks **50-69%** relevant to the position sought and is presented in reverse chronological order.
3. Grammar & Mechanics	• Has **90-100%** accurate grammar and vocabulary.	• Has **80-89%** accurate grammar and vocabulary.	• Has **70-79%** accurate grammar and vocabulary.	• Has **50-69%** accurate grammar and vocabulary.

Task 6: Resume Evaluation Form
(___Post test / ___ Delayed Post test)

Pseudonym of the test taker _____ Evaluator/Rater's name _____

Content / Scales	4 Very good	3 Good	2 Fair	1 Poor	0 No/ wrong answer	Total	Additional comments (if any)
1. (Name of student)							
2. (Name of student)							
3. (Name of student)							
4. (Name of student)							
5. (Name of student)							
6. (Name of student)							
7. (Name of student)							
8. (Name of student)							
9. (Name of student)							

Pre-instruction questionnaire

<u>Part I</u>

Language Learning Background

I.1   Pseudonym: _____

The School you enroll in: _____

I.2   When you took the *English for Communication Course I* (HG 002), what

was the letter grade that you received? _____

I.3   For how many years have you been studying English? _____years

I.4   Please rank the frequencies o f English instruction you have received before this task-

based c ourse be low in order **from 1** (=most often) **to 4** (=the least often), or write **NO**

(=none at all).

_____ grammar

_____ speaking, listening

_____ reading, writing

_____ tasks and/or projects

_____ others, please specify: _____

I.5.a   Have you ever studied at an institution ***in Thailand***, where the primary language of

instruction was English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, for how long_____

Please describe: _____

I.5.b Have you ever *lived abroad* in a country where English was either the only or the primary

language spoken, and that you have to use English all the time?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, for how long:_____

Please describe: _____

I.5.c Have you attended a school or university (*outside of Thailand*) where classes were

conducted only in English?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, for how long: _____

Please describe: _____

I.6.a Have you ever specifically studied *business English* before?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please indicate the type of institution(s) at which you took your course(s):

Commercial College ☐   University ☐

Other: _____Please describe_____

If no, you may skip questions I.6.b and c below.

- I.6.b For how long did you specifically study *business* English? _____

- I.6.c Please describe the skills on which you focused in your previous *business* English
  lessons (for instance: grammar, vocabulary, speaking, listening, reading, writing, or more
  specific tasks such as writing letters, reading business trends, listening to business news,
  etc.): _____

_____

_____

I.7   In the chart below, please rate your current level of general English ability in four general language skills:

Skill ↻	Ability Level ➲ (for each skill put a ✓)				
	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor or needs improvement
Speaking					
Listening					
Reading					
Writing					

I.8   In this table, there are 6 specific business English tasks. Please rate your English capabilities for each:

Task ↻	Ability Level ➲ (for each skill put a ✓)				
	Can do easily	Can do, with very little difficulty	Can do, but with some difficulty	Can do, but with a great deal of difficulty	Cannot do at all
1. Greetings and making introductions					
2. Welcoming visitors					
3. Company presentation					
4. Telephoning					
5. Reading Business News					
6. Writing Resume´					

Part II

Participants' English Learning Goals

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Note: If you need more space to complete your answers in this section, please use the back of this page.

II.1   What is/are your goal(s) in studying English at UTCC? _____

_____

_____

_____

II.2   How are you trying to ***achieve*** the goal(s) that you mentioned above, in question II.1?

_____

_____

_____

II.3   What do you hope to accomplish by taking this task-based course?

_____

_____

II.4   What steps will you take towards achieving the outcomes that you mentioned in question II.3 above? _____

_____

APPENDIX F

THE POST-TASK INTERVIEW

Warm up: My research assistant greets the participant and inform them of the purpose of this

interview session, that is, to recall or reflect on what has happened that contributes

to the task performance.

Questions: 1. How did you feel about working on the task and why?

(e.g., What was productive or unproductive about participating in the task? Why?)

2. How did you and your group approach the task?

(e.g., What was your role and aim? Please explain the steps that you and your

group took.)

3. What do you think are the factors contributing to what went well and what did not

in performing the task, and why?

4. How well did your group work together to complete the task, and what might you

have done differently if you had a chance to do it again?

5. What did you learn from participating in the task? (e.g., any learning strategies you

obtained from working on the task?)

6. Any additional comments for the teacher, peers, the task, etc. (if any), and thanks.

APPENDIX G

Final Interview Questions

Warm up: My research assistant greets the participant and inform them of the purpose of this interview session, that is, to have them evaluate the course.

Questions: 1. How would you describe your experience in this task-based course to a friend, who has never taken this course before?

2. Compared to other English courses that you may have taken this semester at UTCC, which do you prefer? Why?

3. Would you take Business English task-based course II, if it was available next semester? Why?

4. Will you recommend this course to other students at UTCC? Why?

Thank you for your answers.

The i nterview questions on the motivation for better performance in the delayed post-test

Questions: Among the following reasons what you think make you improve your performance on the delayed post-test.

1. It is natural because I take the test twice.

2. I remember the test because it is only a month.

3. I want the teacher to get good data for her dissertation.

4. I want to have a good record on my reference letter.

5. I want to make amends from the last time.

6. I want the teacher to be happy seeing I can do it.

7. I want to know if I can improve my ability. The test challenged my ability.

8. Others (if any) _____

Thank you for your time and responses.

APPENDIX I

EXAMPLE LESSON (LESSON II)

Lesson II: Welcoming Visitors

- <u>Main Objectives</u>: Students will be able to use and respond to expressions in welcoming visitors to their company fluently, accurately, and appropriately.

- <u>Specific objectives</u>: Students will be able to

      (1) Use & respond to expressions in welcoming visitors *outside* their companies: Checking the visitors' identity, identifying yourself, and giving general information.

(2) Use & respond to expressions in welcoming visitors at the company who come *with and without* appointment.

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Task-based Lesson

1. Introduction Task

2. Communicative Task

3. Language Focus Task

4. Rehearsal Task

5. Transfer Task

</div>

1. Introduction Task

1). <u>Direction</u>: Find out about your partner/friend in group. Ask and answer the following questions. Note down each answer you receive from your friends.

You	Your friend (pretending to be a visitor)
A. Where do you come from?	B._____
A. What was the weather like in _____ when you left?	B._____
A. What does your family (company) do?	B. _____
A. What do you like doing in your free time?	B_____

2. <u>Direction</u>: View the video clip to be shown by the teacher, take note of what topics/questions Pichai talked to/asked Mr. Peterson, what else will you say to Mr. Peterson? Think of one more question and one expected answer for each scene.

Pichai	Mr. Peterson
At the airport Identifying visitor:_____	
At the car	
At the hotel	

3). <u>Direction</u>: In groups, discuss about what questions you should/should not ask the visitors to your company. If it is appropriate to ask, add at least one more questions to the list in the table.

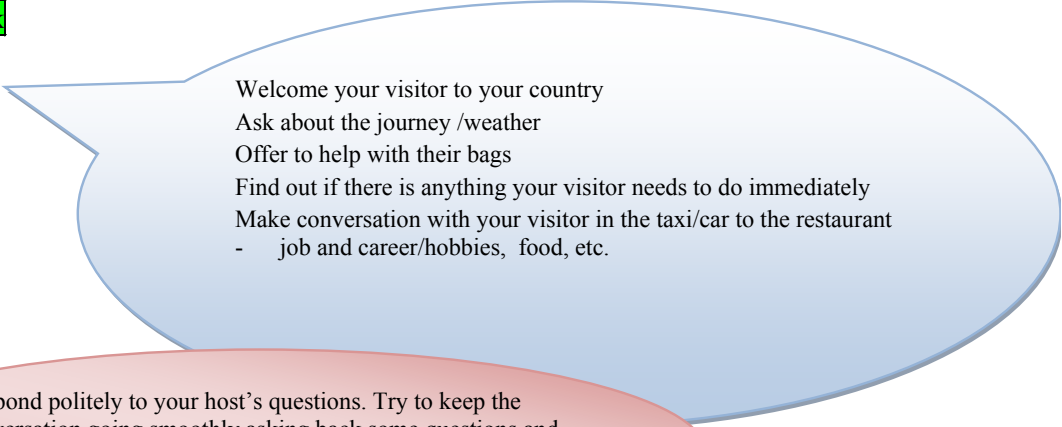| Topic	Yes/No questions	Wh-Questions
The weather	Isn't it a nice day today?	What was the weather like in _____when you leave?
Their journey	Did you have a good trip? Did you have any trouble finding us/finding your way?	How long did it take from___ _____to _____? What time did you leave?
Their family	Are you married? Do you have any children/ brothers/sisters?	What does your husband/wife do? How old are they?
Their job and career	Have you work for _____for long ? Do you travel a lot on business?	How long have you been working for_____? Where did you work before?
Their hobbies and interests	Are you interested in music/sport_____? Do you take part in any sport?	What kinds of music/movies/ books do you like? Where do you play/go?

2. Communicative Task

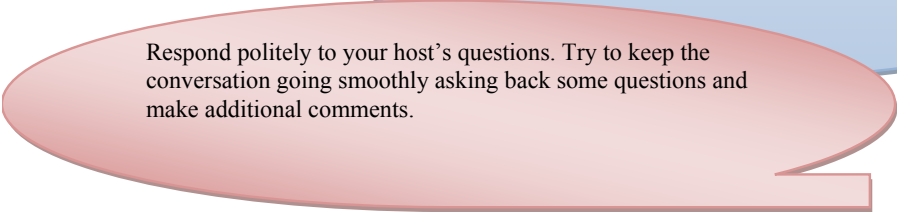## I. Welcoming visitors outside the company

1. <u>Direction</u>: Work with a partner. Plan and act out a situation where 2 business contacts meet for the first time at the airport, and then go out for dinner. One person is the host, the other is the visitor. Present to peer group & class. Give scores and make comments to other pairs.

Outline of talk

Host

Welcome your visitor to your country
Ask about the journey /weather
Offer to help with their bags
Find out if there is anything your visitor needs to do immediately
Make conversation with your visitor in the taxi/car to the restaurant
- job and career/hobbies, food, etc.

Respond politely to your host's questions. Try to keep the conversation going smoothly asking back some questions and make additional comments.

Visitor

Consider (1) completion and (2) Norms of speaking: Fluency, accuracy and appropriateness in terms of tone, gestures, and word choices according to (1) purpose (2) status (3) gender (4) relationship/intimacy (5) culture or business etiquette.

Scoring Rubric Definition Chart

Scores	Description (4 categories: **C**omplete & appropriateness, **F**luency and **A**ccuracy)
4 Very good	**C**: The sentence is complete, **all** correct and/or appropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is smooth and flowing. **No** hesitancy and/or rephrasing. **A**: **No (or very few)** errors in pronunciation or grammar that do **not** impede comprehension.
3 Good	**C**: The sentence is complete, **mostly** correct and/or appropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is smooth **for the most part**. **A few** hesitancies and/or rephrasing. **A**: A few errors in pronunciation or grammar **impede comprehension only a little**.
2 Fair	**C**: The sentence is **quite** complete, **somewhat** correct and/or appropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is **somewhat** smooth, with **some** hesitancy and/or rephrasing. **A**: Some errors in pronunciation or grammar **somewhat** impede comprehension.
1 Poor	**C**: The sentence is **not** complete, with **mostly** incorrect and/or inappropriate in meaning. **F**: Speech is **generally** hesitant and **often** choppy, but showing some attempt. **A**: **Many** pronunciation and/or grammatical errors that **greatly** impede comprehension.
0	**No response**, skip or miss the part. Or there are some response(s) but **totally wrong** in meaning.

II. Welcoming visitors at the company

<u>Video viewing task I</u>

1. <u>Direction</u>: <mark>Situation A</mark>: At the company, Mr. Peterson arrives with an appointment to see Khun Chamnan Pongwat, the managing director of InterData Co. Watch the video and take note of what the receptionist talks to the visitor according to Thai expressions shown in each item.

1. สวัสดีค่ะ (ตอนเช้า) มีอะไรให้ช่วยหรือคะ

   Good (morning) May I help you?/ Is there anything I can help you??How may I help you?

2. คุณชำนาญกำลังคอยอยู่เลยค่ะ

   Khun Chamnan is __expecting_____ you.

_____

3. เชิญนั่งค่ะ __

___Please take a seat._____

4. ดิฉันจะไปบอกให้เขาทราบว่าคุณมาแล้ว

___I will let him know that you have come/arrived_____

5. ต้องการดื่มน้ำอะไรไหมคะ คุณชำนาญจะว่างให้เข้าพบอีกสักครู่ค่ะ

___Would you like something to drink? Khun Chamnan will be available in a moment. ____

_____

6. คุณชำนาญพร้อมจะพบคุณแล้วตอนนี้ เชิญทางนี้ค่ะ

__Khun Chamnan is ready to see you now. Please come this way._____

3. <u>Direction</u>: <mark>Situation B</mark>. At the company, Mr. David Vanton comes to Interdata Co. without an appointment. Fortunately, Khun Chamnan Pongwat, Managing Director is in.
Watch the video and take note of what the receptionist talked to the visitor according to Thai expressions shown in each item.

1. สวัสดีค่ะ (ตอนบ่าย) มีอะไรให้ช่วยหรือคะ

_____ Good (afternoon) May I help you?/ Is there anything I can help you??How may I help you?

2. คุณได้นัดหมายมาก่อนไหมคะ

_____Have you had an appointment? _____

3. ขอชื่อคุณและชื่อบริษัทด้วยค่ะ

_____May I have your name and your company name? _____

4. ขอทราบธุระของคุณด้วยค่ะ

_____May I know your business? _____

5. กรุณารอสักครู่เดี๋ยวจะไปบอกท่านว่าคุณมาแล้วนะคะ

_____Just a moment, I will let him know that you have arrived. _____

6. คุณชำนาญพร้อมที่จะพบคุณแล้วค่ะ เชิญทางนี้ค่ะ

_____Khun Chamnan is ready to see you now. Please come this way. _____
Choose one of the scenes above to exchange roles.

Student Group A

Act out situation A. The visitor can see the card provided by the teacher. Change roles so that others in the group have a chance to play.

2. The teacher will pick a person in the group to act as the receptionist to present your role to peer group & to class.

3. Act out situation B. Follow the same process.

Student Group B

1. Act out situation B. The visitor can see the card provided by the teacher. Change roles so that others in the group have a chance to play.

2. The teacher will pick a person in the group to act as the receptionist to present your role to peer group & to class.

3. Act out situation A. Follow the same process.

Video viewing task II

2. Direction: Situation C: At the company, Mr. Gary Brownell arrives at InterData Company when Khun Chamnan is not in. The secretary is helping with making appointment. Decide, listen and check what the secretary said. There may be more than one possible answer.

1. สวัสดีค่ะ (ตอนบ่าย) มีอะไรให้ช่วยคะ

__ what can I do for you?
__Can I do anything for you?
__May I help you?

_____

2. ขอโทษค่ะ วันนี้คุณชำนาญออกไปธุระข้างนอก

___I'm sorry. But today Khun Chamnan is away on business.
___I'm sorry. But now Khun Chamnan is in the meeting.
___I'm sorry. But at this moment Khun Chamnan is with a customer.

_____

3. ช่วยบอกธุระของคุณมาได้ไหมคะ

__ Would you tell me your business?
__Would you mind telling me your business?
__Would you let me know your business?

_____

4. ดิฉันจะดูว่าจะช่วยอะไรคุณได้บ้าง

__ I'll see what I can do.
__ I'll check what I can help you.
__I'll see if I can help.

_____

5. ขอโทรศัพท์เพื่อจัดนัดหมายอีกครั้งพรุ่งนี้นะคะ

__ May I have _____to call you to _____ a meeting again _____?

_____

3. <u>Direction</u>: Situation D. At the company, Mr. David Vanton comes to Interdata Co. without an appointment. Fortunately, Khun Chamnan Pongwat, Managing Director is in.
Watch the video and take note of what the receptionist talked to the visitor.

1. สวัสดีตอนเช้าค่ะ มีอะไรให้ดิฉันช่วยไหมคะ

__ Good <u>(morning) May I help you?/ Is there anything I can help you??How may I help you?</u>

2. ขอโทษค่ะ คุณสุชาดาเข้าประชุมตลอดวัน

__I'm sorry. Khun Suchada is in the meeting all day. _____

3. ดิฉันสามารถให้นัดหมายคุณได้พรุ่งนี้เวลา 10 นาฬิกา

_I can make an appointment for you to see him at 10 am (if that is all right for you)._____

Choose one of the scenes above to exchange roles.

Student Group A	Student Group B
Act out situation C. The visitor can see the card provided by the teacher. Change roles so that others in the group have a chance to play.	1. Act out situation D. The visitor can see the card provided by the teacher. Change roles so that others in the group have a chance to play.
2. The teacher will pick a person in the group to act as the receptionist to present your role to peer group & to class.	2. The teacher will pick a person in the group to act as the receptionist to present your role to peer group & to class.
3. Act out situation D. Follow the same process.	3. Act out situation C. Follow the same process.

3. <u>Language Focus Task</u>

Direction: After your performance, note down teacher's or peer feedback and comments regarding your grammar, vocabulary, and expressions.

_____
_____
_____

_____

4. <u>Rehearsal Task</u>

<u>Direction</u>: Perform the tasks in Communicative tasks one more time with role changes. The teacher will give feedback. Note areas that you need improvements.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

5. <u>Transfer Task</u>

<u>Direction</u> In 15 minutes, plan your own conversation and a role-play.

Situation: In your group, you are to welcome a visitor from Japan. You pick him or her at the airport, take him/her to the company. Offer help with a seat, a drink, and make some small talks when appropriate. Outline your dialogue here. Perform your dialogue.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

<u>Self check</u>

<u>Direction</u>: Check √ in the box for self check. Now I am able to ……

(1) ☐ Use & respond to expressions in welcoming visitors outside the company

(2) ☐ Use & respond to expressions in welcoming visitors inside the company with or without prior appointment.

If you are still not, how can the teacher or friends help you? What is your plan?

_____

_____

_____

Homework Assignment

Direction: View the video clips again and point out at least 5 things you can make them better. Email your answers to ratisiri@gmail.com

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