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Learner-Centredness Learning: An Approach to Enhance Speaking Practices Using Authentic Activities in Thai EFL University Classroom

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Abstract

Due to the current situation, many English-speaking lessons seem to have problems in providing initial socio-cultural and individual perspectives to arouse Thai university learners to use their schemas to progress speaking ability for conveying contextual information meaningful for real-world situations. Hence, this research has an objective to enhance the learners' speaking practices by arousing learning interest, and promote them to use personal schemas in speaking practices from speaking activities designed based on the learner-centredness learning approach. In brief, the learner-centredness learning approach aims on elevating learning arousing force by the learning activities relating to the learners' lives and developing the learners' communicative skill by expressing creative ideas derived from the socio-cultural and individual schemas. The participants were two classes of Thai EFL students at a private university. Three instruments, including: 1) the three new speaking activities designed based on the learner-centredness learning approach for the practices of presenting contextual information, 2) a class observation, and 3) opinion journals, were applied for the data collection. To acquire the data which are the participants' opinions, the data were collected by gathering opinion journals written by the participants. The collected data were qualitatively analyzed by a thematic content analysis to explore: 1) the factors that the speaking activities aroused the participants practice speaking with interest, and 2) the schemas that the participants applied to create information for the speaking practices regarding the speaking activities. Quantitatively, the frequencies in reflecting each arousing factor and schema by the participants were also investigated to demonstrate the connecting factors and the schemas from the majority.

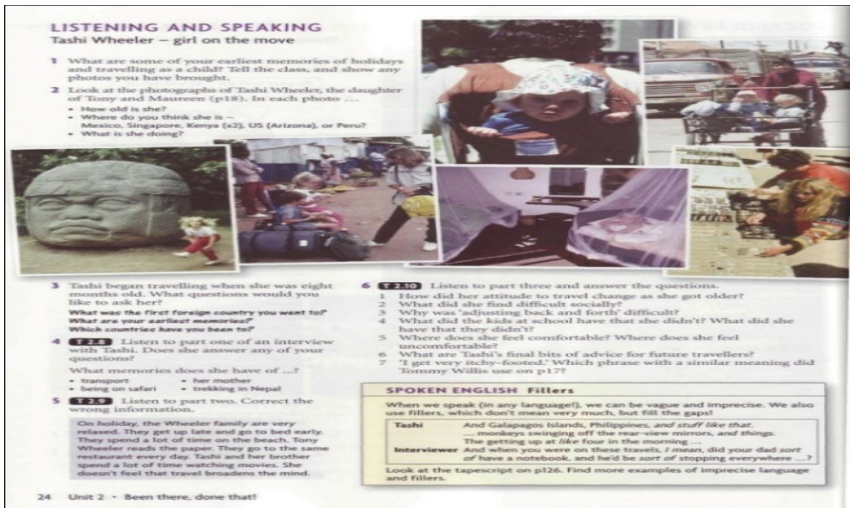
The findings explored that the participants were aroused to practice speaking with interest and use schemas for speaking practices as set up by the objective. In details, the participants were aroused to learn with interests because they had opportunities from a variety of experiences, including sharing problems happening in the real world, and thinking outside the box to present impressive ideas. Furthermore, it was found that the participants had opportunities to utilize schemes, including exploring personal problems happening in daily life, presenting personal inspiration, fantasy, and analyzing the others' personalities, to create the ideas for the speaking presentations. Overall, the findings of this research implied many useful points for enhancing speaking activities for Thai EFL university learners.

Keywords: *Speaking Communication, Speaking Development, Authentic Speaking Activities, Learner-Centredness Learning Approach'*

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Thailand as one of the ASEAN Economic Community's members, several universities widely redevelop their existing English-language courses to promote the more effective communication among the other member countries. In this ongoing redevelopment, speaking has been marked as the most complex skill, in which foreign language learners find problematic (Chinnawongs, 2001). In order to develop language proficiency especially speaking for Thai EFL learners, several problems, including traditional teaching approaches, the inappropriate speaking activities, limited teaching resources, skilled instructors, lacking of language environment, etc., are regarded as the major obstacles in developing language proficiency for Thai EFL learners (Dueraman, 2012). In terms of teaching approaches, it could not be denied that the audio-lingual method as a traditional method is still applied to teach speaking in class sessions. Learning English in Thai-English classrooms, not only in high schools but also in the universities, seem to emphasize the development of speaking skill through repetitive drills, imitation, and memorization, positioning language as a spoken pattern (Yuh and Kaewurai, 2022). Another important problem is the speaking activities in commercial coursebooks playing the crucial roles in English classroom. On the point of English speaking practices of Thai adolescent learners at the university levels, the activities in the coursebooks are actually one of the primary sources that teachers use to support the pedagogy. However, considering some speaking activities in the coursebooks, speaking activities seem to pay less attention on relating speaking activities to learners' schemata. In other words, to response to this specific issue and maximize their speaking development, the learners' schemata that can be brought as a part of the learning process are one of the crucial components that teachers must not overlook.


LISTENING AND SPEAKING
Tashi Wheeler – girl on the move

1 What are some of your earliest memories of holidays and travelling as a child? Tell the class, and show any photos you have brought.
2 Look at the photographs of Tashi Wheeler, the daughter of Tony and Maureen (p18). In each photo ...
- How old is she?
- Where do you think she is – Mexico, Singapore, Kenya (x2), US (Arizona), or Peru?
- What is she doing?

3 Tashi began travelling when she was eight months old. What questions would you like to ask her?
What was the first foreign country you went to?
What are your earliest memories?
Which countries have you been to?
4 T 2.8 Listen to part one of an interview with Tashi. Does she answer any of your questions?
What memories does she have of ...?
- transport
- her mother
- being on safari
- trekking in Nepal

5 T 2.9 Listen to part two. Correct the wrong information.
On holiday, the Wheeler family are very relaxed. They get up late and go to bed early. They spend a lot of time on the beach. Tony Wheeler reads the paper. They go to the same restaurant every day. Tashi and her brother spend a lot of time watching movies. She doesn't feel that travel broadens the mind.

6 T 2.10 Listen to part three and answer the questions.
1 How did her attitude to travel change as she got older?
2 What did she find difficult socially?
3 Why was 'adjusting back and forth' difficult?
4 What did the kids at school have that she didn't? What did she have that they didn't?
5 Where does she feel comfortable? Where does she feel uncomfortable?
6 What are Tashi's final bits of advice for future travellers?
7 "I get very itchy-footed." Which phrase with a similar meaning did Tommy Willis use on p17?

SPOKEN ENGLISH Fillers
When we speak (in any language!), we can be vague and imprecise. We also use fillers, which don't mean very much, but fill the gaps!
Tashi And Galapagos Islands, Philippines, *and stuff like that*. ... monkeys swinging off the rear-view mirrors, *and things*. The getting up at *like* four in the morning ...
Interviewer And when you were on these travels, *I mean*, did your dad *sort of* have a notebook, and he'd be *sort of* stopping everywhere ...?
Look at the tapescript on p126. Find more examples of imprecise language and fillers.

24 Unit 2 · Been there, done that!

Figure 1: A Speaking Activity in New Headway, Upper-Intermediate Student's Book published by Oxford University Press (Soars & Soars, 2008)

As presented on Figure 1 (Soars &Soars, 2008), this specific pedagogical activity looks beneficial as there are a variety of questions for speaking practices. However, considering learners' learning background or schema from the socio-cultural viewpoint, it is very questionable how the activity would engage the learners to keep attending all the tasks effectively with interest. From the details being offered, the tasks mostly drive Thai EFL learners to talk about Tashi Wheeler's traveling memories mainly based on the specific western cultures and societies, which many learners may not feel fully connected due to their insufficient accumulated schema. Furthermore, in view of language practice, there is barely a chance for the learners to use creativity to create a contextual message for an interactive communication practice at all. The activity only drives the learners to say something, in forms of chunks or single clauses, as the answers to the questions back and forth for teacher to check whether or not they comprehend the assigned questions or the messages from the listening parts.

Principally, from the example in Figure 1, it is evident to claim that the activities that seem to be authentic to one group of learners for speaking practices may not be authentic to the other groups regarding their limitations and differences in learning background, cultures and society (Gray, 2000; Frendo, 2019; Si, 2020). From the pedagogical aspect, it is clear to identify that the kind of ready-made speaking activities as in Figure 1 are created based on the teacher-centredness principle (Le Ha, 2004).

Passive knowledge is what teachers are supposed to provide mainly for the learners to gain acceptance as "knowers" (McDevitt, 2004). As stated by Conlon (2009), as the activities are somehow designed to focus on box-thinking knowledge, all the teachers have to implement in teaching process is to transfer the knowledge from the lesson, and then follow by furnishing exercises that the learners only requiring providing information in a form of isolated clauses to the learners to do. Memorizing, repeating and being able to recall the information perfectly are the primary jobs that learners are expected to do excellently (Lewis and McCook, 2002).

According to the pedagogical aspect, speaking activities seem to have a problem from having just a little concern on socio-cultural viewpoint, causing the failure to connect with learners' schemata, and furnish opportunities for meaningful practice. As inferred in Conlon (2009), from the geographical, historical and cultural perspectives, the activities are designed to contain no or only a little socio-cultural information connected to the learners, in this case, Thai adolescent learners studying in Thai universities. From this circumstance, the activities seem not to have capability to arouse the learners to practice speaking from the ideas that they create from their own schemas with interest.

1.2 Rationale

For the enhancement of Thai EFL university learners' speaking practices, it is theoretically clear that English speaking activities should be designed based on the learner-centredness learning approach to provide training how to speak contextually in a meaningful way rather than focusing on passive language knowledge, pattern practices and box-thinking process (Tudor, 1996; Bremner, 2021). In addition, the speaking activities should also be developed based on what Harmer (2003) called "popular culture", in which the activities may be from any cultures and societies, including the learners' own cultures and societies as long as they are the ones that can arouse the learners to learn with interest, and use their schemata as a part of learning. Not only are the speaking activities supposed to socio-culturally consist of something that can arouse the learners to pay more attention to learn, but the activities also tend to promote the learners to produce creative ideas from their schemata for the production of creative ideas as a part of their communicative practices.

2. Research Objectives

To advance speaking pedagogy to be more authentic for Thai adolescent learners on the point of elevating learning arousal and promoting the use of schemata, this research, therefore, has an objective to implement to the following:

2.1 To arouse Thai EFL university learners to practice speaking with interests based on the learner-centredness learning speaking activities.

2.2 To promote the application of schemas in speaking practices based on the learner-centredness learning speaking activities.

3. Research Questions

3.1 What are the factors that arouse Thai EFL university learners to practice speaking with interests from the authentic speaking activities based on the learner-centredness learning approach?

3.2 What types of schemata do Thai EFL university learners apply in their speaking practices from the authentic speaking activities based on the learner-centredness learning approach?

4. Literature Review

4.1 Speaking Communication

As stated by Halliday (1985), spoken language is referred to the means to present "a world of happening". Unlike the written language, the spoken language is not usually produced in the form of well-organized sentences and paragraphs all the time. As inferred by Berendt (2009), it is an unplanned process of giving the message interactively in the real time, in which appropriateness in social/context relationship, feeling expression, turn

taking and getting an attention of the participants are also concerned as a part of the communication process. Generally, from the functional point of view, Brown & Johnson (2022) point out that there are two main functions/purposes that spoken language is used: 1) social relationship continuation and 2) information conveyance.

In the case of social relationship continuation, Maybin (1996) indicates that one of the activities that almost everybody spends a great amount of time to do daily is to have a general conversation with each other. Theoretically, this activity is a face-to-face interactive communication consisting at least two associates (Soonklang, 2001). In conversation or what is called "chat" or "natural talk", the persons in the talk are normally concerned about how to remain warm and friendly while having a conversation in which such incidents and functions as changing topics or trying to compromise for an agreement occurring during the talk (Timmis, 2012). It is an action of what is called "a joint negotiation of meaning" (Soonklang, 2001). Frequently, as implied by Baynham and Maybin (1996), the talk is packed with imprecise and unclear information while the participating listener can digest the receiving message only at the surface level. All the information that the listener would receive is just a general idea, not an in-depth detail inside information (Brown & Johnson, 2022)

In case of information conveyance, Brown & Johnson (2022) point out that spoken language can also be used for the purpose of delivering information in detail. Technically, it is a kind of talk in which linguistic elements are more systematic and organized; and some specific vocabulary and terminology may frequently be engaged during the talk. As inferred by Hughes (2002), based on sociolinguistic aspect, speaker needs to have more awareness in applying his/her linguistic knowledge properly into the talk. Most of the time, it is the talk for such occasions as giving a public speech or formal presentation. The main concern of the talk is to supply clear, accurate and understandable in-depth details to the listeners, which, in this case, are the target audience, rather than keeping good social relationship (Sunaratn, 2013). The speaker should fluently be able to use the language to speak out his/her critical ideas, facts, opinions, stories, etc. instead of just bending down the head and reading aloud orally word by word exactly from the prepared script or what they have memorized (Marr, 1999). Based on a "people-centered" focus, not only should the speaker as a professional be able to keep the audience's attention along the talk with interests, but also, based on "topic-centered" focus, he/she has to make sure that his/her audience can perceive and understand the information being conveyed correctly as he/she has expected (Kramsch, 1998). In case that the talking situation is encouraged and/or friendly enough, the speakers can also occasionally use slang or even swear in their talk to present some emotional association and personal identity (Mercer, 1996). The speakers may even occasionally use some vague words for generating or showing some tactics, senses, features or intentions, such as indirect explanation, friendliness, humor, self-protection, politeness, persuasion, avoiding sounding bookish, etc., during the talk (Channell, 1994). Referring to Derewianka's (1990) and Derewianka & Jones's (2016) concept of functional approach to language, the information usually holds one or

combinations of communicative purposes, in which its presentation is supposed to be in an appropriate framework or model, constructed by a set of appropriate language choices, or the combination to maximize the quality of the information as well as the effectiveness of the communication.

4.2 Learner-Centredness Learning Approach

When talking about the way for speaking practices, one of the pedagogical approaches that can give such a promotion is the learner-centredness learning approach. Different to the traditional second/foreign language teaching approaches and methods, the principles of the learner-centredness learning approach can be described as follows:

Learner-centredness learning approach, as identified by (Bremner, 2021), views learning as a process to develop the learners' learning efficiency by involving more on learners' aspirations and preferences, in which the learners will have to work on the learning tasks with enthusiasm and creativity. To achieve the specified concept, from a viewpoint of materials development, the learning activities should be composed of the pedagogical contents created based on the themes linked to the learners' values and the things around their lives (Tomlinson, 2003). The learners should be able to employ creativity generated from their schemata during learning (Tomlinson & Masuhara, 2017). Without any fixed answers, the learners can display the creative ideas that they regard as interesting, meaningful and valuable to their lives (Chalermnirundorn, 2002). English is a means to exchange experiences, and advance worldview, professionalism, and socialization (Praneenararat, 2011; Hyon,2018).

Conceptually, it can be stated that the learner-centredness learning approach is one of the suitable approaches for training and developing the second/foreign language, which, in this case, is learners' speaking as a means for communication. Based on the learner-centredness learning approach, the learners may actively and effectively practice and develop their speaking communication if the activities are authentically designed from something connecting to learners' lives, in which the learners can: 1) be aroused to learn or practice their English with interests, and 2) bring up their content schemata, or the creativity from the socio-cultural knowledge and experiences, to be a part of their learning as related to schema theory.

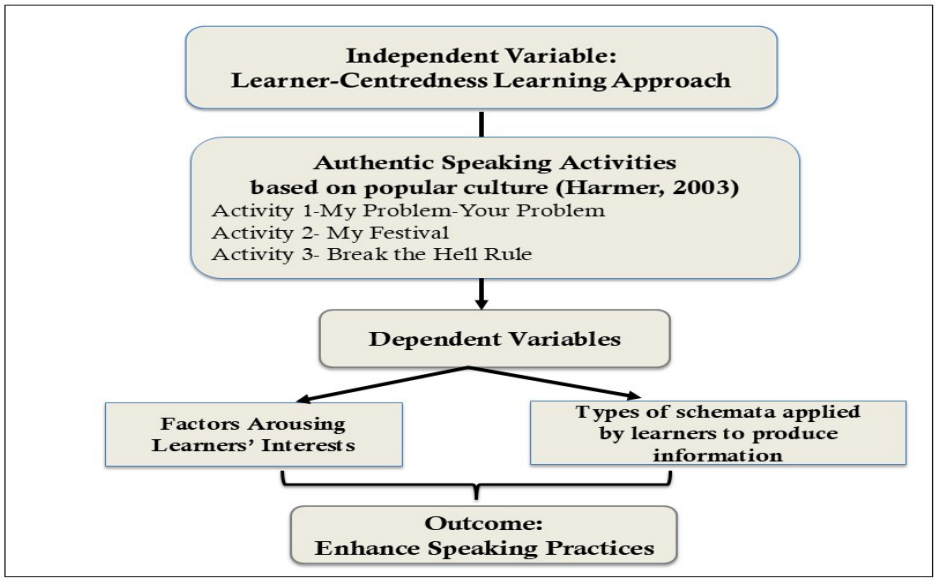


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

5. Research Methodology

5.1 Research Design

To conduct this study, a qualitative case study approach was applied on the small groups of participants to examine the outcomes on arousing the participants to practice speaking with interest, and promoting the participants to use creativity from the content schemata for speaking practices from using the three new speaking activities designed based on the learner-centredness learning approach. Referring to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2018), in order to explore and understand complex phenomena within the real-life contexts, this approach emphasizes on in-depth investigation of a single case or a small number of cases, allowing for rich, detailed data collection through multiple sources such as interviews, observations, and document analysis. Data were collected through: 1) a naturalistic participant observation of the participants' speaking performances, and 2) writing opinions in journals by the participants to reveal: 1) the reason(s) that the participants were interested in each speaking activity, and 2) the reasons that drove the participants to create information for the speaking presentation (McGrath 2003: 187). As suggested by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), thematic content analysis from the opinion journals was conducted to explore the outcomes to answer the research questions qualitatively. In details, the reasons that the speaking activities could: 1) arouse the participants to practice speaking with interest, and 2) promote the participants to use creativity from the schemata for speaking practices, were the focus to explore. Quantitatively, as implied by Nunan (1992), in each of the arousing factors and schemas found from the participants' journals, the number of participants who indicated were also

counted and calculated in the percentages to examine the primary and secondary arousing factors and schemas presented by the participants.

5.2 Research Participants

The target participants were Thai undergraduate students from the private university. As identified in Table A below, the participants were the students of the two English classes, which were: 1) Class A – 10 Year-3 students, and 2) Class B – 10 Year-2 students. The students in these classes obtained the learning objective match to this research, which was to develop efficient English speaking for the effective communication.

Table 1: Participants in the Study

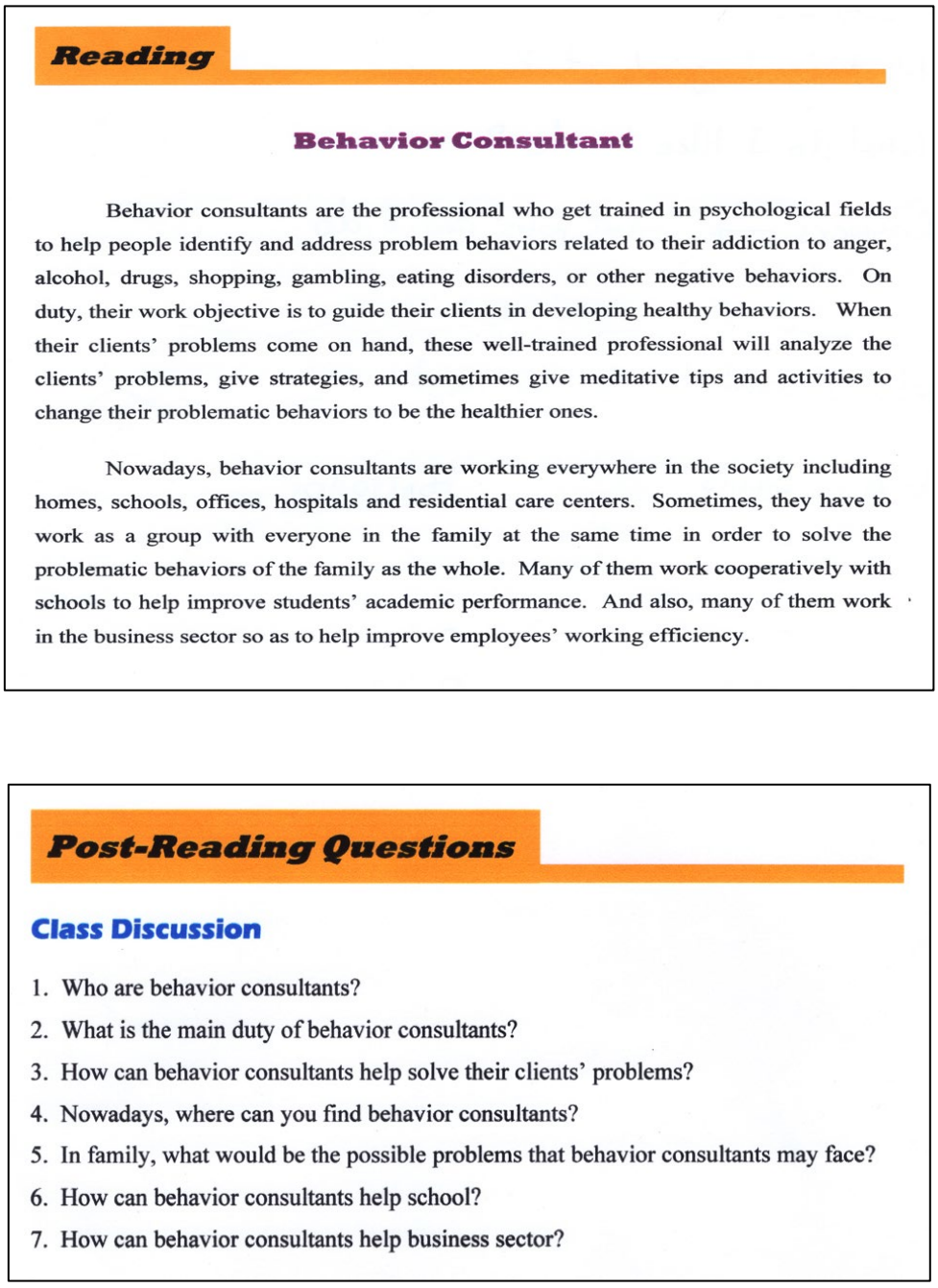
Class	Year	Participants	Code
Class A	3	10	A1-A10
Class B	2	10	B1-B10

5.3 Research Instrumentation

In order to acquire the expected data for the study, the instruments to be applied in this research were consisted of: 1) speaking lessons, and 2) opinion journals.

5.3.1. Speaking Lessons

To generate the data, three new speaking activities were developed by the researcher from the concept of the learner-centredness learning approach. The lessons included two main sections: Section 1) a pre-speaking activity (warm-up activity) which consisted of a reading text with post-reading questions as illustrated in Figure 2, 3, and 4, and Section 2) a speaking activity as illustrated in Table B, on a topic somehow connected to the reading text, in the forms of an individual presentation, a pair-work presentation, and a group-work presentation. In details, the pre-speaking activities were used as a speaking theme for the speaking activity, and also to support the participants to acquire initial ideas before the speaking activity. The speaking activities were designed as the task for the participants to use their creativity from the schemata to create information for the presentation. Based on the learner-centredness learning approach (Bremner, 2021), the lessons were designed from facts, stories, incidents and issues existing in the participants' lives. Again, referring to Harmer's (2003) idea on the popular culture, these stories, incidents and issues could be from any cultures and societies including the participants' own cultures and societies as long as they can arouse the participants to learn and apply their schemata for learning.



Reading

Behavior Consultant

Behavior consultants are the professional who get trained in psychological fields to help people identify and address problem behaviors related to their addiction to anger, alcohol, drugs, shopping, gambling, eating disorders, or other negative behaviors. On duty, their work objective is to guide their clients in developing healthy behaviors. When their clients' problems come on hand, these well-trained professional will analyze the clients' problems, give strategies, and sometimes give meditative tips and activities to change their problematic behaviors to be the healthier ones.

Nowadays, behavior consultants are working everywhere in the society including homes, schools, offices, hospitals and residential care centers. Sometimes, they have to work as a group with everyone in the family at the same time in order to solve the problematic behaviors of the family as the whole. Many of them work cooperatively with schools to help improve students' academic performance. And also, many of them work in the business sector so as to help improve employees' working efficiency.

Post-Reading Questions

Class Discussion

1. Who are behavior consultants?
2. What is the main duty of behavior consultants?
3. How can behavior consultants help solve their clients' problems?
4. Nowadays, where can you find behavior consultants?
5. In family, what would be the possible problems that behavior consultants may face?
6. How can behavior consultants help school?
7. How can behavior consultants help business sector?

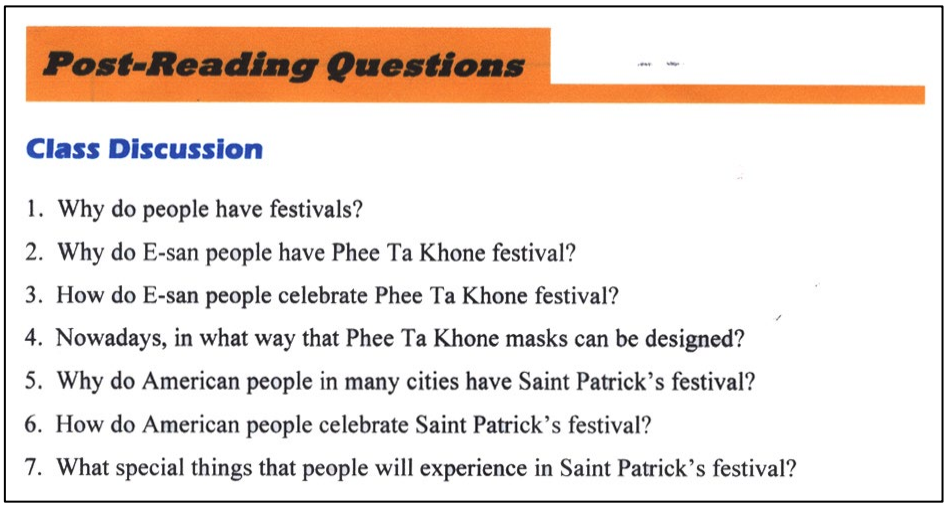
Figure 3: An Example of Pre-Speaking Activity 1 (Davies, 2011)

Reading

That's Why We Have Festival

Nowadays, there are so many festivals in the world. Many of them started from personal story, memorable incident, religion, or historical story. For example, Phee Ta Khone, one of the E-san traditional festivals in Thailand, is the festival for the purpose of favoring Boon Bung Fai and Boon Pa Ved ceremonies. The origin of Phee Ta Khone parade is based on the belief in ancient story of the last great incarnation of the Buddha, Mahavejsandon. According to the story, Phee Ta Khone was a group of ghosts who came out to welcome Mahavejsandon and his wife parading back to homeland. On the day of Phee Ta Khone Festival, people come out to join Phee Ta Khone celebrating parade with Phee Ta Khone costumes. A major and also outstanding part of the costume is a scary mask, with long nose like elephant's trunk, made of bamboo steamer, coconut stalk and cardboard. Along with the main characteristics of the mask, nowadays, Phee Ta Khone mask is usually designed with free concept and imagination as long as it looks colorful, attractive and interesting.

Another good example is the Saint Patrick's Festival held in many cities in the United States. This festival is for the purpose to remember St Patrick, one of the greatest Irish's patron saints and the arrival of Christianity in Ireland, and also honor the old-time Irish immigrants and their roots to the new land, America. On St Patrick's Day, the celebrations concentrate on Irish-themed tradition in which everything in the festival is colored green. People who come out to join the festival also dress up their clothing or costumes in green. There are Irish traditional shows and parades around the city. In most pubs and restaurants, not only decorate their place in green, but they make and serve their alcoholic drinks and food in green just on this special occasion as well.

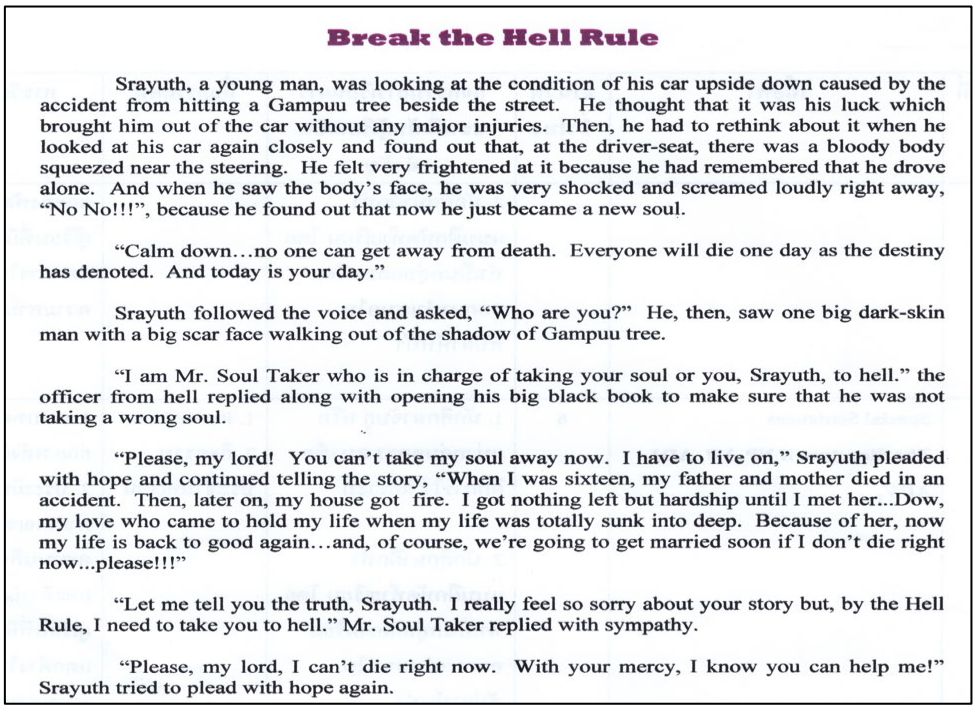


Post-Reading Questions

Class Discussion

1. Why do people have festivals?
2. Why do E-san people have Phee Ta Khone festival?
3. How do E-san people celebrate Phee Ta Khone festival?
4. Nowadays, in what way that Phee Ta Khone masks can be designed?
5. Why do American people in many cities have Saint Patrick's festival?
6. How do American people celebrate Saint Patrick's festival?
7. What special things that people will experience in Saint Patrick's festival?

Figure 4: An Example of Pre-Speaking Activity 2 (Beirne & Secretary, 2011; Hunter, 2011)



Break the Hell Rule

Srayuth, a young man, was looking at the condition of his car upside down caused by the accident from hitting a Gampuu tree beside the street. He thought that it was his luck which brought him out of the car without any major injuries. Then, he had to rethink about it when he looked at his car again closely and found out that, at the driver-seat, there was a bloody body squeezed near the steering. He felt very frightened at it because he had remembered that he drove alone. And when he saw the body's face, he was very shocked and screamed loudly right away, "No No!!!", because he found out that now he just became a new soul.

"Calm down…no one can get away from death. Everyone will die one day as the destiny has denoted. And today is your day."

Srayuth followed the voice and asked, "Who are you?" He, then, saw one big dark-skin man with a big scar face walking out of the shadow of Gampuu tree.

"I am Mr. Soul Taker who is in charge of taking your soul or you, Srayuth, to hell." the officer from hell replied along with opening his big black book to make sure that he was not taking a wrong soul.

"Please, my lord! You can't take my soul away now. I have to live on," Srayuth pleaded with hope and continued telling the story, "When I was sixteen, my father and mother died in an accident. Then, later on, my house got fire. I got nothing left but hardship until I met her...Dow, my love who came to hold my life when my life was totally sunk into deep. Because of her, now my life is back to good again…and, of course, we're going to get married soon if I don't die right now...please!!!"

"Let me tell you the truth, Srayuth. I really feel so sorry about your story but, by the Hell Rule, I need to take you to hell." Mr. Soul Taker replied with sympathy.

"Please, my lord, I can't die right now. With your mercy, I know you can help me!" Srayuth tried to plead with hope again.

Surprisingly, by his second plea, it somehow made Mr. Soul Taker feel mercy for Srayuth very much. Mr. Soul Taker finally came up with the most important decision of his career, "Almost 5000 years of my career as a soul taker, I've never ever broken the Hell Rule before. But this time, I'll do it just for you even through I don't feel good about it at all."

"Sir, you let me continue living today. So when I am gonna die again? It's not gonna be in the next day, right?" Srayuth asked with full of doubt. Mr. Soul Taker, then, opened his thick black book again and answered, "Well, according to the information in the book, it said that you will die again when you are very very old."

After that for a while, Srayuth with only soul felt hot before he returned into his injured body crowded with rescue-officers who were trying hard to rescue his life.

20 Years Later

Srayuth was a 45-year-old man now. Again, he was looking at his car torn apart from crashing at the same Gampuu tree just now. And when he checked closely on the bloody body at the driver-seat, he was suddenly shocked because the body was actually his own body. He realized that he was dead again. So, he started thinking of the past incident when he had the same accident and negotiated with Mr. Soul Taker. He had still remembered Mr. Soul Taker's words that he would die again when he was very very old.

"You're right, Srayuth. Your day is supposed to be in the next 30 years. However, whoever has tried to commit suicide 3 times, his or her agreement of having a long life must be terminated immediately, and Soul Taker may take his or her soul to hell at any time."

Srayuth followed the voice and then; again, he saw a big dark-skin man standing under Gampuu tree. Of course, for this time, Srayuth knew that the man was Mr. Soul Taker.

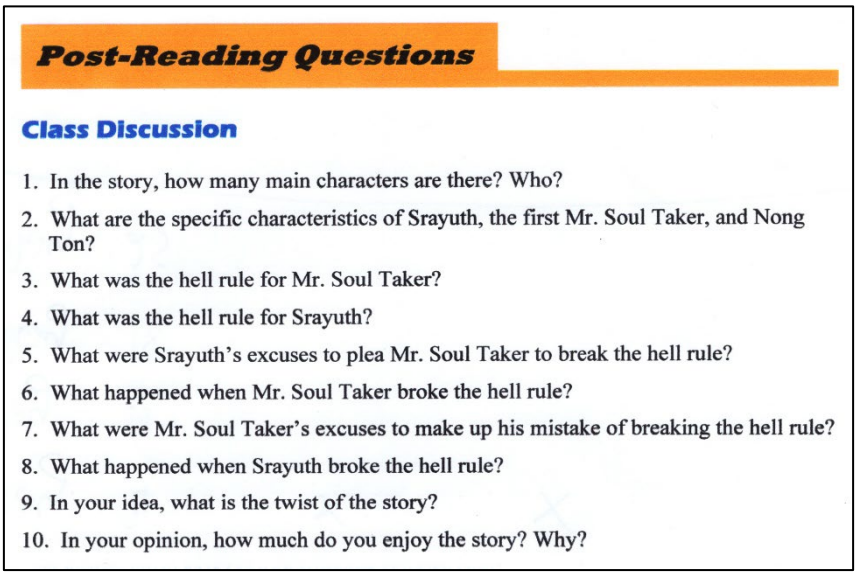
"Mannnn.....," Srayuth cried out with hopeless and did not even have any idea of saying something to plea Mr. Soul Taker again like last time. He started thinking of his life-experience after Mr. Soul Taker gave him another chance to live. He married Dow, a girl he loved. Then, she gave birth to his son. However, after that for a while, his life went downhill because Nong Ton, his son, had grown with very misbehaved habit. He loved to break the rule and had strife. And the worst was that he was also addicted to drug. Of course, Srayuth as a father had suffered very much because of his son. That's why he had finally tried to commit suicide for 3 times.

After that, Srayuth was very surprised again when he saw Mr. Soul Taker walk out of the dark shadow of Gampuu tree, "Wait a minute! You're not that Mr. Soul Taker, the one who I met 20 years ago. That one is taller than you and also has a scar face."

"You're right, Srayuth. I'm different Mr. Soul Taker, not the same one you've just mentioned. Anyway, if you don't mind, let me tell you the story about that Soul Taker, the old one you met before. 20 years ago, that Mr. Soul Taker didn't bring you back to hell, so the Lord Death was very angry at him. For this, he got punished by being sent to work in the deep-dark hell zone for a hundred years. Yet, he asked the Lord Death for another chance to correct his mistake of not taking you back to hell. And today, he just succeeded." new Mr. Soul Taker replied.

Then, Srayuth questioned with great astonishment, "Sir, what do you mean by that?! Oh!!!...please, don't tell me that…"

"You're right! That Mr. Soul Taker made a commitment to the Lord Death to be reborn to be your son, the one that has caused you a lot of anxiety until you've finally ended up with trying to commit suicide for 3 times. That means, by the Hell Rule, your life and destiny must be over right away. Alright, shall we go now?"



Post-Reading Questions

Class Discussion

1. In the story, how many main characters are there? Who?
2. What are the specific characteristics of Srayuth, the first Mr. Soul Taker, and Nong Ton?
3. What was the hell rule for Mr. Soul Taker?
4. What was the hell rule for Srayuth?
5. What were Srayuth's excuses to plea Mr. Soul Taker to break the hell rule?
6. What happened when Mr. Soul Taker broke the hell rule?
7. What were Mr. Soul Taker's excuses to make up his mistake of breaking the hell rule?
8. What happened when Srayuth broke the hell rule?
9. In your idea, what is the twist of the story?
10. In your opinion, how much do you enjoy the story? Why?

Figure 5: An Example of Pre-Speaking Activity 3 (Rukskulnith, 2012)

Table 2: Speaking Activities Based on Learner-Centredness Learning Approach

Activity	Speaking Activity
Activity 1: My Problem Your Problem	Set up a role play by having one person be a behavior consultant and the other be a client. For client's role, think of one serious behavior problem to get advice from the behavior consultant. And for behavior consultant's role, listen to the clients' problem, analyze it, and then finish the job by giving some logical advices or thoughtful tips.
Activity 2: My Festival	Select one person you have known and then create one meaningful and fascinating festival or event for him/her based on his/her biography. Talk about his/her biography in brief and then follow by describing the festival or event you design in detail along with logical supports.
Activity 3: Break the Hell Rule	Create a story with a twist based on the given picture, and then tell the story you have created to entertain your friends in the class.

5.3.2. Classroom Observation

To acquire the evident data on the participants' speaking performances, referring to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), observation by using a set of recording devices, which were Video Recorder or Camcorder – Sony, Handycam HDR-PJ540 –, featuring a 64-GB memory, a tripod and a set of wireless microphone, with ability to record motion-picture and sound, was the selected instrument. The reason that this specific set of tools was the selected choice was because it held a capability to record the participants' speaking performance in real time. Moreover, the recordings of the video files were easy to store in a digital format.

5.3.3. Opinion Journals

To acquire the data for the research questions, the opinion journal with a specified format was the selected instrument. The reason that this tool was the selected choice was because the target participants enabled to express their opinions towards what they experienced on each of the speaking activities that they had just learnt in each class by writing. According to the format, the opinion journal mainly comprises two required paragraphs for the participants to express opinions as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Two Parts of Opinions to Express in the Opinion Journal

Paragraph	Expression
1	Reason(s) that participants are interested in the speaking activity
2	Origin(s) to create information for the speaking presentation

In detail, in the first paragraph, to produce the raw data for the first research question, the participants started with identifying the speaking activity that they participated, and then followed by describing its level of interests along with the reason(s) why the participants were interested in the speaking activity. In the second paragraph, to produce the raw data for the second research question, the participants started with describing their presented information in brief, and then followed by providing the origin(s) to create such the information for the speaking presentation.

Regarding the learner-centredness learning approach, the purpose of the opinions described in the first part revealed the reasons that the speaking activities enabled to drive the learners to be connected in learning, which was to explore the outcomes of using the speaking activities in elevating learners' learning arousal with interests, which is the answer of the first research question. The opinions that the participants described in the second part revealed the reasons that the participants created the information, which was to explore the outcomes of utilizing the speaking activities in promoting the learners to use creativity from their schemata, which is the answer of the second research question.

5.4 Data Collection

To collect the data, the study was implemented through the three main pedagogical processes. First, the pre-speaking activity, as a speaking theme for the speaking activity, was assigned for the participants to read to acquire initial ideas before they are checked on the comprehension from a set of post-reading questions. Then, the speaking activity was assigned as the task for the participants to prepare for the speaking presentation. At this point, they were required to use their creativity from the schemata to create information for the presentation. In case of the individual presentation, the participants are assigned to

generate their creativity for the task by drawing a picture on the whiteboard as the evidence illustrated in Figure 6. In case of the pair-work and group-work presentations, the participants were assigned to generate their creativity for the task by brainstorming ideas with their peers as the evidence illustrated in Figure 7.

Figure 6: Idea Creation Process for Speaking Activity 2

Figure 7: Idea Brainstorming Process for Speaking Activities 1 and 3

After the performance of the speaking presentation, as illustrated in Figure 7 and Figure 8, the target participants who attended the classes were finally assigned to write the opinion journals to express their opinions towards the three speaking activities. The data were the participants' two paragraphs of expression on the journals in each activity, which were: 1) the reason(s) that they were interested in the speaking activity, and 2) the origin(s)

of creating the information for the speaking presentation. As illustrated in Figure 9, the participants expressed their opinions in Thai to avoid obstacles from their low English writing proficiency. There was no limit in the number of words that the participants had to write.

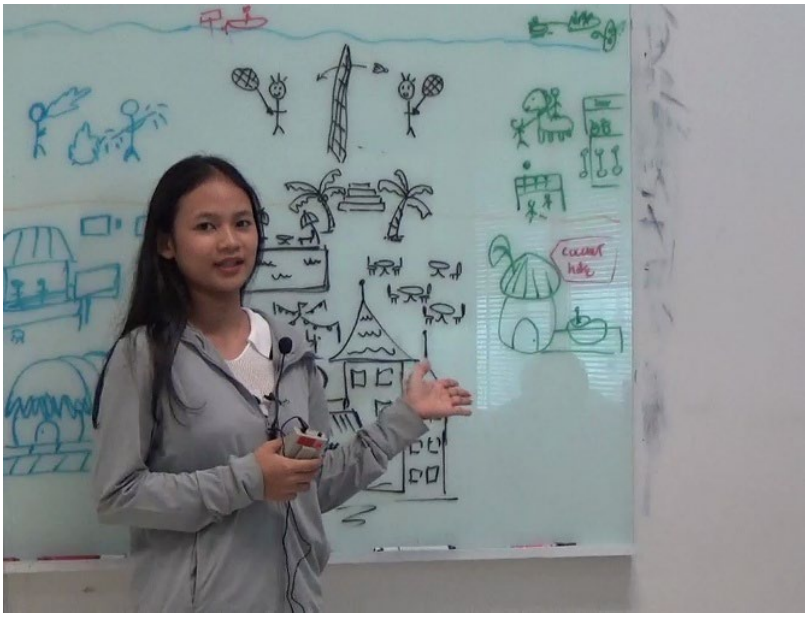
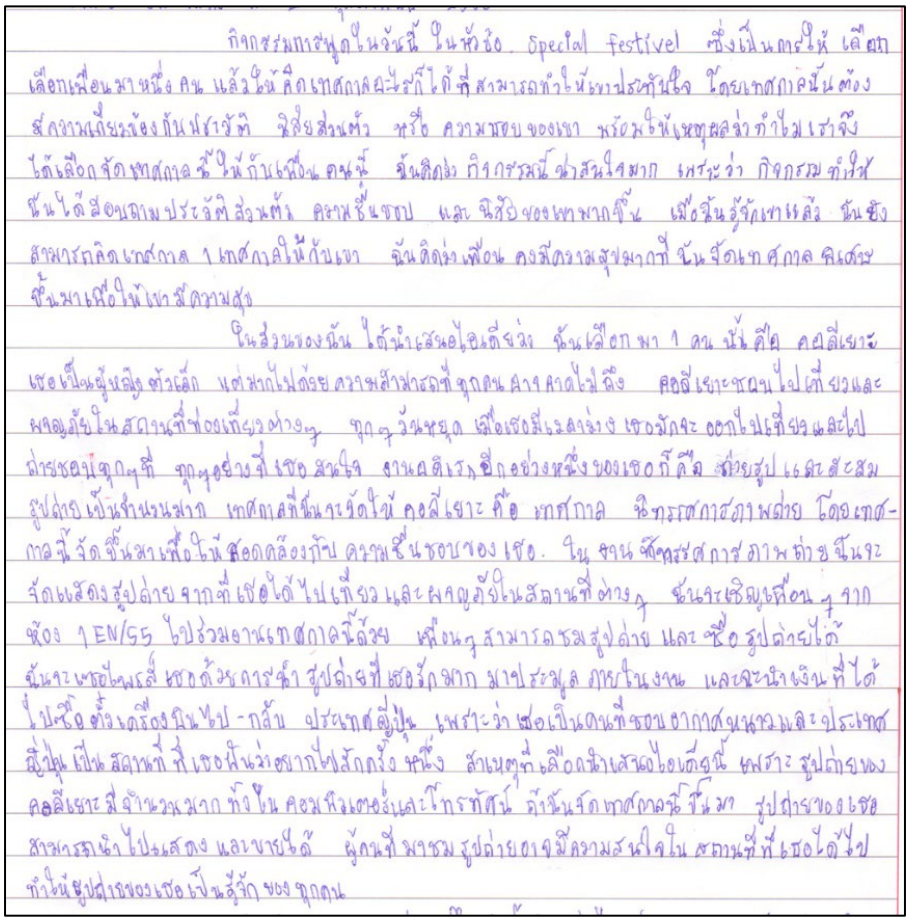


Figure 8: An Example of Participants' Speaking Performance

Example A – An Example of Written Transcription of Speaking Performance |good morning my friend and teacher| ||today i would like to talk..ah..about free festival|| ||free festival is a festival that i create for my friend aneesah|| ||she..she is one of..ah..my gang that i know..i knew her from i..since i start study|| |ah..she..sometime she funny| |||she like to eating very much|| and she like to traveling..ah..very much too especially by free train||| ||ahh..and more thing that she likes most is..ah..take photograph or selfie|| |||ahh…i will..ah..free Festival we start by..ah..taking the bus..ah..from our dormitory to salaya train station|| because..ahh..salaya train station is a nearest our dormitory||| ||we will use the free train station to..ah..saiyok waterfall train station|| |||we will use free train|| and i will..and i have a..a special staff to take the photograph on our trip|| |||when we finish the trip|| we will back to our dor..dormitory at our room||| ||we will have a eating party|| ||ah..the room will..ah..decorated by many picture on the wall|| |||the pictures are about..ahh..our special trip|| and we have mat..ah..to.ah.for sitting on the floor that..ah..have fruit and snack||| |||she like to eat bread very much|| and she like to eat..ah..snack||| |||we buy a snack at factory|| because..ah..snack factory is..ah..very near our..ah..our dormitory||| ||we do..we don't have any glass|| ||we will drink in the vacuum flask|| |||ah..while we are enjoy eating|| we will show some video on the TV||| |||and then….you see…the free festival are not use a lot of money|| because she like to save money very much||| |thank you|



1st Paragraph

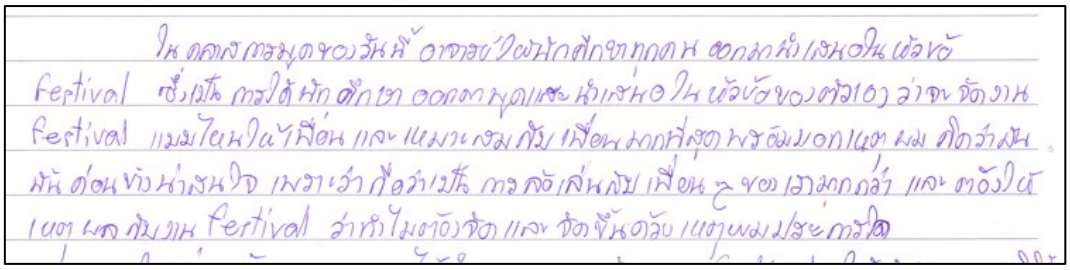
2nd Paragraph

Figure 9: An Opinion Journal Written in Thai

5.5 Data Analysis

By the procedure, the collected opinion journals from the participants were first translated to English, as illustrated in Figure 10. Then, to explore the outcomes in the qualitative perspective, the opinion that each participant wrote was analyzed on the content by a thematic content analysis based on the learner-centredness learning approach with the support of the organized table presented by the speaking activity, as illustrated Figure 11. In details at this specific point, the words, phrases, or sentences reflecting the reason(s) that the participants were interested in the speaking activity from the first paragraph of the journal were identified and categorized for the findings of the first research question. The words, phrases, or sentences reflecting the origin(s) to create the information to present for the speaking activity from the second paragraph were identified and categorized for the findings of the second research question.

Paragraph 1



For today speaking activity, teacher assigned the students to present the topic 'Festival'. The students have to come out and talk how to organize a festival suitable to our friends along with the reasons. I think it is quite interesting because it is like the time that I get a chance to tease my friends.

Paragraph 2

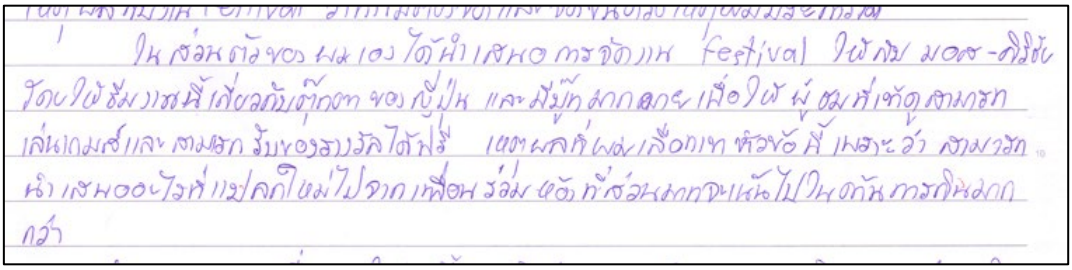


Figure 10: An Example of Opinion Journal Translation

I organized a festival for Sirichai with the theme of Japanese dolls. There are many booths for people to play games to win the free prizes. I selected this idea because I want to present something unique and different from my classmates which mostly emphasizes on ideas about eating.

Table 4: Learners' Opinions towards Speaking Activity

Speaking Activity (1, 2 or 3)	**Paragraph 1**	
	Factors that Aroused Participants' Interests Found in the First Section of Journal	**%**
1		**xx**
2		**xx**

Speaking Activity (1, 2 or 3)	Paragraph 2	
	Types of Schemata Participants Applied Found in the Second Section of Journal	**%**
1		**xx**
2		**xx**

Finally, to explore the outcomes in the quantitative perspective, in each reason listed in the table, the number of participants who pointed out was summed up to determine the total number, and then the percentages were calculated by the formula as shown below to explore the outcomes.

$$\text{\% of Participants Presenting Opinion X} = \frac{\text{No. of Participants Presenting Opinion X}}{\text{Total No. of Participants Writing Opinion Journals}}$$

The findings from the data analysis from both the qualitative and the quantitative processes revealed the effectiveness of the three designed speaking activities based on the learner-centredness learning approach in: 1) arousing the participants to practice speaking with interest as the answer of the first research question, and 2) promoting the participants to bring up their own schemata to create information for speaking practices as the answer of the first research question.

6. Findings

From the data analysis, the outcomes according to the research questions, which were: 1) the factors arousing the participants (Thai EFL university learners) to practice speaking with interest, and 2) the types of the schemata that the participants applied for speaking practices based on the learner-centredness learning approach, from the three speaking lessons, can overall be specified, as follows:

6.1 Research Question 1 - Factors Arousing the Participants to Practice Speaking with Interests

Speaking Activity 1

Example B is the example of the participants' speaking performance produce from their creative ideas from Speaking Activity 1. The outcomes in terms of arousing the participants to practice speaking with interest, and promoting the participants to use schemas are presented.

Example B – An Example of Written Transcription of Speaking Performance from Speaking Activity 1 by Participants A3 and A5

A5: ||hello| doctor|| ||help me please||

A3: ||yes please||

A5: ||i have prob..i have problem|| ||my problem is|| ||i break up with my boyfriend three days||
|||i don't know|| what should i do|| because i cannot sleep||| |||i can..i cannot eat anything|| and
everything is very boring||| ||what should i do||

A3: ||ahh..i think you problem is..ah..have three..auey..two two way for..ah..solve the problem||
||first..ah..you have to throw..you have to throw..throw out..ah..about..ah..everything..ah..
your boyfriend give to you or about..ah..about..ah..ah..cloth dress..ah..high heel or
everything|| ||ah..the second..ah..you have to relax|| |||for example| you have to the book|
watching cartoon or exercise|| because it's make you so tired||| ||and i think..ah..i
think..ah..you..you will better||

A5: |||but i want to find new boyfriend|| but now i cannot find|||

A3: |||i think it's..ah..not..not important now|| because….|||

A5: |||I think|| it's important|||

A3: |okay| |||if you want|| up to you|||

A5: |not up to me| ||because you are doctor||

Table 5: Learners' Opinions towards Speaking Activity

Speaking Activity 1	Paragraph 1	
	Factors that Aroused Participants' Interests Found in the First Section of Journal	**%**
1	The opportunity to learn how to help people by giving advices for the solution	**45**
2	The opportunity to realize the problems frequently happening in real life, and acknowledge the ways to solve the problems	**30**
3	The opportunity to take a role as a specialist, which is an opportunity that had never happened in the real life	**25**

In Speaking Activity 1, the outcome demonstrates that, out of the 20 participants writing the journal, 45 percent of the participants agreed that the speaking activity was interesting because the participants had a chance to practice giving advices to help people from having a conversation with their friends. 30 percent of the participants agreed that the speaking activity was interesting because the participants were able to explore a variety of problems existing in the real-world situations, and had an opportunity to practice problem-solving skill, which could be useful information to apply in daily life. Additionally, 25 percent of the participants agreed that the speaking activity was also interesting because the activity provided an opportunity for them to be a consultant and a client that would never happen in real life.

Speaking Activity 2

Example C is the example of the participants' speaking performance produce from their creative ideas from Speaking Activity 2. The outcomes in terms of arousing the participants to practice speaking with interest, and promoting the participants to use schemas are presented below.

Example C – An Example of Written Transcription of Speaking Performance from Speaking Activity 2 by Participant A7

|good morning teacher and my friend| ||today i would like to present about a festival|| ||i select..ah..my friend palm|| |||palm she like to eats..ahh…all time|| and..ah..she is a big woman||| ||umm..sometime when she come to study|| ||ah…she talk to teacher|| |||ah..she want to go toilet|| but she not go toilet|| and..ah..she go the shop|| and..and buy snack||| |||umm..this festival for palm..ah..celebrate on the thirteenth on may|| because it is a palm birthday||| ||in..ah..it is festival..umm..there are parades around city||| ||in the parades has..um..snack such as lay's tasto..ah..tawan and candy..um…and sweet..umm…all sweet from the world|| |||ahh..the people that walk on the parade|| they wear..um..the woman wear dress from plastic..ah..of snack||| |||such as the woman wear dress from..ah..plastic of lay's of tasto|| and..ah..she..ah..have candy..ah..she decorates candy on dress||| ||and..ahh…in front of the house on..in this festival..ahh..will show about food fruit..ahh..dessert on the

table|| ||in front of the house for show and give tourists and people who come to see the parades|| |||umm…dessert don't have foitong|| because palm she don't like||| |and..ah..fruit..ah..such as grape orange mango| ||and..ah..don't have mangosteen|| ||palm she don't like mangosteen|| |||and food...ah...food from...ahh…food..and..and..ah..every food from Thailand|| because palm she like food every||| |thank you|

Table 6: Learners' Opinions towards Speaking Activity

Speaking Activity 2	**Paragraph 1**	
	Factors that Aroused Participants' Interests Found in the First Section of Journal	**%**
1	The opportunity to create impressive, exciting and challenging ideas based on the real-world information for friends	**60**
2	The opportunity to analyze the real person of friend	**30**
3	The opportunity to make fun of friend	**10**

In Speaking Activity 2, the outcome demonstrates that, out of the 20 participants writing the journal, 60 percent of the participants agreed that the speaking activity was interesting because the participants had a chance to create a new idea related to the real world freely to impress, excite and challenge their friends. There were 30 percent of the participants who also agreed that the activity was interesting from the reason that they had an opportunity to practice analyzing the personality of their friend. Only two percent thought that this activity was interesting because the activity provided a chance to make fun of their friend during the idea-creation process.

Speaking Activity 3

Figure 14 is the example of the participants' speaking performance produce from their creative ideas from Speaking Activity 1. The outcomes in terms of arousing the participants to practice speaking with interest, and promoting the participants to use schemas are presented below.

Example D – An Example of Written Transcription of Speaking Performance from Speaking Activity 3 by Participants A1, A9 and A10

A9: |good morning teacher and my friend| ||today i would like to talk about..ah..the story name is the shadow|| ||ah…buakaw is the famous and good boxer|| ||he ever be champion K-1 and just the champion thai fight in the last year|| ||he ever..ah..fight more than five hundred fight|| ||one day he fight with manny pacquiao|| |||ahh…when he is fighting with pacquiao…ahh…|| when…ahh…the score is equal..ah..when the finally fight|| pacquiao hit his chin...ahh..so he is fell||| ||suddenly…ah..the lord death named kelly said….||

A9 (Lord Death): ||now buakaw die|| ||frankie you go to take the soul buakaw in hell||

A10 (Frankie): |okay kelly… okay Kelly| ||i will take the soul..buakaw now||

A1 (Buakaw): ||where is here|| ||you..you..you take..you take me here…||

A10 (Frankie): ||now you..now you have died|| ||now you are in the hell||

A1 (Buakaw): |no no| ||i..i don' die yet|| ||ahh…yes...let me out||

A10 (Frankie): |no no no| ||i cannot let you go||

A1 (Buakaw): |fighting fighting fighting|

A10 (Frankie): |Kelly Kelly| |||buakaw don't believe me|| that he..that he die||| ||he fought me||

A9 (Lord Death): ||Buakaw you really die|| ||now sai hure pai chod shai kam||

A1 (Buakaw): |no no| ||i didn't die|| ||i..i am fighting|| ||i..i just..i just fell|| ||let me out||

A9 (Lord Death): |okay Frankie| ||let he go|| ||ah..you must..ah..promise with me|| |||when you finish your fight|| you have come back here again|||

A1 (Buakaw): |okay| ||i promise you kelly||

A10 (Frankie): |bye bye."

A1 (Buakaw): |bye|

A10: |||after that..ah..wake up again|| and fight|| until he get the champion|||

Table 7: Learners' Opinions towards Speaking Activity

Speaking Activity 3	Paragraph 1

	I think this speaking activity is interesting because	%
1	The opportunity to exchange creative ideas, and work with friends as a team	**50**
2	The opportunity to be an acting crew	**30**
3	The opportunity to enjoy watching a variety of shows played by friends	**20**

In Speaking Activity 3, the outcome demonstrates that, out of the 20 participants writing the journal, there were 50 percent of the participants thought that the speaking activity was interesting because they had an opportunity to exchange creative ideas freely, and work with their friends as a team. 30 percent of the participants agreed that this activity was interesting because they had an opportunity to be an acting crew to play a character of the story, which they thought it would never happen for them in the real world. Additionally, 20 percents of the participants agreed that this speaking activity was interesting because the participants had a chance to enjoy watching the stories of each other with fun and excitement.

6.2 Research Question 2 - Schemata the Participants Applied for Speaking Practices

Speaking Activity 1

Table 8: Learners' Opinions towards Speaking Activity

Speaking Activity 1	Paragraph 2	
	This speaking presentation was created from	%
1	The ideas based on the personal problems, such as overweight problem, beauty problem, and love problem	**65**
2	The ideas based on the world knowledge about social problems happening in the real world, such as social-network addition, and technologies	**35**

In Speaking Activity 1, the outcome demonstrates that, out of the 20 participants writing the journal, 65 percent of the participants seemed to present the idea for the speaking presentation from their own personal problems facing during that time. The other 35 percent of the participants tended to present the idea for the speaking presentation from the real-world problems that they recognized to find a proper solution.

Speaking Activity 2

Table 9: Learners' Opinions towards Speaking Activity

Speaking Activity 2	**Paragraph 2**	
	This speaking presentation was created from	**%**
1	A free unique imagination to tease, entertain and impress friends	**55**
2	The personal world knowledge to present the social and personal benefits	**25**
3	The good thoughts relating to a current real-world situation	**15**
4	The stories from movies, books, internet sources	**5**

In Speaking Activity 2, the outcome demonstrates that, out of the 20 participants writing the journal, there were 55 percent of the participants who seemed to create the idea of the festival to present a free unique imagination to tease, entertain and impress their friends in the class. 25 percent of the participants tended to create the idea of the festival from the personal world knowledge to present the social and personal benefits that their friends would gain. 15 percent of the participants were likely to create the idea of the festival to give a good thought relating to a current real-world situation to acknowledge their friends. The other five percent created the idea of the festival inspired by the stories from movies, books and the internet sources that they had watched or read before.

Speaking Activity 3

Table 10: Learners' Opinions towards Speaking Activity

Speaking Activity 3	**Paragraph 2**	
	This speaking presentation was created from	**%**
1	Good thoughts from the real world	**35**
2	The fantasy relating to the world knowledge	**35**
3	The analysis of the other friends' actual personalities	**20**
4	The reflection of a current real-world situation or daily life	**5**
5	The popular actions or ideas showing on TV	**5**

In Speaking Activity 3, the outcome demonstrates that there are 35 percent of the participants creating the idea for the story to present some good thoughts from the real world to their friends in the class. The other 35 percent of the participants created the idea for the story from the fantasy relating to their world knowledge to provide a funny plot and an obvious twisting point for entertainment. Furthermore, 20 percent of the participants seemed to create the idea for the story from the analysis of the other friends' actual personalities to make the suitable characters in the play to perform. Five percent of the

participants created the idea for the story to reflect a current real-world situation or daily life, while the other five percent came up with the story idea to make fun of popular actions or ideas showing on TV that they had watched before.

7. Discussion of the Findings

From the findings, it can be interpreted that the three authentic speaking activities designed based on the learner-centredness learning approach enabled to enhance the speaking practices of the participants, which in this case were the EFL university learners, as anticipated. Relating to the explanation by (Bremner, 2021; Harmer, 2003), the participants were likely to be aroused to practice speaking with interest, and use creativity from the schemas for speaking practices when they were incorporated with the speaking activities offering the tasks emphasizing on contextual speaking practices, and supportive ideas based on the popular culture connecting to the schemas. Subsequently, they enabled to perform speaking so as to deliver the message interactively in the real time for the functions of social relationship continuation, and information conveyance as conceptualized by Maybin (1996), Berendt (2009), and (Brown & Johnson 2022). Nonetheless, on the point of the speaking practice enhancement, the participants' learning arousal was varied depending on the assigned speaking activities. From the reasons expressed by the participants, it can overall be identified that the three authentic speaking activities are interesting to learn because the participants could have opportunities to:

The results of this study revealed that learner-centredness speaking activities were effective in both arousing learners' interest and promoting the use of schemata in their speaking practices. These findings contribute to understanding of how schema theory can be applied in EFL contexts to improve oral communication of the participants, which in this case were the EFL university learners, as anticipated. Relating to the explanation by Tudor (1996), Bremner (2021) and Harmer (2003), the participants were likely to be aroused to practice speaking with interest, and use creativity from the schemata for speaking practices when they were incorporated with the speaking activities offering the tasks emphasizing on contextual speaking practices, and supportive ideas based on the popular culture connecting to the schemata based on schema theory. Subsequently, they enabled to *perform* speaking so as to deliver the message interactively in the real time for the functions of social relationship continuation, and information conveyance as conceptualized by Berendt (2009), Brown & Johnson (2022), and Maybin (1996). Nonetheless, on the point of the speaking practice enhancement, the participants' learning arousal was varied depending on the assigned speaking activities. From the reasons expressed by the participants, it can overall be identified that the three authentic speaking activities are interesting to learn because the participants could have opportunities to:

1. Do creative, challenging or entertaining activities that they would never have a chance to do in the real world.

2. Explore and share serious issues and useful ideas happening in the real-life situations.

3. Develop logical thinking, problem-solving skill and analytical skill.

4. Think outside the box from creating impressive, exciting and challenging ideas to encounter the assigned tasks.

5. Have fun with friends on the assigned tasks.

6. Work with friends as a team, and learn more about friends as well as themselves more deeply.

In case of the promotion of utilizing the learners' schemata, from the expressions by the participants, it can be identified that the three designed speaking activities are effective in promoting creative ideas from the use of schemas as a part of speaking practices because the speaking activities provided opportunities to the participants to:

1. Explore personal problems happening in daily life and real-world situations, as well as create the solutions.

2. Use personal world knowledge and imagination freely to create fun and interesting presentation to entertain and impress their friends in the class.

3. Present social and personal benefits or good thoughts relating to the current real-world situations.

4. Create ideas from personal inspiration, fantasy and the personalities of the others.

8. Recommendations from the Research

From the findings of the study, the following are the possible recommendations for teachers. Considering the learner-centredness learning approach, teachers may apply these possible ideas to improve the speaking pedagogy to be more effective to the target learners.

First of all, teachers may try to design the tasks in the way that allows the learners to talk freely in detail about serious issues and incidents happening in the real-life situations. Assigning the learners to create a project-based idea useful for the personal life and the society can be the other challenging alternative as the learners are engaged to practice utilizing logical thinking, analysis and problem-solving skill as a part of their speaking practice process. Teachers may also assign the tasks that the learners may have opportunities to bring up their inspiration or fantasy freely to produce creative presentations to entertain the audience in the class. Likewise, some speaking activities should be assigned in forms of pair-works or group works so that the learners may have opportunities to work interactively and collaboratively as a team with their friends during the practice periods. Beyond the learner-centredness learning approach, from the materials development perspective, as supported by Ramnath (2010), teachers may also try to enhance the efficiency in arousing the learners' interest in speaking practices and the use of schemas by working on the improvement of the speaking activities on the essential linguistic elements, such as the proper text choices, the linguistic supplementary, and the

language focus. In case that teachers have no option, but to use the activities only available from the coursebooks, they may apply the materials adaptation techniques, as guided by McGrath (2003), to modify the activities on the socio-cultural elements in relation to the learner-centredness learning approach, as well as the linguistic elements as necessary to be appropriate to the target learners.

9. Recommendations for Further Research

Beyond the recommendations mentioned in the previous section, the following suggestions are the possible alternatives that researchers or teachers may continue for the further research and development:

Firstly, because the participants for the study were limited to only two classes of 10 university students from a private university, it is interesting to try the three authentic speaking activities designed based on the learner-centredness learning approach again, but with the other groups of participants from the other schools. Extending the study in this way may lead to a more variety of outcomes and some interesting aspects that have not been determined from this study. In the reality, there are three possible groups that could be eligible in this case. The first possible group is the university students, but from the other universities. The second and the third possible groups can be the high-school students (Mathayom 4 to 6) and the junior high-school students (Mathayom 1 to 3), whose English learning are typically not so much as the one of the university students. Finally, because there are only three speaking activities designed in this study, it is a good idea to continue the study by designing more authentic speaking activities based on the learner-centredness learning approach to create more variety to arouse learners to practice speaking.

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