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The Perceived Effectiveness of the Implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching and Mediation Procedures for the Teaching of Business Presentations at a Thai University

By

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in English Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics

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I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family, especially my parents—with love and gratitude for your support and care.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree, diploma, or any other qualifications at this university or any other institution.

ABSTRACT

Keywords: TBLT, mediation, business presentations, university students, Thailand

This case study investigates the impact of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and mediation procedures on the teaching of business presentations at a university in Thailand. A task-based course was developed, which took into account national and institutional education policies regarding the development of business-related knowledge and skills and the limited English proficiency and knowledge of the business world possessed by the learners. Three core tasks, namely Describing Company Profiles, Describing Products, and Describing Trends were designed utilising Willis' framework (Willis, 1996).

The course was delivered over the course of six sessions to two groups of students (n = 22 and 25 respectively). Mixed methods data collection techniques were employed to examine 1) the appropriateness of the designed tasks, 2) the effectiveness of TBLT, 3) the effectiveness of mediation procedures integrated in task implementation and 4) suggestions for the improvement of tasks, TBLT and mediation practices. The data was collected through pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, observer and student interviews, research journals, class observation notes, and audio and video recording of class interactions from four observers and the two groups of students mentioned above.

The qualitative analysis of data focused on participant perceptions of TBLT and mediation as well as on participant recommendations. The findings indicate both positive feedback and the existence of a number of critical issues. Participants were generally satisfied with the use of a wide range of materials and the usefulness of course content. The most significant participant concerns were related to teaching and learning conditions, content relevance and coverage, task complexity and difficulty, task materials, language focus (i.e. vocabulary and grammar teaching), peer feedback and teacher feedback, peer engagement as well as teacher mediation. Implications are also discussed, particularly the greater incorporation of explicit grammar teaching and the increase in number of teaching hours to allow for individual presentation practice and mediation on linguistic difficulties.

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Accountancy students
AEC	Asian Economic Community
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
CD	Compact Disc
CLT	Communicative Language Teaching
CR	Consciousness-raising
CTBS	Collaborative Task-based Syllabus
DA	Dynamic Assessment
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
EP	Enrichment Program
Eng.3	English for Communication 3
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
G-DA	Group Dynamic Assessment
HM	Humanities students
ICELP	International Center for Enchantment of Learning Potential
M	Mean (statistics)
MLE	Mediated Learning Experience
MP3	Moving Picture Experts Group Layer-3 (audio recorder)
Osv	Observer
Post28	Post-Intervention Questionnaire (item 28)
PPP	Presentation, Practice, Production
Pre02	Pre-Intervention Questionnaire (item 02)
SCT	Socio-Cultural Theory
SD	Standard Deviation (statistics)

SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TBI	Task-based Instruction
TBL	Task-based Learning
TBLL	Task-based Language Learning
TBLT	Task-based Language Teaching
TBT	Task-based Teaching
TOEIC	Test of English for International Communication
TSLT	Task-supported Learning and Teaching
VDO	Video
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The mismatch between the demand for developing Thai learners' job-related knowledge and language skills and the provision and practices of English language teaching in Thailand has inspired me to explore teaching methods that would better accommodate the specific needs of Thai learners. Lack of capacity to communicate in English and insufficient, out-of-date professional knowledge and skills put the Thai workforce in a challenging position in a regional job market growing increasingly more competitive. The cooperation initiatives of the ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) Economic Community, or AEC, which include free movement of skilled labour (The ASEAN Secretariat, *http://www.asean.org/communities/asean-economic-community*), have brought benefits to Thai workers, but also concerns, particularly related to language abilities.

It seems language is a major barrier to job application and communication at work. The conference 'ASEAN Towards 2015 and Beyond' revealed that the lack of managerial and language skills is the main weakness for most Thai workers. This is in line with results of surveys showing that the English proficiency of Thai learners at all levels of education falls well below an acceptable standard. Primary and secondary level learners failed to acquire adequate writing skills (Office of Educational Testing, 1999a, 1999b, cited in Wongsothorn et al, 2002), and university learners demonstrated unsatisfactory performance in English (Wiriyachitra, 2002). Another survey of Thais' English language proficiency, based on average TOEFL scores of Asian populations, indicated that Thailand was ranked 54th, while Singapore, for example, was positioned third (Wongsamarn, 2011). The low

proficiency of Thai learners, along with other contextual challenges faced by teachers and learners, have always been discussed among Thai and foreign educators teaching in Thailand. Various problems have been identified, such as large class sizes; lack of budget and resources, teachers' lack of confidence in spoken and written English, over-emphasis on listening and reading in university entrance examinations, teacher-centred instruction, and so on (Biyaem, 1997; Wiriyachitra, 2002; Wongsothorn et al, 2002).

Attempting to resolve the shortcomings of both professional and English skills of Thai learners, the Thai government has urged all educational sectors to put teaching of English – and other foreign languages – into immediate plans for educational reform. One of the key programmes of the reform is to promote improvement in Thai teachers' subject knowledge and teaching methods by considering new methods in teaching practices, classroom management and professional development (Bureau of International Cooperation and activeMinds Consulting, 2008). In the higher education sector specifically, the development of high quality and standards in academic and professional services to enhance up-to-date knowledge and skills required in manufacturing and services sector are highlighted in education policies and plans (ibid.). In response to this, universities have reformulated their policies and geared their teaching towards developing learners' language and professional skills.

The shift in integrating both language and professional skills to assist learners in achieving the required communication and work skills has led to changes in tertiary-level curricula. In particular, at the Business English Department of the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, of which I am a member of the teaching staff, the department has revised its English teaching curriculum. English for Communication

1, 2 and 3 have been designated compulsory subjects for all students. The content area of the study reported here relates to the module on presentation skills, a part of the English for Communication 3 course, in which Get Ready for Business Book 2 (Vaughan and Zemach, 2009) is used as a set coursebook. However, most teachers comment that the coursebook offers only basic language and skill practice for the presentation module, which is insufficient if fundamental knowledge and presentation skills are expected from new graduates in their future jobs. Specific contextual situations, particularly learners' limited knowledge of English language and business practices and the teachers' familiarity with grammar-oriented and lecture-based teaching methods rather than communicative approaches, also signal a demand for the adjustments in teaching methods.

As in the results of surveys of Thai learners' English proficiency, reported above, the majority of learners' English abilities at my institution range between elementary and pre-intermediate levels. At the outset of my research, I shared with all the teachers involved similar opinions on the limitations of learner proficiency and business knowledge, which would inform the design and implementation of tasks and teaching in the study itself and represent an opportunity to try out mediation techniques, which I will elaborate below. In terms of teaching methods adopted at my institution, especially in English for Communication classes, lecture-based teaching has always been a common practice, with the emphasis on introducing and explaining new business concepts and relevant language, including vocabulary and grammatical structures. As a result, there is little chance for communication practice.

To reiterate, Thai learners' lack of skills in language, everyday communication and business communication, as well as inappropriate teaching methodology and

insufficient integration of business content and practices in curricula, calls for attention at both national and institutional levels. I believe that the incorporation of task-based language teaching (TBLT) and mediation into the teaching of business presentations has the potential not only to fulfil the learning needs of Thai learners, but also to offer a unified approach involving TBLT and mediation that represents an alternative methodology that may help lessen or resolve challenges faced by Thai teachers, as well as those in other contexts. In other words, it is hoped that this task-based course will benefit learners and teachers in three respects: 1) the enhancement of learners' business presentation knowledge and skills for their future careers; 2) the improvement of learners' understandings of business and language concepts and usage; and 3) the provision of insights on practical and impractical aspects of TBLT and mediation.

The first aim, of enriching learners' business presentation skills, responds to the demands in the job markets as noted in the Thai education policy agenda. Presentations can be varied in terms of topics, styles and arrangements (e.g. internal, external, formal, informal). For new graduates, it is likely that presenting basic company backgrounds and some descriptions of main products in informal settings would be expected. This corresponds with the content of various business English coursebooks, which mostly focus on presenting the company profile and products. The coursebooks I consulted included *Effective Presentations* (Comfort, 1995), *Business Objectives* (Hollett, 1996) and *Communicating in Business* (Sweeney, 2004). Lecturers at the School of Business Administration also confirmed that these topics are of importance. Although the content areas may not be identical to those which learners will need to present in their future jobs, effective development of

their presentation skills and knowledge of useful expressions frequently used in most presentations will enable learners to apply the skills and knowledge they have learnt when drawing on other content areas. Therefore, the tasks designed specifically for this study focus on developing these skills by covering three key topics for presentations: 1) Describing Company Profiles, 2) Describing Products, and 3) Describing Business Situations (Trends). After this study, these tasks will be refined (if needed) and compiled into an elective module or a training session offered to learners after their completion of English for Communication 3.

The second aim, the improvement of learners' communication and understanding of business and language concepts and usage, can be achieved by engaging learners in TBLT and mediation. A review of the literature on TBLT has led to my decision to follow TBLT practice and procedures because of its emphasis on communication and meanings over the learning of structures (e.g. Willis, 1996; Skehan, 1998; Bygate et al, 2001; Ellis, 2003). TBLT encourages learners to work towards a goal, i.e., the task expected outcomes, which fits well with the requirements of business presentations teaching. In each task, e.g. Describing Company Profiles and Describing Company Products, the expected task outcomes, which are learners developing a script and giving a presentation based on their script, will be clearly explained to students. It will require a lot of effort to try to achieve these pre-determined outcomes. In terms of mediation, a review of literature has led to my belief that combining mediation and TBLT would be useful, especially for learners who have limited English proficiency and business knowledge. Mediation provided during interactions between the teacher (myself) and learners helps the teacher identify areas of difficulties and encourages learners to solve the difficulties, firstly

on their own, and then with the teacher's prompts and suggestions (Haywood and Lizd, 2007; Poehner, 2008, 2009; Grigorenko, 2009; and Lantolf and Poehner, 2011, 2005). This has the potential to facilitate in-depth learning of business concepts and language functions.

Importantly, incorporating both TBLT and mediation into task implementation can offer teachers insights on the practicality of these methods, as both practical and impractical aspects of TBLT and mediation will be explored in this study. The observers and learners' feedback, as well as my reflections after implementation, can provide teachers with fundamental points in considering whether to adopt or integrate tasks, TBLT and mediation in their own classroom teaching or not. Thus, teachers who are looking for alternative approaches may find the results reported in this study beneficial.

This study covers different areas than that of McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) – a prominent task-based study in the Thai context that reported learners and teachers' positive reactions and attitudes to TBLT. They examined whether a TBLT course promoted independent learning and addressed realistic academic needs. Feedback received from both groups indicated that time was needed for the adjustment to TBLT, that learners had expectations of receiving more support and feedback, and that materials could have been managed better. The main differences between the present study and McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007)'s are that this study integrates mediation into task implementation as described above and that the design of different tasks is centred around business presentations rather than various content areas such as Thai culture, social and environmental problems and media programs as in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol's study. McDonough and

Chaikitmongkol recommend a wide range of areas to focus on in future research, and three of them are particularly relevant to this study. These include 1) how TBLT can be adapted to optimise learning outcomes in a wide variety of instructional contexts; 2) how second language teachers perceive their roles in task-based approaches and how their perceptions influence their classroom practices; and 3) what teacher can do to help learners recognise the learning opportunities available in task-based courses. In the first and third aspects, the combination of TBLT and mediation in task-based teaching would offer new perspectives on a balance between communication practice and linguistic focus through interactions and mediation. Encouraging learners to find out mistakes and answers through mediation should promote learner autonomy. In response to the second aspect, inviting teachers to observe lessons in this study enables the investigation of their perceptions of TBLT and mediation practices.

To reiterate, the principal aim of this research is to examine the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation as perceived by learners, observers, and myself. This includes seeking their suggestions for future improvement of the tasks and teaching. With these purposes in mind, four research questions have been formed to guide this project:

1. Are the designed tasks appropriate for the teaching of basic business presentations in a Thai university context?
2. To what extent is the implementation of TBLT perceived by relevant parties to be effective for the teaching of business presentations?
3. What evidence is there, if any, that mediation procedures can be successfully integrated into TBLT for the teaching of business presentations?

4. What suggestions, if any, do learners and teacher-observers have for the improvement of tasks, TBLT and mediation practices?

To answer these questions, a mixed-method evaluative multiple case study will be carried out by inviting learners and teacher-observers to give feedback and recommendations for improvement through questionnaires, class observation and interviews. As both teacher and researcher, I will keep a research journal to record problems that emerge, successes and areas that should be improved. All lessons will also be recorded to enable the analysis of learners' engagement, interaction and responses during the tasks and mediation phases.

This thesis is organised as follows: after this Introduction, Chapter Two (Literature Review) provides a summary of relevant literature and previous studies of both TBLT and mediation practice based on various DA studies. Chapter Three (Research Methodology) presents theoretical foundations of multiple case study and mixed-methods data collection, and data collection and data analysis procedures. Chapter Four (Results of Pre- and Post-Intervention Questionnaire Analysis) summarises findings from the questionnaires. Chapter Five reports research findings, and important issues are discussed in the Chapter Six (Discussion). Chapter Seven (Implications and Conclusion) discusses the implications of this study with recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This literature review focuses on task-based language teaching (henceforth, TBLT), and mediation practice, which concepts constitute the two main areas under the purview of the study. The areas connect with each other as mediation procedures will be integrated within TBLT implementation. Details of concepts, characteristics, rationale and applications of TBLT and of mediation practice are covered in Section 1 and in Section 2 respectively.

2.1 Task-based language teaching

The following review covers seven important aspects of TBLT: 1) a summary of definitions, rationale, and the use of tasks in three types of intervention; 2) task design and sequencing; 3) task components and task types; 4) TBLT implementation; 5) TBLT in business teaching contexts; 6) the justification for selection of TBLT as a teaching approach, and 7) the selected TBLT model used in this study.

2.1.1 Definitions, rationale, and the use of tasks in three types of intervention

Varying definitions of ‘task’ have led to misunderstandings and uncertainties amongst teachers about what approaches are adopted in TBLT (Littlewood, 2007; Ellis, 2009a). As TBLT is not the only form of intervention to employ tasks in teaching, the discussion also takes into account task-referenced learning and teaching, and task-supported learning and teaching (TSLT).

2.1.1.1 Definitions of 'task'

Widespread interest in TBLT has produced not only an extensive literature on the subject but also different perceptions of what counts as a task (Littlewood, 2007). A key distinction has been made between tasks and exercises (Nunan, 1999; Ellis, 2003). Based on the Hong Kong curriculum for English (1999, cited in Littlewood, 2007), Littlewood (2007, p. 247) comments that the status of activities is unclear and suggests that tasks refer to activities that provide purposeful contexts for learning and using English for meaningful communication while exercises are 'activities in which [learners] focus upon and practise specific elements of knowledge, skills and strategies needed for the task'. In this sense, according to Littlewood (2007), activities contain an element of 'meaningful communication, but the purpose is also to practise specific linguistic elements'.

Inconsistent use of terms and acronyms associated with task-based learning, such as TBLT, TBL, TBT, TBI, and TBLL has also created varying interpretations of what constitutes a 'task' and what task-based teaching entails. Shehadeh (2005) notes that some of the differences in definition are due to academics having approached tasks from different perspectives and for different purposes. Bygate et al (2001), for example, suggest viewing tasks in the context of use rather than in terms of how they have been investigated. Ellis (2003) agrees with this view pointing out that although what constitutes a task is context dependent a generalised definition is still needed to identify essential commonalities in tasks. However, whether the task is considered 'an activity', 'a piece of classroom work', or 'a workplan' there are three key elements in most definitions:

1) a focus on meaning (not language or form);
2) real-world language use;
3) goal-oriented nature of tasks with a need to work towards outcome.

Most educators seem to agree that an emphasis on meaning is an important aspect of task (Nunan, 1989; Skehan, 1998; Bygate et al, 2001; Ellis, 2003; Willis and Willis, 2007). But the question arises as to what is meant by a focus on meaning. Willis and Willis (2007) distinguish between a focus on meaning, a focus on language, and a focus on form (or 'forms' as defined by Long (1988). They clarify that a focus on meaning is indicated when the learners are concerned with communication, while a focus on language occurs when the learners pause to think how best to express what they want to say with teachers' facilitation if needed, and a focus on form is discernible when isolated lexical or grammatical forms are taught.

Ellis (2003) suggests that a task should engage learners in using language pragmatically rather than in displaying language aimed at developing second language proficiency through communicating. Nunan (2004) offers a slightly different perspective, which places an emphasis on both meaning and form and is premised upon the understanding that meaning and form are highly interrelated. This interconnectedness implies that grammatical knowledge will help learners to express different communicative meanings. Nevertheless, since knowledge about language is essential in order to achieve successful communication, it seems clear that both meaning and form need to be enhanced.

Willis and Willis (2007) illustrate how the task relates to real world activities at three levels. At the level of meaning, learners engage in producing meanings by using vocabulary and their existing language resources to express opinions on the topic

under discussion. At a discourse level, learners practise discourse used in everyday life when expressing ideas and initiating arguments. The highest level of activity is reached when learners engage in an activity that resembles one occurring in the real world. It could be difficult to design a task to achieve this level, but level 1 (meaning) and level 2 (discourse) should be aimed at, in order to create a useful and motivating task.

Another key aspect of task is that goal and outcome are likely to be connected. Ellis (2003) argues that a task should have a clearly defined communicative outcome. The non-linguistic outcome of the task serves as the goal of the activity, whereas the stated outcome of a task serves as the means for determining the completion of the task. Willis and Willis (2007) and Skehan (1998) distinguish between goal and outcome in which learners use the target language for communicative purpose (goal) and task completion is set up as an outcome in this regard. All tasks must have specified objectives that require learners to achieve something so that they are goal-oriented.

From a pedagogic viewpoint, it is apparent that Ellis' definition of task includes more aspects than those of the others, as it requires learners to be engaged in cognitive processes and practice in the four language skills. In his view, cognitive processes such as selecting, classifying, reasoning and evaluating information are believed to influence a range of linguistic resources needed for task completion but not the choice of forms, which are determined by the user. In addition, a task can involve any of the four language skills and may require dialogic or monologic language use. As such, Ellis claims that they are not different from exercises. In task-based lessons, it is expected that learners will fully develop these four skills.

However, if the term ‘exercises’ is specifically concerned with ‘practice’, I find myself in disagreement with Ellis’ idea because tasks involve various forms of learning. The term ‘activities’ rather than ‘exercises’ seems to be more related to ‘tasks’, and I prefer to use the former term to refer to a group of activities that the learners carry out, in order to achieve the assigned tasks.

Samuda and Bygate (2008) argue that it is inadequate to define task as a workplan because this refers only to the teacher’s pedagogical intentions, rather than what actually happens in real practice. If a task involves real-world processes of language use and engages cognitive processes as proposed, the processes that occur when learners engage in it must also be specified. In other words, ‘task’ should refer to both dimensions of workplan and of process. Under these circumstances, task is redefined as a holistic type of pedagogical activity and the general features of a task for second language learning are summarised (Samuda and Bygate, 2008: 13). These features of a task are given below:

1. It involves holistic language use.
2. It requires a meaningful target outcome or outcomes.
3. It necessarily involves some individual and group processes.
4. It depends on there being some input material.
5. It is made up of different phases.
6. It is important for teachers – and at some point for learners – to know what is being targeted in the language learning purpose.
7. The conditions under which it is implemented have an impact on process and outcome and these can be manipulated and variously exploited.

8. It can be used for different pedagogic purposes at different stages of learning.

In order to design good tasks, teachers need to consider various factors, as stated in the aspects of task as a workplan and task as a process discussed above. Some of these aspects can be pre-planned when designing tasks.

2.1.1.2 Definitions and rationale for TBLT

Most methodologists view TBLT as an integral element of the curriculum and instruction. Samuda and Bygate (2008) define TBLT as covering aspects from curriculum to assessment. In their view, TBLT refers to contexts where tasks are the central unit of instruction driving the classroom, defining curriculum and syllabus, and determining modes of assessment. It has also been pointed out that 'a task-based approach sees the learning process as one of learning through doing – it is by primarily engage in meaning that the learners' system is encouraged to develop' (Skehan, 1996:20).

There are three main reasons to justify task-based instruction as an effective approach. Firstly, task-based instruction involves holistic language learning. Van den Branden (2006) states that task-based syllabuses do not segment language into different elements but take holistic, functional and communicative 'tasks' as the basic unit for the design of activity. From a task-in-process point of view, Samuda and Bygate (2008) point out that in order to complete the task the learners have to engage in a number of different phases in which different strategies are used. From these two aspects, it can be concluded that task-based instruction emphasises holistic learning of language content as well as learning strategies. Secondly, in relevance to the first reason task-based instruction creates opportunities for learners to use

language in meaningful contexts that link to real-world situations. By definition, tasks have some relationship with real-world language needs. Due to this, Long and Crookes (1992) suggest conducting a needs analysis to identify the real-world target tasks before designing pedagogical tasks.

Another reason relates to second language acquisition (SLA) research. Willis (1996) states that the vaunted value of TBL is the opportunity for exposure to rich comprehensible input e.g. teacher talk, listening to recordings and reading texts and real use of language. When learners use the language to express meanings, they have chances to experiment and test hypotheses. In attempting to achieve outcomes, they engage in the task themselves, so they have the motivation to listen and read. Furthermore, a focus on language in the final stage of Willis' framework will prevent fossilisation and challenge individuals to improve. During the consciousness-raising activities, the learners are free to work individually and at their own pace. Thus, they do not feel they are being forced to learn or practise pre-selected structures planned by a teacher or those listed in a textbook. Indeed, 'tasks are supposed to elicit the kinds of communicative behaviour (such as the negotiation for meaning) that naturally arises from performing real-life language tasks because these are believed to foster language acquisition according to the SLA theories' (Van den Branden, 2006:9).

In brief, the three main reasons discussed above reflect the fact that TBLT promotes holistic meaningful language use, in which pedagogic tasks are designed to resemble real-life situations. This makes this approach different from conventional approaches in some ways. Significantly, it marks a shift from the learning and practising of discrete linguistic items to communication, and from teacher-led teaching to learner-

led learning. If tasks are effectively designed and implemented in teaching, it could be said that task-based instruction promotes learner-led, self-directed learning as several skills have the potential to be developed.

2.1.1.3 Tasks used in three types of intervention

As stated previously, the use of tasks is varied, and there are at least three forms of teaching intervention identified by methodologists (Samuda and Bygate, 2008; Ellis, 2003). The first aspect is task-based language teaching (TBLT) as described in the first part of this section. In TBLT, tasks are seen as the central unit of instruction not as linguistics elements. This does not mean that TBLT rejects the learning of linguistic forms, but instead of focusing solely on a study of forms as in traditional syllabuses, TBLT incorporates a focus on form in which the forms are studied in meaningful contexts. Ellis (2003) considers TBLT as a strong version of communicative language teaching in which a course is designed around tasks, and tasks are treated as unit of teaching.

The second feature is task-referenced learning and teaching, which is associated more with an outcomes-based approach than task-based teaching in terms of its concept and function. Bygate (2000) characterises the term ‘task-referenced’ for contexts in which tasks are used for assessment and setting achievement targets that are unlikely to be used in teaching. Curriculum and achievement are defined around a set of pre-determined target tasks. Learners are assessed on ‘competencies’ or ‘attainment targets’; therefore, teaching is not restricted only to task-based approach, but open to any other discipline that can prepare learners for target assessment.

Another form of instruction is task-supported learning and teaching (TSLT), which is regarded as a weak form compared to TBLT. It resembles TBLT in that tasks are used as a key element but not as a single element; instead, they are used alongside other activities from conventional approaches. Thus, they are only one of several elements in the syllabus. Furthermore, in TSLT it is not necessary that tasks should be used for assessment purposes (Samuda and Bygate, 2008). Ellis (2003) notes that TSLT and TBLT are distinguished in terms of function. Tasks in TSLT are used for providing communicative practice of linguistic items, whereas in TBLT tasks are used as a means for the learners to learn a language by experiencing how these occur in communication.

2.1.2 Task design and sequencing

Tasks can be designed and sequenced in various ways based on their theoretical foundations, and the purposes for which they are intended. Each proposal has its own focus and set of proposed criteria. Robinson (2001) concludes that there are three theories that form the foundations for task classification and sequencing: skills hypothesis, capacity hypothesis, and cognition hypothesis. Regarding skills hypothesis, Robinson (2001:21) concludes that there is a proposal for adding a ‘processing dimension’ to the linguistic criteria used in grading and sequencing tasks so as to facilitate the skills learning of content identified in a language-based needs analysis. Johnson (1996, cited in Robinson, 2001:21) claims that functions, structures and linguistic units need to be presented to learners in sequences of activities (called tasks) that facilitate the automatisation of declarative knowledge of the forms. In order to shift learners’ attention from forms to tasks, more demanding conceptual content is added to the latter. Based on a capacity hypothesis theory,

Skehan (1998: 97) contends that ‘more demanding tasks require more attentional resources […] with the result that less attention is available for focus on form’. Briefly, more complex tasks require more attention to content, and thus lead to less attention on form. Therefore, tasks should be sequenced from less to more cognitively intensive for allocation of attention to language form. According to this theory, tasks are sequenced by considering levels of difficulty. Robinson (2001:22) explains that a ‘cognition hypothesis assumes behaviour descriptions of target tasks for populations of learners are the starting point for pedagogic design, and task complexity is the sole basis of task sequencing’. As there is a clear distinction between concepts of the last two theories, tasks can be sequenced using two sets of variables. The levels of difficulty according to the capacity hypothesis are determined by three factors: code complexity, cognitive complexity, and communicative stress, whereas task complexity specified by the cognition hypothesis is increased when resource-dispersing and resource-directing variables increase in complexity.

Because this research involves task design and implementation and learners’ perceptions of the designed tasks and TBLT, it will combine the capacity hypothesis and the cognitive hypothesis theories as general guidelines for task design and sequencing. Thus, aspects of task difficulty (Skehan, 1998) and task complexity (Robinson, 2001) will be combined within a single framework. It is expected that coverage of one aspect that focuses on both linguistic and cognitive factors (task difficulty) and another on cognitive variables (task complexity) will result in credibility as several factors will be brought under consideration. What follows is a

discussion of relevant concepts and frameworks proposed by Robinson (2001) and Skehan (1998) with the latter including some aspects suggested by Candlin (1987).

2.1.2.1 Triadic Componential framework

According to the Triadic Componential Framework (Robinson, 2001), task performance and learning are influenced by three main groups of factors: task complexity, task conditions and task difficulty. Although they are bound to affect performance outcomes, only variables of task complexity can be decided and planned in advance by a task designer. The other elements of task conditions and task difficulty are considered unpredictable, as they are affective and involve ability variables that depend on individuals rather than on tasks such as motivation, anxiety, aptitude, and proficiency. Robinson (ibid.) points out that one challenge in specifying criteria for sequencing tasks is the need to avoid definitions and scope of task complexity as well as task difficulty, as these are too wide and loosely defined. This is exacerbated by the fact that the two terms are often used interchangeably. Another problem arises over which factors actually influence task complexity and task difficulty as there seems to be a wide range of factors involved i.e. cognitive, affective, linguistics, interactional, experiential, and others. To remove any possible ambiguity, Robinson (2001) distinguishes between the two terms and describes their influence on task performance separately.

Task complexity comprises resource-directing (e.g. +/-few elements, +/-here-and-now) and resource depleting (e.g. +/-planning, +/-prior knowledge). These elements, which can be designed before the course starts to increase or lessen cognitive demands of tasks, require different levels of attentional focus, working memory and reasoning. Thus, tasks designed with different variables may require more or less

cognitive demands than the others. It has also been shown by several studies that availability of planning time has beneficial effects on learner performance (Foster and Skehan, 1996; Ortega, 1999; Philp et al, 2006) so this factor also needs to be borne in mind. Robinson (2001:30) further states that 'the cognitively simpler, less resource demanding task will involve a lower error rate, and/or be completed faster, and be less susceptible to interference from completing tasks than the more complex task'.

Task conditions or 'interactive demands of tasks' are not concerned with any learner factors or task factors but with participation as to whether information goes one way, or two ways, and whether a solution is closed or open. Participant variables particularly gender, familiarity with one another and power are also influential factors. However, Robinson (2001) suggests that task conditions are unlikely to be a useful basis for sequencing decisions because they tend to be specified on the basis of a needs analysis. Although a small-scale needs analysis may be conducted before the course in this project to investigate the learners' learning and teaching preferences including aspects of their background, the results will not be used to determine criteria for task sequencing.

Robinson (2001) distinguishes between task difficulty and task complexity by concluding that while task complexity helps explain 'within' learner variations in performance on any two tasks, task difficulty helps explain variations in task performance 'between any two learners'. This is because different learners have different perceptions of the demands of the tasks, which are largely determined by both their affective and ability variables. Different levels of anxiety, confidence and intelligence also shape individual perceptions of difficulty. Dörnyei and Malderez

(1997) suggest that although it is difficult for teachers to predict the effects of tasks on these affective variables, the latter are important to on-line methodological decisions. Teachers should take these factors into account when pairing or grouping students. As this study will incorporate all relevant cognitive demands, language demands and performance conditions for task design and sequencing, the decision criteria will be based on the task complexity proposed by Robinson (2001) and task difficulty proposed by Skehan (1998). In light of Robinson's observation that affective and ability variables cannot be predicted, task difficulty (as in Triadic framework) will not be considered.

2.1.2.2 Task dimensions and task difficulty

In terms of a relationship between syllabus and tasks, Candlin (1987) points out that each syllabus type (e.g. a syllabus of learning, of content, of actions) has its own demands on the design and operation of learning tasks. Learning demands are based on the assumption that learners differ from one another in terms of intelligence, language ability, motivation, and needs. These differences will impose conditions on task design that should enhance their learning. Content demands, which refer to both knowledge and procedures required for the development of communicative competence need to be specified when designing the tasks. Action demands concern arrangements of a variety of classroom activities that encourage learners to respond, explore, experiment, and to take part in purposeful communication with their classmates.

Candlin (1987) and Skehan (1998) consider task difficulty to be based on linguistic and cognitive dimensions. Candlin (1987) proposes criteria for task design and sequencing comprising six aspects: cognitive load, communicative stress,

particularity and generalisability, code complexity and interpretive density, content continuity, and process continuity. Other researchers (Robinson, 2001; Skehan, 1998; Long, 1989) hold that although the criteria proposed by Candlin (1987) are useful in some ways, they do not suggest clear guidelines to syllabus and task designers on the designing and sequencing of tasks.

In order to provide clearer guidelines, Skehan (1998) proposes criteria for an analysis of task difficulty that include some elements suggested by Candlin (1987) but groups them into higher-order categories. The new categories consist of code complexity, cognitive complexity, and communicative stress. It is claimed that the three categories reflect the language, the thinking and the performance conditions needed for a task (Skehan, 1998). Code complexity or 'code complexity and interpretative density' in Candlin's definition concerns linguistic complexity and variety, vocabulary load and variety, and redundancy and density. Density refers to complexity of operations, which need to be performed on such a code. Cognitive complexity divides into cognitive familiarity and cognitive processing or cognitive load. Skehan (1998) distinguishes between these two cognition aspects. Cognitive familiarity involves a capacity to access 'packaged' solutions to tasks whereas cognitive processing is understood as the need to work out solutions to novel problems 'on-line'.

Skehan (1998:100) clarifies the term cognitive familiarity by saying that 'the task requires existing, well-organised 'chunks' of knowledge to be retrieved and mobilised for task performance. It is assumed that attentional resources are not particularly stretched, and there is scope for a focus on form (VanPattern, 1994 cited in Skehan, 1998). Cognitive familiarity specifically involves topic and its

predictability (availability of organised background knowledge), discourse genre (availability of macrostructures), and the task, which refers to jigsaw tasks, decision-making tasks, and riddles in which unfamiliar tasks are less predictable than familiar ones.

It is further noted that '[for cognitive processing] elements of tasks are easy to handle, but there is significant difficulty in manipulating them to achieve a solution that the task requires' (ibid, 1998). The involvement of cognitive processing signifies that there is less attention left to focus on form. The first area of cognitive processing concerns information organisation, referring to naturalness with which information relevant to task is structured. On the other hand, the amount of computation relates to the degree of transformation or manipulation of information that is necessary for a task to be completed. Another aspect of cognitive processing is clarity and sufficiency of information. It concerns directness with which information is made available for learners together with the extent to which inferences need to be made. Finally, information type is based on contrasts such as concrete-abstract, static-dynamic, contextualised-decontextualised (Brown et al, 1984 cited in Skehan, 1998).

The third category that influences task difficulty is communicative stress. Candlin (1987) states that more stressful tasks are those with pressure that comes from interlocutors such as their native-like proficiency, superior knowledge or proficiency. According to Skehan (1998), communicative stress is caused by time limits and time pressure, speed of presentation, number of participants, length of text used, types of response, and opportunities to control interaction. He notes that the urgency of tasks needing completion and learner perception of pressure are factors, which lead to communicative stress.

Skehan (1996) argues that the difficulty of tasks can be analysed using two general categories, namely language factors and cognitive factors. Language factors consist of syntactic complexity and range as well as lexical complexity and range. These two elements mainly concern ranges of structures and vocabulary. The cognitive factors comprise four elements. Familiarity of material in the task is based on whether the task requires learners to produce well-organised language from memory in ready-organised chunks or whether it requires to be drawn on new or less-organised material. Nature of material refers to whether it is abstract or concrete as when real-world referents are involved or whether learners have to deal with generalizations. Reasoning operations required is based on conditions in which the task requires a number of mental operations for its completion with material involved needing to be transformed or manipulated in some way. The final factor is a degree of structuring contained. This raises the question as to whether there is inherent structure involved because of the requirements of a task e.g. a narrative in which beginning, middle and end are reasonably clear, or a description based on some clear underlying schema (Skehan, 1996:23).

As the groups of learners participating in the study have little prior knowledge about business practices, it is essential that tasks and teaching materials used for TBT in this project are designed and graded carefully according to the description of the language factors and cognitive factors delineated above. Task-based lessons should be sequenced from easy/simple structures and vocabulary to more difficult/complex ones, and from the less reasoning-demanding tasks to the higher reasoning-demanding ones. Because the content of the course is partly determined by a prescribed syllabus, some target structures and vocabulary are specified or can be

predicted. It is therefore possible that syntactic and lexical complexity as well as other cognitive elements can be analysed and sequenced according to the levels of difficulty.

Task complexity (Robinson, 2001, 2007) Classification criteria: cognitive demands	Task difficulty (Skehan, 1998) Classification criteria: language required (demands), cognitive demands, performance conditions
(a) Resource-directing variables making cognitive/conceptual demands +/- here and now (Robinson, 1995) +/- few elements (Kuiken et al,2005) -/+ spatial reasoning (Becker&Carroll,1997) -/+ casual reasoning (Robinson,2005) -/+ intentional reasoning (Baron-Cohen,1995) -/+ perspective-taking (MacWhinney,1999)	*(a) Code complexity* - linguistic complexity and variety - vocabulary load and variety - redundancy and density
(b) Resource-dispersing variables making performative / procedural demands +/- planning time (Skehan,1998) +/- single task (Robinson, et al,1995) +/- task structure (Skehan&Foster,1999) +/- few steps (Fleishman&Quaintance,1984) +/- independency of steps (Romiszowski,1988) +/- prior knowledge (Urwin,1999)	*(b) Cognitive complexity* • *Cognitive familiarity* - familiarity of topic and its predictability - familiarity of discourse genre - familiarity of task • *Cognitive processing* - information organisation - amount of 'computation' - clarity and sufficiency of information given - information type
	(c) Communicative stress - time limits and time pressure - speed of presentation - number of participants - length of text used - type of response - opportunity to control interaction

Table 1 Task complexity (Robinson, 2001, 2007) and task difficulty (Skehan, 1998)

Although various researchers have proposed different ways of grading and sequencing tasks (e.g. Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004), this research intends to combine aspects of task complexity (Robinson, 2001) and task difficulty (Skehan, 1998) as a framework for task design and sequencing. This is because selecting the two models will lead to an emphasis on both cognitive and linguistics criteria shown in Table 1 above. The table demonstrates how Robinson (2007) incorporates cognitive factors that have been proposed by other researchers into his model.

2.1.3 Task components and task types

There are various components of tasks and task types. Nijmegen &Holland (1985, cited in Candlin, 1987) summarise criteria for ‘good’ language learning tasks in terms of nine vital qualities, which require that tasks are balanced, motivating, co-operative, strategic, differentiated, focused, open, structured, and critical. To be motivating, tasks need to be interesting, challenging, rewarding, valuable, and require participation. To be focused, tasks must be unambiguous, targeted, and relevant to the needs and goals of learners. This reflects the fact that tasks are not designed without specific purposes or goals and highlights the importance of learning goals, which must be relevant to learner needs and learner goals as described in the ‘focused’ criterion.

Researchers agree that goals are one of the components of tasks with others being input, roles, settings, monitoring, and procedures (Candlin, 1987; Ellis, 2003; Nunan, 2004). However, there also seems to be general agreement among researchers that only three of these are essential, namely, goals, input, and procedures. Nunan (2004:41) believes that goals are important since they provide a link between tasks and a broader curriculum. He concludes that ‘goals are general intentions behind any learning task, [that] may relate to a range of general outcomes such as communicative, affective or cognitive, or may describe teacher or learner behaviour’. It is possible that a complex task may have more than one goal. Candlin (1987) uses slightly different terms, for instance, ‘outcomes’ referring to goals and ‘actions’ referring to procedures, but they carry the same meanings. Ellis (2003) defines goals as the general purposes of the tasks arguing that goals can be specified according to communicative competence. Goals, which refer to a long-term expected

achievement as defined by Breen (1987) and Ellis (2003), should also be set when designing a task-based course so that the learners will know clearly which specific communication skills and strategies and linguistic elements are to be developed during the course. Thus, it can be said that both goals and outcomes can give learners a sense of achievement provided that these are set within the learners' ability range.

Breen (1987) provides some useful guidelines that link to the classroom teaching. He suggests that task designers need to address four questions when designing tasks, which are:

- What is the objective of the task? For example, is it to focus learners' attention on accuracy?
- What is the content of the task? For example, does it draw on familiar or unfamiliar information?
- How is the task to be carried out? For example, will learners engage in planning before the task?
- In what situation is the task to be carried out? e.g. will the task be monologic or dialogic?

These questions indicate that four elements need to be specified in tasks: objective, content, procedures and task conditions. This study plans to incorporate objectives, input or content, and procedures as the task components as well as to consider variables that influence complexity and difficulty of the tasks (Robinson, 2001, 2007; Skehan, 1998) as shown in Table 1. This means that while designing tasks, we must consider both components and other aspects such as the need for provision of planning time, extent of reasoning required, and complexity of structures and vocabulary appearing in the texts. However, the design of tasks should allow

flexibility in that the designed tasks can be adjusted during the course if they are not suitable for the learners' proficiency levels and needs. This is likely to depend on the teacher sensitivity to learner needs and the teacher's decisions regarding adjustments. Another important consideration is selecting appropriate types of tasks. This is because each type has different characteristics, purposes and requirements for task completion.

Table 2 (page 29) shows that tasks under the two cognitive columns are different. The three types of tasks employed in the Bangalore project appearing in Ellis' list are classified and sequenced based on reasoning demands (Prabhu, 1987), but Nunan (1999) subsumes the tasks under the cognitive category according to strategy type. Ellis (2003) distinguishes between focused tasks and unfocused tasks. Unfocused tasks are designed to elicit general samples of language such as listening tasks or interactions. They are not designed for practising particular grammatical structures, and this is in contrast to the focused tasks that aim to induce learners to process some specific linguistic features. Examples of focused tasks include comprehension tasks, consciousness-raising tasks, and structure-based production tasks. There are various types of tasks found in the literature with different names, but Nunan (2004) and Ellis (2003) offer a list of tasks that are classified on the basis of different approaches. A summary of these is contained in Table 2:

Ellis (2003)		Nunan (2004)	
cognitive	i.e. information gap activity, reasoning-gap activity, opinion-gap activity (Prabhu,1987)	cognitive	i.e. classifying, predicting, inducing, taking notes, concept mapping, inferencing, discriminating, diagramming (Nunan,1999)
rhetorical	(discourse) i.e. narrative, instructions, description, report (genre) i.e. recipes, political speeches, job application letters, medical consultations, good/bad news letters	linguistic	i.e. conversational patterns, practising, using context, summarising, selective listening, skimming (Nunan,1999)
pedagogic	i.e. listing, ordering and sorting, comparing, problem-solving, sharing personal experiences, creative tasks (Willis,1996)	affective	i.e. personalising, self-evaluating, reflecting (Nunan,1999)
psycholinguistic	jigsaw, information gap, problem-solving, decision making, opinion exchange (Pica, Kanagy&Falodun,1993)	creative	i.e. brainstorming (Nunan,1999)
		interpersonal	co-operating, role playing (Nunan,1999)

Table 2: Categories of tasks (Nunan, 2004; Ellis, 2003)

In contrast to Ellis' suggestion, Willis and Willis (2007) suggest two ways of designing tasks with one being based on written and spoken texts, and the other being based on one specific topic or topic-based tasks. Different types of tasks within a set are designed around one topic area. Willis and Willis (2007) believe that once the learners are familiar with the basic topic vocabulary they can explore the topic further and exercise a wide range of cognitive skills such as ordering, comparing, and solving problems. It is clear from the examples they provide that Willis holds different ideas on designing and classifying tasks from other methodologists.

The categorisation offered by Willis and Willis (2007) has particularly strong claims as a preferred option for this study. Willis and Willis (2007:180) point out that English for specific purposes (ESP) courses tend to focus on a limited range of lexical topics and language activities determined by a needs analysis. For Business

English teaching, Ellis and Johnson (1994:39) advise that selecting appropriate tasks and setting up the tasks thoroughly are essential so that the learners will have clear ideas as to what they need to do and what is expected of them. The tasks used for a pre-experience class may rely more on support materials such as texts or video, as the learners may not be able to provide much input.

It would appear that topic-based tasks in combination with pedagogic task types such as ordering, comparing, and problem solving suggested by Willis (1996), and Willis and Willis (2007) are more suitable for Business English teaching than other task types. As this project focuses on business presentations, different types of tasks can be designed around topics such as company's products and company's services. Tasks designed on the topic 'company's products' could involve listing words relating to products, comparing different products, and presenting products. However, in the selection of tasks for teaching, there are a number of factors that need to be considered especially learners' prior knowledge about business, their English proficiency, and learning needs. Some highly cognitive-demanding tasks may be unsuitable as all students are pre-experience business learners.

2.1.4 Task-based language teaching implementation

It seems that Willis (1996), Ellis (2003), and Nunan (2004) offer the clearest methodological guidelines on how to implement tasks compared to other methodologists. Of these, the guidelines offered by Willis and Ellis would seem to be the most relevant to this research although the two frameworks have different strengths. While Willis strongly emphasises developing learner communication throughout the three phases of a lesson, Ellis suggests that all phases are important. Skehan (1998), on the other hand, provides only a broad framework, but his

contribution to theoretical foundations and research evidence to support development of the framework is exceptionally useful. It helps to justify the effectiveness of specific activities or procedures.

However, although task-based teachers tend to be generally aware that the task-based lesson is divided into three phases, pre-task, during-task, and post-task, some methodologists use different terms when referring to the same phase. Willis and Willis (2007) refer to all activities after the task as the post-task activities in which 'language focus' is one of the five options they suggest. A summary of options in each phase of an individual framework is presented in Table 3 on page 32.

2.1.4.1 Options for the pre-task phase

Most methodologists agree that the pre-task functions as an introduction to the topic and task. Depending on the degree of familiarity with the topic and type of task, it is the shortest stage lasting between two to twenty minutes. This implies that the less familiar the learners are with the topic and the more cognitively demanding the task is, the longer the duration of the pre-task phase. Although methodologists suggest similar activities in this phase, further clarification on such an important issue as to the number of new structures to be introduced during the pre-task phase is needed. While Skehan (1998) and Ellis (2003) leave this decision to the teacher, Willis (1996) strongly suggests that only useful words and phrases should be highlighted not the new linguistic items. In my opinion, some brief brainstorming or discussion on the potential structures may be useful for lower-level learners, but the ideas should originate from the learners themselves not from the teacher's pre-teaching of the structures.

Willis (1996)	Skehan (1998)	Ellis (2003)	Nunan (2004)
Pre-task Introduction to topic and task ● Introducing a topic ● Highlighting useful words and phrases ● Doing a pre-task activity ● Playing a recording of a parallel task ● Reading part of a text ● Giving preparation time	**Pre-task** Three types of pre-task activities 1. Teaching: an introduction of new language elements (perhaps with restructuring) 2. Consciousness raising activities 3. Planning (giving time for planning)	**Pre-task** 1. Performing a similar task 2. Providing a model 3. Non-task preparation activities 4. Strategic planning may involve both giving preparation time and provision of linguistic forms	Enabling exercises A sequence of enabling exercises to prepare learners to carry out the task: six step procedures 1. Schema building 2. Controlled practice 3. Authentic listening practice 4. Focus on linguistic elements 5. Provision of freer practice 6. Introduction of the pedagogical task
Task cycle ● Task Performing a task in pairs or small groups. ● Planning Planning a report of how they performed the task and the task outcome. ● Report Reporting the outcome and comparing findings between groups (Post-task activities) Listening to a recording of fluent speakers doing the same task	**During- task** Two general aspects of during-task activity 1. Manipulation of attention ● time pressure ● modality ● support ● surprise ● control ● stakes 2. attention and more extended task procedures	**During- task** Options: 1. Task performance options ● time pressure ● access to the input data ● introducing a surprise element 2. Process options: traditional form-focused pedagogy vs. task-based pedagogy	**Within-task sequencing** ● **a pre-task phase** (schema building): introduce a topic, generates interest, rehearse essential language ● **a task-proper phase**: learners complete the task ● **a follow-up phase**: debriefing from the teacher, report the results of the task to the class, receive corrective feedback from the teacher
Language focus ●Doing language-focused tasks by analysing language based on the texts students have read or transcript of the recordings	**Post-task** The aims of post-task activities ● Altering attentional balance ● Reflection and consolidation ● Devising effective instructional sequences	**Post-task** 1. Repeated performance 2. Reflecting on the task 3. Focusing on forms	

Table 3 Options for task-based implementation

Ellis' suggestions on performing similar task and non-task activities (see Table 3) in order to reduce cognitive or linguistic demands are similar to those of Willis and Skehan. However, the provision of a model of how the task can be performed can also be accompanied by consciousness-raising activities in order to draw learners' attention to specific features of task performance. In terms of strategic planning, Ellis

goes beyond suggesting the provision of preparation time to the provision of linguistic forms and/or strategies for performing the task. Although learners have not yet engaged with the task, they can consider and discuss the forms they will need in order to complete the task. According to Willis (1996), preparation time is optional and depends on familiarity with the topic and cognitive demands of the task. If genuine communication is aimed for, preparation can be omitted, and learners can move straight to the instructions and the task. Otherwise, two minutes may be sufficient for a short familiar topic and ten minutes for the more complex and less familiar topic.

In brief, there is a range of options on pre-task activities that can be adopted. In addition to elements suggested by Willis, consciousness-raising activities as well as guided strategic planning, which involves a brief discussion on possible structures and communication strategies to be used for performing the task, seem beneficial for low-level learners or a mixed-level class similar to those participating in this study.

2.1.4.2 Options for the during-task phase

From Table 3, it appears that Ellis (2003) offers clearer guidelines than Skehan. He divides the during task phase into task performance options and process options. The former concerns how the task is to be undertaken and planning by the teacher, whereas the latter involves the teacher and learner online-decision making about how to perform the task. Willis (1996) divides the task cycle into task, planning, and report stages. The task stage is vital as it offers learners an opportunity to use language and to work on their own to complete the task, while the teacher's main roles are to monitor learners, to help when communication breakdown occurs, and to provide brief comments after the task. Willis states that the aims of the task are to

develop fluency in the target language and communication strategies rather than accuracy. Accuracy is developed at the report stage when the groups have to present their findings or task outcomes. This is because when learners are working on their final drafts, they will pay attention to appropriate words or grammar. Willis (1996:55) concludes that 'the report stage gives students a natural stimulus to upgrade and improve their language. It presents a very real linguistic challenge – to communicate clearly and in accurate language appropriate to the circumstances'. The report stage might last from 20-30 seconds or up to two minutes per pair/group depending on the level of the class and type of task. It can be organised as an oral presentation, a written presentation where the group reads the other group's work, or audio or video presentation. The teacher's role is to be a chairperson who summarises and gives feedback. Requiring students to produce written documents e.g. letters, a brochure and a magazine can further improve their language. Willis' task cycle offers the most explicit guidelines on teaching procedures, teacher and learner roles. Thus, this task cycle will be adopted in this research.

2.1.4.3 Options for the post-task phase

Willis (1996) and Ellis (2003) specify three types of activities that aim to enrich learner knowledge on structures, namely, a focus on form, repeated performance or task repetition and reflection on the task. Willis and Willis (2007) propose five options for post-task activities: follow-up tasks for recycling texts, report stage, task repetition, post-task language work, and evaluation and reflection. Follow-up tasks for recycling texts occur when the learners listen to or read the text or transcript again so that they can notice linguistic features and use them in their writing or speaking. Reporting their results to other pairs or to the class is another option.

Although it might increase pressure, it will push them to carefully plan and polish their language. Post-task language work refers to the ‘Language Focus’ phase consisting of language analysis and language practice where language components relating to task are discussed. The final option on evaluation and reflection can be accomplished by getting the learners to write down what they enjoyed or did not enjoy or to make suggestions on slips of paper.

For the task repetition, there are key research papers (Bygate, 1996; Lynch and Maclean, 2000, 2001; Ellis, 2003; Pinter, 2005) indicating that task repetition wherein learners do the same task but with different partners results in increased complexity and fluency and the expression of clearer ideas and opinions. With no fixed rules on setting up the repeated task, the latter can be arranged under similar conditions as in the first performance or under new conditions. After repetition, the teacher can ask the learners to write a report thereby providing an opportunity for learners to recycle the language they have practised.

Briefly, in relation to this research context all three post-task activities will be considered: post task language focus, task repetition, and reflection. This is because most of the learners do not have prior knowledge about business communication, which constitutes the content of the course, and their English proficiency is quite low ranging from elementary to pre-intermediate levels. A focus on form, followed by task repetition that requires learners to work with new partners, may help to recycle the language and to increase their confidence in speaking.

2.1.5 TBT in business English teaching contexts

A number of studies (Stark, 2005; Chen, 2005) are quite relevant to the present inquiry, but tasks in each study have been exploited differently. Although the titles of these studies indicate that they focus on task-based instruction, only the study conducted by Stark fully adopts TBLT, while Chen's work combines teacher-directed content-based instruction and student-centred task-based instruction.

2.1.5.1 Integrating task-based learning into a business English programme

In teaching Business English to 25 economics students, Stark (2005) employs three tasks: analysis of a company, the history of production, and presenting a company. One of the strongest elements is the integration of tasks into the main lessons, graduating the learners from individual tasks to a task-based project incorporating focus on form in lessons. Target language is integrated in three task phases. The pre-task of the analysis of a company, using Nike as a case study, involves learners pooling knowledge on relevant vocabulary and adopts VDO and business newspapers as input materials to provide useful language. In the during-task phase, students are divided into two groups working on different business concepts, and then each student working with a new partner from a different group to explain concepts, check mutual understanding, and finally carry out an analysis and produce reports.

The history of production task is arranged as a task repetition of the first task, wherein a focus on form is emphasised. The task involves reading texts, watching videos and taking notes, producing a list of key points, identifying linking words to

produce a text, rehearsing the task with their partners, and finally writing a summary report. Stark claims that these processes can increase the range of vocabulary and grammar. In my view, the arrangement of focus on form in the second task as a repetition of the first task is very effective, maintaining a balance between focus on meanings or core content/concepts as well as focus on form. This promotes both communicative abilities and accuracy in language use. The third task is a task-based project requiring learners to work in teams to plan and present information about a company. Learners are trained in presentation and teamwork skills, and informal discussions are arranged in class so that the teams can plan the presentations and receive feedback from the teacher. Then, a simulation that requires learners to use the target structures is set up for the learners to try out the structures that they have learnt. The final practice is filmed, and feedback is given in order for the learners to strengthen their presentation skills and to correct language errors. This phase can promote noticing, monitoring and restructuring.

Stark identifies two significant achievements from the task outcomes. One is the opportunity for individualised feedback that can be integrated into the project through informal discussions with the teams. Another success is the noticeable improvement in lexis and register through reading materials, discussions and presentations.

2.1.5.2 Effective implementation of a collaborative task-based syllabus (CTBS) in EFL large-sized business English classes

Chen's research focuses on a collaborative task-based syllabus, which integrates teacher-directed content-based instruction and student-centred task-based instruction' (Chen, 2005: abstract). This syllabus is designed for business-major EFL

learners. Chen (2005) describes aspects of CTBS implementation as: 1) extensive use of group work, 2) before-class practice, and during-class oral presentation on different topics by the groups, 3) specification of objectives, contents, and task procedures including role assignment for the learners to take responsibilities, 4) compulsory participation in a peer-review conference by groups and 5) use of four CTBS projects including company establishment, staff recruitment, business transacting, and feedback and evaluation.

The title of this study suggests that it is grounded in TBT, but the teaching sequence and classroom procedures are not arranged in three task phases. The content seems to focus solely on business skills rather than on language components as there is no language element specified in the tasks. It is unclear whether language is separately taught before the tasks or not required because most learners are highly competent language users. The term ‘tasks’ in this study possibly refers to business tasks, not learning tasks for TBT.

It appears that the course is dominated by business functions drawing on several areas and skills in one course. This study offers an interesting option for a business English course in which setting up ‘a simulation company’ could provide learners with hands-on experience and an opportunity to try out skills they have learned previously. The four projects cover the main business functions, and if they are effectively practised, the learners can gain a lot of knowledge that can be applied in their future jobs. However, these projects may be more appropriate with advanced level learners than low-level learners.

From these two studies, it can be concluded that the tasks designed for Business English teaching are to some certain degree different from ones for general English

language teaching. Because they are determined by business content, all activities are geared towards developing business knowledge and skills. Although the same teaching sequences and procedures may be employed, there is more flexibility during the three task phases in which additional relevant language sessions may be added within the three phases. This implies that during task design the teacher needs to consider both business task and language requirements. However, it would be more effective for some necessary language skills to be covered in advance thereby reducing the cognitive load so that the learners can concentrate on the tasks.

Some features of Stark's TBT can be adopted within the current research. Presenting a company and products will be focused upon, and it is planned that presentation skills will be incorporated in the course. Focus on form activities as suggested by Stark are also useful. Stark's technique of providing feedback while preparing a presentation could be a powerful tool to increase the learners' accuracy of language use.

2.1.6 Justification for selection of TBLT as a teaching approach in this study

Relating to the three main reasons highlighting the practicality of TBLT in language teaching in a general sense as stated in 2.1.1.2, in this section, I will elaborate upon the feasibility of TBLT specifically in the Thai context, in comparison with other English language teaching (ELT) methodologies. The adoption of TBLT, as stated in the Introduction, was justified mainly by Thai learners' needs in job-related and communication skills, my institution's demands and my interest in seeking new approaches. A review of TBLT literature and previous studies revealed two reasons why TBLT represented a promising approach in the Thai context than alternative

methodologies. Firstly, TBLT that incorporates holistic language learning (see p.14) reinforces not only Thai learners' knowledge of meanings and forms but also their learning strategies. These peculiarities are particularly important in developing pre-experienced Thai learners' knowledge of business presentations, where concepts of business and associated language as well as tactics to deal with unfamiliar concepts and linguistic content need to be promoted. These requirements are inconsistent with what has been offered in grammar- and lecture-based approaches, common ELT practices in many Thai EFL classrooms. More precisely, a strong emphasis on learning and practice of linguistic features of the so-called PPP (Presentation-Practice-Production) approach—described by Ellis (2003) as where a language item is first presented through examples, then practised in controlled practiced exercises and finally used in free production—would not have promoted a suitable focus on the relationship between form and meaning. The teacher's pre-selection and presentation of structures to learners in the first stage of PPP would have limited choices of language and hence the varieties of meanings that could be expressed by learners. There also would have been a risk of applying one form to all situations. In contrast, guiding learners to explore business concepts and language frequently used in business presentations in a less controlled manner during pre-tasks would maximise the chance of using appropriate language to suit presentation topics, purposes, genres, target audience and the degree of formality, which are important considerations when planning presentations. Using various vocabulary and structures would also make their presentations more creative and interesting.

Secondly, TBLT requires learners to use language in meaningful contexts to achieve specified outcomes set during task design, providing a clearer direction for the

teacher and learners of what is expected during and after the practice of presentations, which would not have been possible in structure-based approaches. Learners engaging in tasks closely related to realistic situations and realising what they need to achieve would increase their sense of purpose, motivation and knowledge of the subject overall. Furthermore, according to Ellis (2003), tasks benefit EFL contexts in terms of planning a communicative curriculum. Designing a task-based curriculum implemented with TBLT methodologies would increase Thai learners' opportunities to be exposed to communication which they are likely to encounter outside classroom setting, hence offering a greater opportunity to enhance relevant communicative abilities than would be the case with grammar-oriented methodologies. Finally, with regard to the applicability of TBLT to the Thai context, a movement towards TBLT, instead of maintaining traditional language- or lectured-based approaches, would allow me to study the impact of TBLT as a new teaching method as well as barriers and limitations such as teachers and learners' responses that could be anticipated if other unconventional approaches are to be implemented in this context.

2.1.7 Selection of TBLT model to be implemented in this study

As TBLT can be implemented in various ways (see 2.1.4), the selection of the TBLT model used in this study took into consideration not only Thai learners' needs in general, especially ones reported in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol's (2007) TBLT study, but also the needs of student participants of this study. McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) reported learners' concerns about insufficient grammar instruction, viewing lessons as drawing on already learnt linguistic forms instead of more advanced structures that could be additionally challenging. Learners suggest

adding more advanced grammar topics, teacher-led explanation and assigning grammar exercises. Three other areas of concern were also addressed: 1) time for teachers to adjust to TBT, 2) learners' expectations on receiving more support, particularly clear instructions and feedback and 3) managing the course materials. It was also found that too many activities and materials had been used in one lesson, and this led to a repeated switch between sources.

Issues specific to the Thai context, as mentioned above, need to be taken into consideration, particularly the need to develop learners' productive skills and autonomy and to offer more linguistic support in view of low learner proficiency. Ellis' (2003) and Willis' (1996) TBLT frameworks seem to best apply to the Thai context in view of the highlighted limitations and constraints. In Ellis' framework, which is generally considered to be a structural syllabus, priority is given to both meaning and linguistic study wherein the focus on form can be incorporated in all task phases, unlike Willis' model where it is delayed until the post-task phase (see details in 2.1.4.3). Furthermore, while stages and procedures of task delivery are prescribed in both the Ellis and the Willis models, highly detailed procedures with suggested pedagogical implications are specified in Ellis' model. Undoubtedly, Ellis' framework fits in with the demands of the Thai context in many ways but probably not in this study. A number of context-specific issues, specifically large mixed-abilities class, varying needs of students with little or no prior knowledge about business presentations and lack of prior exposure to TBLT for the learners and the teacher (myself) make Ellis' framework unsuitable for this study. Indeed, the inherent flexibility of Willis' framework may make it more suitable for the

introduction of TBLT in this inquiry. The flexibility would freely allow on-line adjustment of tasks and procedures at any stage of implementation.

It is expected that Willis TBLT model, together with her suggestions will provide a practical response to the needs of participants of this study. Firstly, Willis' suggestions on developing tasks from spoken and written texts will provide the learners with more exposure to real-world language materials and practice in listening and speaking skills, which are regarded as weak spots in the learners' repertoire. Teachers may create their own materials from texts taken from newspapers, magazines, news programmes, radio announcements, lectures and others. The spoken texts in particular can be used for listening and speaking practice with a brief discussion about a topic or a story after listening. Willis (1996), and Willis and Willis (2007) outline several techniques on how to create tasks from written and spoken texts.

Secondly, the model strongly promotes communication, an important skill for all Thai learners. Since they are rarely exposed to English in everyday life and grammar teaching dominates in most lessons, they have developed a good knowledge of basic grammar, as reported by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) but not communicative abilities. Communicative task-based lessons will maximise opportunities for improving both their communication strategies and skills. The task stage of Willis' model strongly promotes interaction among learners without the direct support and intervention by teachers. Willis (1996:53) states that 'the task stage is therefore a vital opportunity for all learners to use whatever language they can muster, working simultaneously in pairs or small groups to achieve the goals of

the task'. As a result, they are likely to develop their confidence and communication strategies.

At this stage, it can be argued that the models proposed by other advocates also suggest useful techniques, but Willis' model contains activities and clear step-by-step teaching techniques from the introduction of the task to a language focus. This would provide Thai teachers who want to make a transition from traditional approaches to a task-based approach with clear directions on making a start. As pointed out by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007), Thai teachers need time for adjusting to TBT, and guidance on implementation offered by Willis may shorten the duration for adjusting to this approach. Several techniques suggested by Willis relate to ELT situations in Thailand such as integrating tasks into textbook-based teaching, TBT for low-level groups, dealing with excessive use of L1, and managing a large class.

In terms of Business English teaching, Willis' model promise to be challenging for both teachers and learners. Stark (2005:47) reported success concluding that 'many task-based activities such as team work or presentations replicate real world activities, bringing the functions of language and communication to the forefront'. In terms of business presentation skills, which are the focus of this study, Ellis and Johnson (1994) point out the interrelationship between skills and language, which gives rise to the need for training in this combination. For example, the content matter of the introduction must be introduced in conjunction with the organisation of the content, while the content of the body must include knowledge about signals and linking words. Willis' model can be applied to this topic area through the development of the learners' knowledge of language for presentation during the

three phases, but in order to prevent excessive cognitive load, training in presentation skills may be given separately before the task.

However, based on previous studies on the Thai learners' needs, there are some contextual factors that the TBT model proposed by Willis does not cover. While a strong focus is placed on expressing meaning and interactions, a focus on only language in the final stage is probably insufficient for Thai learners, and thus other aspects should also be considered. These are guided or detailed planning, a focus on form, provision of language support and feedback and task repetition.

Guided or detailed planning

Willis (1996) and Ellis (2003) suggest two planning stages, one during the pre-task phase and the other between the task and the report stage. Apart from pre-task language activities, Willis leaves the planning to the learners. For this study, a teacher-led or guided planning and detailed planning may be considered as better options because this pre-experience learner group is not familiar with either TBT or Business English content. They may need some guidance.

A need to highlight a focus on form with an explicit instruction in the post-task phase (if needed)

Research suggests that meaning-focused approaches that do not address grammar fail to develop high levels of accuracy in the target language, and hence some explicit focus on grammatical forms is necessary (Long, 2000; Lapkin, Hart, and Swain, 1991; Swain & Lapkin, 1989 cited in Nassaji and Fotos, 2004). Long (2000) believes that pure focus on meaning is inefficient, especially in developing native-like grammatical competence, and that focus on form is more effective than the other two

options because learners attend to linguistic components in context while engaging in meaning-focused or communicative activities. Thus, it combines both communicative language use and forms. In particular, a meta-analysis of 49 studies on the effectiveness of L2 instruction conducted by Norris and Ortega (2000) reveals positive effects of explicit instruction (including both inductive and deductive techniques) over implicit instruction. The explicit instruction resulted in target language gains that seemed durable although these gains tended to decrease slightly over time. Explicit teaching in this sense may involve several techniques, mostly rule presentation and explanation and practice of rules, while implicit instruction is likely to entail only implicit exposure to target form in meaningful communicative activities. Doughty and Williams (1998) compare characteristics of implicit and explicit language learning. For example, implicit learning involves automatic access to or use of interlanguage, while these are deliberate in explicit learning, and inductive learning is regarded as implicit whereas deductive learning is considered as explicit.

According to McDonough and Chaikitmongkol's (2007), grammar teaching is always perceived as an essential component of the Thai EFL lessons, and teacher-led instruction is commonly preferred. However, after the implementation of TBT with a focus on form approach wherein attention is paid to form in response to problems encountered, complaints concerning insufficient grammar teaching decreased. In terms of the appropriate stage(s) in focus on form that should be integrated, Willis (1996) and Ellis (2003) suggest the following (Table 4):

Instructional Phase	Willis (1996; Willis & Willis, 2007)	Ellis (2003, 2009)
Pre-task	during a priming stage (optional)	focus on form (if required)
During-task	{incidental} during the meaning focused activity (optional)	focus on form (if required)
Post-task	during a language focus activity (preferred)	focus on form (if required)

Table 4 Focus on form during task-based lessons

While Ellis points out that a focus on form can be integrated at any stage, challenging those who argue that grammar has no place in TBLT (e.g. Sheen, 2003; Swan, 2005), Willis prefers it to be done after the task during the language focus stage. However, an incidental focus during the meaning focused activity is also possible. In the context of this study, Ellis' suggestions seem more relevant upon consideration of the learners' needs, proficiency level, and their lack of prior business knowledge. Students are allowed, although not encouraged, to carry out a brief discussion on forms during the pre-task. This includes an incidental focus on form during the task led by the teacher and some language focus activities in the language focus stage. Furthermore, if complex structures associated with the task need to be clearly understood so that the learners are able to use the language for real-life communication, explicit instruction may be considered.

Providing language support and feedback

Avermaet et al (2006) demonstrate how the teachers can effectively intervene in the task, and identify two kinds of intervention: planned and unplanned intervention. Planned intervention occurs when the teachers anticipate the task's language potential, obstacles that could arise while performing the task, and ways to react.

This enables teachers to provide interactional support during the task, for instance, by implicitly incorporating target structures in the feedback, or focusing briefly and explicitly on form. Unplanned intervention occurs when the teachers observe some major difficulties during the task resulting in comprehension problems. The teacher can act as a cooperative and interested listener implicitly providing input and form-focused feedback through recasts, confirmation requests, and clarification requests. These kinds of feedback are regarded as mediation, which will be discussed in the next section.

Task repetition

Two widely known studies on task repetition are those conducted by Bygate (2001), and Lynch and Maclean (2001). Both studies show positive results of task repetition leading to changes and improvement in the learners' spoken performance. In the first, task repetition takes place ten weeks after the first attempt, and the study is conducted under normal classroom conditions. In the second, task performance is followed by immediate repetition, and the focus is on organising a poster carousel. In the Lynch and Maclean study, after the poster session during which each pair of learners designs a post and then does role play as host and visitor asking questions, an improvement in the phonology and vocabulary of all learners, and progress in the semantic precision of some learners as well as development in syntax are noted.

To summarise, Table 5 shows the Willis model (Willis, 1996) with the addition of the other features discussed above. These will guide task-based implementation in this study.

PRE-TASK **Introduction to topic and task** •Teacher explores the topic with the class, highlights useful words and phrases, helps students understand task instructions and prepare. Students may hear a recording of others doing similar task.			**More aspects to be considered** ■ guided or detail planning ■ strategic planning: learner-led discussion on content, and form (if preferred by the learners)
TASK CYCLE **Task** • Students do the task, in pairs or small groups. • Teacher monitors and encourages; stops the task when most pairs have finished; comments briefly on content.	**Planning** •Students prepare to report to the whole class (orally or in writing) how they did the task, what they decided or discovered • Teacher acts as linguistic adviser, giving feedback; helping students to correct, rephrase, rehearse and/or draft a written report.	**Report** Teacher selects some groups to present their reports of the task to the class, orally or in writing. Teacher acts as a chairperson, linking the contributions, summing up. Teacher gives feedback on content and form, if wished.	**More aspects to be considered** ■ planned / unplanned intervention ■ teacher-led incidental focus on form ■ providing language support and feedback (group dynamic assessment)
* The task cycle may be based on a reading text or listening text. It may be followed by students hearing a recording of others doing the same task. These both give additional and relaxed exposure			
LANGUAGE FOCUS **Analysis** • Students examine and discuss specific features of the text or transcript of the recording		**Practice** • Teacher conducts practice of new words, phrases and pattern occurring in the data, either during or after the analysis	**More aspects to be considered** ■ Task repetition - immediate / later - with similar / new conditions ■ explicit grammar instruction on complex structures (if necessary) ■ evaluation and reflection on the task

Table 5 Willis' TBLT framework (with considerations of this study context)

2.2 Mediation practice

Mediation is any form of assistance provided through interactions in response to difficulties faced by learners while performing a task. In this study, mediation and TBLT are combined in instruction in which the effectiveness and issues relating to mediation in the context of task implementation are carefully examined. From a review of the theoretical foundations of mediation and related literature, it is believed that mediation benefits task implementation in a number of ways, specifically in enabling learners to cope with linguistic difficulties, to improve their

knowledge and to deepen their understanding of language. The integration of mediation into TBLT also opens up opportunities for task evaluation. The analysis of class interactions involving mediation enables the evaluation of task. This evaluation takes into account the appropriateness and successful implementation of the designed tasks. It also focuses on how the tasks can be improved. For a clear understanding of these important roles and benefits of mediation, this review first discusses the conceptual basis of mediation based on dynamic assessment (DA) practices wherein mediation is prominent. Because of a general presumption that mediation and corrective feedback share common grounds, the second section highlights the distinction between them. To develop guidelines for this implementation, the final two sections focus on how mediation has been conducted in language teaching contexts, looking at the conduct of mediation following different DA approaches and previous studies, and then briefly summarising the mediation inventory used in this study.

2.2.1 Concepts of mediation according to DA practices

DA is an assessment approach that encompasses the provision of assistance or mediation through interactions in the assessment processes, and this clearly distinguishes DA from other assessment approaches which disallow assistance. Lantolf and Poehner (2004: 2) stress how DA that incorporates mediation in assessment helps maximise learner abilities noting that:

> *In fact, not only can DA provide a different picture of an individual's abilities, it can actually help him or her [a child or a learner] to develop those abilities by providing finely tuned instruction, or mediation, while engaged in the assessment tasks.*

Mediation is seen as an essential element in DA practices. Theoretically, DA is rooted in socio-cultural theory (SCT) and shaped by the concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) where the provision of mediation plays a central role. The concept of ZPD originated in Vygotsky's (1978) work on the Theory of Mind, which focused on the development of a child's mental abilities. Vygotsky (1978) defines mediation as 'adult guidance or…collaboration with more capable peers'. Based on SCT, it is believed that human development is linked to the socio-cultural environment and is mediated by others through social interactions. Interacting with others fosters the child's development. From his observation of the child doing problem solving tasks, Vygotsky (1978) concluded that although the child was able to do things independently, this could only be assumed to be his or her partial ability since upon assistance the child could perform better in tasks. The unassisted and assisted performances can be interpreted as two developmental levels: the actual development level determined by independent problem solving ability or unassisted performance, and the potential development level determined through problem solving ability with assistance. Vygotsky (1978: 86) defined the distance between the 'actual' and 'potential' development levels as the zone of proximal development (ZPD) explaining that 'the zone of proximal development defines those functions that have not yet matured but are in the process of maturation [...]'. The actual development level is thus perceived as the end product of development, whereas the ZPD is seen as the ongoing process towards future complete development.

Since the goals of learning should focus on the development of the learners' cognitive processes as well as acquisition and participation, as mentioned in the previous section on theories of learning, the co-construction of the learners' ZPD is

important in all language learning classrooms. To help learners construct their own knowledge within their ZPD, teachers should be able to identify the learners' current level of abilities including the causes of their poor performance. All learners have the potential to develop further, regardless of their present level. Contrary to most traditional assessment approaches, DA places an emphasis on developing this potential or maturing abilities (ones higher than currently matured abilities) rather than on examining the learners' actual levels. In other words, DA focuses on future learning development in which mediation provided by teachers is a key instrument to accelerate the developmental processes. This aligns with Vygotsky's development theory, which contends that learning is not development but leads to development. Vygotsky (1978: 90) states that:

> *[L]earning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalised, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement.*

DA is rooted in the work of Vygotsky as described above, and it is known from the work of Feuerstein and his colleagues in Israel (1979, 1980, 1988, 2003), which has been conducted at Feuerstein's International Center for Enchantment of Learning Potential (ICELP). Feuerstein's work is derived from the structural cognitive modifiability theory, which shares similarity with Vygotsky's concepts of the ZPD. The structural cognitive modifiability theory, which views human cognitive abilities as fluid, holds these as open to modification and development in a variety of ways. Interactions and instruction can enhance development. Feuerstein adopts the term

‘mediated learning experience’ (MLE) to refer to interactions provided by an expert or a more competent person in order to help a child (or learner) construct meanings, instead of letting them experiment or explore the meanings on their own from trial and error. This process of helping a child in their learning is similar to the provision of mediation as suggested by Vygotsky for the development of higher psychological functions. According to Feuerstein and his colleagues (1988, cited in Poehner, 2008) to promote the child’s development, a direct interaction with the child alone is insufficient. There are three further attributes which are of importance: 1) intentionality and reciprocity, 2) mediation of meaning and 3) transcendence.

Intentionality refers to a mediator/teacher’s deliberate actions on guiding and providing mediation to learners, especially when they are struggling with some particular linguistic forms they have not yet acquired, which will result in difficulties or failure in solving the task. The teacher’s sensitivity to learners’ needs is a key to appropriate mediation. He/she should be able to quickly identify the causes of difficulties or poor performance. Reciprocity concerns learners’ contributions to interaction. While the teacher has to stimulate and maintain learners’ interest and attention to activity, the learners must actively engage in the activity and interactions with the teacher and seek assistance (i.e. mediation) when they cannot solve problems or difficulties on their own. Both learners and the teacher need to put their best efforts into the process of co-constructing meanings and knowledge. This interactional process Feuerstein and his colleagues (1988, cited in Poehner, 2008) call ‘mediation of meaning’ wherein mediation is provided to develop learners’ conceptual understanding of the principles essential to task completion. For example,

the mediation given could be, signalling and calling learner attention to a sentence containing grammatical errors, asking questions, and making suggestions.

Transcendence is regarded as the ultimate goal of MLE and to achieve this, intentionality and reciprocity, and mediation of meaning as discussed must be promoted and strengthened. That is, true development requires the development of conceptual understanding, which will help a child move beyond the demands of the tasks they are dealing with to the same kinds of tasks under different conditions; in other words, transcendence occurs when the child can recontextualise their abilities when facing new problems. Transcendence is a way of stimulating the child's cognitive development that will move him/her beyond the current level. Intentionality and reciprocity, and mediation of meaning help learners transcend or go further in that they can eventually overcome barriers and difficulties or even successfully complete the task.

With reference to teaching and learning based on Vygotsky's concepts of ZPD and mediation and Feuerstein's MLE, it would be worthwhile if mediation through interactions can be integrated into teaching, but the emphasis should be placed on developing learners' potentials rather than on merely completing assigned tasks, activities or exercises. The advantages of mediation in helping learners overcome linguistic difficulties and improve their understanding of language and business concepts have particularly influenced my decision to integrate mediation in my EFL context, which is yet largely unacquainted with the practice of mediation. The three components of intentionality and reciprocity, mediation of meaning, and transcendence provide useful guidelines. Crucially, because mediation can serve different purposes including tackling mistakes for in-depth understanding of those

forms or structures, there is a risk that mediation could be mistaken for corrective feedback. The next section offers clarification on the distinction between the two practices.

2.2.2 Distinction between mediation and corrective feedback

The distinction between corrective feedback and mediation can be found in their definitions, underlying theoretical concepts, purposes, and practices. In a general sense, Hattie and Timperley (2007) define 'feedback' as information on a person's performance or understanding that is given by an agent such as a teacher, peer and parent. In terms of the nature of feedback about a particular task, Hattie and Timperley (2007) relate it to how well a task is being performed and state that 'corrective feedback' is concerned with the degree of correctness, neatness, behavior, or specified criteria regarding task achievement. Chaudron (1977, cited in Panova and Lyster, 2002) defines corrective feedback as 'any reactions of the teacher which clearly transforms, disapprovingly refers to, or demands improvement of the learner utterance'.

From the definitions above, it can be concluded that feedback, in the form of information or reactions, is given with regard to learners' performance or utterance, most likely after they have performed or completed some assigned tasks or after speech production. On the other hand, mediation can be in any form of assistance, including information (e.g. suggestions, prompts, leading questions) and reactions (e.g. gestures, voice, facial expressions). Mediation is provided through interactions only in response to problems or mistakes that arise while learners are performing a task and engages both the teacher and learner(s) in interactions (see Feuerstein's MLE attributes, 2.2.1, p. 50).

As for the purposes of the two practices, Lantolf and Poehner (2011) note that the purpose of promoting development makes mediation distinctive from corrective feedback. In corrective feedback, the purpose is mostly error correction or treatment whereas mediation starts from the teacher and learners collaboratively identifying difficulties or problems and then the teacher providing, for instance, prompts and suggestions to help learners solve the difficulties. This means learners are working within their ZPD, according to Vygotsky's concepts of ZPD (see 2.2.1, p. 50), and mediation given by the teacher is used as a tool to help them cope with difficulties and to develop their ability in this sense. Furthermore, the purposes of mediation look beyond merely correcting errors or mistakes; it can involve improving learners' understanding of concepts. In relation to this study, it may entail guiding learners in their presentation planning or writing scripts. Also, as stated by Poehner (2008), mediation does not aim solely at task completion, even though that might be the outcome, but at creating understanding and promoting learner development. Lantolf and Poehner (2011) note that if the product (i.e. a correct response, as in the case of error correction) rather than the process of learning is aimed at then explicit feedback is helpful. Lantolf and Poehner (2011) further stress the importance of facilitating the process of learning over the product for development to occur explaining that development takes place from other-regulation to self-regulation wherein learners are able to control their own performance. Explicit feedback given to all learners, who tend to be at different levels of proficiency, cannot be specific to the extent to which each learner can regulate his/her performance. In case of mediation, which is given to either an individual or a group keeping in mind that student or the group's ZPD, the co-regulation happens during interactions when learner(s) responds to the

teacher's mediation. The mediation will need to be fine-tuned in subsequent turns, if necessary, depending upon learner responses.

With regard to practices and procedures, researchers report different types of corrective feedback, and studies report a tendency that more than one type of feedback may be used in any lesson. As reported in Lyster and Ranta's (1997) study on corrective feedback and learner uptake (i.e. responses to feedback), it was found that four teachers in immersion classrooms at the primary level used recasts more frequently (55% of total teachers' responses that contained feedback) than elicitation, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback, explicit correction and repetition. Recasts happened when the teacher reformulated all or part of a student's utterance, while elicitation was performed by eliciting completion of an utterance and clarification request by indicating an ill-formed utterance and asking students to repeat or reformulate it. Metalinguistic feedback included comments indicating there was an error, information through providing grammatical metalanguage referring to the nature of errors or a word definition, or questions drawing learner attention to the nature of errors but at the same time trying to elicit the information from the student. Explicit correction involved the teacher providing correct forms while in repetition the teacher repeated erroneous utterance by adjusting their intonation (Lyster and Ranta, 1997).

With regard to mediation, various forms such as hints, prompts, leading questions, and so on, can be adopted during mediation or interaction, but these forms are usually systematically graded from most implicit to most explicit. Unlike mediation, corrective feedback usually does not conceptualise levels of explicitness or require graded prompts. As noted by Poehner (2008), the move from implicit to explicit in

mediation allows the teacher to identify learners' current level or ZPD thereby enabling the offering of appropriate mediation forms. Forms that are too implicit for a given learner and his or her ZPD are of no use to this learner; equally, if mediation is overly explicit for a given learner's ZPD, it will not reveal this learner's actual level of ability. The next section offers more details on how mediation can be conducted.

2.2.3 Conduct of mediation in different DA approaches

The provision of mediation can be organised in different forms and formats, depending on the practices of DA approaches, namely the interventionist and interactionist DA approaches and group dynamic assessment. In the interventionist DA approach, which is often referred to as standardised, quantifiable interventions that follow a sequence of pre-test/intervention/post-test format, the mediation offered is based on a pre-designed inventory in which all forms of mediation such as prompts and leading questions are graded according to their degree of explicitness, each of which is assigned a numerical value. To establish standardisation, the forms of mediation must be provided in hierarchical orders, so that the given forms can be calculated into an overall score to represent learner performance, including the amount and kind of assistance required in order to achieve the set skills or knowledge (Lantolf and Poehner, 2007).

On the other hand, the interactionist approach, which is considered less standardised, prioritises the learners' development rather than the measurement of their performance. In this approach, the provision of mediation is more flexible but is still required to adhere to the graded level of explicitness. It takes the learners' needs into account by providing mediation in response to the learners' difficulties. Although

the forms of mediation to be given need to range from the most implicit to the most explicit as in the interventionist approach, the interactionist approach emphasises forms of mediation that are effective for improving performance and enhancing development. Thus, they are not pre-determined and do not need to adhere to a pre-determined inventory, but they can emerge from cooperative dialogue between the teacher (as the mediator) and the learner (Lantolf and Poehner, 2007). Lantolf and Poehner further point out that since learners are likely to have different ZPDs, the amount and forms of mediation should be varied from one to the other. In other words, the mediation that is effective for one learner may not be appropriate for another, and this appropriateness can only be determined through cooperative dialogue. If the learners are still not aware of errors and keep producing the same errors, this might be because ineffective forms of mediation are being used, so new forms of mediation should be considered.

The flexible nature of the interactionist approach would be more suitable to my teaching context. Providing mediation based on difficulties learners are facing instead of following prescribed mediating inventory should be suitable for students who may be at various proficiency levels, as are the participants of this study. As my participants lack prior knowledge in business-related content and business presentations, it is difficult to predict the kinds of assistance they will need; hence, with the flexibility of the interactionist approach, various kinds of help and support can be incorporated in the mediation. Mediation is not limited to linguistic difficulties but can also encompass assistance with, for example, ineffective planning of presentation scripts and poorly structured scripts. Any forms of mediation ranging

from implicit to increasingly explicit will be considered and developed as a guided inventory, which can be adjusted to suit learner needs.

In the interactionist and interventionist DA approaches, mediation tends to be given to individual learners or test-takers, which does not correspond to realistic classroom situations where students tend to be assigned to work in groups or a class as a whole. Mediation for such scenarios can be based on group dynamic assessment principles (G-DA) as proposed by Poehner (2008). Thus, the mediation is group-based involving all group members or all students in the class, or at least drawing everyone's attention to mediation. The fundamental concepts and procedures of G-DA are the same as other DA approaches, except that it engages the group in an activity requiring support from other members. In order to develop all members' ZPD, the teacher must engage everyone in interactions and make sure that they all gain benefits from the mediation, although a particular learner may be called to answer a question or interact with the mediator. Because of learner differences, varying forms of mediation e.g. prompts, hints and suggestions are needed but attention should be given to all learners. Tracking an individual's ZPD is possible and can be done within the group ZPD by considering his/her responsiveness in group interactions. This does not mean that everyone needs to respond to the questions or mediation provided by the teacher as a chorus, but one learner can directly interact with the teacher while the others may join in, help to solve a problem or at least pay attention to what has been discussed. In case the teacher is interacting with and providing mediation to one learner, both of them have roles as primary interactants, while the other learners who observe the interaction are secondary interactants. While engaging or observing their peers in interactions, all

members work together and share a sense of group responsibility and most importantly learn from each other. The group-based provision of mediation seems to fit well with the Thai contextual factors, particularly with low-level groups. During group mediation, shy and weak students with the presence of their friends and the latter's encouragement may express themselves more, and the group treatment may avoid an individual losing face as well. With a normal class size of around 25-30 students, I consider group mediation, specifically small group mediation, easier to implement, not least for reasons of classroom management. However, as pointed out by Lantolf and Poehner (2007), and Poehner (2008), individuals may need different forms of mediation, and thus interaction or mediation tailored to an individual may be required. This study will therefore attempt to draw on both individual and group mediation and development.

To sum up, the implementation of mediation will follow the principles and practices of the interactionist DA approach and G-DA but not the interventionist approach. This means the pre-determined graded forms of mediation that can be quantifiable will not be required, and the provision of mediation can be extended to individual learners, small groups, and the whole class. One approach and/or particular forms of mediation may be more focused than the other, depending on the learners' needs, types of difficulties, learning activities and situations in the classroom. Considering the subject matter of the course, i.e. basic business presentations, learners are assigned to work in groups in all sessions to develop presentation content. Hence, it is likely that mediation is needed for the groups to improve and polish what they have written. During pre-tasks and post-tasks, the attention of the whole class might be drawn to serious mistakes or misunderstanding, and thus interactions and

mediation might involve discussing concepts and specific language elements that may include everyone in interactions. As subsequent learning tasks develop from previous ones, the development of the groups can be observed from an improvement in their presentation skills and content. It is difficult to anticipate the kinds of problems or difficulties learners may have and the forms of mediation which are necessary. Therefore, the time of the mediation and types of mediation required depend largely on learners' needs. However, it is certain that implicit to explicit forms of mediation will be given, and a mediation inventory will be pre-planned and used as a guide. In addition, I will also bear in mind Lantolf and Poehner's (2011) suggestion that in order to promote development the mediation must be contingent. That is, it should be offered when learners are faced with difficulties and then withdrawn as soon as there are signs of independence in the work of the learners. In order to inform the development of a mediation guide for my study, I have reviewed relevant DA studies, in which mediation was offered.

2.2.4 DA studies in second and foreign language learning to guide mediation practice in this study

This section focuses on procedures and forms of mediation adopted in previous DA studies that were conducted in L2 and foreign language teaching settings. Prominent DA research relevant to this study includes the work by Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994), Anton (2009), Davin (2011) and Ableeva and Lantolf (2011). Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) investigated the effects of negative feedback on second language learning. Although their work focused on the development of the learners' ZPD, not DA, the procedures they used during tutoring sessions were similar to DA processes. During the one-to-one tutoring sessions, the learner and the tutor (as the mediator)

discussed grammatical problems found in the pre-written essays. The learner received corrective feedback during tutorials in the tutor's office. The tutor read the essay before each tutorial but did not pre-plan a set of corrective procedures, and so made an online decision on the forms of feedback during the negotiation with the learner. The processes involved:

1) asking the learner to identify the mistakes by herself/himself
2) (the tutor) directing the learner's attention to a sentence containing an error such as 'Do you notice any problem?' or 'is there anything wrong in this sentence?'
3) (If the learner is still unaware) pointing out a line or phrase containing an error, by saying 'Is there anything wrong in this line or segment?'
4) (If this does not work), giving further explicit prompts until the problem is solved.

From an analysis of interactions during the tutoring sessions, Aljaafreh and Lantolf (1994) identified levels of help or regulation known as the regulatory scale (see Appendix B), consisting of 12 levels ranked from implicit to explicit help for error correction. I will adapt this regulatory scale to be used in this study, as presented in the final section of the literature review.

Anton (2009) employed the interactionist DA approach following Feuerstein's DA model to assess learners' abilities in a Spanish language learning program. The progress of third-year university level Spanish major learners was assessed through a five-part diagnostic test. DA procedures assessing learners' writing and speaking abilities were adopted, and the mediation phase was organised immediately after the writing and speaking tests. In the writing session, during the mediation stage, the

teacher provided suggestions and prompts in which learners were encouraged to consult dictionaries and grammar books to revise their writing. The speaking test was conducted in the form of an oral interview including a narrative task. From the two examples of the narrative task produced by two learners, the results revealed that while the first learner could produce narration in the past with only a few mistakes in using the present form, the second learner had less control over tense and vocabulary. It is obvious that these two learners were at different levels and needed to receive different forms of mediation for diagnosis purposes.

The mediation given to the learner with greater difficulties was more specific and direct. For example, the teacher sometimes referred back to what he/she had just requested the learner to do, suggested the appropriate verbal tense, and gave choices. In contrast, the mediation with the more fluent speaker did not involve a lot of error correction but rather guided the speaker as to what to say next, pointing out the problem and encouraging a second attempt, and offering to ask if he/she could remember some words. It can be concluded from Anton's study that for learners who lack control of language forms and vocabulary, the mediator should ask detailed questions and explain the mistakes in order to move them in a step-by- step direction, whereas providing general questions and encouragement to the more advanced learners could help move them along further.

Davin (2011) conducted G-DA for the teaching of WH-interrogatives (i.e. what, where, when) to elementary Spanish foreign language learners. The development of nine students was tracked while they were participating in both large and small group work activities during a ten-day DA programme in which mediation was provided within their ZPD. It was concluded that small group work complemented

large group DA in that it offered opportunities for request of mediation, verbalisation of thoughts and provided mediation to peers. Stages of giving mediation in Davin (ibid) involved identifying grammatically inaccurate interrogative forms of questions, providing prompts, and helping to re-formulate correct questions. Standardised mediation prompts were used, ranking from implicit to explicit as in this sequence: 1) pause with sceptical look, 2) repetition of entire phrase by teacher, 3) repetition of specific site of error, 4) forced choices, and 5) correct response and explanation provided. This study offers practical ideas on how DA can be integrated in everyday classroom learning and teaching in which it well supports group work activities. I think the first three prompts are helpful in signalling that some errors have occurred and learners need to check structures and vocabulary carefully. If the learners still cannot identify these errors, I may also use rising intonation as in interrogatives while reading inaccurate words or forms. Another interesting aspect of this study is the potential for peer support or mediation during group work. This will lead to the sharing of ideas on language and the correction of one another's mistakes. The teacher may intervene by confirming if the language they have discussed is correct or providing prompts and suggestions, if needed.

Ableeva and Lantolf (2011) used the mediated dialogue to diagnose listening comprehension of the L2 learners of French. As a result of mediation, the microgenetic analysis revealed an improvement in the learners' abilities measured for an increase in the number of ideas, and it was seen that they could also transfer their abilities to more complex texts. In particular, their investigation included the forms of mediation that could best nurture the development of listening abilities. Listening assessments were in the format of pre-test – enrichment program (EP) –

post-test. The EP sessions were arranged in groups, and involved tutoring and collaborative interactions between the learners and mediator in problematic areas such as phonology, grammar, vocabulary, and cultural knowledge. Ableeva and Lantolf concluded that mediation and enrichment that were sensitive to the learners' ZPD helped to identify and diagnose specific problem areas in which the learners could overcome those problems. From one excerpt showing how the mediation is given, the mediator gives implicit to explicit forms of mediation, even uses a gesture and explains about French culture in the learner's first language (English) for clarification in the final stage. I think offering two choices and using gestures may be helpful in case the learners still repeat the same errors after a few attempts. Offering two possible options allows learners more time to focus and think about those two structures or words. However, this should be done after all hints or prompts have been given, and it will be useful if the learners can give reasons why they chose one form or word over another. Verbalisation helps the teacher check on what learners have or have not understood. Also, giving explanation in the first language on abstract concepts (like French culture in Ableeva & Lantolf's study) can deepen learners' understandings on the issues relating to the use of language.

From the above DA studies, it can be seen that the forms of mediation given follow a sequence of implicit forms, and then gradually increase in explicitness to the most explicit forms, and finally correct answers and explanation are provided, if necessary. The forms of mediation that are frequently used in the studies include prompts, leading questions, and suggestions. The use of leading questions generally starts from general to specific in which the mediator attempts to relate the learners' ideas from one area to another, as in the research conducted by Anton (2009),

wherein an example of interaction unfolds thus: *'What do you think she is going to do after shopping?'* and then when the learner fails to respond, the teacher asked a more specific question *'Where do you think she could go?'*. In addition to prompts and leading questions, I would also consider using forced choices as in Davin (2011). For learners with limited English proficiency, offering forced choices and asking them to explain reasons will focus their attention on those specific choices. This helps the teacher evaluate their understanding of the two options. Verbalising their ideas and reasons as to why they chose a specific choice over another indicates the levels of their understanding so that the teacher can decide if further mediation is needed. Poehner (2008) notes that verbalisation provides the teacher with insights into causes of poor performance, and since learners talk the teacher and themselves through what they have understood, this might also lead to self-mediation.

In this study as I will be taking both roles as the teacher and mediator without prior experience of conducting mediation, I believe that having a working mediation inventory will help me with classroom management. I would also consider using Aljaafreh and Lantolf's (1994) regulatory scales and forced choices and verbalisation technique adopted in some DA studies as a basis for creating my mediation inventory. Since the regulatory scales (see Appendix B) were developed for an improvement of writing and thus focused on error correction of the written work, I selected only levels 3, 6, 9, 11 to be included in the inventory to allow flexibility in giving mediation. As mentioned, forced choices followed by verbalisation have also been included in the third stage of my inventory. Below is the mediation inventory that will be used in this study.

1	The mediator encourages the learner(s) to firstly identify the problem. (if no response) The mediator indicates specific problematic area or segment e.g. *'Is there anything wrong in this sentence?' or repetition of incorrect word or sentence.*
2	The mediator indicates the nature of the problem. e.g. *'There is something wrong with the tense making here'.*
3	The mediator offers choices and asks learners to verbalise their ideas/reasons.
4	The mediator explains concepts or possible actions to tackle the problem to guide them to arrive at answer(s) or solutions themselves.
5	The mediator explains correct answer(s) or solution(s).

Table 6 Mediation inventory (adapted from Aljaafreh and Lantolf's, 1994)

This mediation inventory will be trialled and refined during the pilot study. Thus, these levels of mediation will be kept flexible so that they can be adjusted or other forms of mediation could be added.

2.2.5 Interpreting learners' difficulties and understanding

Similar pathways to interpret learner development as in DA are considered, but since this study emphasises mediation practice, not DA, the interpretation of the outcome focuses on learner difficulties and their levels of understanding. Poehner (2008:167) suggests considering four components. The first relates to the source of problems, for example, the learners' ability to appropriately orient to task and devise a plan and learner difficulties while performing the task, and in case the outcome is unsuccessful, the ability to revise the previous plan. The second component relates to collaboration between the teacher and learners to solve problems, and this collaboration concerns how explicitly the forms of mediation are provided. The third

element entails learner reciprocity, such as the extent to which they take responsibility for completing the task, whether they ask for assistance if necessary, and how they react to mediation. The final component of transcendence deals with how successfully they can apply their abilities when encountering new problems. Poehner concludes that all of these components are functioning as one system, and when learners attempt to recontextualise their abilities, this will help them to 'transcend' or progress further.

Based on Gal'perin (1967, cited in Pohener 2008), performance cannot be simply measured by what learners have done during the task, but how they have handled the tasks. This concept relates to a model of human action proposed by Gal'perin (1967), Vygotsky's student, which comprises three stages: orientation, execution and control. The orientation stage involves learners analysing the task demands, planning and devising a plan, as well as considering necessary resources for successful task completion. Execution refers to the execution of a plan, that is, learners may have a plan but cannot execute it without the mediator's support and may need other resources e.g. diagrams, maps and charts to help with execution. Control refers to learners' ability to evaluate the appropriateness of their actions and to make necessary revisions (Poehner, 2008:163). Thus, successfully completing the tasks does not mean learners have full control over linguistic forms, particularly when they cannot reapply the form they solve in one task in subsequent tasks.

With regard to task-based teaching, which is implemented in this study for the teaching of business presentations, the orientation stage refers to how learners approach an assigned task. After pre-task, the task situation and instruction worksheet is given to each group, but, at an early stage of development, the learners

may not understand the task requirements or then be able to plan a presentation on their own. Mediation thus may involve asking learners to verbalise their ideas and plan and the linguistic elements they plan to use. The analysis of learner difficulties and understanding developed in the orientation stage might focus on whether or not learners have a good understanding of task requirements that will help them to proceed to script planning and writing.

In task-based lessons, the execution of the task refers to three steps of the task cycle wherein learners need to perform the task, plan and then report outcomes to the whole class. It is highly likely that mediation is needed to solve difficulties during drafting, writing scripts and giving presentation. It is worthwhile to analyse areas of difficulties, forms and levels of explicitness of mediation provided, and whether or not problems can be successfully solved and learners can complete tasks successfully. The examination of learners' ability to exercise control over linguistic forms, which is the final stage of the Gal'perin' model of human action (1967, cited in Poehner, 2008), would need a thorough analysis of interactions. For example, a group with higher-level learners is likely to need less assistance than a group with learners in the earlier stages of development, as the former would have better control over language. This high-level analysis may not be accomplished in this study due to the emphasis placed on mediation procedures rather than on DA, which would require extensive analysis of learners' control of specific linguistic elements.

In brief, it is anticipated that areas of difficulties and learner understanding can be identified through mediation and verbalisation during the course of this inquiry. After receiving mediation, learners who face difficulties should be able to express their thoughts and ideas and explain their plans and reasons for their choice of

language or ultimately as well as self-correct or develop a reasonable level of understanding to continue performing tasks. Simply put, verbalisation indicates levels of understanding, and this allows the teacher to evaluate whether or not further mediation is required. In addition, the analysis of mediation and learners' verbalisation as reflected during class mediation provides opportunities for the teacher to evaluate designed tasks and teaching. This will be discussed further in the methodology section.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This inquiry, which was motivated by two main reasons, aimed to examine the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation procedures (see Introduction). The first reason concerned the importance of enhancing Thai learners' job-related, English communication skills, and the second reason stemmed from my interest in trying out TBLT because research indicates that it can improve communication skills significantly (e.g. Ellis, 2003; Willis, 1996). Another element, mediation was introduced in the inquiry with the aim of promoting understanding of business concepts and relevant language (Poehner, 2008). To investigate the feasibility of these approaches, which are largely new to the Thai context, four research questions were set to guide this study:

1. Are the designed tasks appropriate for the teaching of basic business presentations in a Thai university context?
2. To what extent is the implementation of TBLT perceived by relevant parties to be effective for the teaching of business presentations?
3. What evidence is there, if any, that mediation procedures can be successfully integrated into TBLT for the teaching of business presentations?
4. What suggestions, if any, do learners and teacher-observers have for the improvement of tasks, TBLT and mediation practices?

To answer these research questions, a number of data collection methods and analyses were adopted. This chapter covers fundamental concepts of case study research and mixed methods data collection in the first section, and then gives further details on qualitative data collection techniques comprising interviews, class

observation, writing research journals, and recording class interactions. The use of pre- and post- intervention questionnaires to survey learners' attitudes and opinions is also presented, followed by a brief summary of a pilot study and the main study, which is succeeded by discussion of data analysis methods in the final section.

3.1 Research design: case studies and mixed methods

One of the great benefits of adopting mixed methods in this case study is a chance to collect data from several sources later consolidated for analysis, interpretation and conclusions. As suggested by Richards (2010), good case studies should draw on multiple data sources that are unlikely to be collected from one instrument or source, or to employ only quantitative or qualitative methods as each method may provide answers for a particular research question but not for other questions. This section begins with an overview of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation, and then moves onto a discussion of the rationale for conducting a case study employing mixed methods data collection.

3.1.1 Overview of the investigation of 'effectiveness' of TBLT and mediation and research design

The investigation of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation for the teaching of basic business presentations in this study was carried out by conducting an evaluative multiple-case study, in order to collect in-depth views of learners, observers and the teacher/researcher (i.e. myself) regarding task implementation, TBLT and mediation. It was believed that critical comments received from participants would provide strong evidence enabling an evaluation of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation. The conclusion was therefore based on the

stakeholders' evaluation and judgement, i.e. their perceptions and opinions and did not involve direct measures of teaching performance or learning achievement, as in other cases using pre-/post- tests. Within the context of this inquiry, it would be more accurate to define effectiveness as 'the perceived effectiveness' – in other words, as that which is based on the perceptions of the participants.

The evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching has long been discussed, but there is still no consensus regarding definitions and characteristics of effective teaching. Paulsen (2002) notes that standards regarding the components of effective teaching depend on the context of individual departments, within which faculty members should mutually agree on what constitutes those components. However, most researchers (e.g. Johnson and Ryan, 2000; Paulsen, 2002; Douglas and Douglas, 2006) agree that involving multiple stakeholders in the evaluation process requiring multiple evaluations through both quantitative and qualitative methods yield rich evaluative data. The use of common sources like student ratings/questionnaires enables the quantification of their learning experiences and perspectives on the course (Johnson and Ryan, 2000), while the more in-depth qualitative data can be obtained from several sources such as classroom observations, the teacher's self-evaluation through teacher logs or journals, focus groups, interviews and the peer review of the teaching portfolios.

Johnson and Ryan (2000) stress upon the importance of peer review as it enables the assessment of instructor knowledge and of the instruction implemented, and offers an opportunity for the teacher to gain fresh insights and to learn from the expertise of other instructors. Cashin (1989, cited in Paulsen, 2002) suggests that the use of peer review is suitable for enabling an evaluation of the assessment and delivery of

instruction, mastery of subject matter, curriculum development and course design. Amongst these areas, the first three elements require peer expertise and experience in accurate judgment, in order to achieve the reliability and validity of ratings. Evaluations of the last two elements, perceptions and assessment of the instruction, can be gathered from both peers and learners. In this inquiry, peer review was conducted through class observations, which were paralleled by interviews with observers and learners after task implementation to evaluate the quality of the teaching. The use of classroom observation was emphasised by inviting four peers who were senior teachers to observe lessons. The designed tasks, lesson plans and teaching materials including guidelines for class observations were provided to observers before the class. In order to obtain suggestions and information about their overall perception of the teaching, follow-up interviews of the four observers were carried out. As noted by Johnson and Ryan (2000), interviewing the more experienced instructors enabled the evaluation of my knowledge of the subject, teaching performance, and importantly their perspectives on the TBLT and mediation approaches. Although these instructors had not previously engaged with these approaches, their perspectives based on extensive experience in the teaching profession, spanning at least 20 years, provided me with insightful comments. This study also employed the quantitative evaluation of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation using pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, wherein all learner perceptions and opinions were compared. The questionnaire results were triangulated with the post-intervention, in-depth interviews of learners. Furthermore, the other two methods for the evaluation of the effectiveness of teaching included MP3/VDO recordings of the lessons and the teacher's reflections on teaching in a personal,

research journal. From the recordings, learners' participation in tasks and responses during mediation was analysed.

With regard to my self-evaluation of my own teaching reflected in my research journal, being both the teacher who delivered lessons and the researcher who conducted the research allowed me to keep records and reflect on accomplishments and problematic issues that emerged during lessons, as well as challenges, decisions and changes that had been made during teaching and researching processes. However, as noted by Centra (1993), there could be issues about the validity and objectivity of self-evaluation. To avoid criticisms, my self-evaluated data was not exploited as the sole evidence for the judgment of effectiveness, but as an additional source of data providing supporting evidence to the principal data gathered from observers and learners for better overall interpretation of the effectiveness and ineffectiveness of tasks and teaching.

In terms of research design, my intense involvement in teaching and research would make this study a form of practitioner research were it not for the multiple-case study explained in the next section and three other important aspects. Firstly, results and implications of this study aimed to improve methods of teaching that could be applicable to all similar contexts, not only my own classroom teaching. In other words, results of this study did not directly feed into my own teaching where specific ongoing and/or unresolved classroom problems were identified as a starting point for investigation, as it is often the case of practitioner research (Elton-Chalcraft et al, 2008; Murray and Lawrence, 2000). Secondly, because it was not necessary to respond to my own teaching, it was more practical to involve observers who were third parties in the evaluation process. Regarding me as a researcher, not their fellow

teacher, would mean that the teachers would feel far less inhibited in making critical comments on my implementation of TBLT, thus improving the evaluative potential of the study. Most importantly, strong persuasion might have been needed to persuade teachers in training about TBLT and mediation, and this also inevitably would have required a great deal of time and arrangements. Teachers' familiarity with traditional approaches, unfamiliarity with TBLT and mediation, and busy schedules would make the persuasion difficult and possibly result in compromising the research. In this case, there would be risks not only adjusting research design, but also extending my fieldwork. In addition, involving other practitioners would have involved some change in the curriculum, which would have been very difficult to persuade senior management to approve. Based on these reasons, I considered that framing this study as practitioner research would not be the most productive option.

3.1.2 Features, design and procedures of the case study in this study

This study adopted a multiple-case study design, the justification for which will be explained in this section. According to Richards (2010), most case study researchers decide to carry out case studies for two main reasons embodied either in their interest in the case (i.e. a particular case or a problematic issue) or their interest in a particular issue or phenomenon. In the former, the rationale for selecting a specific issue for investigation needs to be explained, while in the latter potential contributions are discussed in support of the rationale for the case selection. While the former may help to come up with solutions and suggestions and ways to improve something, the latter may bring about understanding of how something develops and what its causes and effects. My interest in TBLT and mediation and the ambition to

improve my teaching form the basis for the rationale of this study. Hence, this study aimed to examine the effectiveness of these two approaches.

Most theorists and researchers define and describe characteristics and procedures of case studies in the same ways, although different terms may be used. That is, case studies are perceived as bounded, contextualised, studied in their natural context, and likely to draw on multiple data sources (Yin, 2009; Duff, 2008; Richards, 2003; Merriam, 1998). The case is not a stand-alone separate unit, but is a bounded system. It can be a defined individual or entity such as a learner, a group of teachers, a program or a school (Merriam, 1998). If the case is a learner, the researcher must specify who the learner is, which class and school the learner belongs to and why the study focuses on this learner. This concept is consistent with the perspective offered by Richards (2010: 208). He concludes that 'a case study must involve a focus on a unit or units' and this unit, including the bigger category it belongs to, must be specified. For example, a study of a class of learners should include the nature of the class itself, and the class in the wider context of the whole program or school. Richards (2010) also points out that the size of the case is not an issue, but careful consideration is needed for the methodology. If a case study involves several stages to gain a large amount of data from a number of participants, this will require a lot of arrangements for data collection, data analysis, and interpretation. Secondly, any case study is context-specific, so two features of context need to be considered, what Richards calls the situated context and the axial context. The situated context refers to the context the case is located or takes place in, which can be described in terms of its geographic, social, political and cultural aspects. The axial context is to what extent the case may reveal the feature of other cases of the same kind, but this cannot

be generalised to other cases. Thus, discussing the representativeness of the case is inappropriate; instead the researcher should justify their selection of the case in terms of the purposes of their study. The next feature of the case study is that it must be studied in a natural context where it is situated or occurs. This raises awareness of ethical issues, especially with regard to the rights of participants, which are extremely important. The use of pseudonyms is an option. Finally, the data of the case studies should be gathered from multiple sources to gain rich in-depth information, so using mixed methods for data collection and analysis are increasingly preferable in case study research (Richards, 2010).

Yin (2009) claims that single and multiple-case designs can be distinguished by their advantages and disadvantages rather than their methods. He further argues that cases are often selected based upon the researcher's understanding of literal and theoretical replications of the cases' exemplary outcomes. These outcomes relate to the evaluation questions, particularly 'how' and 'why'. Furthermore, prior hypothesis of different types of conditions and a desire to cover more than one distinctive type of theoretical replications can also lead to multi-case designs.

It is generally believed that conducting a multiple-case study will provide strong evidence as multiple perspectives can be gathered. However, it requires more resources and time. To conduct case study research, a decision on the number of units of analysis is also important. This is because a single-case study may involve a single unit of analysis (holistic) or more than one unit of analysis (embedded). The unit of analysis can be for example, subject, participant, school, program etc. The multiple-case study can be both holistic (multiple cases) or embedded (multiple embedded cases and units of analysis).

Both single-case and multiple-case case study research are generally categorised into exploratory, descriptive, explanatory and evaluative (Yin, 2009; Merriam, 1998; Bassey, 1999). This study is consistent with an evaluative multiple-case study. The functions of each type are clear: to explore, describe, explain, and evaluate respectively. The explanatory and evaluative types seem to be similar, but the explanatory case studies are usually reported in terms of the causes and effects, whereas the evaluative case studies tend to offer evaluative or decisive information from various sources that are useful for decision-making, as noted by Stenhouse (1985, cited in Bassey, 1999: 28):

> *In evaluative case studies, a single case or a collection of cases is studied in depth with the purpose of providing educational actors or decision makers (administrators, teachers, parents, pupils, etc.) with information that will help them to judge the merit and worth of policies, programmes, or institutions.*

To offer such evaluative information, the evaluative case study usually includes the researcher's judgment about the case or phenomenon (Stenhouse, 1993; Merriam, 1998). In my view, this can be both useful and dangerous. The researcher's judgement based on careful thoughts gained from direct experience of fieldwork certainly makes the research useful, but it must be carefully interpreted without researcher bias. This relates to interpretation of the data in which data triangulation is vital.

With regard to this study, an evaluative multiple-case study was carried out to examine the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation approaches. Since it related to classroom teaching and learning, two classes of learners (20-25 students per class)

were selected as cases. The classes were a primary source of data participating in most research processes from attending lessons to evaluating the effectiveness of teaching. As pointed out by Richards (2010), the case should be studied in relation to its bigger category, and thus this study focused on these groups of learners within the contexts of an overall English teaching program and university setting. However, even though both were within a similar institutional context, the two groups were treated as separate cases because of variations in learning contexts, e.g. their degree course, relationship, class atmosphere, learning behaviour and so forth. It was likely that more factors influenced their cooperation and engagement in tasks during the intervention, and this was the main reason for the separation of the two cases. During implementation of TBLT, all students were treated equally in all activities including mediation, and their engagement and responses, perceptions and opinions were collected and analysed in order to obtain holistic views and opinions.

Conducting an evaluative multiple-case study was selected as the most feasible option for three main reasons. First, with proper design and conduct, the study offered an overall picture of the two cases. That is, several aspects, such as the learners' attitudes, the designed tasks, classroom teaching and interactions, as well as the learners' engagements in tasks and their responses to the mediation, could be studied and consolidated. This study collated perspectives from the learners, the teacher/researcher, and four teacher-observers, as well as an analysis of recorded class interactions for an evaluation of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation. Compared with other research methods, such as using only questionnaires, this offered the possibility of probing deeper into the perspectives of several teachers and learners.

Secondly, the conduct of the case study offered various alternatives for data collection and analysis. Since learning and teaching is complex in its nature, the investigation of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation could not be carried out in a simple one-step process. Rather, it required proper and different procedures to capture changes and ongoing progress of the learners. The data obtained was crucial evidence for the validation of the claims, for providing an explanation as to whether TBLT and mediation were effective approaches in this context, and also for why some aspects worked while others did not.

Finally, conducting this multiple-case study during instruction allowed me to detect emerging issues relating to TBLT and mediation. As suggested by Richards (2010:212), 'when developing the study [one should] be prepared if necessary to extend the boundaries of the case for the sake of explanatory breadth'. This implies that the research plan and boundaries can always be adjusted during planning and designing, if it is too narrow or wide in scope or uses unsuitable methods. Richards further states that adjustments during the fieldwork are also possible if new issues emerge such as from observations or interview data. Drawing on Richards' suggestions, I developed a research plan that allowed for adjustments.

However, a crucial point raised by Richards (2010:214) is that a good case study is not judged by the completeness of data obtained, but the representation of the object of study, in which he states that 'case study representation is the product of a number of different processes brought together to create the sense of a unified whole'. This implies not all aspects of data have to be collected but rather a certain amount of details for adequate representation. Thus, it is unnecessary (in fact, impossible) to cover all features of the case, but some part of the case that represents the whole,

which is defined as ‘interpretive synecdoche’ (Richards, 2010). Richards suggests that instead of selecting a representative sample for the purpose of generalisation, the researcher should consider ‘strategic selection’ of a case to generate an ‘illustrative outcome’. Hence, this study focused on how the tasks were delivered, how the learners responded to the tasks and mediation, and whether the mediation helped to improve their understanding and linguistic abilities. These could be evaluated from their feedback and engagement in tasks and interactions, and feedback from the four observers as well as my reflections. Careful examination of these focused areas, although not exhaustive, would offer adequate snapshots and details of whether the implementation of TBLT and mediation were effective. The next section presents how mixed-methods were used for data collection in this study.

3.1.3 Mixed methods data collection

It may be noted that ‘mixed methods’ in this study refers to mixed methods of data collection used within the frame of this evaluative multiple-case study research. The term mixed methods can be defined as ‘the mixing of quantitative and qualitative procedures’ for data collection and analysis that are introduced into the case study research. Even though questionnaires were used to collect the quantitative data in this case study, procedures for the administration of the questionnaire results followed the same rules as in the quantitative research, but the analysis, interpretation and presentation of the findings were framed as case study research. Also, this study relied more on the qualitative procedures than on the quantitative ones, so it could be represented by the symbol ‘QUAL with quan’ based on Morse’s (1991, cited in Richards et al, 2011) definition. The first section offers brief details about the usefulness and main characteristics of mixed methods, followed by the

justification of the use of mixed methods in this study. The second section relates to how the mixed-methods data collection was carried out, looking specifically at types of data collected and research instruments.

There has been an ongoing growth of interest in mixing quantitative and qualitative methods. Most researchers identify the advantages of mixed methods as providing answers to both 'what' and 'why' (research) questions (Ivankova and Creswell, 2009). The mixed methods also offer an opportunity to explore the potential of different perspectives on the research process (Richards, 2011:7), and when the quantitative data collection is followed by qualitative data collection, they examine the surprising quantitative results in more detail, (the sequential explanatory strategy: Creswell, 2009:211). Mixed methods are sometimes seen as a triangulation procedure to validate data from different sources in order to reach a conclusion. Relating to this multiple-case study, data analysis and triangulation was one of the processes used to find out whether the participants had similar or different perspectives on the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation.

Features and procedures of this study matched the descriptions of mixed methods specified by Yin (2009), and Ivankova and Creswell (2009). Ivankova and Creswell (2009) note that mixed methods can be employed in case study and action research by using different tools for data collection such as observation, interview, questionnaire, and diaries. A similar suggestion is given by Yin (2009) who points out that a case study can encompass a survey; in his discussion, it refers to a type of interview consisting of structured interview questions. In this situation, sampling procedures, design, and analysis of the results undergo similar procedures as normal surveys, but the survey is linked to other sources of evidence. In other words, survey

results are regarded as one component of the overall data set. Based on the characteristics of the mixed methods and a plan of this multiple-case study, an overall picture of the study can be represented by Figure 1 below.

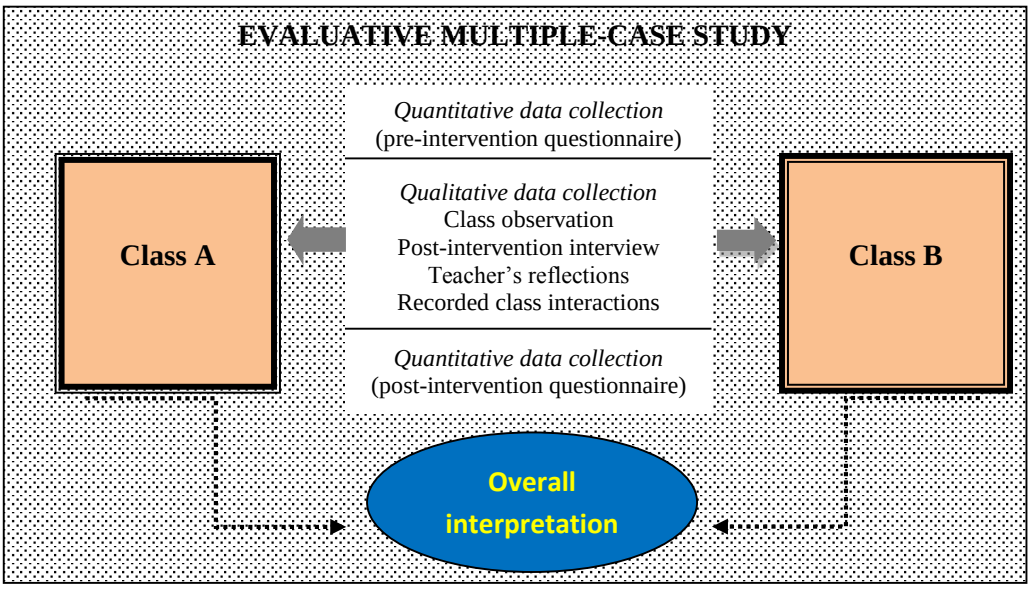


Figure 1 Plan for data collection

The decision to adopt mixed methods for data collection in this study was based on three main reasons. The first reason related to the use of pre-intervention questionnaire data as the baseline data for the implementation of TBLT and mediation, as student preferences for, for example, teaching methods and receiving feedback were examined. Secondly, the design and construction of the questionnaire was quite straightforward, and with systematic analysis as in statistical analysis, the former provided reliable results. This enables a survey of the attitudes and backgrounds of all the students in one step. In contrast, the qualitative procedures were more complex but generated more detailed results. Thus, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods offered both broad and in-depth perspectives, which were useful for an evaluation of TBLT and mediation. In this study, qualitative methods were used to guide the project, whereas questionnaire

served a secondary data set providing a supporting role, as discussed by Richards (2011) and Creswell (2009).

Another significant reason for choosing mixed methods concerned the focus of this research and research questions. Ivankova and Creswell (2009) suggest considering whether mixed methods are the best way to address the research problem. In other words, the researchers should ask themselves whether mixed methods provide the answers to the research questions. While quantitative methods can provide an overall picture of the entire population, qualitative methods can capture the voices of the participants. Both methods have strengths and weaknesses, but a combination of their strengths helps to answer questions that cannot be answered by relying solely on one or the other (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011).

Consideration of the research questions is crucial. The use of unsuitable data collection methods might result in inadequate details affecting the credibility of the research. There were four research questions in this study (see p. 70), each of which (particularly questions 2 and 3) required different types of data, from multiple sources for evidence and claims of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation practices. In order to answer these questions, quantitative methods were used to collect the feedback of the learners and then triangulated with qualitative results of the interviews, observations, recordings and the teacher's reflections.

Creswell (2009) suggests identifying data to be collected that must be specific in terms of what types of data need to be gathered – both quantitative and qualitative. There are further considerations such as in the case of interviews whether they should aim at open-ended or closed-ended responses. An interview with open questions is categorised as qualitative, whereas one with closed questions is

quantitative. These suggestions are useful for the development of research instruments. Based on the four research questions (see p.72), this research was designed to collect seven kinds of data as shown in Table 7.

Type of data	Method of data collect.	Research instrument	Phase of intervention	Answering res. quest..no.
1. Learners' attitudes and preferences for learning activities and teaching methods	Quantitative	Pre-intervention questionnaire	Before	1,2,3,4
2. Four teacher-observers' comments and feedback on the teaching	Qualitative	Observation forms with guided questions	During	1, 2, 4
3. Class interactions	Qualitative	Video/MP3 recordings	During	2, 3
4. The teacher/researcher's reflections	Qualitative	Teacher's journal	During	1, 2, 3,4
5. Learners' attitudes, perception and opinions of the designed tasks, TBLT, feedback (mediation), and suggestions for improvement	Quantitative	Post-intervention questionnaire	After	1, 2, 3,4
6. Four teacher-observers' feedback on the teaching overall and suggestions for improvement	Qualitative	Guided questions for the post-observation interviews	After	1, 2, 3, 4
7. Learners' perceptions, opinions of TBLT and mediation, and suggestions	Qualitative	Guided questions for in-depth interviews	After	1, 2, 3, 4

Table 7 Types of data and data collection methods

From Table 7, it can be seen that more qualitative data than quantitative data were collected. In terms of quantitative data, two questionnaires were used: the pre-intervention questionnaire and the post-intervention questionnaire. The qualitative data was gathered from observation of four teacher-observers, the researcher's journal, recorded class interactions, and observer and learner interviews.

3.2 Qualitative data collection

The following sections summarise the qualitative data collection instruments used in this inquiry. In particular, this case study used observations and interviews in a

related way, with interviews being developed from observation data. In other words, the follow-up interviews were conducted from the baseline data of the observations. This allowed more insight and understanding of the issues raised by the observers based on their classroom observations. The interviews were also conducted with selected learners based on their pre-/post-intervention questionnaire responses and classroom behaviours.

3.2.1 Observations

In this study, I did not take the role of the observer but of the teacher who taught the class, so I invited four colleagues to observe my lessons. The selection of these observers was based upon their attitudes towards teaching approaches, with two teachers who were open to new teaching approaches and two teachers who preferred grammar-based approaches. These selection criteria allowed comparisons of similar and different perspectives of the four observers as to the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation intervention. Observation was required in this study for very specific reasons that differed from those of other observational studies and required a qualitative approach.

Approaches to conducting classroom observation vary considerably. Before deciding upon the type of observation to be used in an inquiry, researchers must consider the purposes of observation and expected outcomes, such as whether they need quantifiable or interpretative results, and/or whether it will be formal or informal, large-scale or small-scale, and high or low inference. Observations can be conducted using quantitative and qualitative procedures. Quantitative observational techniques are usually in the form of category systems, checklists, rating scales, or charts that are used to record the learner and teacher classroom behaviour. Qualitative

procedures, on the other hand, rely on the judgement of the observers in that their comments are provided in descriptive and narrative descriptions.

In the 1960s and 1970s, systematic approaches based on rating scales and category systems were often used to record classroom behaviour and movements during fixed time intervals. These systematic approaches were suitable as most studies were conducted on a large-scale aiming to identify specific characteristics and often involved large numbers of raters. To use the rating scales, the observer has to rate and then circle a number from 1 to 5, whereas in the category system the observer needs to note down categories every time they occur. Each method requires a different degree of inference. Wragg (1999) distinguishes between the high and low inference measures. The former require subjective judgement, whereas the latter involve recording actions or features using pre-determined categories and/or codes, and often focuses on the frequency of occurrence of the observed behaviour. Thus, rating scales are considered as a low-inference observational system.

Many observations take place in informal and semi-formal settings, wherein fellow teachers observe one another's classes by sitting in one corner of the class and taking notes, but such observation can also be formal, where an appraiser makes notes, discusses and gives feedback to the teacher after the lesson. Wragg (1999) suggests that in order to gain an in-depth understanding and perception of an event, an interview can be conducted after the observation. If both the teacher and learners are interviewed, they will probably offer differing perceptions of the same events. Qualitative methods require the observers to make a (high inference) judgement on the event or topic of observation and if requested also an assessment of the teacher's competence. Wragg (1999) further suggests that the qualitative observers need to

bear in mind four considerations: the purpose of the observation (which should be made clear), the need to reflect on the nature of quality and effectiveness of teaching (which can be perceived in different ways), the different ways of discussing and enhancing quality, and the nature of lesson record.

In the context of this study, a qualitative observational method was more suitable for three main reasons. First, the purpose of observation was to gain an understanding of my teaching and the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation through the observer views, which would not have been possible using fixed scales or categories. Secondly, the observation in this study was considered to be small-scale, high-inference and semi-formal, which involved four observers assessing two groups of learners and myself and providing descriptive feedback. Therefore, comparison with other teachers was not required. Finally, qualitative approaches also allowed maximum flexibility for the observers to share their comments.

Nevertheless, a clear framework in terms of what to observe was needed. I therefore listed the content in categories in the forms of headings and sub-headings as in some quantitative instruments. As this study related to TBLT, I also developed categories in relation to TBLT and learners' engagement and responses in tasks. Therefore, the main headings listed on the observation form were, for instance, the observers' perceptions of designed tasks (e.g. levels of difficulty, time allocation, things that worked well and did not work, etc.), learner engagement in tasks and the classroom atmosphere (see Appendix F).

After receiving all observation notes, I selected specific areas or issues from the observer comments for further investigation of the effectiveness of TBLT and

mediation. Thus, the follow-up interview questions were developed from the issues or specific areas recorded in their notes.

3.2.2 Interviews

The research interview has been described as 'a conversation between the interviewer seeking response for a particular purpose from the interviewee' (Gillham, 2000:1), and 'a professional conversation – an inter-view, where knowledge is constructed in the inter-action between the interviewer and the interviewee' (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009:2). Kvale and Brinkmann's definition best describes the purpose of using the interview in this study. The interview, which was a conversation between me as the interviewer and my colleague as the interviewee, aimed to build an understanding of the issues, especially why some parts of the TBLT and mediation and my teaching worked well but others did not, what they thought were the causes of the problems, and how to improve them. Thus, co-construction of understanding of the issues through interview was highlighted in this research.

Conducting an interview was a significant part of this study because the interview results were one of the main data sources for triangulation. Two sets of interviews – with the observers and with the learners – were conducted after the implementation of TBLT and mediation, with the aim of gaining their feedback and opinions on the effectiveness of the intervention. Thus, the interviews were a means to gather in-depth information on their perspectives. The use of interviews also opened up an opportunity for receiving suggestions and solutions to the problems, allowing some undetected issues to be identified.

Researchers categorise interviews into three types: structured, unstructured (also defined as open or in-depth), and semi-structured interviews. I adopted a semi-structured approach because as Dörnyei (2007:136) explains, in this approach the interviewer provides guidance and direction (hence the '-structured' part in the name) but is also keen to follow up interesting developments and to let the interviewee elaborate on certain issues (hence the 'semi' part). This allowed me to combine an element of planning (based on the questionnaires and observations) with sufficient openness to allow new elements to emerge.

In developing an interview guide, observations and questionnaires were used to generate ideas as to what was effective and what was not effective in the implementation of TBLT and mediation, including my performance. I then framed open-ended questions for semi-structured interviews to further investigate the issues. The same process was applied to interviews of the learners, except that the topics or issues for semi-structured interviews came from the pre-/post-intervention questionnaire results, as well as learner engagements in task-based activities. While feedback from observations and questionnaires provided me with breadth of information, the follow-up semi-structured interviews offered in-depth understanding of whether the designed tasks were appropriate and the implementation of TBLT and mediation were effective.

To conduct interviews, researchers suggest similar procedures from preparation to interpretation of the data, but the steps and procedures may not be arranged exactly in the same order. I decided to follow guidelines offered by Richards (2009) that are divided into four steps: preparing for an interview, setting up the interview, managing the interaction, and after the interview. I first needed to consider the

content of the observation notes and then identify interesting or problematic issues specified by the observers in order to develop an interview guide. However, not all issues were chosen, only ones relating to the areas of investigation and research questions, so that the selected issues were relevant to 1) the appropriateness of the designed tasks, and 2) and the effectiveness of the TBLT and mediation approaches. This meant that I was able to prepare some guiding questions and group them under each issue or topic (see Interview guide, Appendix E).

In setting up the interview, most researchers (e.g. Gillham, 2000; Richards, 2009; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) pay attention to scheduling and confirming, arranging the venue, and considering whether recording of the interview and taking notes are necessary. It is also important to assure the interviewees of confidentiality and anonymity. All of these arrangements could be made easily because the interviewees are my colleagues. I interviewed them in their offices at their convenience, starting with a chat on general topics before opening the interview. I also let them know that they could ask me questions if they wished, thus adding an element of discussion, sharing ideas and giving advice.

The next step was conducting the interviews. As Roulston (2010) notes, the interviewer must have very good listening skills to ensure that the interviewee has covered key topics and also be able to capture when and how to follow up the issues raised by the interviewee. Richards (2003) also suggests that interviews should allow the interviewee a proper space by avoiding interruption, and importantly letting the interview flow over the topics or areas raised by the interviewee not just ones the interviewer thinks important. In my view, the last element is crucial because excessive control by the interviewer on topics that are perceived as important may

result in a loss of opportunities to discover something new or more important. A variety of question types are available to the interviewer (Gillham, 2000; Patton, 2002, Duff, 2008; Richards, 2009) but checking, following-up and probing questions were particularly important in these interviews. Before ending the interviews and thanking the interviewees, I also asked if there were any more issues, comments or advice the teachers wanted to add.

Ethical issues of interviews

Researchers (e.g. Rubin and Rubin, 1995; Bassey, 1999; Walford, 2001; Gillham, 2005; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) emphasise the importance and necessity of ethical issues and proper practice before, during, and after any interview session. Discussion of ethical obligations is often related to issues of confidentiality, anonymity, sensitivity, privacy, security and honesty. All of these have to do with the rights of interviewees, which must be protected as well as their feelings. Before an interview, it is important that interviewees be informed about the research project, its aims and the purposes the data will be used for, expectations from the interviewees, potential consequences of participating in the study, confidentiality, and their rights. In this study, even though the interviewees were my colleagues, they were still asked to sign a consent form. Sensitivity was not a serious issue in these interviews because the main content of the interview was the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation implementation and my teaching performance, which was fully open for any criticism and suggestion. As the research was conducted at my university, full anonymity was impossible to achieve since all teachers in the English department know each other, though the interviewees and learners were still anonymised through the use of pseudonyms.

3.2.3 Research Journal

In all processes, the researcher's reflections were needed. This meant reflections needed to be recorded daily, especially during the fieldwork. Duff (2008) suggests keeping a research journal in addition to making field notes based on observation. The latter was unnecessary because four other teachers were invited to observe the class, rather than the researcher (myself). As I had to teach the class, I was not able to observe and take notes on the lessons. Writing in the research journal was essential and brought two benefits. First, I could take notes and reflect on the research processes, such as emerging themes, problems and questions, and decision making, as suggested by Duff (2008). Secondly, the journal provided a record of the case study and reflected the implementation of TBLT and mediation, especially what worked or did not work well. This also included my thoughts on my own teaching, such as whether the forms of mediation provided during lessons were effective and whether there were problems emerging that I was not able to solve. These details should also be included in interpretation of the results.

3.2.4 VDO/MP3 Recording

The arrangements of VDO/MP3 recording served three purposes in this study. Explicitly, VDO recording enabled an overall picture of the implementation of pre-designed tasks as well as learner engagement in tasks to be captured. As details of interactions must be recorded for analysis of areas of difficulties, the provision of mediation and learner responses to mediation, MP3 recorders were used in addition to the VDO. Implicitly, both ways of recording allowed a further analysis of the relationship between TBLT and mediation; in other words, this allowed for a

conjunction of the two approaches that would benefit learning and teaching in this study.

Richards (2003) suggests using VDO camera supported by audiotape recording for recording of both verbal and non-verbal features but warns that it is quite obtrusive. This could alter learner behaviour and reactions during the tasks. In line with Richards' advice, I introduced the study to learners explaining research aims and data collection procedures and assured the confidentiality of their data and their rights to withdraw from the project or not to be recorded. Also, they were invited to listen to the MP3 recording and watch the VDO after the lessons, in which they could suggest parts they did not want to be made public.

3.3 Quantitative data collection

This section describes justification for using questionnaires and content of the pre-/post-intervention questionnaires.

3.3.1 Justification of using questionnaires in this study

This section focuses on the justification for using questionnaires, the questionnaire content and procedures for designing the questionnaires, as well as the collection of questionnaire data. The pre-intervention and the post-intervention questionnaires were designed to serve two main purposes. These were to survey the learners' attitudes and preferences regarding the teaching method and classroom activities, and to examine the learners' attitudes, opinions, perceptions and suggestions after the implementation of TBLT and mediation.

From a review of the literature, it was found that there were several previously established questionnaire items used for surveying learners' attitudes (e.g.

Littlewood and Liu, 1996; Spratt, 1999); therefore, this study adapted some of those questions, where appropriate. As suggested by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010), the advantage of borrowing questions from existing questionnaires is less time-consuming since the questions have already been piloted, but modification and piloting of the questions are still needed because the research context and population that we intend to use them for are specific. Thus, I kept in mind the research purposes, context, and intended population of this study.

Researchers such as Munn and Drever (2004), Gillham (2007), and Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) point out both advantages and limitations of questionnaires. The cost of developing and administering questionnaires is low, and they serve as an easy way of getting information from a large population with a potentially high return rate. Additionally, questionnaires are simple to analyse when closed questions are used. However, there are many problems as well such as the completeness of data, which tends to describe rather than to explain, unmotivated responses, the inability to correct misunderstandings and the possibility of superficial data. In this study, these limitations were overcome by using the questionnaires in conjunction with other instruments for adequate and accurate data, adopting different types of questions with a clear explanation of the benefits of responding to motivate respondents and to reduce the amount of superficial data, which is a common hazard in questionnaire responses. Despite these limitations, I believe if they are well-constructed and administered, questionnaires can produce useful data on the effectiveness of the teaching approaches. Researchers (e.g. Wilson and McClean, 1994; Gillham, 2007) value the main function of questionnaires for gathering information on opinions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviour, although questions relating to these aspects are the

most difficult to write. Attitudinal questions were also designed for the pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, details of which will be presented in the next section.

The pre-intervention questionnaire was used to survey learner attitudes and preferences for teaching approaches and learning activities. The data obtained was useful for fundamental considerations for task design and delivery of task-based lessons. The learners' preferences, such as whether they preferred working on their own or in groups, whether they were willing to engage in solving the tasks, whether they wanted to interact with their peers and the teacher, were a useful guidance for implementing tasks for classroom teaching. There were a number of parallel or overlapping questions of the pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaires (see Appendix D), in order to allow for a comparison. The purpose was to analyse whether the learners' attitudes, specifically their opinions and perceptions, had changed after the intervention as well as to gather their suggestions for improvement. Issues raised in the questionnaires were identified and then used for developing topics for the follow-up interviews. This is regarded as complementary functioning between questionnaires and semi-structured interviews in order to answer the research questions, as Gillham notes (2007: 99) '[i]f you use a range of methods you can put together a more complete picture. The case study exemplifies this approach'.

Another advantage of using questionnaires in this study was that data could be collected from a class of 20-25 students at one time using procedures for collecting and analysing data, which were quite simple and straightforward compared to other methods. For data analysis, closed questions were analysed using descriptive statistics and open-ended questions using qualitative techniques (see 3.6 and 3.7 for

data analysis methods). Furthermore, as this study involved examining the learners' attitudes and opinions of both positive and negative aspects, the guarantee of anonymity and confidentiality encouraged expression of views that were not entirely positive. This was controlled by asking the learners not to put their names on the questionnaires. Giving them freedom and assurance of confidentiality encouraged them to share their views proved useful for the evaluation of the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation and also for improvement in TBLT teaching.

3.3.2 Content and procedures for designing the questionnaires

To design questionnaires, fundamental considerations about the research aims and questions are important. These will determine the constructs (concepts) and content of questionnaires. This will lead to the specification of content. Oppenheim (2000) explains that the specification of measurement aims must be precisely and logically related to the research aims and objectives, so that for each issue to be investigated, a precise operational statement is required about the variables to be measured. The composition of the questionnaire cannot proceed until we specify all relevant variables to be measured and also the types of instruments we need to develop such as rating scales, checklists, and/or open-ended questions. The questionnaires targeted all research questions, as shown in Table 8 below.

Research Question	Type of data needed	Form of questionnaire
1, 2	Learners' attitudes and preferences for learning activities and teaching methods including ways of receiving feedback	Pre-intervention questionnaire
1, 2, 3, 4	Learners' attitudes, perception and opinions on designed tasks, TBLT, feedback (mediation) and the teacher's performance, and their suggestions for improvement	Post-intervention questionnaire

Table 8 Types of data for the questionnaire design

From the table, it can be understood that the constructs posed in the research questions were attitudes, preferences, opinions, perceptions, and suggestions that were relevant to the teaching approaches and learning activities in general and to the task-based teaching (with the integration of mediation) in particular. These terms are interrelated and not clearly defined in the literature. Oppenheim (2000) and Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) share the perspective that attitudes are related to beliefs that often attract strong feelings, and thus they are rather pervasive and resistant to change. This contrasts with opinions, which are more factually based and more changeable, while interests are preferences for particular activities. With this in mind, Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) define attitudinal questions covering a broad category of attitudes, opinions, values, beliefs (or perceptions: Black, 1999), and interests.

The value of a questionnaire lies in providing answers to the researchers' questions or to what it measures, so the design of any questionnaire must ensure that it measures what it is supposed to measure. This is called 'construct validity'. The starting point is to identify the constructs or concepts appropriate to the study and all

their contributing components. In this study, the constructs of the pre-intervention questionnaire are ‘preferences for teaching approaches’ and ‘preferences for learning activities’, and for the post-intervention questionnaire the construct is ‘an evaluation of TBLT’.

The next step is to list underlying components that are made up of these concepts, and in this study essential components were identified from previous studies of the same domains. It should be noted that the constructs of the two questionnaires were different in that the pre-intervention questionnaire focused on learners attitudes and preferences about English language teaching in general, whereas the post-intervention questionnaire emphasised their attitudes and opinions towards TBLT. This was because the learners were not informed about TBLT before the implementation so as to prevent the guiding their responses. This allowed a comparison of their attitudes towards English language before the intervention with their attitude after having experienced TBLT.

Other decisions required in designing questionnaires regard length and format. Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) advise using no more than four pages at most, which should require less than 30 minutes to complete. As the use of questionnaires was not be the only tool in this study, I did not need a comprehensive one, so I limited it to a title page with short and simple instructions and three pages of questions, requiring about 25 minutes to complete. Designing the questionnaire items requires careful consideration of several aspects, especially whether questions will be closed or open-ended and types of items, such as rating scales, semantic differential scales, numerical rating scales, true-false items, multiple-choice items, rank order items, and checklists. The major advantage of these closed questions is that response options

are provided, so they need less time for response, coding, and analysis, unlike open-ended questions that need longer written answers and detailed analysis.

Some general rules for writing questionnaire items suggested by researchers (Gillham, 2007, Dörnyei and Taguchi, 2010; Munn and Drever, 2004) are to write short and simple items, use simple language, avoid ambiguous sentences, avoid negative constructions (i.e. not, doesn't), use active rather than passive voice for clarity of meaning, and avoid jargon, technical terms, and colloquial terms etc. In addition to these, Black's (1999) suggestions for writing rating scales for attitudinal questions include, for example, the use of statements that refer to present rather than past, the avoidance of statements that sound like facts, the avoidance of global terms (e.g. always, never, only) and the need to aim for half positive and half negative statements, etc.

As for open-ended or free-response questions, Black (1999) explains that this type of question tends to elicit divergent, unpredictable, and evaluative responses, of which the latter is given to justify a judgment or opinion. Open-ended questions must be specific but not so restrictive that respondents provide too simple an answer and not so vague that respondents provide unrelated views. Black points out that one of the weaknesses of free-response questions is that even though results can be quantified and reported in bar charts, inferences based upon comparisons can be dubious as different respondents provide different amount of information (e.g. about many issues or only one). Still, their answers help to confirm that the issues raised are important.

Other processes in questionnaire design are grouping, sequencing items and piloting. Wilson and McClean (1994) list some typical sequences of questions, such as factual

questions followed by a set of multiple choice questions and then attitudinal questions building from responses to the preceding questions or use of open-ended questions to elicit general feeling (also opinions and attitudes) and then closed questions to structure the information. Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) advise arranging questions in a logical sequence, and the clustering of questions together into sub-sections, each with its own instructions if the questionnaire consists of different types of items. Also, if the questions are to be arranged according to the content in multi-item scales, it is not necessary that the items be next to each other; they can appear at different points to prevent selecting answers based on related items. In addition, open-ended questions should also be put at the end because writing may put respondents off answering. Respondents tend to provide answers for closed questions mostly, so the open-ended questions should be kept as an additional section rather than the main one. Researchers (e.g. Munn and Drever, 2004; Oppenheim, 2000) suggest putting personal data questions near the end of a questionnaire because the questions can be sensitive for respondents and thus might discourage responses.

In all cases, piloting a designed questionnaire, even if the questions are borrowed from previously established questionnaires, should be done on either small-scale, for instance, getting a few people to read and give feedback to see how the questions work or large-scale, wherein a detailed analysis is included. Piloting helps to improve clarity of instruction and eliminate ambiguous wording, to evaluate whether the questions are too difficult and/or measure something irrelevant, and to accurately estimate time required for completion. Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) recommend final piloting to see how the questions work in actual practice by administering to a group

of respondents similar to the intended population. The group size should be around 100 and should not be smaller than 50 to enable meaningful statistical item analysis.

In this study, at least three question types and both closed and open-ended questions were developed for the two questionnaires. Selecting the various types of questions made the questionnaires more interesting, which motivated learners to provide a complete response. In choosing types of closed questions, I also considered the content area that needed to be investigated in each part because different types of questions serve different purposes. For example, rating scale items are useful for examining respondent judgment of a targeted area, whereas rank order items can be used to assess respondent preferences for the items listed in order of their importance, usefulness, and so on.

3.3.3 Content of pre-intervention questionnaire

The pre-intervention questionnaire was divided into three parts comprising 47 closed items and three open-ended questions. Part One examined learners' attitudes and preferences for classroom activities and teaching methods and consisted of 22 multi-scale items. A review of relevant literature (e.g. Littlewood and Liu, 1996; Spratt, 1999) provided that questions relating to teaching methods and classroom activities tend to be used interchangeably. Since the purpose of using the pre-intervention questionnaire was to survey learners preferences for a range of teaching methods and classroom activities, both aspects were included in Part One.

Part Two related to learners' experience in the exposure of and familiarity with TBLT including feedback methods (i.e. ways of giving and receiving feedback) on the basis of the frequency with which they had been exposed to these practices in

their previous lessons. This part consisted of 25 items arranged under four categories: 1) skill practice i.e. listening, speaking, reading and writing; 2) oral presentations; 3) participation mode i.e. working in pairs and in groups; and 4) feedback methods. In the final part, three open-ended questions required written responses regarding learners' preferences for receiving feedback, their feelings if they were assigned to give a presentation, and their perceptions of own language proficiency ranking from beginner to advanced levels. Several questions of the pre-intervention questionnaire were adapted from Spratt (1999) and some from Littlewood and Liu (1996) (See Appendix C). Littlewood and Liu (1996) investigated teaching methodology preferences in university English classes of first-year undergraduate students in Hong Kong by means of a survey, using the prompt 'I like a university English class in which…', followed by twelve items. Results showed that learners preferred communicative to non-communicative methods and rated reading comprehension, watching videos, listening comprehension and listening to teacher under 'strong preference' and pair work, error correction, vocabulary exercises and grammar exercises under 'less preference.'

Spratt (1999) provides useful insights into learners' preferred activities in comparison to teachers' perceptions of activities that the learner liked. Forty-eight classroom activities were investigated. Results showed that the teachers could gauge the learners' preferences with accuracy for 54% of activities. This implies that learners' and teachers' preferences do not always match. My assumption for including questions from Spratt in my questionnaire was that knowing which activities learners preferred would help me plan task-based lessons better and also allow me to examine whether their attitudes had changed after the intervention. In

fact, Spratt categorised the items into eight areas: feedback, participation modes, listening, speaking, reading, writing, testing and others (See Appendix C), but only items relevant to this study were selected and those about testing were discarded.

3.3.4 Content of post-intervention questionnaire

The emphasis of the post-intervention questionnaire was on the learners' attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of TBLT implementation, and their suggestions for improvement. When designing this questionnaire, the four research questions were taken into account in anticipation that learners' responses would reflect their opinions on the suitability of the designed tasks and the efficacy of TBLT and mediation and their suggestions for improvement. The comparison of learners' attitudes as reflected in overlapping items asked in the pre- and post-intervention questionnaires would enable the analysis of changes in their attitudes.

The post-intervention questionnaire consisted of three parts with 35 closed items and 7 open-ended questions. While Part One examined learners' general feelings and opinions about task-based lessons, Parts Two and Three looked specifically at the tasks, TBLT, mediation and learner suggestions for each area. It should be noted that the term 'feedback' was used instead of 'mediation' throughout the questionnaire, as the term feedback was more familiar to learners than the term mediation, although it carries somewhat different implications (see 2.2.2). This was also the case for the term 'classroom activities', which was used in place of 'tasks'. When asking about task-based teaching, the term 'this kind of teaching' was used with a description of the main feature of TBLT e.g. working in groups to plan and prepare a presentation, solving problems, receiving feedback from the teacher.

Part Two drew on learners' perceptions and opinions about tasks, TBLT and mediation, and consisted of 27 questions. All of these questions were intentionally designed to be in parallel with questions of the pre-intervention questionnaire for a comparison, as mentioned above. In other words, learners' preferences for classroom activities and their familiarity with TBLT and mediation were compared with their perceptions after their engagement in tasks, TBLT and mediation. Seven open-ended questions in Part Three allowed learners to supply details of their opinions including their suggestions for improvement of tasks and overall teaching. These are broad categories that were used as guidelines for evaluation. It should be noted that the evaluation of the appropriateness of the designed tasks by learners did not focus on task complexity and task difficulty regarding linguistic components because this evaluation had been carried out previously by two teacher observers during the task design stage. Instead, the evaluation through the post-intervention questionnaire questions was similar to task evaluation conducted by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007) covering areas such as what learners liked and disliked about the tasks, the usefulness of tasks in improving their knowledge and skills and the levels of task difficulty according to their opinions.

The two questionnaires were piloted at my university in Thailand with a group of second-year learners. I asked my supervisors and colleagues in the English department for their feedback on the clarity of instructions and questions, format and style of the questionnaires and also the suitability of questions used. Based on their feedback and suggestions, I revised the questions and format of the questionnaires before using them for main data collection. The next section discusses how the data gathered from various sources synthesised to answer the research questions.

3.4 Data collection in relation to the research questions

This section illustrates the synthesis of data gathered from different sources for providing ample evidence to answer the research questions in this study. The consolidation of data that shared the same area e.g. the appropriateness of designed tasks or the effectiveness of TBLT but which stemmed from various sources supplied by observers, learners and myself allowed the triangulation of the findings. Table 9 below shows the four focused areas i.e. research questions, and the seven data sets collected in this inquiry. The rationale underlying the synthesis of the data is also offered.

Required Data	Instrument	Res. Q1. Appropriateness of the designed tasks	Res.Q2. Effectiveness of TBLT	Res.Q3. Effectiveness of mediation	Res.Q4. Suggestions for improvement
1. Compared learners' preferences for learning activities and perceptions and opinions on the designed tasks, and suggestions for improvement	The pre-/post-intervention questionnaires	√			√
2. Compared learners' preferences for teaching methods and perceptions and opinions of TBLT, feedback (mediation), and suggestions for improvement	The pre-/post-intervention questionnaires		√	√	√
3. Four teacher-observers' comments and feedback on designed tasks and TBLT	Observation notes	√	√		√
4. Four teacher-observers' opinions on the designed tasks, TBLT, mediation, the teacher's performance , and suggestions for improvement	Post-observation interviews	√	√	√	√
5. Researcher/teacher 's reflections	Research journal	√	√	√	√
6. Classroom interactions	Video and MP3 recordings		√	√	
7. Learners' perceptions and suggestions	In-depth interview	√	√	√	√

Table 9 Data collection in response to each research question

Appropriateness of the designed task (Research Question 1)

To evaluate the appropriateness of the designed tasks, data was gathered from five sources: 1) four teacher-observers' comments written in their observation notes, 2) the observers' opinions and suggestions gained from the post observation interview, 3) the learners' comments and feedback from compared results of the pre- and post-intervention questionnaires, 4) learners' perceptions and suggestions from an in-depth interview after the course and 5) the researcher/teacher's reflections in the research journal.

To address aspects of comparison in the data analysis process, I looked at learners' attitudes and preferences for learning activities queried in the pre-intervention questionnaire and compared these with their perceptions, opinions and suggestions on the designed tasks after the intervention. Adopting multiple viewpoints from stakeholders (the researcher/teacher who implemented the designed tasks, four experienced teacher-observers who had repeatedly observed the classes and learners who had directly engaged in the tasks) enhanced triangulation and verification of the data as to the suitability of the designed tasks. The feedback received from these participants was useful for the adjustment of tasks in future implementation and the development of similar types of tasks since both practical and less practical elements would have been taken into consideration. With specific reference to in-depth interviews of learners and observers, these allowed me to closely inspect critical aspects of tasks escaping fuller explanation in the observation notes and questionnaires. Thus, the follow-up interviews offered me an opportunity to seek further details and advice for future task improvement. In addition, the more in-depth

analysis of task complexity and difficulty was carried out through the analysis of recorded class interactions (see 3.6.3).

Effectiveness of TBLT (Research Question 2)

The evaluation of the effectiveness of TBLT looked specifically into the implementation of tasks in three phases of the task-based framework (Willis, 1996) and learners' reactions and responses to the teaching. In other words, the emphasis was placed on how the designed tasks were executed and handled by learners during pre-task, task cycle, and language focus, to what extent learners engaged in interactions, and importantly, whether they could independently solve the task problems or still needed the teacher's assistance (i.e. mediation).

The evaluation of the practicalities of TBLT relied on six main data sets, which were cross-checked and compared. The main sources of data included learner feedback from the pre-/post-questionnaire responses and interview, the observers' comments about teaching methods and the delivery of tasks and their recommendations for improvement provided in observation notes and interview, as well as my reflections on the success and problems of task-based teaching. Another important source of data was VDO recording of the lessons, in which learner reactions and engagements in tasks can be studied and analysed.

Effectiveness of Mediation (Research Question 3)

Procedures adopted for data collection on the aspects of TBLT and mediation implementation (research questions 2 and 3) were almost identical, except that the latter largely relied on video recordings of class interactions. Unlike the evaluation of TBLT prioritising learners' engagement in tasks, in mediation attention was paid to learners' responses, which enabled analysis and interpretation of areas of

difficulties faced by them and their understanding of business concepts and relevant language (see 2.2.5). However, not all learners' interactions and responses were captured during the mediation processes. Since this task-based course required learners to work in small groups to develop presentation scripts and give a presentation, capturing their responses during the mediation phase was group-based rather than individual-focused. Due to teacher having to mediate as the groups worked simultaneously, it was difficult to record the mediation of all groups. Despite these limitations, a detailed analysis of selected interactions and mediation sufficiently provided evidence on the key elements of mediation.

From pedagogical perspectives, the effectiveness of mediation mainly depends on the quality of mediation given. The data to analyse this aspect was gathered from VDO and MP3 recordings and the teacher/mediator's self-reflections (see 3.6 and 3.7 for methods of analysis). The VDO was set up at the back of the classroom and MP3 recorders were placed on each group's table. Since the recording might distract learners' attention and violate their privacy, I asked for their permission and did not capture their participation and responses if they refused.

Additional feedback and opinions about mediation were also obtained through the post-intervention questionnaire, wherein 3-4 implicit questions about the provision of feedback (implying 'mediation') were asked and from in-depth interviews of observers and learners. Since learners and observers were familiar with the term feedback (not mediation), I asked the learners about whether procedures for giving feedback particularly the teacher asking questions to encourage learners to find answers and solve problems by themselves were effective.

Although the observers sat at the back of the classroom and were unable to hear all interactions, they were later invited to watch the VDOs and listen to the recordings after the lessons. Their comments and opinions were examined in the post-observation interview on aspects about the effectiveness of implicit to explicit mediation according to the pre-determined inventory and required adjustments to mediation, if any.

Suggestions for the improvement of TBLT/mediation and teaching overall (Research Question 4)

As can be seen from the summary Table 9 above, suggestions for improving TBLT were collected from all sources, except for classroom interactions. For mediation, as mentioned above, interviews of observers and learners elicited good advice and varied viewpoints. In addition, the teacher as the mediator, who was likely to be most aware of what worked and did not work during the mediation, could reflect on emerging problems and necessary adjustments for future implementation. Since it was unlikely that learners and observers (my colleagues) would openly criticise my teaching, an honest self-assessment was crucial.

3.5. Fieldwork data collection

Fieldwork was divided into two phases: a pilot study and the main study. A brief summary of the pilot study below includes my reflections of feasible and non-feasible aspects of designed tasks, TBLT, mediation and research instruments. The second section offers details of the main study comprising the description of lessons and tasks, data collection methods and my reflections on issues regarding the implementation. For an overview of the overall fieldwork, Table 10 below shows details of a timeline, participants and methods of data collection in the two phases.

Period/phase	Participants	Tasks/total periods of teaching	Data collection methods
April - May 2012 Pilot study	◆ 1 group (8 learners) (the other group withdrew from the study because of their heavy workloads) ◆2 Observers	◆ 5 lessons (3 main tasks and 2 additional lessons) ◆ 10 periods of teaching (50 mins./period)	◆ pre-/post-questionnaires ◆ class observation ◆ VDO/MP3 recording of lessons/class interactions ◆research journal ◆interview (2 learners) ◆interview (2 observers)
June 2012 Refining tasks and research instruments	◆ the teacher/researcher (myself) with supervisors' feedback and advice	-	-
July - September 2012 Main study	◆ 2 groups of learners - 20 accountancy students - 16 humanities students ◆ 4 observers interchangeably observed lessons (2 observed lessons, the other two watched VDO of the lessons)	◆ 6 lessons/group (3 main tasks and 3 additional lessons) ◆ 12 periods/group (50 mins./period)	◆ pre-/post-questionnaires ◆ class observation ◆ VDO/MP3 recording of lessons and class interaction ◆ research journal ◆ interview (8 learners) ◆ interview (4 observers)

Table 10 Timeline of Data collection

3.5.1 Piloting the tasks, TBLT and mediation procedures

The pilot study was set up to try out the designed tasks, TBLT and mediation procedures as well as research instruments. Two groups of second-year accountancy and business study major students were recruited as participants on a voluntary basis. They had not yet completed the units on presentation skills and had never attended any TBLT classes. Since piloting was arranged during a summer term, only six BA students participated in the study, but all withdrew later because of heavy workloads. Tasks and instruments were then trialled with eight accountancy learners and two

observers. This small-scale pilot study provided useful insights that led to the refinement of the tasks, TBLT and mediation procedures.

Out of five lessons, only three lessons were task-based. Lesson one focusing on presentation skills used both newly produced materials and Unit 2 of Get Ready for Business Book 2 (Vaughan and Zemach, 2009) – a set textbook used in the compulsory English for Communication 3. The use of Unit 2 containing useful expressions for presentation introductions as a bridging activity to tasks in other lessons was effective, despite its heavy focus on language elements. Other lessons included 'Describing Company Profiles' (Task1), 'Describing Company Products' (Task 2), 'Describing Business Situations or Trends' (Task 3) and a session on giving a full presentation.

The feedback for the pilot study indicated both practical and impractical features of tasks. Students enjoyed most tasks and found pre-task task materials e.g. funny VDO clips showing good and bad presentation, quizzes about companies and products, and companies' website information interesting and motivating. Students found the tasks that required them to brainstorm and work with other group members to find out things on their own promoted their thinking skills, which they perceived as very different from learning from a set textbook. Nevertheless, the observers and I were not satisfied with pre-tasks that devoted excessive class time on explaining new words and structures. Because of learners' lack of prior knowledge and experience in business and their limited English proficiency, substantial time was required for explaining and brainstorming ideas on business concepts and practices and business jargon. Most learners were not confident in offering their ideas and participating in discussions, even though they showed great interest in tasks. They preferred being

asked questions to taking part in discussions. I sought out advice from the observers and my supervisors. They all suggested putting learners in pairs or groups to discuss and pool ideas before asking them questions. Providing more language support was another option, but brief class time (two periods per task) seemed to be a major constraint.

In the pilot study, mediation was not fully integrated in tasks and did not always follow a pre-planned mediation inventory, especially when learners had to solve complex language problems. Another mistake was that I tended to give explanations, rather than prompts during mediation. Thus, an opportunity to check their actual understanding was missed. I also hesitated several times over whether errors should be indicated or the lesson should be allowed to flow. My decision was to ignore mistakes students had made during pre-tasks, as the focus was on getting concepts correct and to provide mediation during script development. Despite these mistakes, learners responded positively to mediation saying in interviews that they wanted all mistakes to be corrected and thought it was challenging to identify and correct mistakes themselves.

The Willis framework (Willis, 1996) used in this study had to be adjusted due to the learners' lack of linguistic ability enabling them to cope with the complexity of language and tasks. However, adaptation did not take place following the pilot study but was delayed until more comments were received from observers after the first task in the main study. In terms of technical arrangements, recording class interaction was also a challenge. All lessons were recorded using two VDO cameras with the permission of the learners. Students did not mind VDO recording of lessons but disliked recording of their interactions with me. They spoke in a soft voice in the

first few lessons, but after I assured them that pseudonyms were used in my thesis their co-operation increased. The observation form was adjusted by providing headings on focused areas as guidelines to elicit more details and feedback from observers.

Briefly, the pilot study provided me with insights into the content areas and the research procedures. Firstly, problems relating to learning and teaching were identified, and this helped me think about possible solutions in case similar problems occurred in the main study. Secondly, trying out the tasks enabled the observers and me to evaluate tasks and to identify areas that needed to be improved. Thirdly, the pilot study gave me practice in teaching, interviewing, writing a journal, recording lessons, working collaboratively with observers and building up rapport with learners. Also, some instruments, such as an observation form and an interview guide, which were developed during the research design, were revised in the light of the pilot study in order to be consistent with issues and problems that had arisen. Above all, piloting provided me with a chance to look closely at the actual dataset obtained from all sources. This was very useful as I could plan methods of data analysis.

3.5.2 Implementation of tasks, TBLT and mediation during the main study

The implementation of teaching and interviews of observers and learners were organised during the first term of the academic year of 2012, from July to September. Two groups of leaners were purposively selected based on recommendations from the course co-ordinator of Eng.3 and the willingness of learners to participate. I introduced my project to the groups and asked them to give me their decision on the next day. The accountancy and humanities groups

(henceforth, AC, HM) decided to participate, but they asked me to arrange classes outside their normal schedule. These resulted in some lessons being taught in the evening, from 5pm to 7pm. In the first few lessons, some of the learners were shy and hid from the VDO recorder, but after having been assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of the recordings, they were more cooperative. As I was aware of the importance of providing equal support to all learners, I paid attention to all students, especially during mediation. All groups were recorded through VDO and MP3 to prevent the sense that some groups were watched more closely than others, and this actually made them relaxed.

The teaching lasted for 12 periods (50 minutes/period) per group, 24 periods in total. Out of six lessons, three main tasks were taught, with an additional session of feedback and pause practice, and practice took place wherein the scripts of company profile, products and trends developed in previous lessons were compiled into a complete presentation in the final periods, as shown in Figure 2 below.

GIVING A PRESENTATION ON A COMPANY

(Lesson 1: periods 1-2)
Developing Presentation Skills
e.g.
- Effective/ineffective presentations
- Opening/introduction,
- Gestures and body language

▼

(Lesson 2: periods 3-4)
Task 1 Describing Company Profiles
e.g.
- establishment, headquarters, location
- no. of employees
- no. of branches & subsidiaries

▼

(Lesson 3: periods 5-6)
Feedback and Pause Practice
e.g.
- feedback on presentation scripts
- practise pausing during a presentation

▼

(Lesson 4: periods 7-8)
Task 2 Describing Company Products
e.g.
- its use and purposes
- features & specifications
- accessories
- facilities and services

▼

(Lesson 5: periods 9-10)
Task 3 Describing Trends
(Business Situations) e.g.
- turnover
- no. of customers
- profitability

▼

(Lesson 6: periods 11-12)
Giving a full presentation
e.g.
- group giving a presentation on company profile, products and trends

Figure 2 Lessons and learning tasks

All lessons (see lesson plans, Appendix K) that required some adjustment will now be described briefly. More details on grammar and vocabulary teaching can be found in the Language Focus section (5.4). The introductory Lesson 1 was not organised as TBLT. As its main purpose was to develop learners' presentation skills, it began with class brainstorming and a discussion about effective/ineffective presentations, based on YouTube clips and presentation VDO. Unit 2 of *Get Ready for Business*, containing listening and gap-fill exercises (drills), was used to draw learners' attention to language used for presentation introductions and to help them practise writing introductions. Because of the limited time available, although all groups were able to produce short introductions based on the drill patterns, only a few groups could be asked to give a presentation. The time was also insufficient to freely create introductions about 'a job I want to do after graduation', as included in the lesson plan.

The second lesson, on 'Describing Company Profiles,' was the first task-based implementation following Willis' framework (Willis, 1996). A considerable amount of time was devoted to pre-task discussion of ideas about the concept of company profiles, in which quizzes about Nike and listening to various company profiles were used to elicit concepts and language. Students found concepts and several words unfamiliar, e.g. 'turnover', 'subsidiary', and 'affiliated companies'. In the main task, learners divided into groups studying reading materials from different companies to develop a short company profile. Although a lot of mediation was given, I observed that both AC and HM groups experienced great difficulties in producing scripts. Three activities, the group exchange of ideas about their companies' profiles, feedback after presentations, and post-task language focus, could not be achieved

because of the shortage of time. However, in the last five minutes, I provided my own pre-designed summary language handout for students to use as reference for revising their scripts.

My observation of learners' mistakes of both concepts and language in the scripts led to my decision to add a feedback and pause practice session (see 5.4.2 and 5.4.3 for more details). The latter aimed to improve learners' presentation skills and delivery by recording a native English speaker giving a presentation as a model. It started with peer feedback on scripts (5.4.2), wherein groups checked other groups' scripts and gave feedback. I adopted mediation and later corrective feedback techniques (5.4.3) to help improve mistakes. With no training in giving feedback and low language proficiency, the peer feedback was unsuccessful, but learners were satisfied with my feedback, which was given later. In lesson 4, on 'Describing Company Products,' a class discussion of concepts and relevant language from listening and reading exercises was used as a leading activity before groups studied materials about their company products and then developed a script about the chosen product. Learners' lack of familiarity with new words and the structures of both product and service description consumed excessive amounts of time during script development. The group dealing with describing services was confused by structures and concepts that were different from describing products. Similarly to the situation in previous lessons, there was not enough time for language analysis after the task.

Observing learners' struggles and the language problems they encountered in previous lessons led to my decision to adjust Lesson 5 on 'Describing Trends.' After a few pre-task activities on matching and drawing graphs, I helped learners summarise language they needed for script writing. I defined this activity as 'a mini-

language focus', conducted before group work. Mind-maps of verbs and nouns were drawn on the board, and later the class went through a language handout to point out additional vocabulary and structures. I found that it was not only the complexity of language that learners found difficult but also the concept of describing graph trends. Mediation was provided throughout but still it could not cover all difficulties. The planned activity of group member taking turns giving presentations and receiving feedback from peers had to be cancelled because of a lack of time. The final lesson gave all groups the opportunity to give a complete presentation wherein all sub-scripts (profile, products and trends) were put together. Because of time constraints, it was not possible to allow each individual to give a full presentation, so group members took turns (one member/one part) giving a full presentation. In this and other lessons, peer evaluation to each presenter on presentation skills through completion of a feedback form was encouraged. Overall, it was found that time constraints were a major issue; nevertheless, students seemed to enjoy the lessons.

As described above, in responding to learners' needs in language support as identified from learner and observer feedback received after each lesson, Willis' task-based framework was adjusted as were some materials and teaching techniques used during this main study. As a specific example, in a lesson about 'Describing Trends' wherein students needed to interpret information of the graph, a mini language focus was organised before the main task to introduce concepts and language for describing graphs and charts. This did not follow Willis' framework in which the language focus phase is usually carried out after the main task.

As for mediation, I adopted procedures usually employed in the interactionist DA approach (see 2.2.3 and 5.4.1). Mediation was given to both groups and individuals,

but group mediation was more frequent and more appropriate for the practice of presentation because learners were assigned to work in groups in all sessions, according to the company they wanted to work for (e.g. IKEA, Starbucks, Samsung and Sony). Thus, most mediation was provided during group interactions with me. Even when I interacted with one learner (who dominated in the interaction), all learners were expected to pay attention. This follows the principles of group mediation (see 2.2.3). Most mediation procedures were employed during the task cycle of Willis' framework where the groups were preparing their presentation scripts (before presenting to the class). At this stage, they needed to brainstorm ideas, related language (e.g. vocabulary, grammar, punctuation), and the structure of their presentations. To give mediation, I first observed the group's reactions regarding as to whether they could tackle the task on their own. If they needed assistance, I gave mediation following the steps of the pre-planned mediation inventory (see 2.2.4 for more details):

1	The mediator encourages the learner(s) to firstly identify the problem. (if no response) The mediator indicates specific problematic area or segment e.g. *'Is there anything wrong in this sentence?' or repetition of incorrect word or sentence.*
2	The mediator indicates the nature of the problem e.g. *'There is something wrong with the tense making here'.*
3	The mediator offers choices and asks learners to verbalise their ideas/reasons
4	The mediator explains concepts or possible actions to tackle the problem to guide them to arrive at answer(s) or solutions themselves
5	The mediator explains correct answer(s) or solution(s).

Table 6 A mediation inventory (adapted from Aljaafreh and Lantolf's, 1994)

In task-based lessons on business presentations, it is essential that knowledge of the content and presentation skills be developed alongside each other. Therefore, mediation of these two areas was required throughout the course.

3.5.3 Data collection during main study

I have briefly described the actual implementation of TBLT and mediation above. Regarding the data collection for examining the effectiveness of both approaches, seven types of data were gathered during the main study as follows.

Data collected	Instrument	No. of respondents/ results
1. Learners' attitudes and preferences for learning activities and teaching methods incl. ways to give feedback 2. Learners' attitudes, perceptions and opinions on the designed tasks, TBLT and feedback(mediation)	Pre-int. Questionnaire Post-int. questionnaire	Pre-Q Accountancy: 29copies Humanities: 22 Post-Q Accountancy: 20 Humanities: 16
3. Learners' perceptions, opinions and suggestions for improvement of designed tasks, TBLT and feedback (mediation)	In-depth interview	8 learners
4. Four teacher-observers' comments and feedback on designed tasks, TBLT and feedback (mediation)	Observation notes	28 copies(notes)
5. Four teacher-observers' feedback and suggestions for improvement of designed tasks, TBLT, and feedback (mediation)	Post-observation interviews	4 recorded interviews (2 hours each)
6. The researcher/teacher 's reflections	Research journal	24 copies
7. Classroom interactions	VDO and MP3 recordings	Recorded all lessons

Table 11 Summary of data collection

As shown in Table 11, sources of data on mediation came from pre- and post-questionnaire results, learner and observer interviews, and class interactions as the

main source. Before the intervention, I surveyed learners' preferences for receiving feedback – whether they preferred individual, group or whole-class feedback, and how they would like it to be provided. Implicit questions relating to feedback (implying mediation) were designed in the pre-intervention and post-intervention questionnaires. Since mediation was embedded in task-based lessons, the data on mediation was gathered by recording interactions between students (mostly in small groups) and myself. In addition, I also asked observers to comment about ways of feedback but as the observers could not hear interactions, they were not able to provide the details.

The administration of questionnaires was quite simple. After introducing my project, I gave the questionnaires to the students who decided to take part. As can be seen from Table 11, the number of students decreased, as some students withdrew during the course. However, this did not affect the analysis because all questionnaires were coded, so only respondents who participated in all tasks were considered. The pre-intervention questionnaire concerning learners' preferences for learning activities and teaching methods helped me consider their needs, whereas a lot of issues were identified with their suggestions in the post-intervention questionnaire. I used the issues they mentioned in the questionnaires for an in-depth investigation of underlying circumstances and reasons in a follow-up interview of eight learners. I approached learners who actively engaged in lessons and interactions, in which some of them provided critical comments in the post-questionnaire. While interviewing, in order to ensure my understanding, I also asked about the behaviour I observed in class and in the VDO, for example, whether they were quiet because the lesson was boring, and whether they did not participate in discussion because they were not

interested in the topic. Thus, it could be said that some interview questions were related to issues mentioned in the questionnaires, and some about their behaviours and interactions with me. With reference to mediation, their feeling and perceptions of the mediation procedures were examined during interview. Before the interviews, I therefore had to watch the VDO and listen to the MP3 recordings of interactions.

The data collected from the observers included comments and feedback in their observation notes, informal chats after some lessons and the post-intervention interviews. All four observers gave me constructive written feedback about tasks and teaching methods. They did not mind me asking for clarification if some points were unclear. I sometimes had informal chats with them to discuss problems and seek their advice. We sometimes looked at situations and circumstances from different angles, and I found both similar and conflicting views, comparing their notes with my research journals. The piloting interview guide was revised for the main study, taking into account the issues mentioned in the observers' notes and their informal chats with me.

The interviews of observers aimed to examine particular issues in depth based on perceptions of all observers. Their responses to questions mostly confirmed their thoughts and the underlying reasons for their thoughts and suggestions. Since there were some conflicting perspectives between their notes and my journals, those areas were also discussed. I first offered my thoughts and explanation and then asked for their opinions. For example, I thought that providing a lot of language support would not particularly help to improve communication, whereas, in their notes, they wanted me to provide help with language throughout the lesson. Our interview discussion also included their perceptions and opinions as to the implementation of mediation.

They expressed their concerns, particularly about the limited class time and learners' insufficient English knowledge for interacting with the teacher. In short, I used the information from their notes, informal chats and my journals to develop the interview guide, which enabled the investigation of the observers' views and perceptions of TBLT and mediation. The next section describes methods of data analysis.

3.6 Data analysis methods

With data drawn from eight different sources designed to answer four research questions concerning the effectiveness of designed tasks, TBLT and mediation (see p.123), the data analysis is directed towards these specific research questions. Because of the large amount of data requiring detailed analysis, the analysis was divided into two levels: a direct or explicit analysis, and a synthesis and interpretation of results. The direct analysis involved initial coding and categorising data from each instrument to identify key areas and issues, subsequently developed into categories and sub-categories, in order to reach preliminary conclusions. The synthesis level entailed the consolidation of data across all sources to examine whether similar issues were raised by participants and whether there was consensus on any particular issues. It could be said that the direct analysis produced multiple puzzle pieces, and the synthesis of data involved fitting those pieces together.

Along with the two distinct levels of analysis, I kept in mind Richards' (2003:272) advice that analysis should involve *'thinking'* about the data, research aims and other related elements to inform categories and also involve *'categorising'* by coding the data and assigning it into categories. Furthermore, it should include *'reflecting'* by adding notes, comments and insights, along with *'organising'* the data by

rearranging the categories in different ways to look for connections, relationships, patterns, themes and so forth. Another important procedure encompasses '*connecting'* discoveries to concepts and theories and seeking explanation and understanding. In particular, Richards (2003) notes that categorisation links data collection with analysis and interpretation. In open coding, features of the data emerge that can then be segmented and rearranged in order to develop a better understanding of what the data represent.

The two levels of analysis are described below, starting from the direct analysis of quantitative data, qualitative data, and class interactions and followed by the synthesis of data from different sources for the final interpretation of results.

3.6.1 Direct analysis of quantitative data

As shown in 3.3 and Appendix D), the pre- and post-intervention questionnaires generated quantitative data on learners' insights and opinions before and after task implementation. To analyse closed questionnaire items, SPSS statistical analysis methods were adopted, while open-ended item responses were analysed using qualitative data analysis procedures. The statistical analysis began with entering data in SPSS, where spreadsheets of variable view (e.g. students' group, sex, and assigned I.D.) and data view (responses) were prepared. This coding process was followed by statistical analysis procedures: first, a reliability test for the pre- and post-questionnaire items, and then descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation) to analyse each construct (learners' preferences and familiarity with teaching methods and learning activities, learners' perceptions and opinions on improvement of oral presentations). Correlation analysis was also performed to investigate whether there was a significant relationship between related variables asked in both pre- and post-

questionnaires, for example, between or amongst ‘oral presentations’ variables, ‘teaching focus’ variables, and ‘feedback and error correction’ variables. In addition, a t-test was carried out to examine if there were differences in the mean ratings of the two groups of students (AC and HM). Results of this statistical analysis are presented in detail in Chapter 4, and used in conjunction with other qualitative data for the interpretation of findings, presented in Chapter 5.

3.6.2 Direct analysis of qualitative data

The analysis of qualitative data started with initial coding. As noted by Richards (2003), initial coding entails the process of coding the data freely leading to broad categories. The initial coding began with manual coding of observer and student interview data, based on the consideration that using the largest set of data, compared to other sources, would enable the identification of as many emergent aspects and issues as possible. During this initial coding stage, basic categories and sub-categories were formed and labelled. With the intention of developing systematic coding and categorisation, the coded interview data was transferred to NVivo software, where different nodes (categories) were created. Data from observation notes and research journals were also imported into NVivo, in which comments on the same issues as those from the interview data were retrieved and coded into the same nodes set for interview. In other words, the same issue raised in interviews, pre-/post-intervention questionnaires and journals and observation notes was coded in one node (see examples of nodes created from student interview and pre-/post-intervention questionnaire, Appendix J)

Richards (2003) and Saldana (2009) advise that reflecting, organising and rearranging categories can better allow the researcher to see connections, themes,

and relationships from different angles, which serves to shed light on issues rather than adhering to solely initial coding and categorisation. I trialled the recoding and recategorising techniques using NVivo and found that they did not work with the extensive amount of data I had. Several new patterns and themes emerged but moving from one node and/or sub-node to another consumed a lot of time, and caused repetition and confusion. As a consequence, I abandoned NVivo and returned instead to manual coding. However, I made use of NVivo documents by printing comments from each node (consisting of interview, journal and observation data) to complement the second level (i.e. synthesis) of data analysis. To iterate, I employed open and manual coding for the analysis of qualitative data which allowed flexibility in (re-)coding and (re-)categorising of data. During the direct analysis, various categories and sub-categories were developed into different themes and issues; for example, the 'task material' category was sub-categorised into the usefulness of materials, issues of authenticity, the complexity of materials and so on.

3.6.3 Direct analysis of class interactions

In this study, class interactions provided rich data on the relationship between TBLT and mediation. As TBLT and mediation were unified in classroom instruction, the analysis assessed not only the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation as individual approaches but also the relationship between them (their combined effects on task implementation). Their interrelation was analysed from two angles. First, the function of mediation as a research method for task evaluation was analysed from the amount and levels of explicitness of mediating forms needed, learners' responses and the results of mediation – in other words, whether or not learners could finally resolve problems or difficulties. If struggles persisted even after mediation, it could

be interpreted as indicating that the task was too complex for students at this level. Secondly, the analysis focused on how TBLT and mediation interacted to promote learners' understanding. This could track whether their understanding had improved after mediation; if so, they could continue to perform the task effectively.

Before analysis, interactions with the provision of mediation were carefully selected for transcription, based on which ones had the focus mentioned above. The selection took into account that interactions reflecting different roles and functions of mediation should be chosen for analysis, in order for thorough examination that covered all possible aspects. I listened to several recordings in different lessons to get the gist before making a decision about the most relevant interactions to listen to in detail and then to transcribe. The transcription was not tied to transcription conventions as used in conversation analysis but focused on the context of interactions, particularly areas of difficulties or problems learners were encountering, the number of students involved in conversation, forms of mediation provided, learners' responses, and results of mediations. Only two transcription symbols were used in interactions analysis: square brackets [-] to show omitted word(s), indicate actions and when Thai was used; and three dots … to indicate a pause. Twelve interactions were selected, and the analysis and findings are presented in 5.3.1 and 5.4.1.1.

3.6.4 Synthesis and interpretation of data across all sources

This synthesis level involved pooling and linking the data together, and sometimes comparing it across all sources. Data from the same categories and sub-categories were consolidated, and this resulted in further recategorisation and refinement of some existing categories (developed during direct analysis), because of new issues or

interesting aspects that were identified. In this level, much attention was paid to connecting and crystallising several pieces of data from all sources to offer clear and valid interpretation of results and presentation of findings. Importantly, I inspected previously created categories from observation notes to try to establish a link to categories from interviews and my research journals. It was possible to trace this connection because the interview was originally designed to be a follow-up to observation and research journals. However, as the interview was rather unstructured, only some connections could be identified for analysis. An example of the synthesis data analysis is provided below:

(Observation note, Osv-B)

Activity 1: Listen and Match.
The activity was interesting as students had a chance to practise pronunciation and listening skills, and also test their vocabulary knowledge. This made the teacher realise that many students had problems with pronunciation, which resulted in their classmates failing to understand what they had just said and being unable to match descriptions with graphs.

Activity 2: Read the scripts and underline verbs and adverbs
Script 1 was not difficult. Students had no problem with matching; however, they didn't know the term 'recovery', but after you explained it, they understood. In script 2, the first sentence using 'increase' as a noun was unfamiliar to students. When you asked them to transform sentences from noun to verb patterns as used in script 1, they couldn't do it because they didn't know the differences between the two sentence structures. You should put these structures on slides and explain them in detail. In the third and fourth scripts, most students did not know the terms 'steadily' and 'dramatic' but when you explained them they could match the descriptions.

(learners):
- limited language proficiency
-pronunciation
- sentence structures
- vocabulary knowledge

(TBLT):
offering explanations

Interview (IR =Wuttiya, IE = Observer B)

IR:	You mentioned in your note that many students had pronunciation problems, didn't know the meaning of 'recovery', were unfamiliar with using 'increase' as a noun and so could not transform between verb and noun patterns, and didn't know the terms 'steadily' and 'dramatic' as well. What do you think the causes of these problems are?	
IE:	I think they didn't have sufficient [language] knowledge, not because of the complexity of the task. This topic was taught for many years and students could master it well. The task was fine, but students themselves, around 30% of them lacked the vocabulary knowledge.	**(designed task):** task was not complex **(learners):** learners' limited language proficiency
IR:	I've found the teaching of grammar could not be done straightforwardly. I tried to adjust it to suit our students. In your note, you said that after I explained meanings of unknown words, students could do the matching well, and when I summarised verbs used for describing upward and downward trends, their understanding improved. Does this mean you recommend focus on language in lessons?	
IE:	Yes, we sometimes assume that they all know about how to describe graph trends. It isn't difficult, and so doesn't need to be explained in detail. But when they need to write about it, they couldn't write as what we expected. In the lesson on trends, when you listed verbs used for describing trends such as rise, go up, upward and downward trends on the whiteboard, I could see their faces showing understanding and satisfaction.	**(TBLT):** needs explicit teaching, explanation of new words **(learners):** reactions towards explicit teaching

Figure 3 Example of data analysis

As can be seen from the examples of analysis above, data from the two sources was linked, and interview questions were used to follow up observation notes and confirm understanding of Observer B's comments. There were many aspects mentioned in both sources, but as an example I highlighted three major categories: features and complexity of designed tasks, learners' limited language proficiency, and explicit teaching of language components. Starting from these data sources, I cross-checked whether these issues were raised in my research journals, student interview and other observer interviews, as well as listening to class interactions in the 'Describing Trends' task and watching VDO recordings of lessons. This synthesis level of analysis enabled me to gain an overall picture of each specific issue, for instance, of learners' language abilities and the potential need for explicit teaching.

3.7 Summary of data elicitation and analysis and criteria for selecting data for presentation

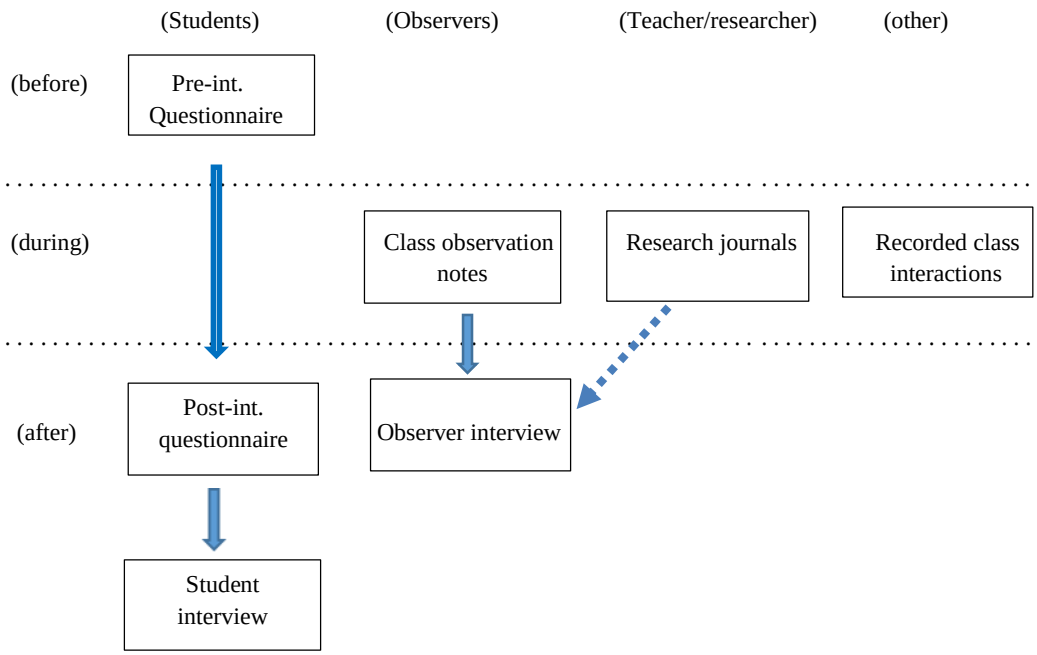
As presented throughout this chapter, data gathered from learners and observers were the main sources for analysis and interpretation, with the addition of the data I provided. Since this inquiry examined the practicality of tasks, TBLT and mediation, the elicitation and analysis of data highlighted both practical and impractical aspects, with the examination of the latter focused on issues raised by participants and their recommendations for improvement. As also noted in 3.6, data triangulations were carried out, firstly within student data and within observer data; and secondly, between student and observer data sets, including my comments as an additional source. To be specific, to triangulate student data, responses in pre- and post-questionnaires were compared, and issues addressed in both questionnaires were listed to develop a student interview guide. Eight students who participated in all lessons and who expressed the most concerns were invited for interview in order to investigate the issues in-depth and elicit further comments and suggestions from them.

Likewise, critical comments and recommendations from observation notes supplied by observers were consolidated into an observer interview guide. Since the observers and I shared perspectives on tasks and teaching in their observation notes and in my research journals, I compared our notes to inspect whether there were similarities and differences in our perceptions. Although the observers' opinions were analysed as the main source for the judgement on effectiveness, I found my additional questions, including ones relating to areas where we had different points of view, helped me understand their thoughts and recommendations better. Thus, in this case,

I used my journal data which included data from my informal chat with them after lessons as a supplementary source to observer notes and interviews in order to crystallise some specific issues.

Similar procedures to those described in 3.6 and above were employed for data analysis. However, discovering that the massive interview data contained more extensive comments and issues than other sources, I decided to analyse the observer interview data first, to try to establish as far as possible (although not definitively) all possible themes and categories in order to make the processes of data categorisation and analysis easier, especially during the data synthesis level. The analysis of observer interview was paralleled with observer notes, in conjunction with data from research journals. This enabled the cross-inspection of issues raised by observers and me. The next stage was analysis of student questionnaires and student interviews, wherein I tried to identify common themes in the opinions expressed and to probe deeper into issues when interviewing selected learners. Among all the data, class interactions were analysed last because detailed analysis of the teacher's provision of mediation, mediating moves and students' responses were vital for valid interpretation of the effectiveness of mediation. In addition, my view was that analysing class interactions after student and observer interviews would enhance my understanding of problems faced by students and me as well as revealing any limitations of conducting mediation in my context. This is why the selection of interactions for analysis must ensure that the interactions contain mediating moves. Figure 4 below summarises steps of data elicitation and analysis as described in 3.6 and above.

1. Data elicitation



2. Data analysis

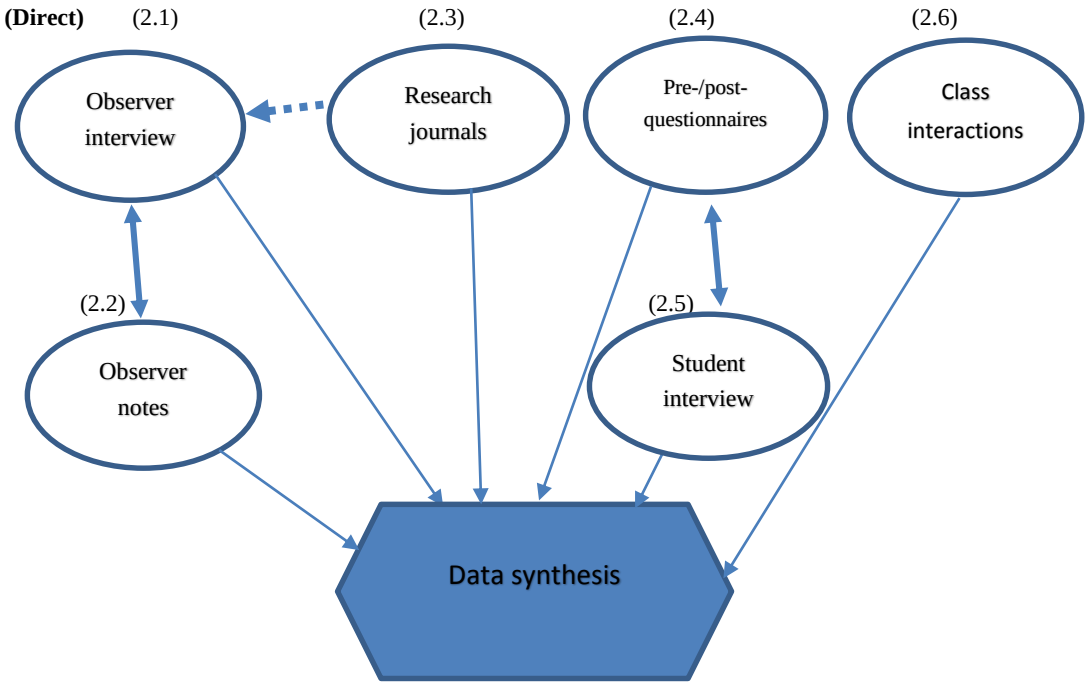


Figure 4 Steps of data elicitation and analysis

The synthesis of data, as shown in Figure 4, produced a vast amount of data in similar thematic areas or categories. However, it was not possible to include all aspects in a report of findings and thus the information that was not closely related to research questions was discarded. Nevertheless, even after the data reduction, results of questionnaire analysis were substantial because of the wide range of content covered, and thus they are presented in a separate chapter, Chapter 4. In terms of the synthesised data, as this inquiry concerned the effectiveness of teaching approaches, special attention was paid to issues that emerged, in which important and interesting data containing fresh insights and critical views on the issues were retained for presentation and discussion. Another important consideration is to link and integrate the two sets of qualitative and quantitative data into a findings report. For a clear illustration on each specific issue, the questionnaire data containing all students' perspectives was presented first to give an overall picture, followed by in-depth qualitative data from class observations, interviews and journals, as presented in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS OF PRE-/POST-INTERVENTION QUESTIONNAIRE ANALYSIS

4.1 Results of the pre-intervention questionnaire analysis

This section presents the results of statistical analysis of the pre-intervention questionnaire, which was developed to investigate learners' preferences and familiarity with different teaching methods and learning activities (see details in 3.3). It begins with a summary of the reliability analysis of the pre-intervention questionnaire, followed by details about the two groups of respondents (accountancy and humanities students), and finally the descriptive results for the following four areas or subscales: teaching focus (i.e. focused areas or skills), oral presentations, participation mode and feedback/error correction (mediation).

4.1.1 Reliability of the pre-intervention questionnaire

The reliability of the questionnaire was analysed using Cronbach's alpha:

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.905	48

The overall high alpha value of .905 (above .8) reflects a good level of reliability of this questionnaire. This means that the 48 items, used for investigating learners' preferences and familiarity with specified teaching methods and learning activities and their English proficiency, had high reliability, which indicates an overall reliable questionnaire. Reliability analyses for the aforementioned four subscales was also

run and yielded satisfactory results (see Appendix G), so I will report descriptive results for these subscales as well.

4.1.2 Respondents and their English proficiency

Tables 4.1.2a - 4.1.2c below present the number of participants and their backgrounds: gender and faculty, perceived English proficiency and TOEIC scores.

Table 4.1.2a Number of respondents by faculty and gender

Faculty * Gender Crosstabulation

		Gender			Total
		No answer	male	Female	
Faculty		1	0	0	1
	AC	0	4	25	29
	HM	0	3	19	22
Total		1	7	44	52

Table 4.1.2b Students' English proficiency (self-assessment)

Faculty * Level of English Crosstabulation

		Level of English						Total
		Post beginner	Elementary	Pre intermediate	Mid intermediate	Upper intermediate	Advanced	
Faculty	AC	1	9	10	6	0	0	26
	HM	4	4	6	3	1	0	18
Total		5	13	16	9	1	0	44

As can be seen from Table 4.1.2a, 52 students, consisting of 29 accounting students and 22 humanities (one did not provide data on faculty), responded to the pre-intervention questionnaires. There were substantially more (i.e. about six times) females than males. Of this total, only 44 students reflected on their English ability (Table 4.1.2b). Although six levels, ranging from post beginner to advanced, were given as alternatives, none of the students perceived themselves as advanced

learners. It is apparent that more students perceived their English levels at pre-intermediate, elementary and mid intermediate, which accounted for 16, 13 and 9 students respectively, than post-beginner and upper intermediate. Roughly half of accounting students (10) regarded themselves as pre-intermediates, compared to one third for humanities students. Surprisingly, more humanities students than accounting students considered themselves as post-beginners, the lowest level, even though they were doing English for Communication for their degree courses.

Twenty students from the two classes took a TOEIC test, and this allowed a correlation analysis between their scores and perceived English proficiency levels. The results showed Kendall's and Spearman's correlation coefficient values of .184 and .233 (Table 4.1.2c below), indicating a small positive association between their scores and levels.

Table 4.1.2c Relationship between their English proficiency and TOEIC scores

Correlations

			TOEIC	Level of English
Kendall's tau_b	TOEIC	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.184
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.334
		N	20	18
	Level of English	Correlation Coefficient	.184	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.334	.
		N	18	44
Spearman's rho	TOEIC	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.233
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.353
		N	20	18
	Level of English	Correlation Coefficient	.233	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.353	.
		N	18	44

As mentioned above, this pre-intervention questionnaire was designed to examine learners' preferences and familiarity with different teaching methods and learning

activities based on four main constructs (i.e. subscales): teaching focus, oral presentations, participation mode and feedback/error correction (mediation). My hypothesis is that if learners prefer and are familiar with certain methods and activities characteristic for TBLT, they might have more positive attitudes towards TBLT, mediation and presentation practice. For example, if learners prefer the teaching focusing on speaking and are familiar with speaking activities, they may be willing to participate in brainstorming and discussions or other speaking activities while engaging in tasks. The analysis below focuses on the aforementioned four constructs.

4.1.3 Teaching focus

Table 4.1.3 below shows results of the analysis of learners' preferences for English skills and for activities that they would like to see focused on in the course (questions 1-7), including their familiarity with those activities (questions 23-45). This scale had good reliability, with an overall Cronbach's α of .770 (see Appendix G). However, the values of Corrected Item-Total Correlation of items Pre03 (writing) and Pre05 (pronunciation) were lower than .3 (a generally accepted value), which can be interpreted as showing that they did not correlate well with others in the scale. Although the overall reliability would increase slightly if these two items were removed, the items were not dropped for theoretical reasons, because I consider writing and pronunciation to be equally important as listening (Pre01) and reading (Pre02).

Table 4.1.3 Learners' preferences for and familiarity with focused areas/skills

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Pre01	51	3.45	.541	.293
Pre02	51	3.29	.576	.332
Pre03	50	3.20	.639	.408
Pre04	51	3.37	.662	.438
Pre05	51	3.69	.547	.300
Pre06	51	3.71	.460	.212
Pre07	51	3.63	.564	.318
Pre23	50	3.46	1.073	1.151
Pre28	51	4.00	.917	.840
Pre31	51	3.20	.960	.921
Pre34	51	3.27	.940	.883
Pre38	51	3.55	.986	.973
Pre39	51	3.55	1.026	1.053
Pre44	51	3.27	.874	.763
Pre45	51	3.35	.868	.753
Valid N (listwise)	49			

With regard to items 1-7, it is obvious that learners preferred teaching that focused on learning new language items (Pre06, M=3.71), pronunciation (Pre05, M = 3.69) and speaking (Pre07, M = 3.63) to teaching focused on other skills. The fact that mean scores were over 3.00 for items 23 to 45 also indicated learner relative familiarity with the activities. Of these activities, it seemed that students had most frequently been exposed to listening to the teacher giving explanations about skills e.g. how to write a report, how to give a presentation (Pre28); reading texts for language analysis e.g. tenses, connectives etc. (Pre38), and check their own writing (Pre39). However, there was high variability in their responses to all questions, as shown by standard deviations being high relative to question means.

4.1.4 Oral presentations

For the 10 items investigating learners' preferences and familiarity with oral presentations, the overall Cronbach's alpha of .621 indicated a somewhat low reliability (see Appendix G). The values of Corrected Item-Total Correlation of items Pre08, Pre11 and Pre20 were relatively low. Thus, it can be said that they did not correlate with other items in the scale. If Pre08 and Pre11 were removed, this would slightly increase the overall reliability. However, researchers such as Dornyei (2007) and Field (2009, quoting Cortina, 1993 and Kline, 1999) point out that the high or low alpha values may depend on the number of items making up a scale and the diversity of constructs measured in one scale. In other words, more questionnaire items will increase reliability, and a low alpha value can be expected when psychological constructs, which normally consist of different traits, are put into the same scale. Thus, the low values do not necessarily mean unreliable scales.

Table 4.1.4 Learners' preferences for and familiarity with oral presentations

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Pre08	51	2.67	.816	.667
Pre11	51	3.22	.879	.773
Pre20	51	3.25	.659	.434
Pre24	51	3.43	.985	.970
Pre27	51	3.39	1.078	1.163
Pre33	51	4.02	.969	.940
Pre36	51	3.10	.944	.890
Pre37	51	3.94	.835	.696
Pre41	51	2.69	1.319	1.740
Pre46	51	3.69	.860	.740
Valid N (listwise)	51			

In relation to oral presentations, most students preferred preparing their presentations in small groups (Pre20) rather than in large groups (Pre11) or individually (Pre08). When preparing presentations, they often searched for information from different sources (Pre33) and listened to their classmates giving oral presentations (Pre37). Although students had been in many oral presentations (indicated by high means above 3.00), they rarely watched themselves in recorded presentations or meetings (Pre41, M = 2.69). However, as there was a large standard deviation, some of them may often watch their recordings (Pre41, SD = 1.319). The same is true for studying techniques for giving effective presentations (Pre27, SD = 1.078).

4.1.5 Participation mode

The reliability test for this 10-item scale indicated a somewhat low reliability (α = .639) (see Appendix G), similar to that of the oral presentations scale. The Corrected Item-Total Correlation of item Pre14 was negative (-.021). The reason could be that this was the only item which asked about students' preferences for working individually. The Corrected Item-Total Correlation of item Pre29 (working in pairs) was also below .3 (.158), indicating that it did not closely correlate with others and the total score of this scale. For theoretical reasons, these items were retained for the descriptive analyses here, but I will not use this scale for further statistical analysis. The other 8 items were related to working in groups and with the whole class and seem to correlate sufficiently with each other.

Table 4.1.5 Learners' preferences for and familiarity with working in groups/pairs/individually

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Pre09	51	3.12	.739	.546
Pre14	51	2.67	.766	.587
Pre17	50	3.32	.741	.549
Pre21	51	3.20	.633	.401
Pre26	51	3.69	.860	.740
Pre29	51	3.98	.707	.500
Pre32	51	3.33	.887	.787
Pre40	51	3.75	.717	.514
Pre43	51	3.61	.850	.723
Valid N (listwise)	50			

The results indicate that most students did not prefer working on their own in class (Pre14, M = 2.67). They indicated that their preference was for working in small groups of 3-5 students (Pre17, M = 3.32), slightly more than in pairs (Pre21) and with the whole class (Pre09). On the other hand, when asking about their experience of participating in pair or group work, they said they engaged in pair work (Pre29, M = 3.98) more than small group activities (Pre40), although some mentioned doing project work in groups (Pre43). During pair/group activities, only some of them asked their classmates questions or for help when they did not understand something (Pre26, SD = .860) and offered their ideas/opinions during group discussions (Pre32, SD = .887).

4.1.6 Feedback/error correction (mediation)

The overall alpha value of this scale (.775) fell between the range of .7 and .8, a generally accepted value for good reliability (see Appendix G). A few items had a relatively low Corrected Item-Total Correlation, showing that they did not highly

correlate with the overall scale. However, since the overall reliability would only increase to .777 if items Pre15 (the teacher giving feedback to individuals) and Pre22 (the teacher correcting most mistakes) were deleted, the items will be kept within this scale.

Table 4.1.6 Learners' preferences for and familiarity with feedback/error correction (mediation)

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Pre10	51	3.73	.532	.283
Pre12	50	3.06	.767	.588
Pre13	51	3.65	.522	.273
Pre15	51	3.27	.750	.563
Pre16	51	2.96	.824	.678
Pre18	51	3.75	.440	.194
Pre19	51	3.35	.688	.473
Pre22	50	3.44	.644	.415
Pre25	51	2.73	1.002	1.003
Pre30	51	3.29	.923	.852
Pre35	51	3.16	1.065	1.135
Pre42	51	3.25	.997	.994
Pre47	51	2.96	1.038	1.078
Valid N (listwise)	49			

Overall, as shown in table 4.1.6, most students expected assistance with error correction (Pre18, M = 3.75) from the teacher rather than having to try to identify mistakes and find out answers by themselves (Pre12, M = 3.06). They also preferred the teacher giving explanations (Pre10) and correcting most mistakes (Pre22). However, it was unclear whether most of them liked giving feedback to each other to improve mistakes (Pre16, SD = .824). As for receiving feedback, the majority of students preferred the teacher to give it to the class as a whole (Pre13) rather than to small group (Pre19) or to individuals (Pre15).

In general, from responses in Table 4.1.6, giving and receiving feedback among learners themselves was not common practice for students in these two classes. Although some of them may often receive feedback from the teacher (high means of Pre30, Pre35, Pre42), some may not, since they have different opinions (high SD values). However, all in all, learners tend to be familiar with receiving feedback from the teacher in a small group (Pre30, M = 3.29).

4.2 Analysis of the post-intervention questionnaire

The main purpose of using the post-intervention questionnaire is to investigate learners' perceptions and opinions about the designed tasks, TBLT and mediation. This section reports results from the statistical analysis of learners' responses, starting with the reliability analysis of the entire questionnaire, followed by details about the respondents. After this, descriptive statistics of learners' perceptions and opinions are presented. The key constructs include: 1) students' overall feelings and opinions about lessons and teaching; 2) students' opinions and perceptions of designed tasks, feedback (mediation) and TBLT; 3) students' opinions on improvement of English skills; 4) students' opinions on improvement of oral presentations; 5) students' opinions on individual/pair/group work; and 6) students' opinions on feedback (mediation). In addition, to examine the difference in the mean ratings between the Accounting and Humanities groups, a t-test was run, and results are presented in the final section.

4.2.1 Reliability of the post-intervention questionnaire

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.823	36

The reliability of the post-intervention questionnaire items is considered fully acceptable, as indicated by an overall alpha value of .823, which is slightly higher than .8 (generally accepted as good reliability value for well-developed questionnaires).

4.2.2 Respondents by faculty

Compared to the total number of pre-intervention questionnaire respondents, the number of students who answered the post-intervention questionnaire decreased by 26%.

Table 4.2.2 Number of respondents by faculty

faculty		Frequency	Percent
Valid	AC	20	52.6
	HM	18	47.4
	Total	38	100.0

Because of the study load in their main course, some students withdrew from this task-based course. This resulted in only 38 students from two classes completing the course and responding to this post-intervention questionnaire. The number of accounting respondents was slightly higher than that of humanities, making up 52.6% of all respondents.

4.2.3 Students' overall feelings and opinions about lessons and teaching

Eight questionnaire items were used in this scale, and the reliability test of these items showed a good degree of reliability (see Appendix G), with a Cronbach's alpha of .774. All Corrected Item-Total Correlation values were higher than .3, so there was no need to drop any item in order to improve the reliability of the scale. Table

4.2.3 below reports responses about their general feelings and opinions of task-based lessons and teaching, based upon 7-point semantic deferential items.

Table 4.2.3 Students' feelings and opinions about lessons and teaching

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Post01	38	6.47	.687	.472
Post02	38	6.34	.708	.501
Post03	38	5.42	1.004	1.007
Post04	38	5.61	.916	.840
Post05	38	5.68	.962	.925
Post06	38	5.84	.789	.623
Post07	38	6.24	.675	.456
Post08	38	6.00	.959	.919
Valid N (listwise)	38			

Based on the mean of all the scores, it could be said that learners were mainly positive about the course and teaching. In particular, results indicated that they thought the implemented task-based lessons were useful for improving presentation skills (Post01, M = 6.47) and for learning about presenting a company (Post02, M = 6.34), and that teaching techniques used by the teacher were helpful for practising presentations (Post07, M = 6.24). There were two aspects with conflicting opinions: their perceptions of the difficulty of materials (Post03, SD = 1.004) and learners' self-confidence (Post08, SD = .959). This means some of them considered the materials difficult or fairly difficult while others thought they were at the right level, relatively easy or easy. Furthermore, after completing the course, although some of the students felt more confident in giving presentations about a company (Post 08, M = 6.00), others were still nervous, as there was a high standard deviation of .959.

4.2.4 Students' opinions and perceptions of designed tasks, feedback (mediation) and TBLT

Questions 9 to 35 of the post intervention questionnaire required learners to rate designed tasks, ways of giving feedback and task-based teaching according to given statements, on a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). In addition, the level of their satisfaction with the teacher's teaching performance, rated on a scale of 1-7, was assessed by question 41. The reliability analysis of this scale (excluding item 41, as this was used in a different scale) indicated good reliability (overall Cronbach's α = .784). However, 7 out of 27 items did not seem well correlated with others, since their Corrected Item-Total Correlation values, particularly item 29 (.072), were below .3. If items 29, 32, and 35 were deleted, the reliability of the scale would improve slightly. However, these 3 items were not deleted of the scale because of theoretical reason. Items 32 and 35, in particular, were highly related to how feedback (mediation) should be handled in class.

Table 4.2.4 Students' perceptions of and opinions about the implementation of designed tasks, feedback and TBLT

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Post09	38	4.24	.490	.240
Post10	38	4.21	.577	.333
Post11	37	3.49	.607	.368
Post12	37	4.65	.588	.345
Post13	38	4.13	.623	.388
Post14	38	4.26	.503	.253
Post15	38	4.47	.603	.364
Post16	37	4.81	.462	.213
Post17	38	4.18	.609	.371
Post18	38	4.13	.623	.388

Post19	36	4.36	.593	.352
Post20	38	4.16	.789	.623
Post21	38	4.37	.633	.401
Post22	37	4.57	.765	.586
Post23	38	4.55	.602	.362
Post24	38	4.24	.634	.402
Post25	38	4.47	.506	.256
Post26	38	4.50	.797	.635
Post27	38	4.16	.916	.839
Post28	38	4.58	.858	.737
Post29	38	4.21	.664	.441
Post30	38	4.29	.654	.427
Post31	38	4.29	.732	.536
Post32	38	4.34	.847	.718
Post33	38	4.50	.507	.257
Post34	38	4.42	.552	.304
Post35	38	3.97	.822	.675
Post41	35	6.51	.562	.316
Valid N (listwise)	29			

Overall, the mean scores on most responses (except for questions Post11 and Post35) were over 4.00, indicating that learners had positive perceptions of the designed tasks, feedback (mediation) and TBLT. In particular, there were small SD values for questions Post09 (M = 4.24, SD = .490) and Post16 (M = 4.81, SD = .462). This means students had quite similar opinions about whether most activities matched their English abilities (Post09) and whether the activities were useful for their future jobs (Post16).

Nevertheless, students' opinions varied (high SD value) when asked whether the time given was sufficient to do the activities (Post27, SD = .916), whether they felt relaxed when interacting with the teacher to solve problems or mistakes (Post28, SD = .858), whether they thought it was effective when the teacher corrected most mistakes that students made (Post32, SD = .847), and whether they thought it was

effective that the teacher gave feedback to the whole class (Post35, SD = .822). These results indicate that some students thought time was insufficient, that they sometimes felt nervous or uncomfortable when interacting with the teacher, that they might not want all mistakes to be corrected and that they might prefer the feedback given to individuals or small groups. In terms of their satisfaction (Post41), rated from 1 to 7, students seemed satisfied with the teacher's performance, with a mean of 6.51.

4.2.5 Students' opinions on improvement of English skills

The Cronbach's alpha value for this scale was rather low, at .652. However, given that there were only 5 items in this scale, the reliability is still acceptable.

Table 4.2.5 Students' perceptions of and opinions on improvement of skills

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Post10	38	4.21	.577	.333
Post19	36	4.36	.593	.352
Post21	38	4.37	.633	.401
Post24	38	4.24	.634	.402
Post25	38	4.47	.506	.256
Valid N (listwise)	36			

It is clear that learners had positive opinions regarding the usefulness of this task-based course in improving English skills with means above 4.00 (on a 5-point scale). The small standard deviations on most items indicate similar views and ratings. Students gave particularly high rating to the statement that taking notes on important ideas and writing short passages helped them remember the content of presentation better (Post25, M = 4.47), and that listening and watching different people giving presentations helped them learn about effective presentations (Post19, M = 4.36).

Although on average they felt that this TBLT course helped improve their speaking skills (Post21, M = 4.37), some disagreed with this evaluation (SD = .633).

4.2.6 Students' opinions about improvement of oral presentations

This scale consists of only a few items, which may explain the low reliability (α =.148). Deleting item Post34 would improve the reliability (α =.158), but this is still far below .8. I will only analyse the answers for their content, and not treat the items as one scale for further statistical analyses.

Table 4.2.6 Students' perceptions of and opinions about improvement of oral presentations

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Post13	38	4.13	.623	.388
Post17	38	4.18	.609	.371
Post18	38	4.13	.623	.388
Post34	38	4.42	.552	.304
Valid N (listwise)	38			

There were many similarities in learners' opinions. Most of them indicated that practising giving a presentation to their group and to the class helped boost their self-confidence (Post34, M = 4.42), that they learnt a lot from listening to their classmates' presentations (Post18), and that individuals had to prepare their own presentations (Post13). However, they also reflected on their worries about correct grammar and making mistakes while preparing presentations (Post17).

4.2.7 Students' opinions about individual/pair/group work

The reliability test for this 5-item scale indicated a low alpha value for this scale (α = .459). The values of Post26 and Post29 in the Corrected Item-Total Correlation were

below .3, and this indicated their low correlations with the scale overall. Removing item Post26 would improve the reliability, with the alpha value rising to .535. As with the last scale, I will not treat it as scale for further statistical analyses.

Table 4.2.7 Students' perceptions of and opinions about individual/pair/group work

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Post11	37	3.49	.607	.368
Post26	38	4.50	.797	.635
Post29	38	4.21	.664	.441
Post30	38	4.29	.654	.427
Post31	38	4.29	.732	.536
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Results showed that most learners recognised the benefits of working in groups and pairs, with a lower preference for working individually (Post11, M = 3.49). They thought that planning and drafting presentations in groups helped them gather different ideas (Post26, M = 4.50), although some did not agree (SD = 797); that they could ask classmates for help when working in groups (Post30); and that taking part in pair work made them feel relaxed and learn better (Post31).

4.2.8 Students' opinions about feedback (mediation)

The low alpha value (.264) indicated low reliability for this 7-item scale. As the values of Corrected Item-Total Correlation were also low, it can be said that items did not all correlate to one another. Deleting any single item had little effect on the reliability. From looking at all questions, the main reason might be that too many different areas were asked about in this scale e.g. the teacher's feedback, classmates' feedback, learners' preferences for receiving feedback, and their feelings when

interacting with the teacher. Hence I will not treat these items as one scale for further statistical analyses.

Table 4.2.8 Students' perceptions of and opinions about feedback (mediation)

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Post12	37	4.65	.588	.345
Post15	38	4.47	.603	.364
Post20	38	4.16	.789	.623
Post23	38	4.55	.602	.362
Post28	38	4.58	.858	.737
Post32	38	4.34	.847	.718
Post35	38	3.97	.822	.675
Valid N (listwise)	37			

Overall, it is clear that learners wanted to received feedback individually more than in groups, as shown by the high rating of Post12 (M = 4.65) and low rating when asking whether it was effective that the teacher gave feedback to the whole class, not individuals (Post35, M = 3.97). They also recognised the benefits of receiving teacher feedback, as everyone in the group would learn about mistakes (Post15), and of the teacher trying to get them find out things by themselves instead of giving answers (Post23). However, differences in their opinions were found on responses of Post28, 32 and 35 (relatively higher SD values). This means some of them agreed with those statements, while others did not. These statements included whether they felt relaxed when interacting with the teachers to solve problems or mistakes (Post28), whether they thought it was effective that the teacher corrected most of the mistakes students made (Post32) and whether they liked it when the teacher gave feedback to the whole class, not individuals (Post35).

4.2.9 Examination of the difference in students' mean ratings

In addition to the reliability test and analysing responses of the two questionnaires, a t-test was used to examine whether there was a significant difference in the questionnaire mean ratings between the accounting and humanities groups. Since the rating scores were obtained from two separate groups, an independent-sample t-test was run. Results of the t-test (see Appendix H) indicated a statistically significant difference ($p<.05$) in 8 out of 84 items of the pre- and post- questionnaires. Among the 8 items, Pre10 and Post24 were under the 'teaching focus' construct; Pre20, Pre24, Pre27 and Pre33 under the 'oral presentations' construct; Pre40 under 'participation mode', and Post27 under the 'others' construct (see questionnaire items, Appendix D). It was apparent that these items were from several different constructs (or scales). Thus, it can be concluded that learners' ratings were fairly similar in most items and in all constructs. Where there was some difference between the means, its magnitude was small, not reaching statistical significance. Therefore, the two groups of participants can be treated as one.

4.3 Correlation analysis of the pre- and post-intervention questionnaires

In order to test the hypothesis that learners' preferences and perceptions would change after the implementation of TBLT and DA, the relationship between related variables of the pre- and post- intervention questionnaires was analysed using correlation analysis. The analysis allowed the direction and strength of the relationship to be evaluated. Since different areas were asked in the questionnaires, each area (e.g. listening, oral presentations, participation mode, and feedback) was computed and reported. Kendall's tau's and Spearman's correlation were selected because of the non-parametric, ordinal type of these datasets (see Appendix I) for

statistical results). As the correlation coefficient values of both tests did not differ much, only Kendall's tau (τ) is reported here. First, the teaching focus construct is presented, divided into listening, speaking, reading and writing. This is followed by oral presentations, participation mode, and feedback/mediation.

4.3.1 Teaching focus

From the level of familiarity with listening, speaking, reading and writing activities expressed by students in the pre-intervention questionnaire, it is interesting to see if they perceived these aspects differently in the post-intervention questionnaire. Correlation analysis between corresponding items in the two questionnaires was run. The items including the coefficient and actual significant values are presented in summary tables:

Table 4.3.1 Correlations between some 'teaching focus' variables

** Not all items within each sub-scale are displayed (see Appendix I for all items). This table contains only items described below, for illustration.*

	Pre-Q	Post-Q	Coefficient τ	sig. (2-tailed) value
Listening	Pre01	Post19	.314	.054
	Pre28	Post19	.084	.586
	Pre34	Post19	.027	.858
Speaking	Pre05	Post21	-.029	.854
	Pre07	Post21	.107	.497
	Pre23	Post21	.009	.950
	Pre31	Post21	.191	.197
Reading	Pre02	Post10	-.224	.148
	Pre02	Post24	-.101	.509
	Pre38	Post10	.139	.350
	Pre38	Post24	.114	.440
	Pre45	Post24	.092	.529
Writing	Pre03	Post25	-.129	.420
	Pre39	Post25	.167	.270
	Pre44	Post25	.272	.075

With regard to listening, there was a positive relationship between learners' preferences/familiarity with listening activities (Pre01, Pre28 and Pre34) and their perceptions of listening and watching different giving presentations in helping them to learn about effective presentation (Post19). However, this relationship was not significant. For speaking, only two items showed a small positive relationship; the focus on speaking (Pre07) and pronunciation (Pre05), and taking part in oral exercises (Pre23) and role-play (Pre31) were not significantly related to students' perceptions that this TBLT course helped improve their speaking skills (Post21). A negative correlation was found between their preferences for pronunciation practice (Pre05) and whether students felt that TBLT course helped improve speaking skills (Post21, τ = -.029). This could be interpreted as showing that the course did not give sufficient practice of pronunciation compared to learners' expectations. Students might consider pronunciation as a significant speaking skill, and thus feel that the course should also highlight pronunciation practice.

Overall, learners' preferences for and familiarity with reading activities were not significantly related to their opinions on reading after the course. However, a small positive relationship was found, for example, between their familiarity with reading texts for language analysis (Pre38) and their perception of whether reading company websites was useful for a study of language (Post10, τ = .139), and also whether reading the company websites helped them learn new words about business (Post 24, τ = .114). Furthermore, Pre45 (reading silently to find out information) was related to Post24 (τ = .092). However, learners' preferences for the focus on reading (Pre02) was negatively correlated with their perceptions of whether reading website materials about companies was useful for a study of language (Post10, τ = -.224) and

whether reading the companies' websites helped them learn new words about business (Post24, τ = -.101). Likewise, learners' preferences for and familiarity with writing were not statistically correlated with their perceptions of writing activities organised in this course, although most items indicated a slight positive relationship. A negative correlation was found between learners' preferences for the teaching focused on writing (Pre03) and whether they felt taking notes on important ideas and writing short passages helped them remember the content of their presentations better (Post25, τ = -.129).

4.3.2 Oral Presentations

Within the oral presentations construct, there was a significant correlation between some variables asked in the pre- and post- intervention questionnaires, as follows.

Table 4.3.2 Correlations between 'oral presentations' variables

Pre-Q	Post-Q	Coefficient τ	sig. (2-tailed) value
Pre08	Post08	.316*	.028
Pre08	Post17	.323*	.030
Pre08	Post18	.415**	.005
Pre36	Post17	.310*	.034
Pre41	Post34	.291*	.046
Pre46	Post17	.306*	.040

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*
*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

Firstly, learners' preferences for preparing and giving presentations on their own (Pre08) were significantly related to their reports of whether they were nervous or confident in giving a presentation (Post08, τ = .316, p<.05), whether they were worried about correct grammar and making mistakes (Post17, τ = .323, p<.05), and whether they learnt a lot from listening to their peers' presentations (Post18, τ = .415, p<.01). It could be said that the more students liked developing and giving

presentations on their own, the more they felt nervous in giving a presentation, the more they worried about making grammatical mistakes, and the more they learned from listening to peers' presentations. Secondly, there was a significant correlation between their familiarity with planning and giving an individual presentation (Pre36) and their worries about correct grammar and making mistakes (Post17, τ = .310, p<.05). This means the more learners are familiar with planning and giving a presentation independently, the more they are worried about mistakes. Thirdly, watching themselves on VDO recordings of meetings or presentations (Pre41) was significantly correlated with the perception that practising giving a presentation to their group and to the class helped boost their self-confidence (Post34, τ = .291, p<.05). The more they valued watching themselves on recorded meetings and presentations, the more they thought practising presentations in class was helpful in improving their confidence. The last pair of significantly correlated items was those of the use of dictionaries or grammar books (Pre46) with their worries about correct grammar and making mistakes (Post17, τ = .306, p<.05). The more they used these resources, the more they worried about making mistakes.

4.3.3 Participation mode

To examine if there was any difference in learners' perceptions of participation mode, working in group in particular, before and after attending this task-based course, a correlations analysis was carried out. Table 4.3.3 below shows correlated items between learners' preferences for working in class and groups and their feeling after participating in group work and discussions.

Table 4.3.3 Correlations between 'participation mode' variables

Pre-Q	Post-Q	Coefficient τ	sig. (2-tailed) value
Pre09	Post29	.331*	.028
Pre32	Post11	.309*	.040
Pre32	Post31	.446**	.003
Pre43	Post05	-.320*	.025
Pre43	Post31	.360*	.017

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*
*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

As for the participation mode, the learners' preference for the whole class working together in activities (Pre09) was significantly correlated with whether they felt relaxed when participating in group discussions (Post29, τ = .331, p<.05). The more students preferred working as a whole class, the more they felt relaxed in group discussions. There was a strong positive relationship between offering ideas/opinions during group discussions (Pre32) and learners' perceptions that taking part in pair work made them feel relaxed and learn better (Post 31). This was statistically significant at τ = .446, p<.01. Offering their ideas in group discussions (Pre32) was correlated to their perceptions that individuals worked productively on their own (Post11, τ = .309, p<.05). The same was between doing project work in groups (Pre43) and their perceptions when taking part in pair work (Post31, τ = .360, p<.05). However, a significantly negative relationship was found between doing project work in groups (Pre43) and their feelings as to whether they think working with other classmates in small group is enjoyable (Post05, τ = -.320, p<.05). This can be interpreted as the more they were involved in project work, the less enjoyable they found it when working in small groups with their peers.

4.3.4 Feedback and error correction (mediation)

The relation between learners' perceptions of feedback and error correction stated in the pre- and post- questionnaires was examined. Table 4.3.4 shows correlations between variables on feedback, which are mostly positive.

Table 4.3.4 Correlations between 'feedback and error correction (mediation)' variables

Pre-Q	Post-Q	Coefficient τ	sig. (2-tailed) value
Pre12	Post28	.347*	.021
Pre13	Post20	.322*	.036
Pre15	Post06	-.314*	.034
Pre19	Post20	.410**	.007
Pre25	Post35	.308*	.031
Pre30	Post28	.293*	.044
Pre35	Post28	.387**	.007
Pre42	Post28	.540**	.000
Pre47	Post28	.402**	.005

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)*
*** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*

There were more variables with strong positive correlations that were significant (τ = .05, p<.01,) in the feedback/error correction (mediation) compared to other constructs. The Post28 item was highly correlated to 5 pre-questionnaire items. That is, learners' feelings that they were relaxed when interacting with the teacher to solve problems/mistakes (Post 28) were significantly correlated to their preferences for the teacher asking them to find and correct their own mistakes (Pre12, τ = .347, p<.05), with getting feedback from the teacher in small groups (Pre30, τ = .293, p<.05), and with receiving feedback from the teacher individually (Pre35 τ = .387, p<.01). The other two items that had significantly strong relationship with Post28 were receiving feedback that the teacher gave to the class as a whole (Pre42, τ =.540, p<.01), and receiving feedback from their classmates on writing (Pre47, τ =.402, p<.01). This means that the more students prefer the teacher to encourage them to tackle mistakes

on their own, and receive group and individual feedback, the more they feel relaxed while interacting and solving mistakes with the teacher. The latter was also correlated with their preferences for the teacher giving feedback to the class as a whole (Pre13). Nevertheless, their preferences for the teacher giving feedback to individuals (Pre15) was negatively related to their perceptions that the teacher's ways of giving feedback by asking them guided questions are effective (Post06, τ = -.314, p<.05). This means the more they preferred receiving feedback individually, the less they regarded receiving feedback through the teacher asking questions as effective.

In summary, this section presented the reliability of the questionnaires, the differences between the two groups of learners' mean ratings, and the relationship between selected pre-/post- questionnaire variables using correlation analysis. For learners' rating manners, the t-test results revealed small differences in their ratings. There were only 8 items from the two questionnaires that can be identified with significantly different means. As these items were distributed across different scales, and showed no patterns, the two groups can be treated as one. Finally, the correlation analysis of selected item-pairs in the pre-and post-questionnaires indicated that there were more correlated items in the feedback/mediation construct than in others. None of the items in the teaching focus construct (of the pre- and post- questionnaires) were significantly related, although they had positive relationships.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

Overall, the implementation of tasks adopting TBLT and mediation techniques received both positive and negative feedback from the learners, the observers and myself. Given that this study looks beyond the outcomes of the specific intervention to examine the possible applicability of the designed tasks, TBLT and mediation approaches in the Thai context, the evaluation findings focus mostly on critical issues to be used for future adjustment. The analysis of learner and observer interview data, pre- and post-questionnaire responses, and my research journal, as well as class interactions, reveals important issues. Since several issues are interrelated or share common grounds, they are grouped into five main categories: 5.1 teaching and learning factors, and time constraints; 5.2 relevance and content coverage; 5.3 task complexity and difficulty; 5.4 language focus; and 5.5 peer engagement. Findings regarding these issues are reported in Chapter 5, with a summary table of key points appended at the end of this chapter. In Chapter 6, these important issues will be discussed in detail.

5.1 Teaching and learning factors and time constraints

The data analysis found that the operationalisation of tasks and TBLT was influenced not only by instructional practices, e.g. the design and features of tasks and the implementation of task in classroom teaching but also local context-specific issues. This section looks at the main influential factors, which included 1) institutional requirements for the syllabus and course delivery, 2) learners' limited English proficiency and knowledge of business, 3) learners' lack of familiarity with

TBLT and mediation procedures, 4) the use of mother tongue (Thai) in class and 5) time constraints. These seemingly basic but important issues need much consideration in future task adaptations and implementation.

5.1.1 Evaluation of this task-based course in relation to institutional requirements and the relevant course of English for Communication 3

As discussed in the Introduction Chapter, the enhancement of Thai learners' language and job-related skills is seen as a priority, and thus has always been placed at the top of my university's agenda. Regulations for English language teaching syllabi, objectives, course content and delivery, in particular, highlight both English and professional skill development. However, the main challenge for all teachers is the successful administration of the business-oriented syllabi within tight schedules and other contextual constraints such as large classes, learners' low English ability and lack of business knowledge. The difficulty of balancing several content areas in a syllabus to develop learners' business-related knowledge and skills, under various learning and teaching context specific situations, drew criticism that most subjects (i.e. course units) offered breadth but not depth in content. Being a part of the team teaching the compulsory unit of Eng.3 that offered business presentations and describing trends, my colleagues and I often shared our difficulties in trying to complete all syllabus content areas within 45 (37 hours) teaching periods – the standard length of most English course units at my university. The Eng. 3 eclectic syllabus responded well to the university's requirements in developing extensive knowledge of Business English covering a broad array of subject matter – mainly telephoning, presenting business information, describing trends, writing memos and business emails, and reading business news. On the other hand, it elicited criticism

for being very broad in content, which meant it could not offer learners intensive practice. For example, since presentations and describing trends were embedded in two textbook modules and a supplementary module drawing on various topics and activities, fewer periods were allocated to the study of presentations, and only a brief session for practice was possible. These shortcomings led to the development of this task-based course with an intensive focus on both content and presentation skill practice.

The findings helped evaluate not only the suitability of this course but also the existent course at the university. Feedback from students who attended both Eng.3 and this task-based course indicated the advantages of this task-based course over the standard Eng. 3 teaching. Students felt that this task-based course was more practical and intensive, even though the time allowed for practice needed to be extended, as can be seen from student comments:

> (Student interview, HM11)
> *We studied graphs before, but not as much as in this course. This was the first time I had to present graph information [describing trends]. This course should provide more practice in reading graphs.*
>
> (Student interview, HM12)
> *It looked as if this course was linked to English for Communication 3. Attending this course, my presentation skills had been improved. We learnt about presentations in Eng. 3, but your course offered more business focus and more practice on openings, closings, and sequencing ideas.*
>
> (Student interview, AC08)
> *The content [of Eng. 3 and this course] was quite similar; for instance, we had to present about the company's background in both. But this course focused on presentation skills and the use of body language more than Eng.3.*

These comments show that this task-based course provided intensive practice in business presentations, which preparation was regarded by HM11 and HM12 as

being more comprehensive than the content offered in Eng. 3. On a practical note, as mentioned by AC08, this course highlighted not only topic content but also presentation skills. Students particularly expressed satisfaction with this course because of the opportunities available for skill practice, even though they suggested an increase in practice opportunities for future implementation.

Based on the issues raised by students, I interviewed observers on the possibility of adjusting the course in future implementation. For the benefit of the learners and the university, all observers agreed on the modification of this task-based course but in a way that corresponded with institutional standards for course arrangement and delivery. The observers suggested:

> (Observer interview, Osv-B)
> *This course can be offered at the language centre, not as a mainstream course, especially for Years 3 and 4 students as they will need to apply for their jobs soon. The administration of the course then can be flexible.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-C)
> *It would be nice to focus only on presentation practice of each topic they have learnt – individually develop a script and give a presentation - probably starting from period 13 to period 20.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-D)
> *We can't just increase from two to three periods [if set as a mainstream course], but we can freely design and implement it, if organised as an elective subject. Thus, if you want to do it the best, it should be set up as an individual course, something like 'Business Presentations'.*

Taking into account general institutional regulations on course design and delivery, the observers' perception was that it is unlikely that this task-based course could be set as a mainstream course. The best alternative would be for the course to be offered as an elective unit or stand-alone course at the language centre, which would allow for the flexibility to focus on one content area and to offer extended teaching

periods. Furthermore, this course should be extended to up to 20 periods and provided to years 3 and 4 learners preparing to apply for jobs. As the 12 periods offered in this study were sufficient for students to study the content but insufficient for presentation practice, Observer C recommended that an additional eight periods should be set for individual practice.

5.1.2 Limited learner English proficiency and knowledge of business practices

It is widely known among English instructors at my university that the majority of students, except for those majoring in English, have low English ability. However, the observers and I agreed that the AC and HM learners in this study demonstrated exceptional abilities in dealing with unfamiliar content and had better English skills than second year students in general, although their TOEIC scores were not as high as expected. The test results were in line with self-assessment of their proficiency in the pre-intervention questionnaire. That is, they perceived themselves as being pre-intermediate, elementary and mid-intermediate learners, rather than upper-intermediate or advanced learners. Out of the 20 students who took the TOEIC test (from 45 in total), based on listening and reading tests, three students achieved high scores of 620, 600 and 500, whereas six students received low scores ranging from 205 to 295. Surprisingly, on average, the AC students taking the test performed better than the HM students who were doing an English Communication degree. This also corresponds with their self-assessment in the pre-intervention questionnaire wherein more AC than HM students rated their proficiency at pre-intermediate level, and more HM than AC learners considered themselves to be post-beginners. In their field, this AC group were ranked by the school of accountancy as high achievers in

accounting subjects but based on their TOEIC scores and my observation of their English ability during their interaction with me, I would consider them a mixed ability class in English. Some AC learners could converse better in English than others, while some of the students mostly communicated in Thai.

As reflected in observation notes and my journal, the observers and I were impressed with most AC and HM students' learning behaviour. Both groups were highly motivated and cooperative compared to students in general, despite a lack of prior knowledge and experience in business practices. The AC group learners were more familiar with business terms than the HM learners. The observers noted that tasks were successfully implemented in both groups, but with groups in other settings some adaptations of the task content and task processes might be necessary.

> (Observer interview, Osv-A)
> *Our students' English proficiency is low. They need a lot of time to do activities […]. As we need to explain all details, it always takes considerable amount of time.*
>
> (Observation note, Osv-B)
> *Writing about trends required them to synthesise prior knowledge of vocabulary and structures and then sequence ideas logically. They've never engaged in this kind of activity, and with limited proficiency they couldn't brainstorm information and produce accurate scripts, even at a paragraph level.*
>
> (Student interview, HM01)
> *The teaching should slow down a bit. I tried to push myself for ideas during script writing, but couldn't think what to write.*
>
> (Student interview, HM12)
> *As we're in our second year of study, we haven't learnt much about business, so it's difficult for us. […] It was the first time I had heard of this word [turnover] – never heard of it in other lessons. I didn't know the word 'subsidiary' either.*

It is apparent from the excerpts that learners' limited proficiency and prior knowledge affected the allocation of time for activities because a great deal of elaboration and clarification was needed, as can be inferred from Observer A's comment. Observer B also noted learners' difficulties in handling the Describing Trends task, which occurred clearly because of their first experience of creating presentation texts. Insufficient background knowledge resulted in a lack of ideas during the content planning and script writing. Both students (HM01, HM12) voiced their frustration at their lack of ideas and vocabulary knowledge.

5.1.3 Lack of learner familiarity with TBLT approach and mediation procedures

Neither TBLT nor mediation procedures had been implemented at my institution previously. Most fundamental English courses (including Eng.3) were operated through textbook-based lecturing with some departmental supplementary handouts. Based on my experience of teaching Eng.3, lessons normally started with listening or reading, followed by role-plays, vocabulary and grammar exercises, writing short paragraphs or reporting results. Students therefore found task-based and mediation procedures unfamiliar, as indicated by the pre-intervention questionnaire (see 4.1) and interview responses. The questionnaire results clearly showed that giving and receiving feedback, especially among peers, was uncommon (Pre16, SD = .824), and that learners expected the teacher's help with error correction (Pre 18, M = .375), instead of trying to solve mistakes by themselves (Pre12, M = 3.06). It was also apparent from the interview data that textbook-based teaching was normal practice, while engaging learners in group work and interactional activities were infrequent, as revealed by students themselves and observers:

(Student interview, AC08)
[The methods were] different from other classes that usually followed what presented in textbooks, nothing beyond that. I like working in groups […]. You made us do the work by ourselves first, and this made us recognise our own mistakes.

(Student interview, HM02)
It would be helpful if you explained [concepts] more. During group work, I asked questions but you did not give detailed explanations. I really wanted you to explain things more.

(Observer interview, Osv-B)
Your teaching was quite student-centred by trying to get students to talk and answer questions, not lecturing. […] Thai students, stereotypically, are afraid of making mistakes that would make them embarrassed […].

(Observer interview, Osv-C)
Getting them to think and analyse [language] would work with these groups but not the majority of our students. The low-level learners still couldn't identify incorrect plural forms or misspelt words in their writing.

In describing classroom procedures in this study, observers and students commented that the sessions were *'quite student-centred…not lecturing'* (Osv-B) and involved *'working in groups…[and the teacher] made us do the work by ourselves'* (AC08), *'getting [the learners] to think and analyse [language]'* (Osv-C). These descriptions indicate that techniques used were unfamiliar or somewhat irregular, as opposed to AC08's description of the usual classroom practice, which *'usually followed what was presented in textbooks, nothing beyond that'.* From these comments, students appeared to be unaccustomed to teaching methods, which pushed them to participate in discussions, brainstorm and share ideas and voice their opinions, as well as independently find out related language, before the teacher's explanation and summary; in other words, they were unused to being autonomous learners. Based on the post-intervention questionnaire results, although several positive comments regarding TBLT and mediation were received, there was variation in student

opinions when looking specifically at some items (see 4.2). The variation could be interpreted as learner uncertainty or skepticism about those techniques. For instance, some were relaxed when interacting with the teacher, while others were nervous (Post28, SD = .847); some wanted all mistakes to be corrected while others did not (Post32, SD = .847). Some preferred feedback to be given to the whole class while others preferred it to be given to individuals and small groups (Post35, SD = .822). Significantly, most students were worried about making grammatical mistakes (Post17, M = 4.18).

Mixed reactions could also be observed during lessons and, more clearly, in the VDO recordings of lessons. Among students who were dubious, some showed dissatisfied facial expressions when no answers or explicit explanations were given. Some stayed quiet and relied on other group members, and some looked stressed and worried. Although they were cooperative, these skeptical students (mostly from the HM class) did not actively participate in pre-task discussions and presentation planning and writing. This made the teaching quite difficult to manage as I had to ask a number of questions, more than expected, in order to lead the discussion and stimulate them to participate. Similar learning behaviour and class atmosphere occurred during class mediation, but the situation was slightly different for small group mediation. Students in small groups were more enthusiastic and involved, putting their utmost effort into correcting mistakes. Although the relatively new mediation procedures were well-received among students, the observers criticised it for being time consuming and for potentially putting pressure on low-level students (see details in 5.4.1.2).

Based on what we observed, the observers and I arrived at the conclusion that the learners' passive behaviour was caused mainly by their familiarity with lecturing and textbook-based teaching. Hence, this led to their lack of familiarity with TBLT and mediation techniques as reported above and development of worries about making mistakes when communicating in English. As revealed in the post-questionnaire (see 4.2.4), students worried mainly when they were interacting with the teacher (Post28, M = 4.58) and during the preparation of presentations (Post17, M = 4.18). Judging from their cooperative manner, the observers and I agreed that the learners were not unwilling to participate in interactions and discussions rather their discomfort stemmed from other factors.

5.1.4 The use of mother tongue in class

In principle, the use of English as the medium of instruction was strongly promoted at my university, but in practice most foundation English lessons (including Eng.3) were taught in Thai. For classroom interactions, teacher-student interactions in English were largely occurred in high proficiency (mostly English major) groups, but even so peer interactions in English were rare. From my experience and informal discussion with other lecturers, our deliberate intention to teach in English often floundered when we became aware of the learners' limited proficiency and pressure of time. With these barriers, English tended to be used only for classroom management and for completing activities, not for discussing or explaining concepts and language functions during which process we needed to be certain of being understood correctly. In this task-based study, it was my perception that a thorough understanding of both business concepts and related language was essential for good quality in presentation scripts; hence, use of Thai was not completely disallowed. In

other words, students' responses in Thai were allowed, and I switched to Thai when noticing learners' frustration at dealing with complicated business concepts and complex structures. The plan to use English in an effort to reinforce learners' English communication skills was achieved in interactions between the learners and myself wherein English was used for about 70% of class communication, but not amongst students themselves. This corresponded with learners' expectations, given that learners had stated their preferences for English over Thai in all lessons in order for them to improve their English skills. As HM04 and AC12 commented:

> *(Student interview, HM04)*
> *We study English so English should be used. If we don't understand one thing in English, we tend not to understand all. But I still think using English is the most useful.*
>
> *(Student interview, AC12)*
> *English [was] better, although Thai might also be useful. Switching between English and Thai sometimes made me confused, quiet or too slow to answer, and so I waited for you to explain more.*

Both HM04 and AC12 shared the view that communicating in English would be productive. HM04 insisted that the use of only English in class was best even though this might affect comprehension, whereas AC12 indicated possible confusion if teachers regularly switched between Thai and English. The overall student interview data showed varying opinions in terms of whether or not and when to use Thai. Some students proposed a summary of concepts in Thai after new concepts were introduced; some argued that switching between two languages would cause confusion rather than understanding. When asked about grammar explanations, most agreed that explanations in Thai were more helpful than in English. Student perspectives on the advantages of explaining grammar in Thai corresponded with Observer C's perception:

(Observer interview, Osv-C)
Thai should be used when explaining concepts like grammatical rules. Low-level learners need detailed explanations in Thai on structures and vocabulary such as those used in describing company profiles.

(Observer interview, Osv-A)
We can teach the main content in English but must always check learners' understanding. Of course, there will be times when students won't understand and so we need to explain again with simple English and more details. If the problem persists, we then switch to Thai because we have tried twice already. There's nothing wrong with using Thai; in fact, it will save time and enrich understanding.

As can be understood from the comments, Observer C strongly recommended detailed explanations in Thai, particularly for low-level learners when precise understanding was required, whereas Observer A differed slightly. That is, Observer A thought English should be used first with a switchover simple English if necessary and finally to Thai as the last resort. Observer A clearly supported using Thai in class as she said it could save time and deepen understanding.

To a large extent, I faced two major problems in using English in class. I either overused it when Thai would be more helpful or did not use it as much as I should. I tended to switch to Thai too quickly, particularly when pushing for answers. The observers agreed with me that using Thai would save time. It would shorten the processes of error identification and corrections. However, my rapid switching to Thai without allowing more time for students to think, especially when learners were getting stuck in the middle of English interactions, did not offer enough opportunity for thinking and asking questions in English. This contradicts with the view that thinking skills should be reinforced. While all participants, including myself, agree that English should be encouraged at all times, we also believe that Thai was helpful in some classroom situations.

5.1.5 Time constraints

As mentioned in 5.1.1, a standard length of English course at my institution, Eng.3 for example, is 45 teaching periods (50 minutes per period) or approximately 37 hours. As giving a presentation was one of the modules in Eng.3, this task-based business presentation course was designed according to the number of teaching periods allocated for the presentation module in the Eng. 3 course (12 periods in total). According to the feedback received, this 12 period task-based course was too short. One of the issues most criticised by the participants and myself in this section was that of the constraint of time in conjunction with other main issues such as language focus (5.4), teacher mediation (5.4.1) and peer engagement (5.5). Some student complaints about time were:

> (Student interview, HM05)
> *It would be good if class time were increased. Lessons moved on so quickly. Two periods for each lesson was too little – should be at least three periods.*
>
> (Student interview, AC08)
> *Studying this subject for 12 periods was too short. There should be enough time for everyone to practise. Two periods for learning concepts was okay, but after that additional time should be given for practice only.*

Complaining that two periods per lesson was inadequate, HM05 suggested that the time for each lesson should be extended to three periods or 150 minutes, while AC08 considered two periods to be enough for studying business concepts and practices (i.e. profiles, products, trends), although both agreed that extra time was needed for presentation practice. In response to post-intervention questions about whether there was sufficient time for the task, there was no consensus upon a response from the students (Post27, SD = .916, see p.164). This showed that some students thought the time allocated was insufficient.

Possibly the most serious problem identified by most students and the observers was a lack of individual practice between preparing and creating presentation scripts and giving the presentation for full feedback.

> (Observer interview, Osv-B)
> *Yes, limited class time created pressure. Some activities required more time than we predicted. Even though I wanted to cover all the aspects, as course components, it often happened that I felt students did not perform well as expected but that we needed to move to something else.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-C)
> *It would be nice to focus only on presentation practice of each topic they have learnt – individually develop a script and give a presentation - probably starting from period 13 to period 20.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-D)
> *It would be more practical and encouraging if each learner was involved in all steps from independently developing a script to giving a presentation. Although each student took turns giving a presentation in parts, this would not give them as much of a sense of pride because they didn't do the whole thing by themselves. It was understandable, though, that this could not be organised in such limited time.*

In the excerpts above, three observers pointed out that time pressure affected learning and teaching that is, there was insufficient time to improve students' poor performance (Osv-B) and to provide opportunities for individual practice so that each learner had direct experience of creating and giving his/her own presentation (Osv-C and Osv-D). It was generally agreed by participants that 12 periods of study were not enough, and that class time and course duration should be extended probably to 20 periods as proposed by Observer C.

In brief, section 5.1 summarised findings and participant perceptions of key contextual factors influencing the implementation of the tasks. These factors not only reflected the general picture in the university where this study took place but also

highlighted other pedagogical issues, e.g. the absence of a language focus phase (see 5.4) and unwillingness and unequal contribution during group work (see 5.5).

5.2 Relevance and content coverage

Overall, participant evaluations based on the post-intervention questionnaire and interview data show participant satisfaction with course relevance to career preparation, while the negative feedback relates mostly to content coverage. The relevance of the course was evaluated on the basis of its usefulness and applicability, which also includes the usefulness of task materials.

5.2.1 The usefulness and applicability of the course

Participants considered the course useful in three respects: it helped to improve general presentation skills and to enhance knowledge and skills in business presentations for their future careers, and it facilitated the learning of other related subjects. Based on the post-intervention questionnaire results (see 4.2), students viewed the course as being useful for improving presentation skills (Post01), learning about presenting a company (Post02) and practising presentations (Post07), with means of 6.47, 6.34 and 6.24 respectively. There were conflicting opinions when students were asked if the course helped boost self-confidence. While some of the questionnaire items (Post08, M = 6.00 and Post34, M = 4.42) and the responses of five interviewees indicated an increase in confidence, others still felt nervous and worried about making mistakes (see Post17, M = 4.18). Students also had heterogeneous opinions on other questionnaire items relating to the improvement of four macro skills (items 10, 19, 21, 24, 25; SD = .577, .593, .633, .634, .506 respectively). This indicates that some agreed that the course enhanced their

listening, speaking, reading and writing skills while others disagreed as to experiencing such improvement in the four skills. As for other aspects, students revealed during interviews that they particularly appreciated the first lesson on Developing Presentation Skills in preparing them for giving clearly structured introductions and using appropriate gestures and body language, and the overall course in building up their knowledge and skills for their future careers. Students reported in interviews that they developed a sound understanding of business concepts and language for presenting company profiles, products and business situations (trends). Although their current abilities were far below those of business professionals because of their lack of experience, the observers and I were impressed by their performance. To my surprise, the learners also expressed their appreciation that the course facilitated learning of two compulsory subjects: English for Communication 3 (Eng.3), and English for Accounting. In fact, the emphasis of this task-based course was fundamentally similar to the content of those subjects, especially Eng.3 in which giving a presentation was one of the modules on offer (see 5.1.1). Students who took part in interviews noted that the extensive practice in this course helped them perform better in those subjects, which assessed their performances in presentations. They recommended that this task-based course should be integrated in the second year syllabus.

5.2.2 Content coverage

In terms of content coverage, participant comments indicate that this task-based course provided good coverage of subject matter essential for learning and practising business presentations. It offered more in-depth content study and intensive skill practice than the compulsory subject of Eng. 3 as previously mentioned. The most

practical part, according to the observers and the learners, was the inclusion of developing presentation skills (Lesson 1) prior to studying topic content (i.e. tasks). Thus, both presentation skills and knowledge of business presentations were conjointly developed in this course. However, based on participant recommendations, four areas needed to be considered in future implementation: the need for guidelines for presentation planning, the need for the exclusion of describing services from products, the need for individual practice, and the need for intensive grammar teaching.

5.2.2.1 The need for guidelines for presentation planning

Despite the positive feedback mentioned above, the observers recommended that the practice of presentation skills encompass guidelines for presentation planning, within which presentation structures and language are taught as controlled writing rather than free writing. These recommendations were in fact in line with my reflective journal comments after observing group presentations. A teaching of precise step-by-step presentation planning, useful expressions, cohesive devices and transitional words seemed likely to improve the organisation and coherence of student presentations. Based on their experience of teaching writing, two observers suggested controlled writing that requires frequently used structures and expressions to be used in scripts as an appropriate approach. This would reduce learner errors and improve the quality of their presentations. The observers' suggestions were:

> (Observation note, Osv-B)
> *If they wrote the opening by hands following patterns like a sample text of Lisa Gomez [a textbook exercise], they would understand and do the activity [group writing the opening] better. They wouldn't need to think – just use the given information. What they had to do is arranging information in order and checking grammar and word pronunciation.*

(Observer interview, Osv-B)
We should teach them frequently used expressions […] in a controlled writing, instead of free writing. Their work would not sound like Thinglish [a form of English produced by Thais]. They do not need to create new terms. It is not required that Business studies, Economics […], except humanities, students to write in sophisticated English. Being able to communicate well and produce correct sentences is more important. The controlled writing can save students and teacher's time in dealing with mistakes and also avoid students feeling discouraged.

(Observer interview, Osv-C)
It's a good idea to give them blocks [of phrases and expressions]. Inventing their own would result in different groups creating different things that would be hard to point out all mistakes. Language used for openings and conclusions are like blocks [fixed terms that are typically used in presentations].

(Observer interview, Osv-D)
Various expressions from introduction to closing should be taught in the first few hours. This will reduce our work on checking their writing.

Furthermore, as noted by the observers other areas of weaknesses in content coverage stem from content overload, which can occur from combining describing products and services in the Describing Company Products task, insufficient individual practice, and inadequate grammar instruction, as presented below.

5.2.2.2 Need for the exclusion of describing services from products

The main reason for the suggestion to teach services and products separately was that in order to describe both areas different lexical terms were required. As Observer A comments '*Different sets of vocabulary were needed […]; some words like 'service-minded and 'hospitality' were often used to talk about services.* Observer C had a similar view, saying that *'Business involves both products and services but they were different. If they were combined in a task, class time should be increased.* In the opinion of Observers A and C, discarding the service part would make the task less complicated since concepts and language used for describing both components are significantly

different. In addition, a focus on describing products could be expanded with more time generated for practice. My observations of the groups working on describing services confirmed the suggestions of the observers. The groups struggled throughout the lesson in their attempts to develop the presentation scripts on hotel services. The descriptions of services shown in the hotel's webpage contained a number of sophisticated words, which were completely different from the product descriptions. Hence, it would be more practical for these two areas to be taught in two separate tasks in future implementation of the course.

5.2.2.3 Need for individual practice

In terms of individual practice, while learners preferred working in groups to working individually during pre-task and group preparation of scripts, five post-questionnaire respondents who answered open-ended questionnaire items and a number of student interviewees complained about a lack of opportunities for independent preparation and presentation, including creating their own visuals. One student, HM02, claimed that insufficient practice was largely the result of an over-emphasis on the content, and hence some content areas should be reduced. She proposed that each student should prepare a script and materials, and give a presentation as in real life situations. By setting up a simulated atmosphere, learners would expend more on preparation and presentation, as her comment shows:

> (Student interview, HM02)
> *The content should be reduced to have more time for practice. I only gave a presentation once with other group members, not by myself. I thought you would assign each of us giving a presentation, one by one, in all lessons. […] everyone should choose one product, prepare a script; probably in Thai first and then in English with your feedback, and after that present it within group before to the class.*

Indeed, HM02's proposal tallied with the reservations expressed by Observers A and D relating to the last lesson wherein all group members took turns giving a presentation in parts, instead of individually presenting a full version. As a consequence, the observers stressed the importance of enhancing learners' ability to independently create their own presentations after some practice in groups, as indicated by their comments:

> (Observer interview, Osv-A)
> *I expected each student prepared a presentation with PowerPoint slides like in real presentations that they opened files and then click, click. […] the missing part was preparing slides showing turnover, numbers, graphs and photos of a company. With the time provided, only language could be covered, not techniques. If possible, everyone should give a presentation, and get comments on both language and delivery. They would feel good and considered the course useful.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-D)
> *The content and materials: presentation skills, profile, products, trends, all were blended very well but it was a shame that there were no opportunities for individual practice*

As noted above, the coordination of content wherein all topics were well merged in the course was seen as a strength (Osv-D) while a lack of opportunities for individual practice was considered a definite weakness. Observer A advised that learners should develop PowerPoint slides to display business information. The course thus should incorporate not only language but also skill training with the incorporation of the teacher's feedback. Likewise, I also recognised the shortcomings of individual practice, reflecting in my research journals that students had a chance to present their work only once or twice or even not at all throughout the course, especially shy or weak students.

5.2.2.4 Need for teaching of more grammar

Another critical issue raised by participants was inadequate coverage of grammar. The course drew on relevant grammatical features, but most were not explicitly taught and explained. The observers regarded explicit teaching of grammar significant to all Thai learners who learn English as a foreign language. Participant requests for grammar instruction will be discussed further in the language focus section (see 5.4).

5.2.3 Task materials

Overall, feedback after task implementation reveals that while most materials fulfilled the aims in building on and expanding learners' business presentation skill practice, pre-task listening and main task reading materials needed to be refined. The use of other pre-task materials for the teaching of presentations, i.e. online VDO clips, teaching VDOs and quiz, proved to be excellent resources in stimulating learners' interest and motivation in the early stages of business-related study. However, observer comments and unforeseen problems during teaching highlighted the need for modification of materials in future task implementation. Meanwhile, my deepest concern shared with the observers was related to the refinement of tasks and materials in ways that corresponded effectively with the Thai students' learning preferences and linguistic needs, especially of those with low English proficiency. Keeping the simplification of materials in mind, the observers and I debated whether authentic materials should be simplified at the expense of losing realistic language. The remainder of this section considers outcomes of these discussions.

5.2.3.1 The usefulness of materials

The use of presentation VDOs, YouTube VDO clips and quiz was well-appreciated. They attracted the attention of the learners very effectively. As noted by the observers, learners would lose their concentration on the lesson after the introduction phase or every 15-20 minutes. Using a variety of interesting and multimedia materials aside from textbooks helped draw their attention back. The observers further commented that integrating technology in teaching could be very helpful except when technological problems arise. Despite some internet crashes and reconnection delays, presentations by well-known experts (e.g. Steve Jobs) and funny VDO clips showing poor and good presentations provided rich resources for brainstorming and discussing ideas about effective presentation techniques. Students were stimulated to think about and offer ideas in relation to these VDOs during the pre-task discussions. The discussion topics included appropriate body language (e.g. gestures, facial expression) and presentation skills, together with listening to a presentation of business situations, answering a quiz about company profiles, and matching graphs with descriptions. Observation notes and interviews indicated that these activities were genuinely well received, though technical considerations (see Observer B's comment below), as well as focus and selection (see comments by Observers D and A) were identified as potentially problematic:

> (Observation note, Osv-B)
> *The three VDO clips worked well. Students were interested in the VDOs and could identify differences in those presentations. Unfortunately, technical problems were major obstacles in this activity.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-D)
> *Good materials. I thought Nike (quiz) was a reading exercise. I asked you if there wasn't any content to show them. I didn't know it was actually the*

> *content […]. Apart from revealing the answers, you should also emphasise - it's about a headquarters, it's about turnover, it's about an establishment.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-A)
> *Nike is well-known but students tend to watch, rather play sports. Females may do neither. Thus, it could be predicted that they had little ideas about Nike's profile, but were more familiar with McDonald's and interested in its profile. This would help accelerate task completion process.*

In her comment, Observer D strongly recommend summarising key terms in the materials. Merely leaving students to notice the terms in answers by themselves was not effective. Observer A stressed a need for familiarity of content or concept that would not only stimulate learners' interests but also possibly shorten the time needed to complete a task. This emphasises the need for being aware of learner familiarity with the content in future task design.

Learner comments regarding materials closely paralleled observer opinions. In the interviews, three students could recall the features of materials and pre-task stages. They stated their preferences for participating in a quiz and watching VDOs and later brainstorming ideas with the class or in groups over a presentation of the main concepts by the teacher. They mentioned the advantages of the pre-task materials in enhancing their thinking and thought that this would more likely promote longer-term memory of concepts than direct teaching. One student (HM04) even considered watching a VDO a relaxing activity:

> (Student Interview, AC15)
> *It [quiz] activated my thinking about the topic areas before you teaching us. Thinking made me remember concepts – what comes first and after. If you told me straightaway, I would not remember. [The VDO was] about eye contact, gestures and presentation preparations. It compared good and poor presentations. This made me remember what [I] should not do when giving a presentation. The VDO—I[t] wanted me to find out what it was all about.*

(Student interview, HM04)
I think it was good. Watching a VDO instead of studying from paper-based handouts made me relaxed and had a lot of fun.

5.2.3.2 Concerns over features of pre-task listening and the authenticity of website materials

Overall, findings indicate positive feedback towards most pre-task materials, except my self-produced pre-task listening that was recorded using foreign speakers. The purpose of offering learners' exposure to authentic texts was attained, but the task was considered pedagogically impractical by the observers. Significant problems included the lengthiness of the listening texts, excessive business jargon, too many large numbers, and fast delivery. These difficulties diverted learners from learning about key terms and/or new concepts to listening for numbers. Observer A commented that:

(Observer interview, Osv-A)

Listening for numbers was difficult as they couldn't see figures […]. We may change from a real to made-up smaller figures, but keep original sentence patterns. With small figures, they would probably be able to identify key terms e.g. profit, revenue and something else. They needed to concentrate on a lot of things while listening […] and this was why they stopped when hearing large numbers. I remember listening tasks of Samsung and McDonalds' profiles contained large figures. It would be better if the listening required learners to focus on the profile information.

The same materials may or may not work with particular groups depending on their levels. Modification of materials is crucial for low level learners. Only main parts containing target language or answers should be retained, while irrelevant details should be discarded […]. Long listening can result in confusion.

Problems associated with the use of authentic texts emerged not only in pre-task listening but also in main task reading materials wherein genuine website materials

of widely known companies such as Sony, Samsung and IKEA were used as reading resources and models for developing presentation scripts. Similar to the abovementioned pre-task listening text, these website materials contained numerous specific business-related terms and complex structures. However, students had conflicting opinions regarding the difficulty of materials, as reported in the post-intervention questionnaire (Post03, M = 5.42, SD = 1.004; see 4.2).

From the interview data, two of the observers indicated that the authentic texts were too difficult and thus needed to be simplified. To deal with this issue, three possible solutions were suggested by participants: 1) allotting more time if authentic materials are used, 2) simplifying the materials especially for low-level groups and 3) reducing the content by selecting only target information and structures. Further advice included displaying concepts, structures and useful expressions on PowerPoint slides. The observers believed that visualisation could assist learners learn and memorise the language better. Another strong recommendation centred on providing learners with handouts containing a summary of concepts and language before the group work with the teacher also talking leaners through each element in the handouts for a thorough understanding.

However, as mentioned earlier, while two of the observers regarded authentic texts too linguistically complex, the others felt that continuous exposure to authentic business materials maximised the opportunity for students to acquire language used in real business communication. In their opinion, the acquisition at this early stage of learning would not be substantial, but total reliance on modified materials would inhibit their progress. Rather than relying entirely on simplification, adjustments of teaching methods (as suggested by Observer B below) in order in support the

exploitation of authentic materials would be strategically more helpful, for example, assigning pre-reading of materials before class, allocating more time to tasks and providing more assistance during tasks. A flexible option would be to employ modified texts for learners' first encounters with difficult topics and then switch to authentic texts in subsequent stages. The observers' advice included:

> (Observer interview, Osv-D)
> *That is not authentic. Students will not see simplified versions in real life but real difficult ones. Since they could complete the tasks, this means they could do them, but may need more time. If the materials are simplified, they will not be authentic and useful.*
>
> *Which level? Year two? You may prepare 2-3 texts, starting from a simplified one to ease their worries about the difficulty of this topic, and then using authentic texts. But no, not all texts should be simplified.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-B)
> *Yes, I support the use of authentic materials but it really depends on the purpose. If we want them exposed to real work-related language, we shouldn't modify the materials. Rather, we should provide more help during activity such as introducing new words or complex sentences, but not explaining all. […] we should assign them to study materials before class.*

Interestingly, their comments also suggest that a decision on retaining authentic texts should be based on learners' potential in successfully manipulating tasks, and that the rationale for using authentic texts should include an instructional purpose in the exposure to realistic language use. If learners can successfully handle certain tasks containing authentic materials, this means the materials are suitable and not beyond the learners' comprehension. In brief, participants found task materials useful and stimulating, but some of the authentic materials might need to be modified and simplified.

5.3 Task complexity and difficulty

In this study, task complexity and difficulty are evaluated and closely examined from three different angles: mediation during class interactions, participant perceptions and Robinson's (2001) and Skehan's (1998) criteria for grading and sequencing tasks. Two prominent roles of mediation were emphasised in this study (see 2.2 and 3.1.1). Used as a teaching and learning tool, mediation is provided to help learners handle the complexity of business concepts and language in order to develop in-depth understanding of the subject matter, which in turn gives the teacher feedback on teaching (see 5.4.1). Serving as a research tool for task evaluation, mediation provided me with valuable feedback on tasks in my role as the teacher. Characteristics of the designed tasks, i.e., task complexity (Robinson, 2001) and task difficulty (Skehan, 1998) (see p. 25), including task stages (Willis, 1996) (see p.49), could be evaluated through the involvement of the learners in tasks and interactions with me during the co-construction of knowledge. Learner engagement during all task phases, from the task orientation to task completion stages, and the extent of mediation needed in order to handle the tasks allowed me to evaluate whether the designed tasks were appropriate. For example, I looked at the extent to which mediation was needed, whether implicit or explicit forms of mediation were required, how learners responded to the mediation, and whether they achieved the task after mediation (see 2.2.5). Because of the space and scope of this study, only the most relevant interactions were selected for analysis. If mediation was provided during script development, I also examined the final scripts to provide a thorough analysis. Furthermore, the analysis and interpretation of task difficulty relied on learner perceptions of the difficulty of tasks as a primary source and observer

feedback as a secondary source. As Robinson (2001) (see 2.1.2.1) points out, only task complexity can be pre-planned during task design, whereas task difficulty is hard to predict because it depends on the perceptions of the individuals when engaging with tasks. Individual learner factors defined as affective variables (e.g. motivation, confidence) and ability variables (e.g. proficiency, intelligence) significantly influence learner task performance and thereby perceptions of task difficulty. In addition, given that task design and sequencing in this study were mostly guided by Skehan's (1998) classification criteria and Robinson's (2001) Triadic framework (see 2.1.2.1), I re-examined the identified task elements that were perceived as difficult using Robinson's (2001) and Skehan's (1998) criteria.

5.3.1 Task complexity and difficulty as reflected in class mediation

Interactions in Extracts 1 and 2 taken from the Describing Company Profiles task (Lesson 2), and Extracts 3, 4, 5 and 6 from the Describing Trends task (Lesson 5) below illustrate how mediation reflects the level of complexity and difficulty of the two tasks. In the Describing Company Profiles task, while mediation was not required during the learning of concepts related to company profile in pre-task, in the main task it helped steer learners in their planning. During script development, I observed their confusion and uncertainty after reading the task worksheet, which described the situation and provided the instructions (see lesson plans, Appendix K). They were unsure of what to do, where to start and how to construct their presentation. I then asked them to tell me their plan and the topics they wanted to put in the presentations. This verbalisation of their ideas and planned actions not only allowed me to gauge their understanding of the concepts, task situation and presentation structures but also to identify weak aspects of the tasks.

Extract 1

(T=Teacher, S1= student one, Ss=two or more students)

01	*T:*	*Tell me, who are you?*
02	*S1:*	*The HR manager*
03	*T:*	*What will you have to do?*
04	*Ss:*	*Prepare a three-minute presentation on company profile*
05	*T:*	*Please give examples of information you want to include in your*
06		*presentation.*
07	*Ss:*	*establishment, headquarters, turnover*
08	*T:*	*What are you going to write about the company's establishment?*
09		*How many paragraphs do you plan to write? What will your first*
10		*paragraph be about?*

In this interaction between myself and one AC group, I tried to elicit ideas and the plan they had in mind. I believed that working from scratch would enhance their skills for presentation planning; thus instead of giving details of what to do, I asked them open-ended questions to give a hint at their role, the expected outcome, and tentative content and structures of their presentation. The prompts given were quite implicit but as the learners had just read a task worksheet with instructions, they could respond promptly. The response of the learners stating that they intended to include information about establishment, headquarters and turnover showed that they had reasonable conceptual understanding of the topic (i.e. company profile), but the difficult part lay in planning. The interaction in Extract 1 suggested that explicit instructions and guidance on steps of presentation planning may be essential in order to prepare this group of learners for their first exposure to TBLT and practice of business presentations. A similar problem is shown in Extract 2 wherein the Mandarin group appeared to be lost during planning:

Extract 2

(T=Teacher, S1= student one, Ss=two or more students)

01	*T:*	*Okay? Which group [company] are you working on?*
02	*S1:*	*Mandarin [Oriental]*
03	*T:*	*Oh, Mandarin…yes, okay. So, you know when it was founded?*
04	*S1:*	*… uh … established?*
05	*T:*	*Established … when? ... any information from here?*
06	*Ss:*	*No*
07	*T:*	*Yes, you can see here … right? More than one hundred …*
08	*Ss:*	*more than one hundred thirty five years*
09	*T:*	*Okay, so you've got establishment … what else?*
10	*Ss:*	*Near Chao Phraya River*
11	*T:*	*Ah… so you can talk about … give information about location*

Since the group could not explain their planned content, I asked them to underline sentences in the information sheet about the company to identify relevant information and language. Mediation based on learners' verbalisation of their planned content shown in Extract 2 enabled me to pinpoint the gaps in presentation planning skills and conceptual understanding experienced by the learners from the Mandarin group. Without guidance on selecting specific information from reading materials, learners were unable to extract and consolidate different pieces of information into a draft. Although the problems identified in both Extracts 1 and 2 were not directly related to the complex features of the Describing Company Profiles task, the missing task content (i.e. explicit instructions, guidelines for planning) would indirectly make the task more complex, leaving the learners unable to complete the task on their own. The process of verbalisation enabled the identification of the missing aspects of the task and learners' need for support, and mediation helped progress planning of presentation content and structures.

Further challenges caused by the complex nature of describing graph trends and the designed features of the Describing Trends task also made this task difficult as perceived by participants and as shown in Extracts 3-6. During interviews and the post-intervention questionnaire, students and observers revealed that the Describing Trends task was the most difficult (see 5.3.2). Because of the demands in accurate reading and describing graph trends and the fact that students had insufficient conceptual and language knowledge to handle these demands, a lot of help, mediation and explanations in Thai were required throughout the lesson. Extracts 3 and 4 below show learners' confusion over using the preposition *'by'* during the pre-task of describing and drawing graphs.

Extract 3 One group was discussing [in Thai] the use of a preposition 'by'

01 S1: I don't know if this one [the interest rate] fell 2% or fell to 2%
02 S2: Decreased … down to 2%, I think.
03 S3: Do you understand? What should we draw here?
04 Ss: [went quiet]

Extract 4 Class mediation on the use of preposition 'by' to describe trends

01 T: OK…No. 2, the interest rate decreased by 2% in May. So how can this be
02 drawn in the graph?
03 S2: [fell from 8] to 2%
04 T: She said the graph fell to 2%. Do you agree with her? [asking the class]
05 Ss: No … wrong
06 T: Why?
07 Ss: Because it went down 2%
08 T: Yes, only 2%. Tell me, from what number to what number?
09 Ss: From 8% to 6%
10 T: [in Thai] So what does 'decreased by' mean? What does it tell you about?

11 Ss: [no response]

12 T: 'Decreased by' … 'increased by'. What can be concluded from this?

13 When to use 'by'?

14 Ss: [no response]

15 T: It is used to tell the diff…

16 Ss: The difference.

The small group discussion in Extract 3 was based on one of the six incomplete graphs students had to complete. I considered accurate reading of graph trends essential for describing trends, so I drew the class's attention through class mediation, as in Extract 4. This showed only a fraction of the mediation and assistance needed throughout the pre-task phase. Instead of giving direct explanations, I employed elicitation and verbalisation techniques to help students draw conclusions on the function of the preposition *'by'* to describe trends. The prompts provided were quite explicit and straightforward *'Yes, 2%. Tell me, from what number to what number?'* Based on Extracts 3 and 4, the intensive demands of the task in completing several lengthy graphs and the complexity of task content and language made the work too complex and difficult. This second pre-task activity after matching graphs with description was followed by the third pre-task of drawing a 12 month graph, which was even more complicated. Extract 5 illustrates the struggle of the learners in coping with an unknown word:

Extract 5 Class mediation: introducing the word 'dip'

01 T: [read a transcript] Why did we have that dip in June? From this

02 transcript, could you please tell me what does 'a dip' mean?

03 Ss: [no response]

04 T: Can you look at the sentence, and tell me whether 'a dip' means

05 sales went up or down or dropped'

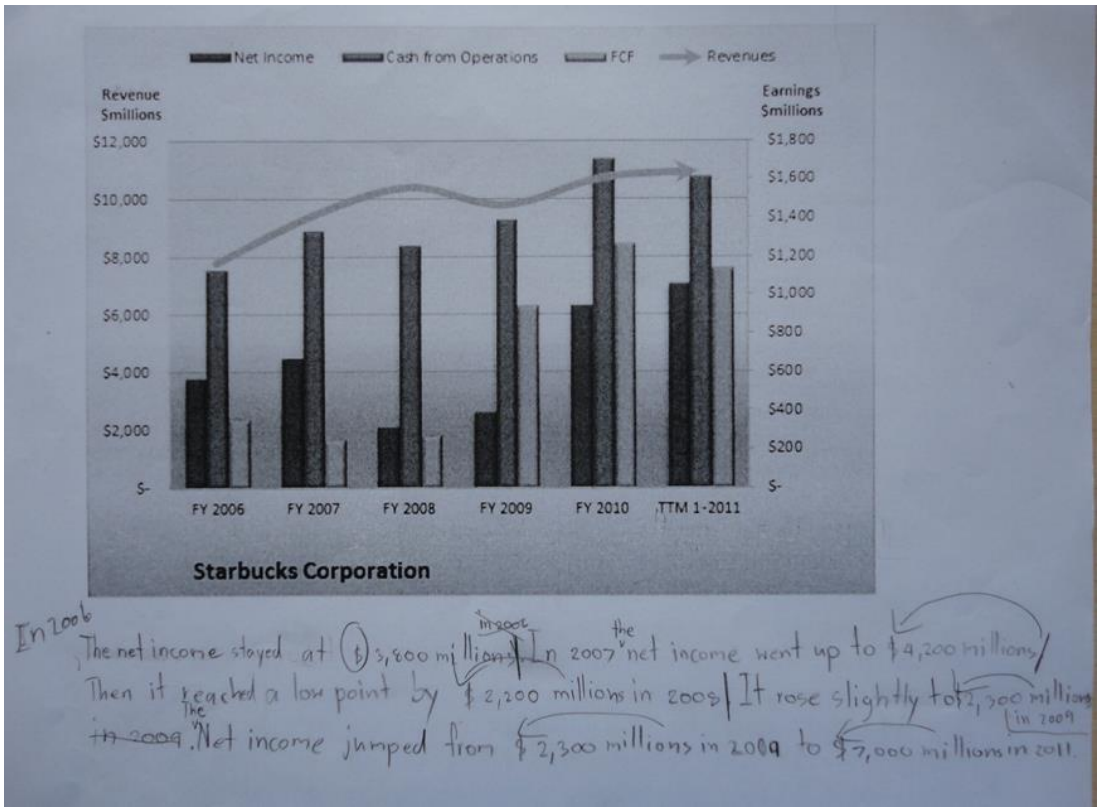
06 Ss: [quiet, still did not respond]

07 S1: [spoke softly] Down
08 T: Down, right? Okay, what does 'a dip' mean then? If you don't know the
09 meaning of this word…if you read further: 'Lodgico, our biggest competitor
10 launched a new product, and it cut into our market share. Sales fell to
11 5,000 units in May'. So, 'dip' means 'went up' or 'went down'?
12 S1: Went down
13 T: [in Thai] um…..fell to. Is this correct? We can notice from here…..' dip' –
14 fell to, or dropped, but 'why did we have that dip?'. 'A dip' is a noun.

Extract 5 is taken from the listening and drawing graph pre-task (see lesson plan, Appendix K). This listening extract was taken from a business discussion or presentation, and so the delivery rate was fast and contained several business terms and figures unfamiliar to learners. Listening to the discussion of the trends of annual revenues and then drawing a graph, learners appeared anxious and failed to complete the graph. Their performance improved in the second round of listening, when the tape was segmentally paused. The unknown word *'dip'* ruined their concentration vis-à-vis remaining information. The mediation was provided through the elicitation of meaning from the verb form of *'dip'*, which was identified from other verbs (i.e. *fell to*, *dropped*).

Considerable challenges caused by linguistic complexity occurred not only during pre-tasks but also during script writing, even on the areas that had just been mediated. Extract 6 shows learners' persistent difficulty in using preposition *'by'* to describe figures, although this specific use of *'by'* was previously discussed in the pre-task (Extracts 3 and 4).

Figure 5 Script on describing trends, written by the AC Starbucks Group



This script (Figure 5) contains several mistakes, but it also shows learners' ability in manipulating verbs and adverbs (e.g. *stayed at, went up to, reached a low point, rose slightly*) introduced in pre-task materials and language handouts. However, some terms, such as '*jumped from',* sound informal and are more appropriate for spoken rather than written work. As the use of preposition '*by'* had just been discussed in a pre-task, I seized this opportunity to mediate '*reached a low point by*', illustrated in Extract 6.

Extract 6 Group mediation on using the preposition *'by'*

01 T: Oh, check your dictionary how to say numbers in million.

02 Ss: [Quiet]

03 T: Can you say 'by' here? Reached a low point 'by'?

04 Ss: [no response]

05 T: Remember? We talked about this - increased to … increased by.
06 Ss: [quiet, still did not respond]
07 S1: [in Thai] 'By' to tell how much it increased, from one figure to the
08 other
09 T: Yes, the difference… and so, can we say 'by' here?
10 Ss: No
11 T: What should we say then? Please check the handout I gave you.
12 Ss: [no response]
13 T: [reading the handout] An increase…Um, a recovery…Um
14 S2: [an] increase of, [a] low point of
15 T: Yes. Why? Why do you say 'a low point OF', 'an increase OF'?
16 [emphasised the word 'of']
17 S2: [in Thai] because '2,200 million dollars' [two billion two million
18 dollars] was the total net income , not the difference.
19 Ss: Yes … yes

In this interaction, I pointed out mistakes in reporting numbers by suggesting that learners consult a dictionary. After listening to this class interaction, I realised that I should have provided mediation on this area. Since learners had just received mediation on using preposition '*by',* I quickly directed the group's attention to their incorrect use of '*by'* in their script, and referred to examples in the handout to guide them. In the absences of an immediate response, it seems that group members other than students 1 and 2 still could not manipulate this form and function. However, one student (S2) could verbalise his reason for why *'of'* is the correct preposition for this sentence, and the others agreed.

The ongoing struggles of the students and the amount of mediation given, mostly through verbalisation, to help them cope with unfamiliar concepts and vocabulary and structures, as shown in Extracts 1-6, made me aware of the complex nature of

the task content and related language. I then decided to set up the mini-language focus activity before group work, as described on p. 120.

5.3.2 Participants' perceptions of areas of difficulty

As the open-ended responses in the post-intervention questionnaire and interviews showed, while approximately 30% of participants reported the compatibility and correspondence of all tasks with learners' abilities, about 70% of them regarded the Describing Trends as the most difficult tasks in the course. Looking at task stages, around 50 % of the participants found the task cycle stage too demanding, as it required learners to elicit ideas, language and content from authentic website materials in order to develop presentation scripts within a given time limit. Negative feedback was also received on pre-task listening activities of all tasks regarding the delivery speed and an excessive number of specific terms in listening texts. Factors leading to the difficulty of the Describing Trends task, all listening pre-tasks, and task-cycle stages across all tasks were analysed. It was found that there was no single factor determining the difficulty. Rather, the difficulty stemmed from a number of factors including learner-related factors, the complexity of subject matter and task demands as well as delivery.

5.3.3 Participant perceptions of factors contributing to task difficulty

For the task on describing trends, three main factors contributing to the difficulty were identified by participants: 1) linguistic and conceptual complexity of the subject matter, 2) learners' lack of prior knowledge and limited English proficiency and 3) task demands as well as the delivery of tasks. Although the task drew on fundamental concepts and language for describing changes (e.g. in sales, profits and

turnovers), the ability to master core structures and lexis for describing movements, figures and period of time over which those changes occurred was also essential. This entailed not only knowledge of parts of speech but also skills in analysing reading and interpreting graphs as well as writing a coherent presentation script. The main challenges identified by learners were analysing different forms of changes and movements (e.g. upward and downward trends, stability etc.) and selecting appropriate language items to describe them. Learners' lack of prior knowledge and their first exposure to this subject matter equipped only with limited English ability were other factors contributing to the difficulty of these tasks. Students found a lot of terms completely unfamiliar, such as *'fluctuation'*, *'levelling off'* and *'dramatically'*, as well as the distinction between closely related terms such as *'dramatically'* and *'sharply'*, and *'slight'* and *'gradual'*. More complicated was sentence transformation, mainly verb-adverb and adjective-noun formulations. Most students were able to manipulate the verb-adverb sentences like *'sales increased slightly'*, but seemed confused with adjective-noun patterns like *'There was a slight increase in sales'*. After the provision of mediation or even explanation of language items provided, they could perform the task better, although they still struggled with the work. The following comments by the participants illustrate the points made here:

> (Student interview, AC 12)
> *At the beginning I couldn't catch up with the lesson, and this made me bored. I didn't know some words, but you had already moved on to something else. You should introduce words for describing graphs – increase, decrease – before listening or during activity.*

> (Student interview, AC15)
> *The difficult part was using modifiers, for example, using 'slightly' to modify 'declined' and 'increased', and also when to say 'slightly' – to what extent it declined or increased that can be described 'slightly'.*

(Student interview, HM05)
I've never read anything about graphs before. The content was difficult, not the activity. […we] should spend more time on introduction – more explanation about graphs before group work. The first time learning and with little explanation, I didn't know what to do. […The text] said, in English, sales increased in the last three months. We didn't know much about business – reading this in Thai would have been confusing enough, but this was in English.

(Observer interview, Osv-B)
'Pattern-Verb' – verb followed by adverbs, was not a problem but students often found 'Pattern-Noun' difficult. After 'There was' they did not know what to say.

Other factors that made the Describing Trends task difficult were task demands and task delivery. The observers admired the use of various pre-task activities and group work to enrich skill practice but disapproved of the overloading content of each. Three consecutive pre-task activities were implemented: matching graphs with descriptions, underlining useful language, and listening and drawing graphs followed by a brief language focus. According to observers, the simultaneous requirements for learners to listen, remember all details, and match or draw the graphs made the task too cognitively demanding. None of the learners could complete the activities in their first attempt. Each learner looked confused and fell quiet. The activities were completed only with reliance on the teacher's mediation and explanation. Their recommendation was that for less experienced learners practising informal presentations, only fundamental concepts and content of key areas should be covered in the task. A shorter listening task containing simpler vocabulary and trends would be more suitable. A pre-teaching of related language during pre-task would also enable better task performance.

(Observer interview, Osv-A)
Matching graphs with descriptions was difficult. They mostly guessed answers. They had to listen, remember details, and decide which graphs matched the descriptions. Six graphs showing both upward and downward trends were too many – three would have been enough.

How graphs are used depends on the purpose and target audience […] but this task included a wide range of areas. If the manager gave a presentation to internal staff, the information would not be that intensive, e.g. —how much in thousands sales rose or fell. Only a report of turnover and profits in the last three years would be sufficient.

(Observation note, Osv-B)
Most students did not know the terms 'steadily' and 'dramatic', but after your explanation, they could match [descriptions with] graphs. When you summarised and listed verbs describing upward and downward trends, they understood and could use them more accurately.

(Observer interview, Osv-C)
[There were] too many pre-task activities. Learners seemed to get all the concepts but felt bored after repeated activities. It was good to change from reading to listening, but this led to repetition of areas practised.

In fact, after I realised that the learners had limited English ability, which prevented them from dealing with the complexity of subject matter, the Describing Trends task was modified to lessen the difficulty during use with the humanities group. Learners received further mediation and explanation of unknown vocabulary and structures as well as a language handout. The group work was also split into two sessions to allow more time for brainstorming of ideas and discussing language while developing a script. Through these adjustments, the humanities group managed to improve their presentation drafts with satisfactory results in comparison with the accountancy group who received less mediation and explanation of unknown terms. In my journal, I noted that to some extent learners' frustration in dealing with unknown vocabulary was resolved through mediation and explanation:

> (Research Journal, The teacher-myself)
> *Because of the intention to encourage learners to explore the language with less reliance on my presentation of the target language, some learners looked tense and confused when coming across with new words such as 'sales', 'fluctuation' and 'peak'. However, after a brief discussion and some explanation of the terms, most students could understand concepts and information about trends.*

So far, I have presented the perceptions of learners, the observers and myself with respect to the Describing Trends task. Other areas of difficulty, as indicated by participants, were the pre-task listening activities of the Company Profiles and the Describing Company Products tasks. Similar concerns as for the listening of Describing Trends described above were expressed, mainly a fast delivery rate, excessive business terms, large figures, and lengthy content. The more critical issue here was the demands created by group work during the task cycle stages, which is also noted in the task materials section (see 5.2.3). According to some participants, the use of authentic website materials made the task difficult as most of group work time, which was very limited, was spent on studying the content of materials, e.g. company profile and product descriptions, rather than on writing scripts and practising presentations. Most HM students and three of the observers strongly suggested simplifying the website materials, which is discussed below in the recommendations.

In addition to the content difficulty as summarised above, I observed that the difficulty was also a consequence of learners' lack of familiarity with task-based procedures. In other words, the fact that this task was their first engagement in TBLT also added to the difficulty. As noted by students, they were more familiar with lecture-style teaching than brainstorming ideas, identifying and discussing language and concepts, and developing scripts as a group in this course. Lack of prior

knowledge and difficult content, as well as their worries about making mistakes, made them hesitant to offer ideas, engage in discussions and respond to the teacher's questions. However, later in the course, both the observers and I noted that they became more outgoing and relaxed and seemed to be more critical when expressing ideas.

5.3.4 Re-evaluation of task complexity and difficulty based on Robinson's (2001) and Skehan's (1998) criteria for grading and sequencing tasks

The perceptions of task difficulty identified above correspond to criteria for grading and sequencing tasks proposed by Robinson (2001) and Skehan (1998), as shown on page 25. In brief, Robinson (2001) points out the significant effects of cognitive complexity on learner perceptions of task difficulty as well as language production. Although learners' language production and development were not investigated in this study, the perceptions of task difficulty could be analysed from the obtained feedback. It showed that some factors defined as resource-directing and resource-dispersing variables (Robinson, 2001), as summarised in Table 1 (see p.25), created cognitive/conceptual demands and performative/procedural demands in tasks. Skehan's (1998) classification criteria, which were rooted in Candlin (1987), were also useful for analysing task difficulty; they encompass both linguistic and cognitive aspects comprising three categories: code complexity, cognitive complexity, and communicative stress (see p.25).

Participants' perceptions of the difficulty of concepts and language of the Describing Trends task, the pre-task listening content and the authentic website materials largely matched the criteria of code complexity and cognitive familiarity. The former involves the difficulty of syntactic and lexical elements of input and the latter

learners' familiarity with the topic, discourse genre and task (Skehan, 1998). Clearly, a number of specific terms used for describing trends introduced in the task increased vocabulary load and variety. Learners' first engagement in this type of task, topic area and task-based procedures were consistent with cognitive familiarity variables (Skehan, 1998). This contributed to the cognitive complexity, which affected learners' ability in dealing with the perceived difficult areas. Time limits and pressure, classified as communicative stress (Skehan, 1998) also contributed to the task difficulty. Based on Robinson's conception of task complexity, the tasks on describing trends and listening activities were complex and were perceived as difficult because of high cognitive demands in information processing. These activities required learners to handle new concepts and language, brainstorm and elicit ideas and language from materials, and decide on appropriate presentation structures for which they had limited or no prior knowledge. According to Robinson (2001), these cognitive factors are linked to learner factors and lead to individuals perceiving task difficulty differently. Based on this, it could be said that learners who perceived the activities as being difficult had limited English proficiency or lacked motivation to participate in the activities.

5.4 Language focus

This section reports on issues regarding language focus, mainly grammar and vocabulary instruction, which have been highlighted by the participants during the inquiry. To maintain the genuineness and originality of participant comments, the term 'grammar' is used throughout this section. The first two sections illustrate how mediation as a teaching and learning tool, details of which have been outlined in the Literature Review (see 2.2), enriched learners' knowledge and understanding of

business concepts and language and what participants perceived to be effective or ineffective mediation practices. In addition to mediation, the effects of the other two language-focused activities, peer feedback on written scripts and the teacher's corrective feedback (provided in Lesson 3), are presented in sections 5.4.2 and 5.4.3. This is followed by a section focusing on participants' dissatisfaction with insufficient and implicit grammar teaching and on related literature as well as my perspective on the issues (5.4.4).

Methods employed for teaching grammar and vocabulary in this study varied, from implicit instruction in the 'Describing Company Profiles' task to explicit instruction in subsequent tasks, especially in the 'Describing Trends' task. In lesson one, which focused on developing presentation skills, there was no specific language-focus activity, except for a brief practice of useful formulaic expressions for presentation outlines taken from a set textbook of the Eng. 3 subject. Useful expressions were taught through gap-filled drills, wherein chunks of information in formulaic sentences must be replaced by the same kinds of information and small group joint-writing of presentation introductions. These rather traditional structured-based activities were deliberately adopted as bridging activities to TBLT to avoid unnecessary worries in dealing with both unfamiliar teaching techniques and content.

In lesson two, the 'Describing Company Profiles' task (Task 1), was implemented following Willis' TBLT framework with implicit grammar instruction. Targeted structures and rules including vocabulary were neither presented nor explained but brought to learners' attention through a pre-task quiz and a listening exercise. I asked a number of leading questions to provide hints for elicitation and identification of concepts of a company profile, along with elicitation of related vocabulary and

grammatical forms. After listening to recordings of the profiles of different companies, learners were asked to identify relevant language in a tapescript followed by a brief discussion of target structures. During group work, authentic company profiles were shared as models, and again important information and language were underlined for script development. However, the planned post-task language analysis, which was supposed to be carried out by revisiting the pre-task materials and printed companies' profiles, could not be achieved because of insufficient class time. Fortunately, being aware of learners' lack of familiarity with business concepts and the fact that this was their first encounter with TBLT, a handout with a language summary had been designed beforehand and so was given as a reference. I quickly summarised useful language in the handout, and this received much positive feedback from both observers and learners during the interviews.

Lesson three 'Feedback and Pause Practice' was an unplanned supplementary lesson, arranged in response to several mistakes found in written scripts and the delivery of presentations in Lessons 1 and 2. In addition to mediation, mistakes were improved through peer feedback and the teacher's corrective feedback (see 5.4.2 and 5.4.3). This extensive language-focused lesson did not conform to TBLT principles, and was mostly conducted in Thai because it involved mainly giving feedback on scripts and correcting errors (see 2.2.2). Also, a sample record of an effective presentation was used as a demonstration of accurate stress, intonation and pauses. Much positive feedback was received from learners and observers.

In lesson four on 'Describing Company Products,' the wide range of concepts and language used for describing products caused great difficulty for the learners in dealing with the tasks. The language focus involved guessing missing words in a

listening script and underlining related vocabulary and structures in the script, following which the teacher summarised related business concepts and language. It was noticeable that learners faced great difficulties in handling unfamiliar vocabulary and structures contained in both the pre-task and the printed company products that were used as models. Excessive time was devoted to explanations of unknown terms and complex linguistic features. The groups needed a lot of language support while developing presentation scripts, and this resulted in inadequate time for post-task language focus.

In lesson five ‘Describing Trends’ task, the teaching of grammar and vocabulary was the most explicit, compared to instruction in the previous tasks. Three pre-tasks of matching descriptions with graphs, listening and drawing a graph and pair-work and completing a graph were designed for concept building and identifying useful language elements. Because of the learners’ needs for linguistic support observed in previous lessons, I decided to initiate a ‘mini-language focus’ before group work instead of using implicit instruction, in order to reduce chances for mistakes and to increase vocabulary and structure ranges. Also, a reference language handout consisting of target words and forms along with two alternative sentence patterns (verb-pattern and noun-pattern) used for describing changes was given. I pointed out some dominant language elements from the handout, but for the remaining language elements, I suggested that learners consult the handout on their own during their script development. This mini-language focus was framed as a small scale post-task language focus phase (Willis, 1996). There was no available time for post-task language focus because of a heavy focus on language during and after pre-tasks.

The final lesson of ‘Giving a Full Presentation’ (Lesson 6) aimed at building learners’ confidence in giving a presentation, and thus none of the linguistics items was discussed or taught. Nevertheless, while attending the presentations of all the groups, I noted down essential language components that were required for presentations but which had not been taught, particularly transitional words, cohesive devices, and expressions for Q&A and closing.

5.4.1 Implementation of mediation in language focus

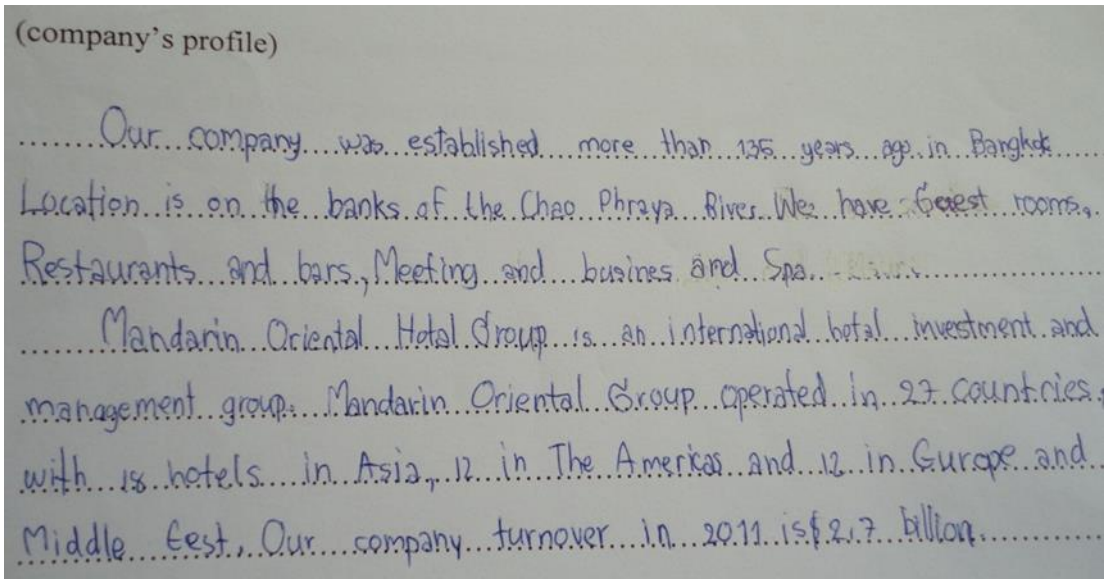
During the main task activity, all groups were expected to develop the presentation script in their own words. I walked around assisting them with language as needed. This was when the mediation played an important role. Implicit forms of mediation tended to work well with simple mistakes such as singular/plural forms, present simple/past simple tenses, frequently used cohesive devices (e.g. *and, but, however*) and capitalisation. More explicit forms of mediation, including explicit explanations, were necessary when mistakes appeared in complex structures, especially in the present perfect and passive forms. Detailed explanation was sometimes needed to improve learner skills in writing. Nevertheless, most learners were attentive, and as soon as I asked them leading questions or gave hints or prompts, they looked up words in the dictionary, consulted each other and tried to improve the mistakes. Some of them even showed their frustration when their answers were still incorrect.

5.4.1.1 The analysis of mediation interactions

Results of analysis of class interactions with the provision of mediation confirm the benefits of mediation in facilitating learning and teaching, as discussed in the Literature Review (see 2.2). Figure 6 and Extracts 7 and 8 below show the Mandarin

group's struggles in dealing with both concepts and language as well as the provision of mediation to solve these difficulties and to improve learner understanding of business concepts. As shown in the script (Figure 6) below, the AC Mandarin group members who seemed to have difficulties in planning the content (see also interaction in Extract 2, p. 192) to an extent covered key content areas about the hotel profile.

Figure 6: Script on company profile, written by the AC Mandarin Group


(company's profile)

.....Our...company...was...established...more...than...135...years...age...in...Bangkok.....
Location...is...on...the...banks...of...the...Chao...Phraya...River...We...have...Guest...rooms,.
Restaurants...and...bars,...Meeting...and...busines...and...Spa.....
.....Mandarin...Oriental...Hotel...Group...is...an...international...hotel...investment...and
management...group...Mandarin...Oriental...Group...operated...in...27...countries,
with...18...hotels...in...Asia,...12...in...The...Americas...and...12...in...Gurope...and...
Middle...Eest,...Our...company...turnover...in...2011...is$2.7...billion.....

As can be seen, the first paragraph contained some mistakes and incomplete information. In the referencing materials (i.e. printed hotel profile), the terms *'hotel'* and *'company'* were used interchangeably, so I did not suggest changing from *'our company'* to *'hotel'*. This script revealed that learners still did not have control over the expressions for describing location *'Location is…'* even though they had just learnt them during the pre-task. This included the use of compound nouns, as for meeting room(s) and business centre. Extract 7 below illustrates how mediation was provided to improve this script and how the group tackled the problems.

Extract 7 Mediation provided to improve mistakes in a script

01	*T:*	*[reading] Location is on the banks of the Chao Phraya River…any ideas?*
02		*any suggestions?*
03	*S1:*	*our… is at?*
04	*S2:*	*our location*
05	*T:*	*Any ideas?*
06	*Ss:*	*[quiet]*
07	*T:*	*[in Thai] to talk about location…can you remember anything? From the*
08		*last time we talked about this.*
09	*S3:*	*Located*
10	*T:*	*located, yes, 'located in' followed by a city [introduced in the pre-task] …*
11		*in this case, what should be used here?*
12	*Ss:*	*[quiet]*
13	*T:*	*What are we talking about?*
14	*Ss:*	*Company, our company*
15	*T:*	*You already mentioned 'our company'. Can we use 'it' here? It's …*
16	*S1:*	*located in*
17	*T:*	*If you say 'in' … how [what] can you say … 'in the banks of the Chao*
18		*Phraya River? Can you say 'in' the Chao Phraya River?*
19	*Ss:*	*No*
20	*T:*	*So, what should you say then?*
21	*S4:*	*On*
22	*T:*	*Yes, 'on' … [do] you know [the meaning of] 'on the banks of' …?*
23		*[discussed in Thai] Can you say the sentence again please?*
24	*Ss:*	*Our company is located on the banks of Chao Phraya River.*

By reading the incorrect sentence to call for their attention, I intended to assess learners' knowledge of expressions used for describing a location based on what was introduced in the pre-task. S1 and S2 seemed to recognise the mistakes, while S3 tried to use the expression learnt during pre-task (saying *'located'*). At the beginning, implicit prompts were employed to activate learners' recall of this structure. My

response mentioning *'located in, followed by a city'* (line 10) caused confusion, since it seemed to suggest *'in'* was a fixed preposition used with *'located'*. In fact, it also led to the misunderstanding that the preposition *'on'* they had used was incorrect. S1 made two attempts in trying to correct this suggestion both *'at'* and *'in'* (lines 03&16). This showed his good general knowledge of prepositions. I regarded using *'on'* describing location quite uncommon for foreign language learners, compared to *'in'* and *'at'*. I struggled to find suitable prompts and some good examples to help learners solve this mistake. Overall, this was a lengthy mediation. My prompts (lines 17&18) seemed vague and irrelevant, but they worked. Making learners aware of the overall meaning (lines 17&18) helped them to recognise the mistake. A summary in Thai and suggestion of an alternative term 'situated' were offered at the end of mediation. This extract illustrates an instance where mediation helped resolve linguistic difficulties (i.e. expressions and prepositions). Learners were actively engaged during the interaction.

The second part of the mediation shown in Extract 8 below shifted to mediating concepts of the company (i.e. hotel) profile, in other words, the details that should be offered in the script.

Extract 8

01 T: Next … we have guest rooms. Is this okay?
02 Ss: No
03 T: Yes, every hotel has guest rooms, right? But is this interesting
04 information?
05 Ss: No
06 T: Any suggestion?
07 Ss: [quiet]
08 T: If I want to mention about the size of the hotel, I can say … how many

09		*rooms has it got, right? So, I can say here 'we have got 358 guest rooms'*
10		*[some students did not concentrate, so I called an individual to answer a*
11		*question]*
12	T:	*Why do we need to mention about the number of guest rooms?*
13	S1	*We want to tell about the size*
14	T:	*Yes, to say how big … the size of the company or hotel, in this case. As*
15		*we don't have much time, limited class time, I'd like to show you my*
16		*version. I added 'with river views' after the guest rooms. Why do you*
17		*think I added that?*
18	Ss:	*[in Thai] to give details about the rooms, that they are nice, with river*
19		*views, so guests want to come stay in this hotel.*

From examining the Mandarin group's script (Figure 6), I realised that the learners' acquisition of some core concepts of describing the hotel's profile, such as the hotel's location, facilities (e.g. guestrooms, spa) and current operations and development was evident in the script. However, it was obvious that there was a lack of essential information about hotel services, and thus I intended to provide mediation to encourage them to think about which supporting details to put in. As can be seen from lines 01-07, implicit prompts were provided but none of the students volunteered answers. I wanted to draw their attention to the idea that the size of the hotel should be included in the profile, and so I suggested that the number of guestrooms should be added (lines 08-09). This was a stage 4 prompt (the mediator explains concepts or possible actions, see mediation inventory (p. 68), which was quite explicit. Observing learners' lack of participation, I tried out an alternative technique by calling upon an individual to contribute ideas. Aware of limited time and learners' lack of knowledge of describing hotel profile, I decided to display my corrected version containing additional information on slides and then asked them to verbalise what they thought the underlying reasons of those details

were. I felt this mediation technique, i.e. providing correct answers but asking students to verbalise their ideas or reasons, worked well in this situation. Because of limited business knowledge and proficiency, it is unlikely that they could offer unprompted ideas. Nevertheless, in my view, asking learners to verbalise why the provided versions were corrected could be effective for mediating concepts or conceptual understanding, as the hotel profile in this extract, but not for linguistic difficulties. It would not effectively enhance learners' linguistic knowledge if correct answers were supplied before enabling them to attempt to solve the problems on their own.

Also, what I have learnt from the analysis of this and the mediation shown in other extracts is that when open-ended questions like *'Any ideas?', 'Any suggestions?'* were used to elicit ideas, none of the students responded. Thus, the use of implicit prompts (stage 1: encouraging learners to identify problem) may not work if learners' lack conceptual knowledge, and so more explicit prompts and/or forced choices were required. Sensitivity to learners' responses and reactions during mediation is crucial, since if the given prompts and suggestions do not work, different forms of prompts should be used. Furthermore, learners' reactions, as shown in Extracts 7 and 8, might help confirm that describing services and products should be taught as two separate topics, as per observer suggestions (see content coverage, 5.2).

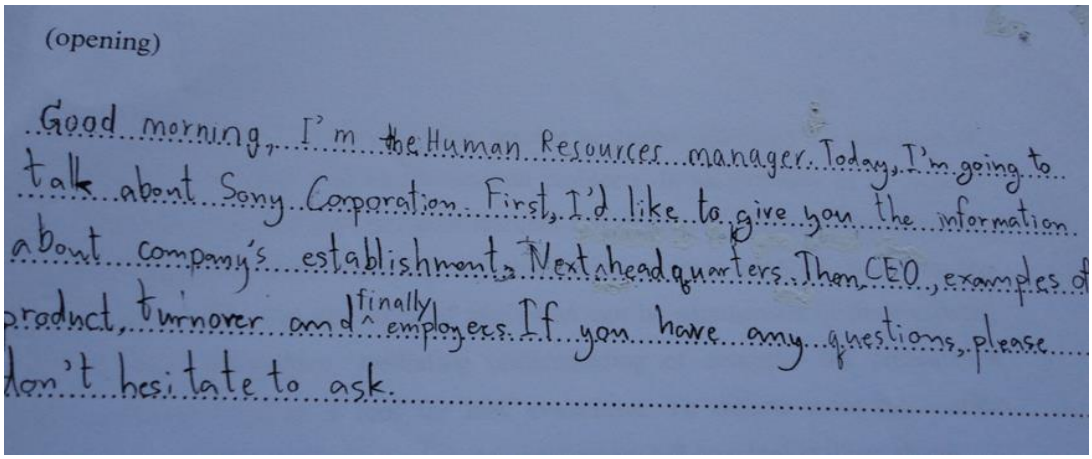
The next interaction in Extract 9 below shows the use of forced choices technique to help the Sony group resolve the difficulties in using articles while they were writing their company profile. This interaction indicated that using forced choices was sometimes helpful so as to halt further unnecessary confusion.

Extract 9

01 T: Anything wrong with this? I'm a Human Resources Manager? Usually if
02 you talk about manager...how many managers in one department?
03 Usually one, right? So, in this case you can say I'm …
04 S1: HR? [Asked other members in Thai] why? Do we need to change this [the
05 term 'HR']?
06 T: It's okay here … yes, it's okay. You can say HR. Look at this you should
07 say 'a' or 'the'?
08 Ss: 'the'
09 T: Why 'the'?
10 S1: [responded in Thai] uh … only one person.
11 T: [answered in Thai] Yes, only one person and specific … Good!

In this extract, the problem was firstly signalled by raising my pitch of my voice when reading the incorrect sentence, but the group was still not aware of the mistake. They misunderstood, thinking that the term *'HR'* was incorrect. After the forced choices (*'a'* or *'the'*) were given, they could respond correctly and also verbalise their reasons. The problem with using the wrong articles was quite a simple one; after mediation it stood resolved. A more complex problem was found in their script, as is illustrated in Figure 7 below:

Figure 7: Script on company profile, written by AC Sony Group


(opening)

Good morning, I'm the Human Resources manager. Today, I'm going to talk about Sony Corporation. First, I'd like to give you the information about company's establishment, Next, head quarters. Then, CEO, examples of product, turnover and finally employees. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

As can be seen from this script, although problems on using articles had just been mediated during presentation planning (Extract 9), the group was still not able to master this structure well. This was also shown in some articles not included in this script (Figure 7). The correct use was shown only in the sentence that had been mediated (the Human Resources [M]anager). There could be two reasons underlying this. Firstly, the complexity of syntactical rules of articles usage is generally considered difficult even for advanced learners. Secondly, the quick solving of article errors with explicit prompts (forced choices) during planning without any further discussion could be insufficient for learners to gain full control over the use of articles in other situations. This means some in-depth mediation of the concepts of article usage and further practice, probably as an analysis of articles used in different texts and out-of-class grammar exercises, would be useful. The lack of sufficient knowledge of text structuring was also another major problem, as presented in Extract 10 below.

Extract 10

T: In this sentence, you want to put all parts into one sentence, or you want to start a new sentence? Here, you can't say 'Next, headquarters.' Then um … full stop, you have to join the parts together. So, first, I'd like to talk about the company's establishment. Next, … [in Thai] what should you say next?

S1: I …

T: Um … I want to focus on, or I want to tell you about

S2: I want to talk about

T: To join … um … a sentence. You can say 'next' 'and then'. Usually, we use 'Next' to start a sentence. Next, I'll tell you about, and then … They can be put in one sentence.

S3: I see … we don't need a full stop here [pointing after the term 'headquarters'].

T: No, you can join them. So, next… what?

S3: I want to … to you

T: I want to tell you about our headquarters and then

S1: So, we can use comma here [pointing after the term 'Next'], right?

T: Yes.

Problems and suggestions discussed in this dialogue were mostly related to the structure of the writing, particularly on listing and connecting ideas or different parts together into one sentence. Learners were aware of using cohesive devices (as they included connectors like '*Next'* or '*Then'*), but they did not know how to list them in one sentence or start a new sentence. My responses were mostly direct, explicit suggestions and explanations, instead of giving more implicit prompts or hints to guide them. In fact, the problems with structuring sentences and text were not anticipated, so I was not prepared and did not employ mediation procedures to solve these problems.

Similar problems regarding structuring a presentation can be found in other interactions. Extracts 11 and 12 below show my interactions regarding expressions used in opening and closing a presentation with the Apple Incorporation group while they were writing their presentation draft,. Students had learnt some useful phases in the handout provided in the Developing Presentation Skills lesson (Lesson 1), but since they did not often give presentations, these terms could have been unfamiliar to them.

Extract 11

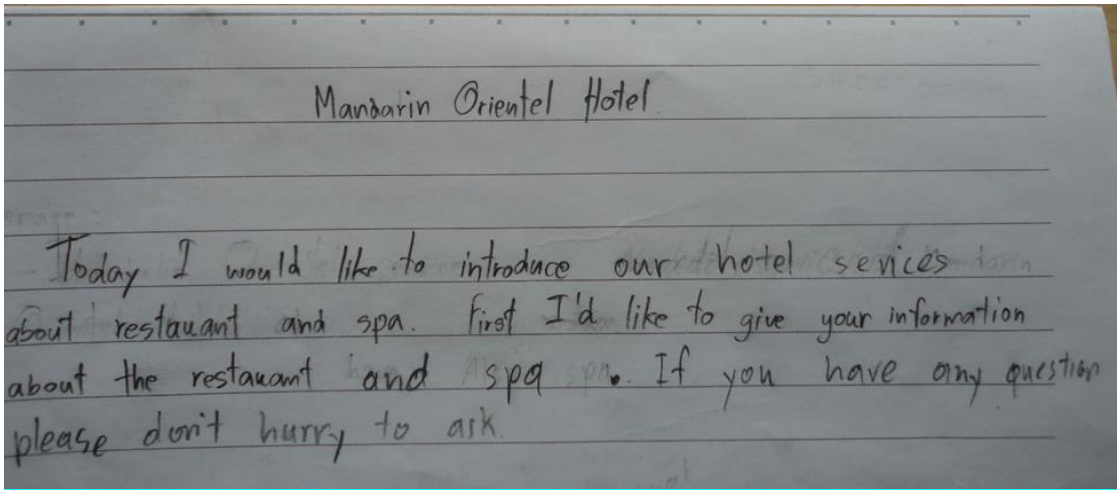
01	*T:*	*[reading their script] 'Please ask any questions when we finish'. Is it*
02		*necessary … to ask questions? You may use sentences we've learnt*
03	*Ss:*	*[no response]*
04	*T:*	*Your sentence is [grammatically] correct, but we don't normally say*
05		*this. Can you think of …? Oh, please look in the handout …*
06		*openings … yes, telling [attendees] when to ask questions*
07	*S1:*	*[read the handout] I'd be glad to answer any questions at the end of my*
08		*talk.*
09	*S2:*	*If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.*
10	*S3:*	*[read the handout] Please hold your questions until the end of the*
11		*presentation.*
12	*T:*	*Ok … Good!*

In the interaction, while informing them that their phrase was grammatically correct, I signaled that it did not express their intended meaning by saying '… *but we don't normally say this'.* Instead of telling them what expressions were more appropriate, I referred them to useful phrases listed in the handout. The students read those sentences by themselves indicating their understanding of proper expressions to be used.

The script (Figure 7) and interactions in Extracts 10 and 11 above, including the following script (Figure 8) and interaction (Extract 12) indicate that brief mediation was frequently required to solve difficulties in giving presentation outlines, from introducing talks to stating the right time for questions. This area of difficulty was not expected as most of these expressions are widely used in presentations. I sometimes encouraged learners to use various expressions that they might have learnt or heard, but results revealed that they had limited knowledge of terms and

expressions generally used in presentations, as shown in Figure 8 and Extract 12 below.

Figure 8 Script on presentation introduction, written by HM Mandarin Group


Mandarin Orientel Hotel

Today I would like to introduce our hotel serices about restauant and spa. First I'd like to give your information about the restauant and spa. If you have any question please don't hurry to ask.

From this script, it was apparent that students attempted to use listing devices (i.e. *First*) and include an expression to inform when questions would be dealt with (i.e. *…don't hurry to ask*), but failed to achieve both, presumably, because of their lack of familiarity with these common terms. Using the sentence *'If you have any question[s], please don't hurry to ask'*, they seemed to be confused between the terms '*hesitate'* and '*hurry'*. Alternatively, this could be the result of a direct translation of a Thai expression. Mediation was given in response to problems.

Extract 12

01 T: [reading the script] 'First[,] I'd like to give you[r] information about the
02 restaurant and spa' What else?
03 Ss: [no response]
04 S1: Information … about restaurant and spa

05	*T:*	*What else? If you use 'first', where are 'second', 'third'?*
		More information?
06	*S1:*	*No more*
07	*T:*	*Do you need 'first' here?*
08	*Ss:*	*No*
09	*T:*	*Why?*
10	*S2:*	*Only restaurant and spa*
11	*T:*	*And you said 'If you have any question[s], please don't hurry to ask'.*
12		*Anything wrong?*
13	*S2*	*Hurry?*
14	*S3*	*Hurry*
15	*T:*	*'Please do not hurry?' Check the handout.*
16	*S2:*	*Hesitate?*
17	*S3:*	*Yes, hesitate*
18	*T:*	*Okay*

In this interaction, I did not provide mediation on the verb '*introduce'*, which should be '*introduce you to'*, and the phrase '*your information'*, which should be '*give you information'*. Instead, I drew learners' attention to the unnecessary cohesive device *'First'*. When an implicit prompt *'What else?'* was used, students did not recognise the mistake, but with increasing explicit prompts "*If you use 'first', where are 'second', 'third'?"* and *"Do you need 'first' here?"* they realised the mistake. The mix-up of the terms '*hurry'* and '*hesitate'* showed learners lacking a profound understanding of meanings. When learning about expressions, they would have just simply recited them.

5.4.1.2 Participants' attitudes towards and concerns about mediation

As mediation is a very new practice in the Thai context, it is worth examining its feasibility also from the perceptions of participants who were involved in the processes: myself as the teacher who put it into classroom practice, learners who directly engaged in interactions with me during mediation, and observers who, following close observation during mediation, offered their perspectives in response to my shared experience. Overall, my first engagement in mediation as a teacher was fruitful but greatly challenging. This has led to my belief that to maximise the benefits of mediation, some context-specific issues must be taken into consideration for future implementation.

Mediation was firstly put into action in the 'Describing Company Profiles' task (Lesson 2); however, the shortage of time in conjunction with learners' limited English proficiency were influential, contextual factors preventing all mediation stages from being fully carried out as planned (see inventory p.65). As a result, it was often necessary to omit the first stage of problem or mistake identification. It was found that encouraging learners to identify mistakes required excessive amounts of class time, and most learners did not have sufficient language knowledge to be able to handle the mistakes on their own. This led to my decision to adjust the mediation inventory after Lesson 2. If learners failed to identify mistakes by themselves, the mediation procedures were reduced from five to three stages: offering choices, explaining concepts or possible actions to tackle the problems and finally explaining correct answers. After learners made up their minds about the best choice, I often asked learners to verbalise their reasons for choosing one grammatical form, action or solution over another. This allowed me to trace their understanding

of structures or problem. In addition, I always involved the whole group rather than an individual learner in the process for a better sharing of ideas and to avoid causing particular learners embarrassment. Due to learners' lack of prior knowledge in business, shown by the poor quality of scripts which were incomplete not only in language use but also in clarity and delivery of messages and concepts, mediation was also provided to fix the lack of understanding regarding concepts and presentation structures, as shown in 5.4.1.1.

At the personal level, as reflected in my journals, I encountered a lot of difficulties which I perceived as challenges. Firstly, I was not confident in my abilities to give spontaneous mediation. There were various language issues that were brought up by different learners while they were engaged with tasks. Some were serious and needed to be sorted out for them to continue working on tasks. Examples included problems relating to business concepts and practices, questions about presentation structures, and unknown abstract words and language functions. I could handle most typical problems, but for very complex ones I sought advice from more experienced teachers. Secondly, there were times when I was unsure whether I should let the lesson flow or interrupt the lesson for mediation. Because of the mismatch between learners' limited knowledge and proficiency and the complexity of content, mediation was required throughout the lessons. Hence, but only serious problems were rather than all errors were mediated as stated previously. Furthermore, my familiarity with grammar-based teaching, together with my worries about time, made me frequently forget about mediation, and as a consequence, I offered correct answers immediately. It may yet take me some time to familiarise myself with the mediation procedures.

However, as revealed in the post-intervention questionnaire and interviews, students had positive attitudes towards mediation, recognising its advantages for learning. The more familiar term ‘feedback’, instead of ‘mediation’, was used in both questionnaires and interviews to allow for clear understanding and appropriate responses. The pre-questionnaire results indicated that most students preferred individual to group feedback, while in the post-intervention questionnaire, although they still favoured individual mediation (i.e. one-to-one interaction with the teacher), they expressed more positive attitudes about class and small group mediation. In particular, learners recognised the benefits of mediation in allowing all group members to learn about mistakes (Post15, M=4.47) and giving them opportunities to find things out by themselves instead of getting answers directly from the teacher (Post23, M=4.55). Although students had a high level of satisfaction with the usefulness of mediation, they had different opinions about whether they felt comfortable when interacting with the teacher (Post28, SD = .858), whether the teacher should correct most mistakes (Post32, SD = .847), and whether feedback (mediation) should be given to the whole class rather than to individuals (Post35, SD = .822).

The results of the interviews were in line with the questionnaire data, even though there were some negative comments about the mediation received being inadequate and learners experiencing confusion during mediation. Some students could recall the mediation procedures correctly. They reported their struggles in handling mistakes by themselves, but with the teachers’ prompts and suggestions, they could identify and correct mistakes. This sometimes needed more than a few attempts before they could solve problems. Engaging in interactions to solve mistakes made

them realise the benefits of mediation. They said it helped to promote thinking and long-term retention of correct structures. To respond to the teacher's questions, they needed to think about all possible options or answers. Furthermore, although they were too shy to offer what they thought correct, they felt relaxed in interactions. Giving them frequent chances to try, and involving their peers or the class in interactions, meant that they felt more comfortable than when interacting with the teacher individually. Helping each other resolve difficulties in groups or pairs made them feel relaxed and relieved them of pressure. To reiterate, the advantages of mediation according to learners included: 1) enabling learners to identify and correct mistakes, 2) stimulating deeper thinking about and long-term memory of structures and 3) allowing learners to feel relaxed when interacting in groups or with the whole class, not just one-to-one.

Despite the usefulness of mediation, as mentioned above, in some interactions, students were confused and frustrated, especially when they did not understand the hints (i.e. clues) and did not know what to do or look for. In their opinion, more explicit hints or prompts would help find mistakes and resolve these more quickly. In addition, their dissatisfaction was caused by the inadequate mediation they received because of limited class time, rather than in their involvement in the mediation processes, as revealed by their comments:

> (Student interview, AC12)
> *We wanted more support. You provided help all the time but it was still not enough. I know you couldn't help everyone, so I sometimes didn't bother when you were busy with others. […] we sometimes got confused as you asked many questions. You should ask specific explicit questions to point out mistakes so that we know what to pay attention to.*

> (Student interview, HM12)
> *Only brief time was allocated to each group —not enough. We wanted your suggestions on how to improve our script, […] but you didn't come straightaway when we called for help; you helped other groups. Although I liked it when you asked questions to help us find answers, with very limited time you might just give answers.*

From the above comments, although AC12 and HM12 seemed to understand that demand for the teacher's support was high, they expressed their disappointment at not gaining enough assistance. While AC12 gave up asking for help, HM12 perceived that, with limited class time, providing direct answers promptly, rather than mediating, would be a better alternative. AC12 was also dissatisfied with implicit prompts. He said he that he was confused when several questions were asked (i.e. prompts), and that he would prefer only specific questions directing his attention to mistakes.

Issues were highlighted and scepticism expressed by observers as to the suitability of mediation practice within the Thai context. Two of the observers were reluctant to adopt mediation in their class because of their perceptions of it as a time-consuming process, and of possible confusion that it may cause in weak students. In this study, it was not possible to obtain comments on classroom mediation from observers. Sitting at the back of the class, they were unable to listen to and understand interactions within the groups. Nevertheless, after describing the procedures to them during the interviews, the observers offered some comments, mainly expressing their hesitation at adopting the procedures. The underlying reasons for their hesitation were that they considered the mediation process time-consuming and thought that it might discourage low-level learners, especially when they could not solve problems or failed to understand concepts or the content discussed during interactions.

(Observer interview, Osv-A)
Students who had good knowledge would answer, but ones who answered incorrectly once or twice would become quiet and didn't want to speak anymore. We needed to boost their confidence for them to open up to us. We must consider the nature of Thai students and also the context of our learning and teaching, and adjust those teaching methods.

(Observer interview, Osv-C)
I agreed about its usefulness but even when we gave mediation to group, there was not just one mistake but several mistakes. If we had to ask about them all—why this sentence was incorrect and what about this sentence?—we would not have enough time. Inaccurate complex structures and business concepts should be explained in Thai or just tell them answers. It would not work to ask them to identify them like the active and passive forms. We don't have time.

As shown above, Observer C felt quite strongly that conducting mediation, which involved identifying mistakes to solve numerous mistakes in a limited time frame was not practical. Also, explaining in Thai as well as giving correct answers would help learners solve mistakes of complicated linguistic structures and business concepts within limited class time. The observers' hesitation, in fact, corresponded with my own concerns on the full implementation of mediation according to the five-stages of my pre-planned inventory (see p. 68). In the mainstream courses, the teachers would need to cover all the modules prescribed in the course requirements, and thus conducting mediation would take some class time that was spared for explaining core content and exercises. Another issue raised by observers related to face-threatening acts, as failing to solve problems or to answer correctly may cause some students to feel and/or lose face.

5.4.2 Peer feedback on written scripts

Peer feedback and the teacher's corrective feedback (5.4.3) were set out in Lesson 3 (Feedback and Pause Practice) to improve the quality of scripts written in the

previous ‘Developing Presentation Skills’ (Lesson 1) and ‘Describing Company Profiles’ (Lesson 2) lessons. A brief description of Lesson 3 is offered, and then an illustration of how peer feedback was conducted and its outcome. Explanations of complex lexical and grammatical forms when the mistakes could not be resolved even by explicit mediating prompts and suggestions were provided during feedback.

As mentioned in 5.4, Lesson 3 was an unplanned, supplementary lesson organised in response to the learner need for increased linguistic support, which was identified from several serious mistakes in the scripts produced by the learners (see examples of scripts pp. 196, 209, 215 and 218). Prior to the lesson, I identified and corrected all mistakes found in scripts, and prepared slides of my adjusted versions to offer alternatives but did not display these until students attempted to improve their original scripts. Although the improvement of scripts aimed to not only correct grammatical mistakes but also to enhance learners’ understanding of business concepts, content and presentation structures, learners devoted considerable attention to the grammatical errors. The peer feedback of scripts was first conducted within groups and then with the teacher-directed class-based correction of errors and suggestions for the improvement of content. Two scripts from each group, one about presentation introductions and the other about company profiles, were photocopied and provided to all groups (thus everybody received the scripts of all groups). The scripts were also displayed on PowerPoint slides for class discussion. Upon receiving the other group’s scripts, all group members identified and corrected mistakes, with the teacher helping to point out mistakes and guiding students on how to improve them. After letting them attempt to solve mistakes on their own, the teacher led a class discussion, with the original scripts on slides, on what were

considered effective and what could be improved. This included feedback not only on errors but also on the content and structures of the presentations, as previously mentioned.

All students found Lesson 3 helpful overall, even though there were mixed opinions among participants regarding the quality of peer feedback. While some appreciated the efforts of peers, others remained sceptical about their peers' English abilities. At the same time, students were not confident in correcting their own and peers' mistakes, as noted by HM04:

> (Student interview, HM04)
> *We all helped with corrections, but some were wrong and some were correct. We thought they were correct but they were actually incorrect. I wanted you [the teacher] to check my company profile script again. If you corrected it, I knew exactly what was wrong.*

The observers' recommendations paralleled those of the learners. They believed that most students were at the same level, and thus the teacher should take all responsibility for checking their scripts. They also warned about the issues of 'face' threatening, especially peer corrections of pronunciation. That is, weak students might lose face and feel discouraged if they were corrected by peers. Hence, according to Observer A, mispronunciation had to be corrected only by the teacher:

> (Observer interview, Osv-A)
> *Ones who were corrected by peers might lose their confidence and felt they were incompetent compared to peers who corrected them. Peer correction of pronunciation must be undertaken carefully, and that it should rotate among students so that everyone took part and shared this role. I think it would be better if only teacher did the correction of pronunciation.*

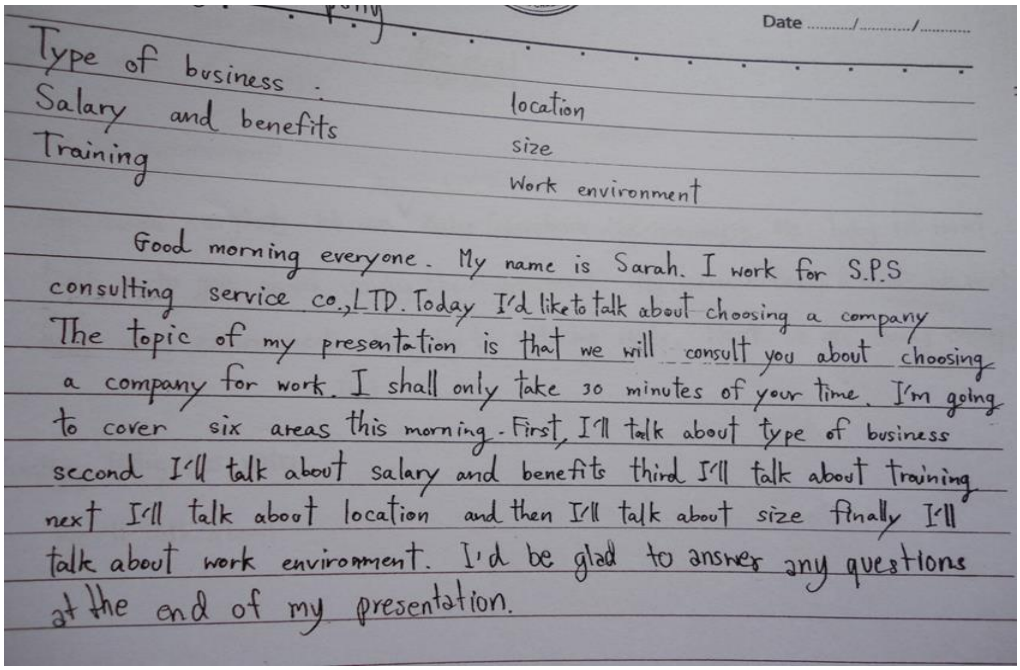
In fact, watching VDO records of this feedback session, it was noticeable that many students looked uneasy, and some even did not take part in the peer feedback.

Responding to my questions asking if they had found any mistakes, one student pointed out a few mistakes but noted that she did not know how to correct them. Her limited language ability enabled her to identify mistakes but not to correct them.

5.4.3 The teacher corrective feedback

This section focuses on the teacher's corrective feedback, which has distinctive characteristics, purposes and procedures from mediation as described in 2.2.2. Briefly, one of the main features is that while mediation can be in any form of assistance graded from implicit to increasingly explicit, the corrective feedback places emphasis on error treatment. In this study, despite the fact that mediation was highlighted in all tasks, including at the beginning of Lesson 3, due to the remaining limited class time, learners' limited language proficiency and thus restricted ability to give peers feedback as observed during the lesson, mediation was switched to explicit corrections and recasts – the two types of corrective feedback. That is, in explicit corrections I indicated where the problem was and then provided the correct words or forms, while in recasts I reformulated or rephrased incorrect sentences found in their scripts. At some points during the corrective feedback in lesson 3, I gave detailed explanations of complex concepts and grammatical structures. In addition, after the class correction of mistakes, I showed them improved versions of scripts that were pre-prepared for the purpose of comparison with learner versions. Figure 9 below shows mistakes in AC group's presentation introduction that was written in the 'Developing Presentation Skills' lesson. I adopted the explicit correction method to correct errors.

Figure 9: Presentation introduction, developed by one AC group



Date ...../...../.....

Type of business
Salary and benefits
Training
location
size
Work environment

Good morning everyone. My name is Sarah. I work for S.P.S consulting service co.,LTD. Today I'd like to talk about choosing a company The topic of my presentation is that we will consult you about choosing a company for work. I shall only take 30 minutes of your time. I'm going to cover six areas this morning. First, I'll talk about type of business second I'll talk about salary and benefits third I'll talk about training next I'll talk about location and then I'll talk about size finally I'll talk about work environment. I'd be glad to answer any questions at the end of my presentation.

After working on capitalisation, I pointed out mistakes on introducing the topic, indicating that the term *'consult'* was incorrect. I drew the class's attention to whether they wanted to ask for or give advice. Learners then realised the term *'advice'* was more appropriate, but were confused between *'advice'* and *'advise'*. I explained the distinction between the two forms. In the next stage, after the class-error correction, I offered my versions. For example, I reformulated their sentence on introducing a topic to *'The topic of my presentation is advice on choosing a company for work'*. From the repetition of a phrase *'I'll talk about'*, it can be understood that this group had limited knowledge of using expressions for listing. This language problem had been discussed in previous scripts, so I did not correct them in my version, but I underlined this whole topic listing part to direct their attention to this structure. Trying to find incorrect structures and words, the learners then realised the inappropriateness of repetition and suggested new words such as *next, then, after that, and last of all*. The same strategy (i.e. underlining the part containing mistakes)

was used to correct other small mistakes, for instance, plural forms, capitalisation, and punctuations. This technique was adopted only after learners failed to identify mistakes on their own. However, in view of the criticism offered by Observer A about the effectiveness of peer feedback (see 5.4.2), letting learners handling both identification and correction of errors was too challenging. Mistakes needed to be highlighted by the teacher.

In terms of the teacher-led discussion on mistakes, most students and observers were satisfied with the feedback received, but the observers questioned the time-consuming procedures of mediation and the difficulty of self-identification of errors by students themselves.

> (Observer interview, Osv-C)
> *It [mediation] was practical but as there were sometimes more than 10 mistakes, how could we asked questions on what were wrong in those sentences. To help one group fix all mistakes already took a lot of time, but what about other groups? The mediation techniques could be applied with these two groups but not low level students who still couldn't identify mistakes. This would discourage them*

Amongst the positive comments, there was consensus that the provision of mediation and corrective feedback enhanced learners' understanding of both conceptual content and language functions. All interviewees said that they and their group members had to pool their prior knowledge to try to identify and correct mistakes, as mentioned by AC08:

> (Student interview, AC08)
> *It was fun that we had to find mistakes. This helped refresh my knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. […] If you told us answers, we would not remember the structures and make the same mistakes again.*

> (Observation note, Osv-D)
> *The most satisfying part was the teacher giving corrected versions as suggestions. Students could learn new words and expressions as well as accurate sentence structures. It was a good reinforcement activity.*

As noted by Observer D above, the corrected versions of scripts displayed on slides after the learners had improved mistakes in their original scripts were particularly useful as additional business content including new words and expressions were introduced to make the original versions more complete and business-like. However, according to Observers A and C, the processes of mediation from learner brainstorming to identifying and self-correcting ill-formed sentences to the teacher guiding learners and pointing out correct versions consumed considerable amounts of class time. Encouraging learners to verbalise their ideas of what the mistakes were and how to refine them was seen as more time-consuming than the sole collaborative class-identification and correction of errors, when all scripts were put on slides. Furthermore, Observer A considered that the self-identification of errors by students themselves was beyond their current level of language ability. It could have been more practical if the teacher had underlined all errors for them. Also, the corrected sentences needed to be written on the whiteboard for learners to compare between inaccurate and accurate forms and sentence patterns for clear understanding.

5.4.4 Participant concerns about insufficient and implicit grammar teaching and recommendations

Participants expressed particular concerns over the delivery of language focus, which were mostly linked to insufficient grammar teaching and implicit instruction. After detailing their comments, I will discuss these two important issues in relation to the literature in the field in the final section.

5.4.4.1 Observer comments on language focus

As mentioned earlier, the observers felt strongly about the incorporation of more explicit grammar teaching in the course. This related to their perspectives about Thai learners' limited linguistic knowledge and English proficiency and the necessity for developing language skills alongside presentation skills. Hence, the observers recommended that this course needed to prioritise and accommodate learners' needs through an increase in grammar practice activities and adjusting teaching methods to be more explicit.

> (Observer interview, Osv-B)
> *The weakness of this course was the teaching of grammar. From the content, there were insufficient grammar activities to enhance learners' grammatical competence. Most practice focused on speaking. Thai learners still needed to develop their knowledge of grammar.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-C)
> *[There were] insufficient grammar activities. […] The handout contained examples of expressions, but let them explore structures on their own before the explanations did not work. It seemed like the [grammatical] structures were not properly taught. Low-level students were lost […]. Methods of teaching should be customised in response to students' linguistic needs. […] if they did not know 'slightly, slight, dramatic, steady and steadily' how could we expect them to produce work first, and summarise meanings of these terms later? This was too difficult.*
>
> (Observer interview, Osv-D)
> *We need to adjust [methods of teaching] to be compatible with our Thai students. When the focus of language was delayed until post-task, students were unable to produce their scripts. I would teach the language first for students to get ideas quicker, but this would not follow TBLT principles, I guess. [It] depends on students' abilities. Thai students were familiar with neither specific terms nor grammar such as active and passive forms and expressions.*

As implied from Observer B's comment, most practice was centred on speaking thereby excluding the creation of conditions and opportunities for grammar practice,

which deficiency was perceived by Observer B as *'the weakness of the course'*. Observers C and D revealed their strong preferences for explicit grammar instruction. Presentation and explanation of lexical and grammatical items before group work were preferable, whereas brief identification and discussion of relevant language during pre-tasks, and self-study of language handout (if provided) was regarded to be inadequate as *'the [grammatical] structures [were] not properly taught'* (Osv-C). In their opinion, the identification of structures through teacher-led discussion was too implicit and did not adequately equip learners with the language needed for script development. Students were left uninformed about what language forms or expressions to focus on for the delivery of presentation content. Interestingly, Observer D, who seemed to have some theoretical knowledge of TBLT, disapproved of delaying the language focus phase until after the main task/group work based on her perception that the pre-teaching of structures would quickly generate ideas of language rather than elicitation and identification from activities for script writing. As a follow-up to observer responses, further questions were asked during interviews regarding the extent to which they thought grammar should be explicitly taught.

> (Observer interview, Osv-A)
> *For these two groups of learners, the language focus could be set up after group work. They had good English skills, so they could analyse the language themselves, although with some mistakes, on how to write sentences […]. They should be able to elicit some language before we summarised it in the end.*

> (Observer interview, Osv-B)
> *We thought they knew and so didn't explain in detail, but later found they couldn't write as we expected. When you wrote 'rise', 'go up', 'upwards and downwards trends' on the whiteboard, I noticed their facial expressions showing understanding and satisfaction. Explanations of structures should be given before group work to help them write correctly—with fewer mistakes […] but [there is] no need for this for the higher level learners— let them do it first*

and work it out from the mistakes they make. It depends on learners' level of proficiency.

(Observer interview, Osv-C)
We shouldn't assume they knew. [The teacher] needs to go through all structures in the handout, […it was] not effective to get them to analyse graph trends without background knowledge of how to use 'to' and 'by'. They might know [how to use them] in other situations, but not when they are used to describe trends.

(Observer interview, Osv-D)
I think TBLT is suitable for the teaching of business presentations—but with the adjustment of language focus. I would present language on a PowerPoint slide at the beginning. I would definitely move the language focus before the main task, and explain some structures. In the [Describing] Trends task, it was unavoidable to not explain passive forms, adjectives and adverbs.

The observers' preferences for the level of explicitness of grammar instruction can be identified from the above feedback. For example, there was some support for implicit teaching, suggesting that the teacher let the students *'…analyse the language themselves'* and *'…elicit some language before we summarised it…'.* On the other hand, there was also support for explicit teaching, reflected in the views that the teacher *'…didn't explain in [enough] detail',* implying the need*'…to go through all structures',* and *'…present language on a PowerPoint slide'.* Further advice from Observers C and D confirmed their preference for explicit teaching of grammar regardless of prior learner knowledge of grammar, in contrast to Observers A and B who suggested taking learner proficiency into consideration. Explanation and presentation of structures would enhance thorough understanding of structures (Osv-C and Osv-D) and ensure a high level of accuracy (Osv-B). For high level groups, both Observers A and B encouraged the identification and analysis of language before the teacher's summary. They perceived mistakes as being acceptable. Observer A suggested that '*[…] they could analyse the language themselves,*

although with some mistakes' and Observer B suggested *'[…] let them do it first and work it out from the mistakes they make'.* However, this process of trial and error did not allow learners to fully understand the structures on their own. Observer A suggested that the teacher should intervene in the process by summarising the structures at the end, and Observer B recommended that the teacher should strategically deploy teaching techniques to help learners improve their mistakes. Observer A's view was that inductive learning about structures would not work in spontaneous listening activities, even with highly proficient groups, because of the nature of listening activities that were always highly cognitive in their demands. Thus, a selection of listening texts with simple lexis and structures was likely to be achievable for the identification and elicitation of language.

Interestingly, there were some contradictions in Observer D's comments. While she seemed to approve of TBLT as a feasible approach for the teaching of business presentations, she advised setting up the language focus phase prior to the main task. She felt that a detailed explicit summary of structures by the teacher, after the learners' identification of structures during pre-task and the presentation of language on PowerPoint slides, was mandatory.

> (Observer interview, Osv-D)
> *You summarised patterns—'increase' as the opposite to 'decrease'. You wrote 'an increase (noun)' only on the board, not other terms such as 'a decrease'. Then, you jumped to the patterns like 'there was an increase in sales', and ended at that. These should be illustrated in two columns, verbs and nouns, and shown on PowerPoint for a clear presentation of subject, verb, followed by adverb, or the alternate option 'there was'.*

My initial conclusion from the feedback of Observers A and B is that the level of explicitness and the arrangement of language focus (i.e., before or after group work)

should be dependent upon learner language ability, and that there should be room for explicit teaching of grammar, as preferred by Observers C and D. The belief was expressed that through explicit teaching learners would likely to acquire and use target structures in their writing. Furthermore, the levels of accuracy and understanding would increase if the teacher offered explicit presentation and explanation of language components.

5.4.4.2 Learners' opinions on language focus

With regard to student opinions, follow-up questions were not asked because the interview was unstructured and very informal, and none of the students raised any serious concerns about grammar teaching Nevertheless, there was some negative feedback on the teaching of language elements, mostly related to the implicit teaching of vocabulary. About 30% of student interviewees requested detailed explanation of new business-related vocabulary, in order to expand their vocabulary range for script writing.

> (Student interview, AC12)
> *It would be better if you taught [new words] before listening like new words about graphs, or you could explain them while we were doing activities. No, it [grammar] was not difficult. The difficult words were the ones used for explaining upward and downward trends. [Verbs and adverbs?] Yes.*
>
> (Student interview, HM12)
> *More assistance should be provided at the beginning of the lesson. I liked it when new vocabulary was explained in English and after that in Thai again. It was good to know meanings both in English and Thai.*

In addition, the majority of students found the language handout summarising vocabulary and structures for describing graph trends extremely useful and requested the provision of handouts during group work in all tasks. Having reference handouts

meant they had a clearer direction as to what target language should be included. Thus, their scripts would be more accurate, with fewer grammatical mistakes and also sound more professional.

5.5 Peer engagement

This task-based course required learner participation and active engagement in all activities especially during the group development of presentation scripts. As shown in the Language Focus (5.4) on the peer feedback (5.4.2) in particular, collaboration was needed not only between the teacher and students but also amongst peers. Since all group members working together in all tasks, some students expressed both their appreciation and complaints regarding group work in interviews and the post-intervention questionnaire. This section reports on learner perceptions of the roles of peers in evaluating presentation skills and after that on their preference for group over individual work as well as their dissatisfaction in participating in group work.

5.5.1 Peer evaluation on presentation skills

Peer evaluation on presentation skills was done through written comments on peer performances, mainly on gestures, voices, and the clarity and organisation of the presentations. Short evaluation forms with headings for guidance were given to students, and their names were kept anonymous, so students felt able to voice criticism.

However, learners expressed their disappointment about peer evaluation. Most students reported having more praise than criticism regarding their presentations. Critical comments were only given and received from close friends. Many of them were suspicious that the praise was only intended to make them feel good, and felt

there was a lack of genuine advice about what could have been done better. Even though they realised the benefits of peer evaluation, keeping their peers from losing face was important because their relationships were also important for group integration. Despite this saving face aspect, a few AC students reported that they obtained negative comments on their gestures through jokes. All students believed the teacher's evaluative results were more reliable, constructive and accurate than those of the peers and expected to gain more from the teacher than from their peers, as indicated by comments from AC16 and HM05's:

> (Student interview, AC16)
> *Getting feedback from the teacher was better than getting it from my friends. They always wrote something like "perfect", "clear", "good tone". There was nothing constructive. They said everything was good but I felt it was not.*
>
> (Student interview, HM05)
> *I want to receive feedback from the teacher, as the feedback given by my classmates could be either positive in order to please me or biased.*

It is obvious that AC16 and HM05 preferred to receive comments from the teacher and believed that their peers would give either mostly praise or biased feedback. These attitudes are similar to those expressed with reference to peer feedback on scripts (see 5.4.2). The learners valued the teacher's performance over that of their peers as it was perceived to be more accurate and constructive.

5.5.2 Preference for group work over individual work and issues of unwillingness and unequal contribution to task completion

Findings regarding group work indicate that while most learners favoured and recognised the benefits of group work, some students had negative attitudes after their experience in group participation. The pre- and post- questionnaire results clearly showed learners' preferences for working in small groups of 3-5 (Pre17, M =

3.32; Post26, M = 4.50) over working individually (Pre14, M = 2.67; Post11, M = 3.49). However, unequal contribution of peers to group work and insufficient time and assistance provided during group work were major issues highlighted by the participants. The observers and I agreed that the limitations of large class size and brief class time made the arrangement of group work extremely challenging, and thus the arrangements of group work in some classes were not possible. Giving a lecture to an entire class as a whole or treating learners individually was usually preferred as it was more manageable than handling groups. Although group work was possible, it tended to be limited to short practice activities, such as brainstorming ideas to solve a specific problem or to write a short descriptive paragraph. This was in sharp contrast to the extensive and demanding group development of presentation scripts required in all tasks in this study.

Despite the challenges mentioned above, the overall feedback from learners and observers indicated that working in groups was a more useful option than working in pairs or individually. Proponents of group work (7 out of 10 interviewees) appreciated the benefits of pooling and exchanging knowledge and ideas, learning from others and consulting others when facing difficulties. They felt working with more capable peers, who had a wider range of vocabulary and grammatical knowledge, enabled them to write more accurately and creatively and improved their English knowledge and conceptual understanding as the following comments suggest:

> (Student interview, AC08)
> *We could ask each other for help whenever we needed it. We might suggest different ideas and sentences but we all helped choose what we thought the best.*

(Student interview, AC15)
When I was short of ideas or did not understand something, my friends would offer some ideas and sometimes explained concepts underlying those ideas. This made me learn from their perspectives as well. After all of our ideas were combined, our work looked more creative.

(Student interview, HM01)
There were many things to write about, which really made me worried. If I had to work by myself, I wouldn't have been able to complete a script. It was better to do it in groups. We could think and plan our ideas together. […] I was always nervous –I didn't know what to say. Taking turn giving a presentation in my group increased my confidence, but we didn't have much time to do this.
It would be more effective if each student prepared a presentation before class but practised in groups.

(Student interview, HM11)
More people meant more ideas, which was better than only one or two people's ideas. Since some members suggested very basic words, we helped think of other words that sounded better.

As shown by the comments above, the opportunities for assisting each other and brainstorming and sharing ideas were emphasised by all interviewees. Other significant advantages of group work, as noted by these learners, included synthesising ideas proposed by different members, resulting in the script becoming more creative (AC15), working collaboratively in groups, facilitating thinking and planning of presentations (HM01) and sharing vocabulary knowledge leading to a careful selection of words (HM11). HM01, in particular, felt that handling the script writing activity by himself without the help of others would have been daunting and less successful. In addition, according to HM01, rehearsing a presentation within the group prior to presenting to the whole class helped increase confidence, but the brief class period was a barrier to this group rehearsal activity.

On the other hand, three of the learners who participated in interviews felt that working in groups was less productive than working on their own, and they would

have chosen the latter mode if allowed. According to them, the downside of working in groups included less freedom in decision-making and creativity, opening up opportunities for freeloaders, and possible humiliation and pressure when collaborating with their peers. Their comments were:

> (Student interview, HM02)
> *From my experience, if some friends did not understand they did not provide much help—only helped with printing work. So if you can do it, you do most of the work. I think work and practice should be done individually, and you should be strict, otherwise they won't do anything.*
>
> (Student interview, HM05)
> *Whether in pairs or in groups, I still had to do the most work. Working with selfish people, I couldn't do things or speak out as I wanted. I was scared, to offer my ideas. I like talking, but as they sometimes raised their voices, I stayed quiet. [In another case] I asked my peers if they wanted to change something; they said everything looked okay. They always agreed on my ideas while I needed theirs. They sometimes wanted to change something I wrote but did not say what–just left the work to me.*
>
> (Student interview, HM12)
> *I like working on my own—not sure if I'm too confident but it's easier to have only my ideas. In a group, if I have some creative ideas but others came up with something different, I will have to compromise on my ideas. This will make me bored and stop suggesting more ideas and only listen to others'.*

As disclosed in these excerpts, learners' rejection of working in groups is largely associated with interpersonal issues between themselves and their peers, rather than with group work processes and procedures or the management of group work by the teacher. Student perspectives above indicated both positive and negatives attitudes towards group work, and it is obvious that most of the negative comments were from HM learners (HM02, HM05 and HM12). Similar views regarding the AC and HM students' group work behaviour and engagement were expressed by observers. From observation of the two classes, the observers also identified various reasons influencing the former's group participation behaviour.

The observers admired the AC class' active group participation and identified their good relationships, positive attitudes to English learning, high motivation and reasonably high English proficiency as the key reasons for their active involvement and collaboration. They felt that the HM class struggled more:

> (Observation note, Osv-A)
> *The AC group activities went very well. Everyone did the work. They had good relationships. [HM students] were quiet but attentive. This could be their nature. […] most worked on their own—they did not share or consult others. [There was] not much teamwork […].*
>
> (Observation note, Osv-B)
> *Good class atmosphere. All [AC students] worked hard—they did not sit doing nothing. Most of them had good knowledge and attitudes about learning English, were highly motivated and not worried about mistakes.*
>
> (Observation note, Osv-C)
> *Most [HM students] paid close attention, except some at the back who did not try to solve problems or even speak—just listened. Some groups asked questions to get the teacher's feedback but some did not bother.*

As can be seen, the AC learners' high motivation was as admirable as their good relationships. It is interesting, as can be inferred from Observer B's comment, that their confidence – not worrying about making mistakes – also led to their active participation. However, the opinions of the observers regarding the HM students' contribution were consistent with the attitudes of the HM students towards working with their peers as mentioned earlier. That is, not all HM group members regarded it as being their responsibility to contribute to group work with whatever resources and capacity they had. The observers' perception was that the quiet nature of HM students contributed significantly to their passive involvement and unwillingness to share and/or work with other members. Some students who were inattentive put little effort into solving task problems and getting feedback from the teacher. Observers A

and B's comments about 'good class atmosphere' and 'AC group activities [going] very well' versus HM groups having 'not much teamwork', imply that group cohesion and collaboration could either reinforce or negatively affect learning and teaching atmosphere, smooth operation of activities, and working as a team.

5.5.3 Provision of insufficient time and assistance during group work

Out of two class periods (100 minutes), approximately an hour was allocated to development of a script by groups. Some groups spent over half an hour on planning and thus had little time to spend on writing. Within the limited time, I tried to provide as much assistance and mediation as possible to the groups in need, but I could not respond to all areas as requested. Although there was consensus that adopting group instead of individual development of scripts is a practical method, students and observers felt that inadequate time and assistance were major barriers to learners producing scripts of the best quality possible. As reported in the time constraints section (5.1.5), limitations such as learners' limited knowledge of business and English proficiency exacerbated the already short class periods. As with other activities, these limitations caused difficulties both before and during group work. In the task orientation stage, learners requested more time for them to understand task requirements, brainstorm ideas and relevant language, and plan script structures, as shown by complaints from HM04 and HM05:

> (Student interview, HM04)
> *I was surprised and not ready when you assigned group work. I still did not understand things. [It was] too rushed. After listening [to instructions], we were still confused as to what to do.*

> (Student interview, HM05)
> *Time was too little. We needed to think—think about a company, and read about the company. I couldn't finish reading it, but you rushed us before we ran out of time.*

A sudden shift to group work after pre-tasks did not allow learners much time during planning, particularly to review what they had just learnt. Many students and observers commented that time allocated to reading printed materials (company profiles, products, trends) to get ideas for creating scripts was not enough. Learners' first encounters with the new concepts and sophisticated language in the materials resulted in time spent on looking up new words in a dictionary, discussing meanings and even translating words and sentences into Thai to confirm and correct their understanding. Therefore, a great deal of group work time was invested in reading and pooling ideas before learners could start writing.

Learner complaints as to the complexity of reading materials tallied with my reflections on their difficulties in dealing with the 'Describing Company Products' task in my journal. Instead of asking me questions about how to best construct their scripts, learners struggled with unknown words and asked me to explain the latter. The same struggle occurred when they actually started writing as they had to decide on ideas, select proper words and grammatical structures, and structure paragraphs and the overall script. Given the time limits, their scripts contained many mistakes and some were incomplete. During interviews, both learners and observers voiced serious concerns about the shortage of time for group work. Students believed that if there had been more time available, they could have done better and produced scripts that were well-structured and more accurate.

In addition, learners also complained about not receiving enough support during group planning and writing scripts. Because of the difficulties stated above, learners were immensely anxious about mistakes, for example, how to construct an introduction, what should be included as the main points and whether their sentences were correct and so on. During these stages, I was called upon to help, sometimes by two groups at the same time. I tried to help all groups by providing as much help and mediation as they needed, but even so, with the limited class period, I could not resolve all the difficulties of the students (see 5.4.1 for more details).

To resolve the issues of time and insufficient support, the suggestions of Willis and Willis (2007) are helpful. They state that the key is to focus on learning by enabling the students to use the language themselves rather than to try to cover everything thoroughly. While working in pairs or groups, class time should be used wisely by responding to learner needs. Since class time should be saved for learners exploring and experimenting with language using the teacher's help, Willis and Willis further suggest four ways to manage activities and time. Firstly, to save time during pre-tasks, pre-checking of topic- or task-related vocabulary should be assigned before class. Learners can look up new words and roughly plan their ideas of what to say. Secondly, starting grammar exercises in class but letting learners complete the exercises out of class time can also save time. A review and questions can be dealt with in the next lesson. Thirdly, listening, reading and follow-up activities can also be done at home if CDs or materials can be supplied before class. Finally, the teacher should promote independent vocabulary learning like keeping a vocabulary notebook so that class time can be saved for tasks. These strategies might be helpful in future implementation to solve time and to deal with the need for linguistic support. For

example, task reading materials (i.e. company profile, product and trends) as well as the planning of presentation structures can be set as tasks to be done before class. Assigning reading materials to be studied before class was not planned in this course because it was not expected that the materials would be too complicated, and students had very limited knowledge of business content.

So far, I have reported issues that emerged during the implementation of tasks, TBLT and mediation. All key issues are summarised and presented in Table 12 below.

Table 12: A summary of key issues and participants' comments and recommendations for future adjustment

＋ indicates strong/effective points

－ indicates weak/ineffective points

* indicates participants' recommendations

Area		Key issues and participants' comments	Participants' recommendations
5.1 Teaching and learning factors and Time constraints	+	5.1.1 Institutional requirements of syllabus and course delivery This task-based course offered more in-depth study and skill practice than the mainstream course of English for Communication 3, which also offers presentation practice.	*The course should be offered as an elective course, allowing greater flexibility in content focus and extended periods of teaching. * Observers agreed the course should be extended to 20 periods, in which periods 13-20 are designated as time for practice only.
	- -	5.1.2. Learners' limited English proficiency and knowledge of business practices Learners had limited English proficiency, although this was perceived by observers as being a high level of proficiency, as compared to students in general Learners lacked prior knowledge of business content.	
	-	5.1.3. Learners' unfamiliarity with TBLT approach and mediation procedures Learners were unaccustomed to TBLT and mediation techniques, and needed time for adjustments to these procedures.	
	+ +	5.1.4. The use of mother tongue in class Participants were satisfied with the lessons being conducted in English. Thai was helpful for grammar explanations and concept summaries. Decisions about when to switch between the two languages were difficult to make, resulting in switching too early or overuse of both languages.	* Thai should be used in cases where precise understanding is necessary. * Instructions should be first given in English and then Thai. *The use of Thai saves time during feedback and mediation.
	-	5.1.5. Time constraints Twelve periods of study and practice was too short a time, resulting in insufficient time for task completion and individual practice	* The number of study periods should be extended to 3 or 4 periods/task (divided into 2 sessions). * The course should be expanded to 20 periods.

5.2 Relevance and coverage	+ + +	Participants satisfied with this task-based course in 3 respects: improving general presentation skills and boosting learners' confidence in giving a presentation enhancing knowledge of business and business presentations skills for future careers facilitating the learning of other subjects	*Learners recommended this course to be offered to second year students *One observer suggested offering to years 3&4 learners because of their readiness in language use and knowledge of business
	+	a good content coverage, esp. the inclusion of developing presentation skills (lesson1)	*All tasks should be retained.
	-	a need for the teaching of presentation guidelines	*Guidelines for presentation planning should be incorporated and explicitly taught in controlled writing e.g. ▪ presentation structures and step by step planning ▪ language e.g. useful expressions, cohesive devices and transitional words
	-	Combining describing products and services made the task too complicated and lengthy that could not be achieved within 2 teaching periods.	*describing services should be discarded.
	-	insufficient individual practice e.g. learners creating his/her own script and visuals, and giving a presentation	*increasing individual preparation of materials and practice in simulated atmosphere *A cycle of individual practice was recommended by one student, from independent preparation, group presentation and class presentation *(my view) the increase in individual practice is possible if organised as an elective course with 45 teaching periods
	-	a need for intensive and explicit grammar teaching	*The course should incorporate more grammar teaching, and that complex structures should be taught explicitly
5.2.3 Teaching materials	+	Materials were interesting and useful.	
	+	Recording foreign speakers for pre-task listening offered authenticity	
	+	The departmental handouts and worksheets on describing trends were useful for language revision and self-study, and so responded to learners' linguistic needs	* Handouts should be provided before group work.
	+	Despite technical problems, YouTube VDO clips, presentation VDOs and quiz well attracted learners' attention and provided resources for pre-task discussion.	
	-	Main task reading materials taken from websites offered real business language use, but contained several complex terms and structures that students found extremely unfamiliar	* simplifying and selecting only target information and Structures * summarising key terms in materials and displaying language on PowerPoint slides * allotting more time for studying the materials
	-	Pre-task listening was cognitively demanding: too long, contained too many business terms and large numbers, and was delivered too fast	

5.3 Task complexity and difficulty	+	Half of the participants said tasks matched learners' abilities. Most found that the instructions and stages of doing tasks were not complex.	
	-	Some difficulties included: content difficulty ▪ Describing Company Products task (because it included services) ▪ Describing Company Products pre-task (too many technical words) ▪ Describing Trends (difficult content and structures) ▪ the content of (genuine) website materials	* Exclude describing services (from products). * Simplify materials describing the aerobic cycle. * Provide language handouts with explanations of complex structures. * Simplify the website materials.
	-	task process difficulty (because of unfamiliarity with TBLT, esp. brainstorming & discussing ideas, writing scripts in groups)	
5.4 Language focus	-	Learners and observers requested more explicit grammar teaching. ▪ With implicit teaching, students could not specify and use target structures in writing. ▪ The absence of a language focus phase may have led to their requests for more grammar teaching. ▪ I decided to arrange a mini language focus before group work.	* Grammar should be taught explicitly. * Language handouts should be provided as references.
5.4.1 The teacher mediation (also 5.3.1)	+	The key roles of mediation in in this study included: ▪ mediating linguistic difficulties ▪ mediating understanding of business concepts and presentation structures ▪ facilitating task evaluation	
	+	Students had positive attitudes to mediation, feeling that it stimulated thinking and long-term memory of structures, as well as skills in identifying and solving linguistic problems.	*Learners' motivation for more active participation in mediation needs to be strengthened.
	+	Class and group mediation were preferable to individual mediation, and interacting in as a class or in groups with the teacher made learners more relaxed than one-to-one.	* More time was required for both the teacher (esp. to provide immediate and effective prompts) and learners to adjust to mediation procedures.
	+	Explicit prompts or even explanation were needed when mediating complex structures or concepts	*One student requested specific explicit prompts, rather than implicit prompts that resulted in confusion.
		– Students complained about not receiving adequate mediation and assistance.	
	-	The observers considered the mediation processes useful but time consuming	*With limited time, one observer and one student suggested providing direct answers and explanations in Thai rather than implicit forms of mediation
	-	According to two observers and one student, the mediation with implicit prompts might lead to possible confusion, embarrassment and discouragement for weak students	* (my view) to mediate business concepts, providing a correct script and asking learners to verbalise reasons underlying additional details would be helpful

(mediation)	+	Mediation procedures (following pre-planned inventory) were reduced from 5 to 3 stages: offering forced-choices, asking learners to verbalise their ideas, and the teacher giving explanations.	
	-	Mediation may not be practical in cases where students have limited knowledge of complex business concepts and linguistic structures, as well as presentation structures	* Giving explicit prompts, explaining in Thai or even giving direct answer (advised by one observer) might be more helpful.
	+	Implicit prompts were effective for simple linguistic structures and less complicated problems.	
5.4.2 Peer feedback on written scripts	-	Both observers and learners were sceptical about learners' ability to review their peers' work.	* The teacher should assess students' relationships before arranging peer feedback/review
	-	The identification of errors in scripts by students themselves was regarded, by one observer, as being too difficult	
	-	Peer correction of pronunciation may be embarrassing and discouraging for learners	
5.4.3 The teacher's corrective feedback	+	The versions corrected by the teacher and shown on PowerPoint slides were useful as new business terms and expressions were added.	* One observer suggested that the teacher take all responsibility for error correction
	+	The teacher's mediation and corrective feedback were regarded as being more reliable and accurate than, and so preferable to, peer feedback.	* The teacher should highlight/underline all mistakes in scripts, and the corrected sentences should be written on the board.
	-	The processes from error identification to correction were time consuming.	* Mispronunciation should only be corrected by the teacher.
5.5 Peer engagement	+	Small group work is suitable for the teaching of presentations, as it facilitated pooling and exchanging ideas, and learning from others. This resulted in, according to students, more accurate and creative scripts	
	+	One student said rehearsing presentations within the group increased confidence, but that time was a barrier.	
	+	Learners did not worry about mistakes, leading to active participation	
	-	Learners preferred group work to individual work but were dissatisfied with: ▪ peers' unequal contribution to group work ▪ the large group size (5-6 members) ▪ insufficient time and assistance from the teacher during group work	
	-	Three students noted that there was a downside to working in groups, as it allowed them less freedom in decision-making and creativity.	
	-	The rejection of group work was largely related to personality, relationship between peers, and unequal contribution (i.e. freeloading)	
	-	Freeloading might relate to learners' personality or to the lack of content understanding.	

	-	According to observers, some students' quieter personalities also led to their passive involvement	
	-	Learners were not ready for group work, which was set up immediately after pre-tasks	*more language study during pre-task to enable group work *more time for group planning of presentation
	-	In terms of presentation skills, learners did not expect to receive any negative comments, except from close friends.	

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

In relation to the findings reported in Chapter 5, there are some critical issues raised by participants that are worth considering for future improvements in tasks and teaching delivery based on TBLT and mediation practices. The main issues relate to teaching and learning factors and time constraints, course relevance and content coverage including task materials, task complexity and difficulty, language focus, and peer engagement. In this chapter, these crucial issues are discussed in detail. In order to facilitate links between findings and comment, section headings in this chapter match those in Chapter 5.

6.1 Teaching and learning factors and time constraints

Data analysis indicated that contextual factors, especially learners' limited language competence and knowledge of business content in association with time constraints, caused a number of problems and difficulties. Before looking at these key factors, I offer my views from the evaluation of this course in conjunction with the university's requirements and the existent relevant course.

6.1.1 Evaluation of this task-based course in relation to institutional requirements and the relevant course of English for Communication 3

It is apparent from the findings that there was a mismatch between learners' need for intensive skill practice and the broad content coverage of the existing Eng. 3 subject, set according to the standard university requirements. With regard to this task-based course, while learners and observers shared similar views about the usefulness of this

course, they suggested modifying the course to enable it to be offered as an elective unit with extended study periods and intensive practice. Their recommendations imply two important pedagogical considerations: an emphasis on one specialised business skill (i.e. giving business presentations) so as to introduce several different skills as normally offered in mainstream course units and an increase in study periods for skill enhancement. The new arrangements as the elective unit offering more time and practice would not only conform to the university requirements, but also accommodate students' needs. It would be worth discussing with the university's management the possibility of offering this course with the flexibility proposed by participants.

6.1.2 Limited learner English proficiency and knowledge of business practices

Although the AC and HM groups had higher English proficiency than the majority of Year Two students, their struggles due to limited proficiency were still noticeable when they were approaching and engaging in tasks and interacting with the teacher. Learners' lack of linguistic resources and content knowledge caused students frustration and the teacher difficulty in delivering tasks. Carless (2004) notes the effects of language proficiency in his task-based research. One of the teacher-participants taking part in the research observed that linguistically advanced pupils were capable of performing a wider range of tasks on different topics than their counterparts with more limited proficiency. With good English skills, they could tackle and complete tasks quickly. However, this should not be assumed as a restriction of TBLT, suggesting that it is not a suitable approach for limited proficient learners. Task-based scholars, e.g. Ellis (2009a) and Willis and Willis

(2007), believe TBLT can be operationalised for all levels of proficiency, even with learners who have basic command of linguistic structures. According to Willis and Willis (2007), two alternative TBLT approaches, starting with either meaning-focused or form-focused communicative activities, are both pedagogically viable. In the former, meaning is prioritised, while form is developed from meaning. This is based on the perception that communicating with a few meaningful words and/or incomplete or inaccurate sentence structures may still enable learners to express their intended meanings. Therefore, teaching with TBLT should encourage learners to freely use whatever existing language resources they have while attempting to achieve tasks. However, without a doubt, advanced language users, especially ones with a wide knowledge of grammar, can express complex abstract meanings more efficiently than users with limited proficiency. Alternatively, the attainment of both meaning and form can also be achieved through a focus on both aspects in activities. That is, grammar is taught in meaningful situations. Ellis (2009a) notes the relevance of language proficiency to task design and implementation in that tasks must be tailored to suit learner proficiency. When learners have limited proficiency, input-providing tasks (i.e. ones involving listening or reading) are more appropriate than output-prompting tasks.

For my study and my context, Ellis' recommendation is important and practicable for future adjustments of tasks if implemented with low-level learners. As revealed in the task complexity and difficulty section (5.3), the task requirements of producing output (presentation scripts) with expected formal accuracy under very limited class time seemed too demanding for these groups of participants, even though the English ability of the majority of the students could be categorised

roughly as pre-intermediate level. Thus, adjusting task features and requirements to account for learners' abilities might be needed in future teaching.

6.1.3 Lack of learner familiarity with TBLT approach and mediation procedures

Learners found tasks, TBLT and mediation procedures very unfamiliar, which led to some learners expressing skepticism and dissatisfaction, particularly when pressed to participate in class discussions. While TBLT and mediation procedures have been exploited for some time in other contexts but not with Thai learners, it is understandable that the learners were unused to it, and as a result, some of them did not actively participate in activities. Negative reactions due to a lack of explicit grammar instruction, were also recorded in the initial stage of a TBLT study conducted with a group of Thai students by McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007). However, both teachers and learners participating in that study appreciated that TBLT had helped the learners to become independent in their learning. Allowing learners ample time to accustom themselves to these new methods with no negative consequences if they cannot perform tasks as planned would eventually eradicate their worries, and so ensure their active participation.

6.1.4 The use of mother tongue in class

Participants' opinions regarding the advantages and disadvantages of using Thai were varied. Mainly, while the use of Thai can cause confusion and impede the development of English skills, detailed explanations in Thai can lead to a precise understanding of the subject matter. Similar scenarios regarding the use of mother tongue in class have also been reported and discussed in other studies. Studies

carried out in Asian learning and teaching contexts report that learners preferred using L1 during instruction. Li (1998) found Korean students were resistant to oral participation in class. In the Japanese context, Eguchi and Eguchi (2006) also reported that learners were reluctant and finally decided to use Japanese instead of English, even in simple communication. Chang (2004) surveyed native English-speaking teachers' understanding of EFL contexts. The teachers commented that students did not want to take risks when speaking English in order to avoid mistakes that would make them lose face. In Carless' (2004) study, one of the teacher-participants found the use of English as a medium of instruction too time-consuming when learners had limited proficiency. However, it has been widely accepted that to stretch learners' interlanguage and communicative competence, English must be used during instruction as much as possible. Ellis (2009) points out that accessing extensive input is crucial for successful instructed language learning, particularly in foreign language teaching contexts. Hence, instruction must maximise the use of the second language (i.e. English, in this case) by exploiting it as the medium of instruction.

In contrast to the findings of relevant studies in other Asian contexts, which showed that learners preferred the use of L1 as briefly summarised above, learners in this study favoured English. However, since Thai was not tightly restricted in class interactions in this study, in contrast to the use of mother tongue in the studies mentioned above, a direct comparison of results could not be made. Interestingly, similar perspectives on the benefit of L1 in saving class time based on lessons provided to limited proficiency students, was reported by one teacher in Carless (2004) study as well as Observer A in the present study. Nevertheless, the advantage

in saving class time may need to be weighed against effective teaching that demands that only the target language is used for class communication, as recommended by Ellis (2009). Whether or not Thai should be banned or at the very least minimised, needs to be reconsidered in future task-based intervention.

6.1.5 Time constraints

In this study, time constraints were a serious issue, which was compounded by other factors, especially learners' limited English proficiency, their limited prior knowledge of business understanding, and their lack of familiarity with the implemented techniques. The shortage of class time and teaching periods affected the implementation of tasks in a number of ways. As teacher, I found that the time pressure did not allow me to provide enough mediation enabling learners to overcome all difficulties, particularly their poor performance and knowledge, incomplete understanding of business concepts and mistakes they had made. Importantly, there was insufficient time to complete all task phases according to Willis' (1996) framework (see 5.4). For students, it was obvious that insufficient time resulted in poorly-written and incomplete scripts. In addition, they did not receive the language support they needed. Because of standard course lengths imposed by the institution, an extension would not be possible if such a course were set up as a mainstream offering (like Eng.3). Organising it as an elective, where more class time is available, is likely to be the most suitable option.

6.2 Relevance and content coverage, and task materials

Although participants perceived this course as being useful and applicable to learners' present study and future careers, they proposed some adjustment of the content coverage and task materials.

6.2.1 Relevance and content coverage

The strongest recommendations made by observers were to incorporate presentation planning, individual practice and more grammar teaching, and to divide the content of describing products and services into two separate tasks. In relation to skills in planning and structuring presentations, a review of business English relating to oral presentations indicates that teaching learners some fundamental concepts and skills in planning presentations is helpful. Structures and formats of presentations are usually introduced with samples. Ellis and Johnson (1994) point out that since business English is generally defined according to business performance skills such as conducting meetings and delivering presentations, knowledge of certain concepts needs to be developed. These concepts are normally broken down into functional areas such as comparing and contrasting or recommending and agreeing along with associated linguistic elements. In addition to grammatical and lexical items, elements of spoken and written discourse such as cohesive devices, logical connectors and organisational features (e.g. signalling a new topic and turn-taking) are also of importance. Dudley-Evans and St. John (1998:86) note that lexical phrases, short set phrases that are frequently used in certain situations, are always taught to offer options in expressing moves, especially in speaking and writing lessons. These phrases include, for instance, *'the table suggests that…', 'as shown in the diagram', 'sales fell sharply'*. Similarly, the term "blocks", in Observer C's comment (see p.

180) that "*it's a good idea to give them blocks",* implies the same idea of teaching lexical phrases. When asked for clarification of their responses, all observers insisted that explicit teaching of frequently used phrases and expressions for structuring presentations and signposting was extremely useful for students who had limited knowledge and experience in giving a presentation, as was the case for these participants. This suggestion seems to correspond to the product approach to the teaching of writing that involves presenting and analysing a model text, and then assigning a task to produce a similar or parallel text (Robinson, 1991, cited in Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998). The observers' advice will be taken into account for future adjustment of tasks, but further concerns will need to be addressed, particularly whether this course should encompass basic writing skills and presentation planning. If so, it must be decided whether these should be arranged as controlled activities or be oriented to the TBLT approach and to what extent class time should be extended in order to cover these additional areas. Consideration of these issues will need to take in account learning and teaching and institutional factors, and I will discuss possibilities in the Implications and Conclusion (Chapter 7).

With regard to the need to provide more opportunities for individual practice, in my view, HM02's idea for a full cycle of practice from independent preparation and a group presentation to a class presentation and similar suggestions by the observers (see 5.2.2.3) were practical, but this might need 45 periods, equal to a standard course length. Such an increase in intensive practice is only possible if the course is arranged as a comprehensive elective, as discussed in 6.1.1. However, with regard to the critique of course content by HM02, I am not in favour of reducing the content.

The general content of company profiles, products and some simple language used for describing trends are considered basic knowledge of business presentations that university learners should know. In the observer interviews, we discussed this issue and agreed on the necessity of including both the learning of content and skill practice. Thus, all designed tasks should be retained. The more pressing issue of the need for teaching grammar will be discussed in the 'Language focus' section (6.4).

6.2.2 Task materials

As for learners who lacked experience in business presentations, like the AC and HM groups, this study revealed that the provision of input through supporting learning and teaching materials was perceived as very helpful. The usefulness of VDO and other media resources as input materials in the business teaching course was also noted in Stark (2005, see 2.1.5.1). This is in line with Ellis and Johnson's (1994) advice that since input can hardly be expected from learners who have no prior experience in topic content, materials such as VDOs or texts are great resources for input. Dudley-Evans and St John (1998) identify several reasons for the use of ESP materials as a learning support and for motivation and stimulation. In their view, stimulating materials need to be challenging but achievable, contain familiar but also new concepts and knowledge, and be fun and purposeful. More importantly, as a learning support, materials should stimulate learners' cognitive (not mechanical) processes so that opportunities are maximised and learning centres around thinking about and using the language. Additionally, a variety of activity types, especially those with visuals, can also increase motivation.

Nevertheless, as noted by Observer D, implicitly introducing target language in the materials by leaving learners to notice and identify target language by themselves did

not guarantee their understanding of the new language elements (see 5.2.3.1). Observer D's suggestion of a more precise summary of key terms probably reflected her preferences for explicit teaching of the terms. I consider this suggestion useful for the teaching of pre-experienced and/or low-level learners, since correct understanding leads to sound knowledge of the subject, but the explicit teaching is unnecessary for these two groups of learners who possess good English skills.

More criticisms raised by observers relate to the authenticity of materials. The use of authentic website materials and self-produced pre-task listening, by recording English native speakers intended to make the listening authentic, led to concerns about content overload and the advantages of authentic resources. In terms of the pre-task listening, reviewing Ur's (2012) criteria for the design of listening tasks, a number of weaknesses could be identified. First, the listening texts and comprehension questions were overloaded with large figures and new terminology. Ur (2012) points out the drawbacks of overloading that it might result in frustration and/or failure to learn new concepts or target language, which problems were also noted by Observer A (see 5.2.3.2). This notion relates to input factors, particularly aspects of code complexity, cognitive complexity or cognitive demands (Skehan, 1998; Robinson, 2001; Ellis, 2003) (see 2.1.2.2). Secondly, the created listening was a monologue recorded from written texts (i.e. website company profiles). Although the texts themselves were authentic, the listening task was not constructed in a way resembling authentic interactional situations thereby contradicting the criterion identified in Ur's (2012) question: *'Does the [listening] task provide listening experience that prepares students for real-life listening situations?'* In this case, experience refers to hearing and understanding a range of natural speech. Situations,

the focus of this research, may simulate real presentations about the company profiles. This suggests that examples of either real VDO recorded or tape-recorded presentations would be more suitable as listening texts.

Nevertheless, I consider creating my own tasks and materials useful. McGrath (2002) points out the pedagogic values of the teacher-made materials, which can be designed and finely-tuned to suit learners' levels, interests and needs. Incorporating internet resources, the materials can be attractive and professional-looking. Even though task and material designs in this study prioritised thematic content, i.e. business presentations without pre-assessment of learners' levels and needs, an evaluation of the quality of produced materials, apart from the listening task as mentioned earlier, elicited mostly positive feedback. The departmental worksheets and handouts on 'useful language for describing trends' (Boonpattanaporn and Nitayapakdee, 2011) developed by the observers proved very useful for language revision and self-study. These responded to learners' linguistic needs identified in requests for the distribution of similar types of language handouts to be used as references before group work.

As mentioned above, the use of authentic website materials sparked a discussion on the issue of authenticity and simplification of materials. Authenticity has always been a somewhat controversial subject, as a number of studies reveal. In most of the literature (e.g. McGrath, 2002; McDonough and Shaw, 2003; Tomlinson, 2011) the term 'authentic' is used in conjunction with other terms such as real, real-life, genuine, natural and unsimplified. Authentic texts are seen as samples and/or models of language use (Nunan, 1988a, in McGrath, 2002). However, in Dudley-Evans and St John's (1998) view, authenticity of text and authenticity of purpose in which texts

are exploited in the same ways as real-world use are equally important. According to Tomlinson (2011), cognitive and affective exposure to authentic use of English is essential for learners in the language acquisition process. McGrath (2002) summarises criteria for the selection of authentic texts, e.g. relevance, intrinsic interest of topic, cognitive and linguistic demands, and cultural appropriateness. Based on these criteria, I found the cognitive and linguistic demands of a pre-task listening text and main-task reading materials retrieved from websites did not match with the ability of the learners. Lack of familiarity with key concepts and new words resulted in difficulties in dealing with the tasks.

However, the observers' further comments show that authentic materials should not be regarded as having no useful purpose; instead, if learners can handle the materials, they will benefit from exposure to authentic materials. These comments are consistent the assertions of Gilmore (2007) and Lee (1995) who contend that the justification for material selection should be based on learning aims rather than merely on their level of authenticity. If the aim is to assist learners to become communicatively competent, both authentic and contrived materials are of great value. Drawing on relevant literature (e.g. Widdowson, 1980; Breen, 1985; Bacon and Finnermann, 1990, cited in Lee, 1995), Lee distinguishes between text authenticity and learner authenticity in which the latter refers to the interface between text and learners. Appropriate learner responses and positive perceptions, particularly in terms of the usefulness of text and stimulation of learner interest justify its learner-authentic value. In this sense, textual authenticity alone cannot be claimed legitimately to be learner-authentic. This means authenticity should be

evaluated beyond the text level, taking into account learners' reaction to the materials.

Furthermore, Gilmore (2007, citing Anderson and Lynch, 1988; Brown and Yule, 1983) summarises a number of factors contributing to text difficulty, which disregard text authenticity. The factors include, for example, the organisation of information, content (i.e. grammar, lexis, discourse structure and presumed background knowledge) and degree of explicitness. All in all, Gilmore (2007, citing Anderson and Lynch, 1988) points out that whether or not a text is too difficult depends on the learning context in which it is used. This is largely governed by how familiar the lexis and topic are to recipients and their prior knowledge of the topic irrespective of the authentic attributes of the text. Thus, authentic materials can be used for all levels of teaching, if carefully selected with consideration of contextual factors. To maximise students' exposure to realistic language use, a decision on simplification of authentic texts might have to be reassessed. This notion of text difficulty is compatible with Robinson's (2001) perspective on task difficulty that is determined by learners' affective and ability variables. Further discussion of this area will be presented in the next section. With reference to Gilmore, whether or not the website materials used in this study were appropriate is not concerned with the quality of being authentic but with the features and language of the material. It was obvious that the website materials of all the companies contained several business-specific terms and structures as in business discourses in general, and there was a mismatch between this and learners' comprehension because of their limited English proficiency and business knowledge. In this case, there would not be any difficulties if authentic company materials matched with learners' proficiency.

Nevertheless, reviewing the literature on authenticity in response to the ambivalence of observer reactions to the use of authentic materials has raised my awareness of authenticity. That is, learner factors such as familiarity with textual information and concepts, capacity in dealing with tasks and materials and responses to materials should all be kept in mind when selecting texts and tasks during task design. In other words, learner-authenticity is as crucial as textual authenticity, and this needs to be acknowledged for future material selection and task design.

6.3 Task complexity and difficulty

One of the prominent features of this study is its adoption of three different means for evaluating task complexity and difficulty. While participants' perceptions of task complexity and the re-evaluation based on Robinson's (2001) and Skehan's (1998) criteria produced tangible results, learner responses as reflected in mediation provided further conclusive evidence. Interestingly, these three evaluation methods yielded similar results on the linguistic and task complexity, regarding the Describing Trends task in particular. Participants' said factors contributing to task difficulty included 1) linguistic and conceptual complexity of the topic content, 2) limited subject knowledge and English proficiency and 3) task demands as well as the delivery of tasks. The effects of these factors were profound, as can be observed from learners' struggles while performing the Describing Trends tasks, illustrated in the analysed mediation Extracts 3-6 (see 5.3.1). In this study, the mediation that was exploited as a research tool proved to also be useful for task evaluation. In other words, mediation, especially the verbalisation techniques (asking learners to verbalise ideas based on what they had understood), shed light on the complex

aspects of designed tasks, the demands of task content, and the missing aspects of task content.

In addition, other areas of task complexity that were disapproved of by observers included the overly demanding task cycle stage of script writing, and the fast delivery and cognitive demands of pre-task activities. In future implementations, observers suggest the adjustment of tasks to cover only fundamental concepts and content to reduce the level of difficulty. I agree with their opinions on the extent of the coverage, but in future teaching I would consider learner ability and potential, and adopt mediation to help learners solve difficulties. The differences in my perception and those of the observers regarding the task difficulty may stem from our different perspectives on task achievement. While accuracy would be a primary goal for them, I consider learner participation and the development of some knowledge in their first exposure to this content area to be a satisfactory form of achievement. I would prefer to provide more mediation to help learners cope with the complexity of task, rather than adjusting the tasks to cover only fundamental content areas, as proposed by observers.

6.4 Language focus

The implementation of language focus through mediation, peer feedback and the teacher corrective feedback received positive comments in terms of the usefulness of these methods, but were questioned by observers regarding their suitability to the Thai context. Since the most critical views relate to mediation, I would like to discuss its practicality and its challenges, based on my perspective and evaluation, and then look at the other major criticisms regarding insufficient coverage and implicit grammar instruction as also cited by observers.

6.4.1 Implementation of mediation in language focus

Although there were many challenges, the implementation of mediation as a learning and teaching tool, briefly exemplified by some classroom interactions (see 5.4.1.1), offered a number of useful insights. Firstly, mediation had an advantage in terms of reinforcement of learners' thinking. Secondly, the requirement for immediate response from the teacher, alongside learners' lack of sufficient knowledge, resulted in the teacher and learners struggling to carry out mediation. Thirdly, adjustment of a pre-planned inventory is needed when dealing with complex concepts and structures. Fourthly, learners' motivation for participating actively in mediation needs to be strengthened. Finally, the class and group mediation was more practical than one-to-one mediation.

The implementation of mediation in this study followed the guidelines of the interactionist approach of DA principles (see 2.2.3). That is, the provision of mediation was spontaneous and flexible, focusing on the upward development of learners' abilities. This resulted in students struggling to construct meaning and knowledge, as can be seen from all interactions (see 5.3.1 and 5.4.1.1). Positively, this could be interpreted as an indication that learning was taking place. Through their struggles, different forms of mediation were employed to help learners solve problems, which generally followed specific processes. These included the teacher identifying problems or difficulties, assessing whether learners were aware of the problems, signaling there was a problem(s), encouraging learners first to solve the problems by themselves and if this failed, the teacher providing mediation and checking to ensure learners' understanding, and finally, if needed, giving explanations. However, as can be seen from the examples of interactions, full-scale

mediation had to be reduced to forced-choices, explaining concepts to help learners think further or giving explicit explanations in the final step, especially when dealing with unfamiliar business concepts and structures. All in all, mediation was still accomplished without giving straightforward correct answers, meaning that all learners were stimulated to think and offer their ideas and suggestions. Even when mediation was given to individuals, other group members and the class members were always invited to get involved in interactions, or at least called upon to pay attention. From these mediation practices, learners appreciated that mediation reinforced thinking and memorising of vocabulary and structures and thus facilitated the ongoing learning processes, as reflected in the post-intervention questionnaire and interview. Learners also found receiving mediation in groups or as a class stress-free compared to one-to-one mediation.

The provision of mediation was conducted in the manner that responded to the immediate needs of the learners, rather than drawing on new content or language areas. It was difficult to predict areas of difficulties; hence, no specific prompts and suggestions could be prepared. As shown in all interactions, the teacher tried to reinforce the co-construction of knowledge and concepts and encouraged self-correction, but since immediate responses were required, some of the prompts and suggestions provided were not effective. In the first place, it was crucial that the teacher was sensitive to problems, whether they were caused by the lack of understanding of or incorrect use of business concepts, language, or presentation structures, and that the teacher would only then decide which prompts would be appropriate. With spontaneous action required, I sometimes failed to identify the actual problem, could not think of any prompts, jumped to explicit prompts or even

gave direct explanations. I found mediating business knowledge and understanding more difficult than mediating language because of the complex nature of business practices. Also, most problematic areas were not misuse or misunderstanding but the lack of business concepts. Thus, it was unavoidable that explicit prompts or explanations rather than implicit prompts were given.

In relation to required spontaneous responses as stated above, although the pre-planned mediation inventory consisted of five stages from implicit to explicit prompts (see p. 68), in realistic classroom situations, especially with the pressure of time and learners' limited proficiency and knowledge, those stages were sometimes reduced to two: forced choices and explicit explanations. This means that the pre-determined steps of mediation within different situations and areas of difficulties may not always work and so these steps need to be fine-tuned to accommodate more effective responses to learner needs. The same is true for the level of explicitness of prompts and suggestions indicating that explicit prompts or even explanations in English or Thai may be more suitable than implicit ones, especially in the case of insufficient conceptual knowledge. This corresponded with the observer perspectives that not all problems could be solved through the five stages of mediation. Some problems (e.g. unfamiliar concepts, complex structures) were too complex to be solved in an implicit manner and so would lead to confusion rather than understanding. In addition, I found that during script planning and development, giving explicit suggestions and explaining in Thai to mediate poorly-structured scripts helped solve problems quickly. Hence, as strongly advised by Observer C (see 5.4.1.2), explicit explanations in Thai or giving direct answers were found to be

more practical for complex linguistic structures, business concepts and presentation structures, whereas implicit prompts worked well for simple concepts and structures.

Furthermore, it was found that even with these highly motivated groups of learners, it was not easy to attract and maintain their attention and involvement. While some students (always the same students) contributed to interactions, many students remained quiet. Hence, motivating all students to participate in interactions and mediation is always a big issue in the Thai context. According to Feuerstein (see 2.2.1), promoting learning development, reciprocity or learners' contributions to interaction is crucial. Engaging in interactions with the teacher and peers provides opportunities for them to co-construct new knowledge. Last but not least, both the students and I myself needed time to adjust to the mediation process and procedures. I think more experience in engaging (learners) and providing mediation (myself) has the potential to turn these unfamiliar processes into an everyday classroom procedure.

Finally, this study revealed that mediation is a useful means to promote learning. Learners had a largely positive attitude to this teaching practice, even though there were some criticisms from observers. From my experience, I consider class- and group-mediation as more appropriate than one-to-one mediation in the Thai classrooms. The reasons are that treating mistakes as group mistakes can prevent individuals from losing face. Weak learners can learn from more able peers during group- and class-mediation, and small group- and class-mediation seems to be more promising than one-to-one mediation for large classes.

In response to observers' skepticism about the pedagogical applicability of mediation to the Thai context, especially the time-consuming process and the possible

confusion it may cause, some adjustments of the mediation process and procedures should be made. As stated above (p. 269), two possible ways are to reduce stages of mediation or to adjust the forms of mediation, considering areas of difficulty and learners' abilities. However, if the observers had been involved directly in the mediation process themselves, instead of giving their comments based on my shared experience, they might have realised the benefits of mediation on learning and so their perspectives might have changed.

6.4.2 Peer feedback on written scripts and the teacher corrective feedback

Based on observers' and my observation, it became obvious that the AC and HM groups were not capable of giving feedback on scripts because of their limited knowledge of language and business practices and lack of training in reviewing and giving feedback. These factors resulted in learner worries and lack of confidence in reviewing scripts, and even unwillingness to take risks in offering possible correct forms. It would be unfeasible, however, to expect learners at this level to demonstrate linguistic competence in peer feedback. Learner reactions have led to the consideration that this task-based course would be perhaps more effectively conducted if it were offered to third and fourth year students who have more experience in both language use and business content studies. Potentially, learners were better able to give feedback on peer presentation skills and content in general, such as the degree of clarity and the organisation of presentation structures, as discussed in the Peer Engagement section (6.5) below.

With regard to the teacher corrective feedback, I agree to some extent with observers that the teacher should provide feedback on scripts rather than expecting learners to work out mistakes on their own or reviewing each other's work. However, instead of

relying on teacher corrective feedback alone, particularly when explicit corrections were involved, I would encourage learners to actively take part in mediation because of learning benefits as stated in the mediation section above. From the literature review and the outcome of mediation (5.4.1) and corrective feedback (5.4.3) in this study, it is evident that mediation and corrective feedback approaches shared some common ground but adopted different procedures. While mediation entailed graded mediation procedures with prompts and suggestions ranging from implicit to increasingly explicit, corrective feedback consisted of mainly explanations, explicit correction and recasts based on practices defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997), which were largely used in Lesson 3 for the improvement of presentation scripts. In fact, explicit correction is similar to stage 5 (the mediator explains correct answer or solution) of the mediation inventory (see p. 68). The difference is that in mediation it is required that the learners should identify and try to solve a problem on their own before the teacher steps in to provide a correct answer, but in explicit correction the teacher offers the correct answer even though learners verbalise their reasons afterwards.

The significant distinction between corrective feedback and mediation in this study as reflected in class interactions in particular is that mediation practices cover a wider scope not only error correction (see 2.2.2). While corrective feedback highlights error treatment, mediation was used to mediate linguistic difficulties and ineffective presentation planning and structure (see 5.4.1) and to evaluate the complexity and difficulty of designed tasks in which some weak aspects of tasks were identified (see 5.3.1).

6.4.3 Participant concerns over insufficient grammar coverage and implicit instruction

As mentioned earlier (see 6.2.1), critical issues related to grammar and vocabulary instruction encompassed mainly insufficient grammar coverage and observer preferences for explicit over implicit instruction. Based on interview data, my journal entries, and my perspectives, I identified three key factors contributing to participants' negative responses: 1) lack of explicit grammar-focused activity, 2) the observers' perception that explicit grammar instruction was needed for the attainment of accuracy and 3) the absence of a language focus phase.

As revealed in 5.4, there was no grammar-focused activity during the core tasks of Describing Company Profiles, Describing Company Products and Describing Trends (Lessons 2, 4, 5), apart from textbook-based drilling exercises in lesson 1 and feedback on scripts in lesson 3. The absence of concrete grammar activities was seen by observers as a lack of opportunities and resources (i.e. materials with exercises) being provided for grammar practice, and hence as failing to foster learners' overall grammatical knowledge and competence. Their recommendation was to increase pre-task grammar activities, wherein the target language is taught before group work, which implies those activities represent important means for grammar practice. This likely corresponds to the notions of traditional grammar-oriented pedagogy, such as the PPP and focus on forms. Referring to Wilkins' term of synthetic approach, Long and Robinson (1998) note that in the focus on forms, L2 is segmented into discrete linguistic items. The items are then sequenced, based on consideration on linguistic complexity, for presentation as models for learners to synthesise and use those bits and pieces during communication practice. Synthetic syllabi with pedagogical

materials and accompanying classroom procedures are purposefully designed for the presentation and practice of specific linguistic units or forms. Following similar processes of presentation and practice to those described by Long and Robinson (ibid.), the final P of PPP, or a free production stage requires learners to reproduce target language. This presupposition seems wrong according to Willis (1996), who argues that since there is a strong tendency for learners to reproduce pre-selected target forms that they have just practised, the production (i.e. language use) is restricted and not spontaneous as expected. In line with the PPP approach and focus on forms, the observers in my study recommended an increase in grammar activities for overt presentation and practice of forms and rules, before script writing. My assumption is that their familiarity with these traditional methods of grammar instruction, PPP in particular, might have influenced their view that the grammar coverage was inadequate, and thus that there was a need for greater incorporation of grammar practice.

Secondly, the reason for the observers' objection to implicit grammar and vocabulary teaching (see 5.4.4) is justifiable. Explicit teaching with presentation, explanation and summary of target language before group work is perceived as being crucial for Thai learners, whereas elicitation, identification and analysis of target language through the teacher's facilitation and input during pre-tasks is seen as being too implicit for the learners to grasp the concepts and language required for accurate script production. As stated by the observers, they expected the students not only to complete the tasks successfully (producing a script) but also to achieve a certain degree of accuracy. In their view, implicit teaching did not serve these learning goals. Their support for explicit instruction became overt as the lessons continued,

with strong positive reactions towards the feedback and mini-language focus sessions in Lessons 3 and 5. Indeed, scholars in the ELT field, e.g. Long (2000), Lapkin, Hart, & Swain (1991), and Swain & Lapkin (1989) (cited in Nassaji & Fotos, 2004), note the benefits of focus on form. Meaning-focused approaches that downplay grammar teaching would not serve the goal of helping learners achieve high levels of accuracy. According to Long (2000), focusing on form, with the emphasis on both meaning and forms in communicative activities, is the most effective approach. Similarly, Norris and Ortega (2000) report that some techniques, like presenting and explaining grammatical functions and rules, which are considered to be explicit instruction help learners to gain target language although the gain may decrease over time.

In relation to this study, I agree with the observers' opinions on the non-feasibility of implicit instruction for these learners. Its inadequacy is found in the many mistakes and the very limited understanding of topic concepts shown in learner scripts for the 'Describing Company Profiles' task (see 5.4.1). This was the main reason for the adjustment of grammar and vocabulary teaching in subsequent tasks.

Furthermore, the absence of the language focus phase which was supposed to be carried out after group work in Lessons 2, 4 and 5 (see 5.4.1 and 5.4.2) may have caused concerns over grammar instruction. In other words, if the language focus phase had been delivered as planned, the observers' perspectives might have been different. Also, theoretically, since the post-task language focus phase embraces both language analysis and practice of linguistic components identified during pre-task and task cycle, according to Willis' (1996) framework implementing a post-task language focus phase would make the delivery of grammar instruction more explicit

overall and thus satisfy the observers and respond to student needs better. Nonetheless, the unavailability of the language focus was due to time constraints (see 5.1.5), which needs to be addressed to allow sufficient time for the language focus phase.

Although I agree with the observers that an increase in the explicitness of the grammar teaching provided to these groups of learners would be beneficial, this does not mean a return to traditional approaches that isolate linguistic elements from meaningful context of use. In the context of this study, my belief is that the explicitness of the focus on form activities should depend upon learners' proficiency (also mentioned by observers, see 5.4.2) and the aim of each activity, i.e. whether accuracy or fluency is the priority. What is important for forms to become part of learners' interlanguage behaviour, as noted by Larsen-Freeman (2003), is the provision of opportunities for learners to encounter, process and use forms in a wide range of form-meaning relationships. To attain both accuracy and fluency and to enhance learners' communicative competence, researchers (e.g. Fotos & Nassaji, 2007; Ellis, 2005) agree that attention to form in meaningful context is as important as a focus on meaning, although priority should be given to meaning, i.e. pragmatic meaning over semantic meaning (Ellis, 2005). Ultimately, instruction should combine both form-focused instruction and meaningful communication (see p.43 and 166). Ellis (ibid.) suggests that focus on forms can be achieved through input-based and output-based grammar lessons, focused tasks, time for strategic planning and on-line planning, and corrective feedback. The input/output-based lessons may adopt an inductive approach to encourage noticing of predetermined forms as well as a deductive approach to build an awareness of grammar rules. Focused tasks, wherein

specific linguistic elements are highlighted are also useful, as learners will engage in processing target structures in the input and/or produce the structures during task performance. Allocating reasonable time for both strategic and on-line planning also facilitates the focus on form. Unlike the on-line planning that occurs during performance of the task, strategic planning (see more details, p.32) occurs when time is allocated for planning before performing, mainly to think about what forms and/or content could be used (Ellis, 2003). This can be set up individually or in groups. As for corrective feedback, Ellis et al. (2001) regard corrective feedback (i.e. the teacher's responses to errors) as reactive attention to form, as opposed to pre-emptive feedback which may be initiated by the teacher or student. In relation to this study, language support (including error correction and feedback) was handled through mediation based on dynamic assessment (DA) principles and procedures. The advantages of mediation, especially its role in improving linguistic difficulties, are presented in section 5.4.1.

The above review of the role and benefits of focus on form, especially in TBLT syllabi, affirms that greater integration of focus on form is of importance in future implementation in the Thai context. However, the absence of a language focus phase in this study should not lead to the misperception that TBLT neglects the teaching of grammar, as the observers' negative reactions suggest. TBLT researchers have tried to dispel this misconception. Ellis (2003) clarifies the misperception of inadequate coverage of grammar in TBLT, an issue raised by both Sheen (2003) and Swan (2005). Ellis argues that the task-based syllabus consists of both unfocused and focused tasks (see details p.28), and that grammar has a major role in the latter. The mistaken views may be derived from unfocused tasks in a purely task-based

syllabus, wherein grammar is not explicitly discussed. In Ellis' view, although the syllabus does not clearly specify grammatical elements to focus on, the methodology of task-based teaching does not downplay the teaching of grammar. But it is true that grammar is introduced at different stages in different frameworks. For instance, grammar can be integrated in all phases in Ellis' model (Ellis, 2003), delayed until a post-task phase in Willis' framework (Willis, 1996), or included in the main task through recasts according to Long (2006). More arguments for the role of grammar in TBLT can be also found in Littlewood's (2007) review of task-based work in East Asian contexts. He suggests that teachers should adapt rather than adopt TBLT in these context-specific situations. In the Thai context, evidence showing a preference for explicit teaching of grammar exists in McDonough and Chaikitmongkol (2007).

Likewise, Fotos (1998) points out differences between ESL and EFL situational contexts and suggests a possible shift from focus on forms to form through various form-focused activities, including task-based approaches for large classes. In an ESL situation, two types of activities, which are common, are seen as being efficient: 1) implicit grammatical instruction through the provision of communicative input for learners to attend to target forms, notice and process the forms and 2) explicit instruction combined with communicative activities, normally a brief grammar lesson followed by reinforced communicative input. These are considered to be formal instruction (Fotos, 1993; Schmidt, 1990 cited in Fotos, 1998) that aims to promote first awareness of grammatical forms, and second noticing of target structures in repeated exposure to communicative input. These types of formal instruction work well in ESL situation, wherein such exposure can be expected both inside and outside the classroom, but not in EFL settings. For task-based focus on

form in EFL situation, Fotos (1998) recommends two types of activities: the implicit focus before task performance, and the explicit focus after the task performance. Implicitly, the target structure must be used to complete the pure communicative task, whereas, explicitly, the target structure is set as the task content that requires learners to solve grammar problems. This explicit focus is in line with Ellis (2009a) suggestion with reference to consciousness-raising (CR) activities involving a discussion of grammatical components and rules. Ellis recommends the CR activities as being ideal post-task grammar activities. An important distinction between the CR activities and focused tasks (as mentioned above) should be noted here. While the former caters for explicit learning, the latter primarily promotes implicit learning.

In addition, the focus on form can also be operationalised in collaborative output tasks as discussed by Swain (2001). It relates well to this study, as learners need to produce presentation scripts; this is regarded as pushed output. Swain argues that pushing for accuracy tends to occur during L2 production when learners are not able to speak (and write) in the way they intend to. In their attempt to produce accurate target language (pushed output), they engage in formulating and testing hypotheses, which reinforce syntactic processing. This pushed output can be carried out through focused communicative tasks and collaborative output tasks. The latter, in which learners collaboratively produce output, is an interesting option that could be incorporated for future implementation. A further review will be needed in terms of theoretical grounds and procedures.

To conclude, in this section I have described the mismatch between the observers' preferences for grammar instruction and the actual implementation. I agree with their recommendations for greater grammar coverage and increasingly explicit instruction.

However, rather than continuing with the so-called traditional structure-based approaches and lecture-based methods, which are common practices in my context, I consider a focus on form more practical. To ensure learners' understanding of target structure, explicit methods or techniques, e.g. explaining grammatical rules and functions, can be integrated into or deployed after implicit instruction. From a review of literature in the field, options for focus on form activities that are worth considering for the adjustments of tasks in future implementation include input/output-based grammar lessons, focused tasks, consciousness-raising activities, strategic and on-line planning, corrective feedback (also mediation following DA, see 5.4.1), implicit instruction with communicative input, a combination of explicit instruction and communicative activities, and collaborative output tasks.

6.5 Peer engagement

The findings showed that the majority of learners preferred group work to individual work. Sharing ideas and knowledge among peers improved their learning. Their positive responses are in line with Jacobs' (1998, cited in Ellis, 2003) list of potential advantages of working in pairs and groups. That is, group work leads to an increase in learning, collaborative skills, motivation, enjoyment and social integration. Also, peers working together in groups are more willing to take risks and scaffold each other than when they are working individually. However, a rough comparison of group behaviour in the AC and HM classes shed some light on factors influencing different degrees of cooperation and contribution amongst learners. It was found that personal factors (e.g. quiet natured, a sense of responsibility to group contribution or inattentive study behavior) played an important role in group relationships. Interestingly, two learning factors concerning learners' lack of content –

understanding versus not being worried about making mistakes – also affected the levels of cooperation. Littlewood (2001) assumes that the concept of collectivism could lead to emphasis on the importance of relationships among Asian students, and there seemed to be different perceptions of 'common goals' between Asian and European learners because of the influence of collectivism versus individualism. The collectivist culture of Asian prioritises relationship-oriented goals, while the individualist culture of Europeans emphasises outcome-oriented goals. In relation to this study, since relationship plays an important role, peer relationships clearly shaped how learners work together towards the goal or expected task outcomes (i.e. in producing good quality scripts). As the AC students had good relationships, close collaboration helped them achieve tasks without any major problems. The HM students' distant relationships led to struggles in both cooperating with peers and working on the task.

The other main issues for group work are the provision of insufficient time and assistance, as reported by participants. To resolve these shortcomings, the suggestions of Willis and Willis (2007) are helpful. They state that the key is to focus on learning by enabling the students to use the language themselves rather than to try to cover everything thoroughly. While working in pairs or groups, class time should be used wisely by responding to learner needs. Since class time should be saved for learners exploring and experimenting with language using the teacher's help, Willis and Willis further suggest four ways to manage activities and time. Firstly, to save time during pre-tasks, pre-checking of topic- or task-related vocabulary should be assigned before class. Learners can look up new words and roughly plan their ideas of what to say. Secondly, starting grammar exercises in class

but letting learners complete the exercises out of class time can also save time. A review and questions can be dealt with in the next lesson. Thirdly, listening, reading and follow-up activities can also be done at home if CDs or materials can be supplied before class. Finally, the teacher should promote independent vocabulary learning like keeping a vocabulary notebook so that class time can be saved for tasks. These strategies might be helpful in future implementation to solve time and to deal with the need for linguistic support. For example, task reading materials (i.e. company profile, product and trends) as well as the planning of presentation structures can be set as tasks to be done before class. Assigning reading materials to be studied before class was not planned in this course because it was not expected that the materials would be too complicated, and students had very limited knowledge of business content.

In conclusion, this chapter discusses a number of issues and possible solutions as proposed by participants, and as noted by scholars in relevant literature. The next chapter looks at the implications of this study.

CHAPTER 7

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This chapter begins with a summary of key areas in response to my research questions, followed by a discussion of implications of the results of my study. Based on the perceived effectiveness of the implementation of the designed tasks and recommendations from learners and observers, I propose guidance for future task design and delivery of business presentations teaching, and also an adjusted task-based model designed specifically for the teaching of business presentations. This proposed model is based on Willis' framework (Willis, 1996). I believe the potential implications from this study will benefit not only the local Thai context, but also other similar contexts including wider English language teaching communities that might face the same challenges or consider implementing TBLT and mediation procedures in teaching.

7.1 Summary in responses to research questions

The rich, insightful feedback gained from relevant parties in case studies facilitates in-depth analysis and interpretation of research findings that ultimately allow for valid conclusions about the focused areas of investigation. To this end, the suitability of designed tasks, TBLT, and mediation procedures can be briefly summarised as follows.

With regard to the first research question, which focused on the effectiveness of designed tasks, learners and observers perceived that the strength of all tasks lay in their relevance, while content coverage needed to be improved. The tasks were useful for developing learners' presentation knowledge and skills that were essential

for their future careers and job prospects. Although the tasks provided a reasonably good coverage of business-related content and basic presentation skills, tasks needed to incorporate guidelines for presentation planning and structuring, divide the teaching of describing company products and services into separate tasks, and embrace more intensive and explicit grammar teaching. The need for the teaching of presentation planning and structuring was not identified during task design, but was recognised from observing learners' difficulties in planning their scripts during lesson delivery. Future implementations should take into account that teaching effective planning skills and presentation structures is as important as the study of presentation content. Furthermore, as repeatedly noted by observers, the designed tasks should integrate more explicit grammar teaching. Criticisms about the insufficiency of grammar coverage have not been only voiced in this study, but also in other task-based studies (see p. 41). As such, I believe these widespread criticisms exist not only within the Thai context but also other contexts. Hence, this should be seriously addressed in future task design. Some suitable ways of teaching vocabulary and grammar have been discussed at length in the evaluation of the practicality of TBLT (see response to research question two below), and I summarise some advice in the implications section below. In addition, observers' suggestions about how to improve designed tasks included the simplification of pre-task listening activities, which were considered too cognitively demanding, as well as the use of authentic materials. While there are a number of advantages to exposing learners to the realistic business language contained in authentic materials (see 6.2.3), observers questioned whether authentic website materials were valuable in this context because they made the tasks too complex for learners at this level. Thus, future task design must consider whether to use authentic materials, simplified texts, or a balance

between the two. My direct experience of dealing with issues relating to presentation planning, language focus and authentic materials in this study has broadened my perspectives on these issues, enabling me to develop general guidance on task adjustment in the implications section.

In terms of the effectiveness of TBLT for the teaching of business presentations (research question two) most learners, observers and myself would endorse using TBLT, integrated with mediation, in future teaching, but would opt for some adaptations in order to accommodate Thai learners' linguistic needs. TBLT was perceived as being a more effective approach than textbook-based teaching, particularly because of its advantages in promoting thinking, sharing ideas and knowledge and collaborative group work during script development. The preference for group work expressed in this study is indeed in line with the general opinion about a TBLT approach, in that activities are always carried out in pairs or groups. Significantly, as shown in this study, group-based script development enabled successful script production, even though the quality of scripts were quite low because of learners' limited language proficiency and lack of prior knowledge of subject matter. Thus, group work was a practical means in this sense. However, some ambivalent viewpoints were expressed by a few participants regarding whether individual script development should have also been included, and whether intensive and explicit grammar and vocabulary teaching before group work (i.e. in pre-tasks) should have been introduced to increase the level of accuracy. The major reason for the need for explicit teaching expressed by observers was that implicit teaching, as in the pre-task phase of Willis' TBLT framework (Willis, 1996), did not equip learners with the target language they needed, and thus failed to achieve a high level of

accuracy. Also, it was too demanding to expect learners who had limited vocabulary and grammatical knowledge and proficiency to brainstorm, offer ideas and participate in discussion about structures that should be used, as would normally be required during task stages.

There has always been skepticism about the inadequacy of grammar instruction in TBLT (see p. 41). In this Thai context, the observers and I agreed on the need for additional grammar instruction, although I would seek a balance between implicit and explicit grammar teaching. I would prefer implicit teaching during pre-tasks (even though one observer favoured entirely explicit teaching) and a more explicit summary and explanations of rules and meanings if required after pre-tasks. Adapting Willis' framework, I initiated the mini-language focus after the pre-tasks in the Describing Trends task, which learners found helpful. I would recommend setting up this mini-language focus in other similar contexts, especially ones with low-level learners. I will elaborate on how the mini-language focus can be organised, as well as how I adapted Willis' framework, in the following implications.

In addition, as reported in the findings section, time constraints were a serious issue affecting the implementation of pre-task discussions, group script writing, and the provision of mediation and feedback. At my university, and possibly in other contexts as well, increasing class time and extending periods of teaching cannot be done without taking into account institutional standard requirements for course administration. Nevertheless, in order for opportunities for discussing and sharing ideas, exploring tasks and language and interacting with peers and the teacher to be promoted in future delivery of TBLT, time constraints need to be resolved. On the assumption that this can be accommodated within a university's normal constraints,

a detailed plan is needed of how many periods should be dedicated to TBLT and how to make the best use of those periods during task design. To give other teachers some ideas as a starting point, I propose possible solutions and a time frame for business presentation course in the implications section.

As for the effectiveness of mediation practice, research question three, it was found that mediation not only fulfilled a role in facilitating learning, but also strengthened TBLT intervention. As concluded in the findings and discussion chapter, mediation served three main functions: 1) to mediate linguistic difficulties; 2) to mediate understanding of concepts and presentation structures; and 3) to facilitate the evaluation of tasks. There was concrete evidence, from challenges I encountered in helping learners to cope with task complexity and conceptual demands and from detailed analysis of class interactions, that mediation played a substantial role in helping learners handle tasks. Despite low levels of both linguistic abilities and prior knowledge, learners who fully engaged in interactions during the mediation process could, to some extent, identify and correct mistakes, and improved their comprehension of concepts at a satisfactory rate. This leads to my belief that mediation can be applied at all levels of proficiency, and with all sorts of content areas. In fact, based on this study, as much of mediation involved solving linguistic difficulties, the claims made by observers regarding insufficient coverage of grammar teaching could be wrong. In this study, mediation directed learners' attention to linguistic features as much as instructed grammar teaching did. Learners' perception that mediation stimulated their thinking indicates that mediation might lead to a deeper level of learning and understanding of concepts than direct explicit presentation and explanation. In short, mediation was one of the most important

mechanisms in assisting learners to achieve tasks and build up knowledge of business-related language and subject content.

Another major contribution of mediation in this study was on task evaluation. Although it was not possible to implement all pre-planned five steps of mediation procedures due to time restrictions, the remaining three steps focusing on learners verbalising their ideas and reasons for their choices (i.e. what they thought correct or more appropriate) opened up opportunities to evaluate tasks on-line and after implementation. This provided me with valuable insights into practical and impractical aspects of the tasks and my teaching. During interactions, whether learners struggled, failed or successfully solved problems in the end reflected the degree to which tasks and the teaching delivery worked. For example, as soon as I noticed learners had difficulties planning their scripts and asked them to verbalise some ideas they had in mind (see Extracts 1 and 2, pp. 191-192), I realised that guidelines for planning scripts were missing from the course. This addition was also recommended by observers. In this case, students' reactions and verbalisation during the task process provided me with on-line feedback that gave me direction for monitoring their scripts. In another case, verbalisation during the mediation process enabled me to identify specific linguistic needs, e.g. adjectives for describing products and noun-sentence patterns for describing trends that students could not master. Recognising these linguistic areas in this study provides a guide to which linguistic components should be highlighted in future teaching. Detailed analysis of mediation from class interactions after all tasks would give the teacher an overall picture of linguistic needs. All in all, stimulating learners to verbalise their ideas and

reasons is worth considering in future courses, as well as the use of mediation procedures for learning and evaluation tools.

However, as noted by observers, the mediation process seemed lengthy and hence time-consuming, which could exacerbate the problem of time pressure. The conduct of mediation might also discourage weak learners if they fail to improve mistakes after the mediation. This is particularly important to the Thai and other Asian settings because of the sensitivity towards losing face in front of peers. Hence, specific contextual factors such as the issues of time, attitudes and proficiency of learners, and the possibility of face-threatening act as raised in this study need to be taken into account if mediation is to be used. My perspective is that the tangible benefits of mediation found in this study mean teachers should take the opportunity to try this method in their classrooms. In the implications section that follows, I propose possible solutions for applying it in other contexts with similar contextual restrictions.

7.2 Pedagogical implications: guidance for implementing tasks, TBLT and mediation procedures

In this section, I propose detailed guidance for future implementation, with a summary diagram at the end of this section. The guidance includes 1) incorporating presentation skills, useful expressions and guidelines for planning presentations; 2) allocating sufficient time; 3) developing a bank of resources and materials; 4) managing group development of script; 5) highlighting language focus in low-level groups; 6) providing mediation and 7) providing opportunities for individual practice, if time allows.

In terms of building up presentation skills, the introductory lesson adopting available multimedia resources like Youtube clips of funny or well-known presentations helped attract learners' attention and was useful for eliciting ideas about effective gesture and body language. This captured learners' interest, as well as allowing authentic presentation examples to introduce useful expressions and transitions e.g. opening, closing and cohesive devices. However, what I learnt from this study is that low-level learners might need a clear guide on how to use these suggested expressions, phrases and transitional words, including step by step planning and presentation structure advice. Merely highlighting these structures in examples given, as I did in this study, was not enough to help them master these structures correctly. It might be worth considering observers' suggestions to teach these structures in straightforward controlled writing sessions at the beginning of the course. Five to six periods, probably split into two sessions, should be devoted to this introduction. If learners' abilities in these areas were enhanced this way, group script development could be fully spent on planning ideas and writing script content, rather than planning as happened in this course.

To resolve time issues, the possibility of extending this course beyond 12 periods should be negotiated with the institution. Organising the course as a business skill building course at the language centre or as an elective course would allow some flexibility. The course should last 20 periods at a minimum, or longer—a normal standard for an elective unit is 45 periods in Thailand. Fundamentally, 6 periods should be allocated to introductions as mentioned above, 12 periods for content study and script development and some practice, and the final 2 periods for simulated practice. If the maximum of 45 periods is allowed, as for an elective

course, the following could all be added in future teaching, in order for learners to achieve higher levels of skill improvement and accuracy of scripts: more intensive study and practice of each task; the inclusion of describing services task; peer feedback and review; full-scale teacher-led mediation; rehearsal within group, and individual practice. On the other hand, if the proposed extension fails and only 12 periods are available, as in this course, retaining all lessons and tasks (except the content of describing services) would be reasonable. However, as a greater proportion of time would be allocated to group script development and language focus, I would recommend that teachers assign some activities to do outside of class or before lessons, e.g. pre-study of authentic website materials and language handouts, creating presentation slides, review scripts and rehearsing presentations.

Developing a bank of materials, including language handouts, would offer a wide variety of materials that can be used to supplement any stage of the course. Since it is often the case that the actual proficiency of learners tends to be recognisable once they have engaged in tasks, supplementation and adjustment of pre-designed materials may be required, as happened in this study. The use of authentic website materials offered opportunities to expose learners to realistic business language use, but in future teaching, some complex parts with a number of unfamiliar words and structures might need to be simplified. In particular, it was found that learners consulted language handouts a lot when dealing with linguistic difficulties, and that handouts increased vocabulary range during script production. Hence, a variety of authentic materials (e.g. company profiles, product advertisement brochures, etc.), more handouts, supplementary grammar worksheets and exercises relating to each task should be pre-prepared.

The task stage on group development of scripts needs special attention as well. Forming a group consisting of 5-6 members, as in this study, made the group too large. Three to four members would be a good size. However, the size is not as important as having all members collaborate and contribute. I observed some unequal contributions and a lot of struggles during group work, due to this being the learners' first encounter with business content and presentations. Thus, I would suggest that teachers monitor learners closely during group work and encourage active participation in brainstorming and offering ideas, as well as helping each other. Also, allowing sufficient time for group planning and writing is crucial for quality scripts. As mentioned above, the course should be extended, or, if this is not possible, some in-class activities should be assigned before class, in order to allow enough time for producing scripts and receiving mediation to improve the scripts.

In terms of linguistic focus, it emerged in this study that learners did not have sufficient language knowledge and abilities to independently orientate to and handle tasks. The implicit teaching of concepts, target structures and vocabulary embedded in brief pre-tasks did not help them acquire the language needed for script development. Therefore, it is crucial that Thai teachers and teachers who work with low proficiency learners, particularly in similar EFL contexts, consider the adjustment of linguistic focus. I would recommend starting with implicit teaching, i.e. emphasising the exploration and identification of structures and vocabulary by learners, followed by teacher-led discussion and summary of structures after pre-tasks. Attention might be drawn to complex target structures, with some explanations of rules and meanings provided if necessary. With limited class time, I would follow Willis and Willis' (2007) advice to not include grammar practice in class, but would

provide grammar and vocabulary worksheets to do out of class, with a review in later lessons. In fact, in class, the more explicit methods of grammar teaching can be arranged in the language focus phase. Unfortunately, the post-task analysis and practice of language components (Willis, 1996) could not be implemented in this study due to limited time, but even if it had been possible, learners' lack of linguistic knowledge would still have caused difficulties during script production. If the full language focus phase is shifted to between pre-tasks and group work, more emphasis on language can be added. However, shifting the language focus phase to before group work (main task) would be a return to grammar-oriented approaches that may not offer many opportunities for communication practice and exploring and thinking about language that is believed to lead to deeper levels of learning than explicit presentation of structures. In summary, I think teachers should limit explicit teaching (i.e. direct presentation and explanation of structures and new words), but instead provide mediation and handouts as reference to help learners cope with linguistic difficulties. To promote richer understanding of structures, grammar exercises can be given for additional out-of-class practice. The conduct of post-task language focus should be mandatory in future implementation, as better understanding of structures and concepts would increase learners' capacity in revising their scripts. In fact, as mentioned earlier, a brief summary of language identified in pre-tasks would ensure better understanding of new language elements. I defined this stage as a mini-language focus (see p. 120).

This study showed that mediation had a prominent role in its own right and a complementary role to TBLT. The fresh insights gained from this implementation of mediation procedures offer teachers guidelines on mediation practices. In the Thai

context, and presumably other Asian contexts, group mediation would be the most suitable option. However, this also depends on learners' levels, as more advanced learners may prefer to or be able to solve difficulties on their own. Nevertheless, I still feel the group mediation approach is best, as I believe more new concepts and language will be exchanged during interactions. Furthermore, as mentioned in the response to research question three (see 7.1), verbalisation is proved to have benefits in providing teachers with feedback on teaching, and thus verbalisation should be stimulated in interactions. In terms of mediation procedures, teachers should first follow all five steps as planned in the mediation inventory (see p.68), but may shorten this to three steps if time is too limited or there are signs of confusion during the first two steps, involving error identification through implicit forms of prompts and suggestions. From my experience in this study, I think mediation can be carried out in all task phases. In fact, it might be a more effective approach as compared to explicit teaching or direct explanation of concepts and structures. Teachers should consider this approach to reinforce linguistic focus and get feedback on teaching through learner verbalisation.

Given that many complaints received were related to the lack of opportunities for individual practice after group work, this should be seriously considered for future implementation. Out-of-class individual preparation and development of script and visuals should be promoted, with feedback given to each learner. Subsequently, the learner could present work to the class for peer feedback. As reflected by participants, learners' subject knowledge has progressed to some extent, and thus with some more group and individual practice their skills can be further polished.

Figure 10 below summarises implications and recommendations that may be useful in giving teachers some ideas for future implementation.

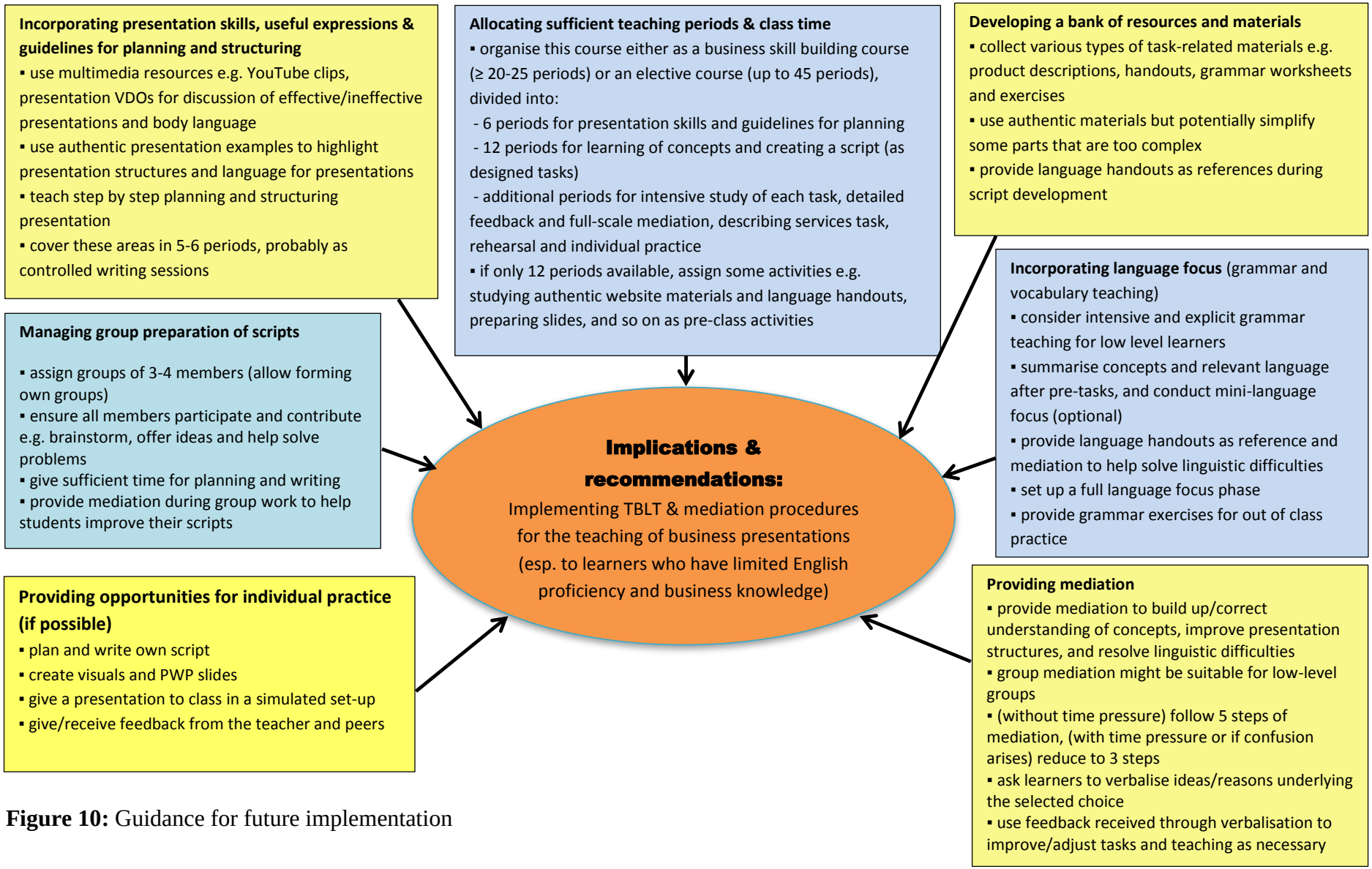


Figure 10: Guidance for future implementation

7.3 Pedagogical implications: a proposal for adaptation of Willis' framework (1996) for business presentations course

In this section, I would like to propose an adjusted TBLT model, which I have built from Willis' task-based framework (1996). It is hoped that this model, which has been specifically adapted for the teaching of business presentations, will provide teachers with guidance for future task design and delivery.

Pre-task *(Introduction to topic and task)* •Teacher explores the topic with the class (e.g. from pre-task listening, examples of presentations etc.) - discuss important concepts (e.g. info. about company profile, products) - discuss what need to be included in a presentation on e.g. describing company profile, products, and trends - highlight useful words, phrases and expressions		
Mini-language focus • The teacher and class summarise relevant language components identified during pre-task • The teacher briefly explains unfamiliar words and complex structures, if required • The teacher suggests more useful language (expressions, structures etc.), and may provide language handouts for reference		
Task cycle		
(planning) Planning ideas/structures of presentation • Students work in groups, read the task worksheet and discuss what to do • The group studies website materials to get ideas/info. for writing script • The group plans how to structure presentation, with some ideas listed in each paragraph …… • The teacher helps revise their plan and suggest more ideas and language • The teacher mediates incorrect understanding of concepts, and language as learners planned	*(Task)* Task (group writing a script) • The group brainstorms ideas of what is to be included in the script • The group starts writing a script and may consult language handouts and grammar books if unsure about correct forms/words. …… • The teacher helps check the organisation and clarity of ideas presented in the draft •The teacher gives mediation to help improve the script and resolve language problems …… • The group might rehearse their presentation within group, if time allows	*(Report)* Giving a presentation to the class • It would be feasible under limited time conditions that each member takes a turn, in different tasks, to give a presentation to the class • The group representative gives a presentation to the class • Peers and the teacher write feedback on the presentation using a feedback form and give it to the presenter …… • The teacher might draw learners' attention to some serious errors (taking care not to embarrass the presenter), but sharing in the whole class would prevent the same mistakes recurring
Language Focus		
(Analysis) The students • do consciousness-raising activities to identify and process specific language features from task text and/or transcript • may ask about other features they have noticed …….	*(Practice)* The teacher • conducts practice activities after analysis activities where necessary, to build confidence …….	

The teacher	The students
• reviews each analysis activity with the class • brings other useful words, phrases and patterns to students' attention • may pick up on language items from the report stage	• practise words, phrases and patterns from the analysis activities • practise other features occurring in the task text or report stage • enter useful language items in their language handbooks

Table 13: Proposed adaptation of Willis' task-based framework (Willis, 1996)

To reiterate, it should be noted that this proposed framework has been developed from Willis' task-based framework in order to be compatible with the content and teaching of business presentations. The main adaptations have been made in the pre-tasks and task cycle phases. It is not possible to make recommendations on the language focus phase since this study did not achieve this important stage, and therefore did not have sufficient data for adaptations and suggestions. Thus, I retain what Willis suggested during the language focus. As can be seen, this model illustrates activities that should be included in all stages with speculation about the teacher's and learners' roles. The whole task process seems lengthy as it is intended for low-level groups, but would be feasible if there is no time constraint. Teachers might need to consider their own context-specific situations and further adjust this model to be in line with the needs of their students. For example, the mini-language focus might not be of value or the planning stage during task cycle could be shortened if working with advanced learners.

Clearly, this proposed pre-task phase will consume more time, probably 15-20 minutes, but draw more on business concepts and relevant language than Willis' suggested pre-task. I think a slightly stronger emphasis on new areas through teacher-led discussions would better direct learners' attention to target concepts and language in a more concrete way. Asking direct questions about what should be

included in script, for example, about the company profile, may lead learners to think about the concepts and language to focus on for script writing. Another main adaptation to the task cycle phase is that I reverse the order of the task and planning stages of Willis' framework; in other words, I recommend starting with planning followed by task (or group script development). This is based on my conclusion from this study that learners need guidance for planning. Although some ideas about planning may be introduced in the first few lessons, in actual practice involving topic business content, learners might need detailed guidance. A brief review of their draft of ideas, with some mediation of incorrect concepts and planned structures, as also provided in this study, would give a clear direction for writing. As per Willis' suggestion that the teacher should act as a language adviser during task process, the teacher should closely monitor students' work and provide mediation as needed. As this study found that the teacher could not help with all mistakes, I collected work to check out of class and arranged the additional feedback and mediation session (lesson 3). This might be one alternative to consider. Again, if time is available, additional within-group practice with members taking turns rehearsing a presentation based on the created script, with feedback from other members, would increase learners' confidence before presenting to class.

In the report or presentation stage, the emphasis would be on giving the presenters feedback, and the teacher might point out some weak aspects as a summary of all presentations at the end of the class. In this study, I summarised mistakes and things to improve without mentioning individual students, but as overall feedback to the whole class. This worked well and avoided any particular students losing face. In the language focus phase, if conducted in future implementation, in addition to

consciousness-raising activities, I might pick some aspects of language learners produced in their scripts for discussion and practice.

7.4 Limitations of this study and directions for future research

As shown in this study, the combination of TBLT and mediation procedures was very promising. The mediation procedures developed from the principles of dynamic assessment (DA) worked well. In this study, the investigation of the effectiveness of mediation focused mainly on its roles in facilitating learning. It would be interesting in future research to examine the roles of mediation in assessment as well. The investigation might cover areas such as whether the teacher effectively assesses learners' current levels and provides appropriate prompts and suggestions. This will need detailed recording and analysis of classroom interactions.

In addition, future research might include the study of impact of mediation procedures and dynamic assessment on learner learning development. In this case, a study of the dual roles of DA as an innovative assessment approach and as learning tool will offer a complete picture of learners' progress stimulated by mediation. With a careful research design, this would be of great benefit to the English language learning and teaching fields. In the same way as this study, I believe the integration of TBLT and DA in one study would broaden knowledge and understanding of these two areas. For the evaluation of learning, the conduct of pre-tests and post-tests in an experimental design, or the employment of action research could yield results which would facilitate the analysis of learning progress. Importantly, as reported in this study, not all teachers are satisfied with the mediation process and so the teachers and learners' attitudes towards mediation, TBLT and DA (if integrated in the project), should be further investigated.

Although this case study was conducted in one university with only two groups of students, it yields rich and deep insights into task design and implementation and mediation practice. The investigation of all tasks during the entire course over an extended period of teaching, rather than the selection of one or two tasks to focus on, ensured all possible task aspects and teaching could be thoroughly examined. The repeated analysis of tasks also allowed for cross-checking to see if specific problems recurred in subsequent tasks, and whether the same task and mediation procedures worked in later tasks. My intense engagement as teacher and researcher, from task design to evaluation, has deepened my perspective and understanding of various aspects, which could be useful for teachers in general and in EFL settings, especially ones who work with low-level learners and are interested in TBLT and mediation practices. However, performing the dual role of teacher and researcher somewhat affected data collection and analysis. During data collection, I had to manage teaching, setting up equipment and solving all technical issues, and this resulted in distractions and complications, particularly when technical problems remained unresolved. In the data analysis process, doubly careful consideration about avoiding bias in using my data caused me to hesitate about whether to include my critical views in some debating areas. While I believe there were some advantages in taking a dual role as all-round engagement in research led to an in-depth understanding of circumstances, adopting one role only (teacher or researcher) would have reduced the complexity in addressing issues of bias and thereby potentially increased research credibility. Hiring a research assistant or training another teacher to conduct the teaching would be possible options in future research.

7.5 Conclusion

In this study, a number of feasible aspects as well as issues regarding the pre-designed tasks, and the implementation of TBLT and mediation into classroom teaching have been reported, and this could be used as a starting point for future research in these areas. Further investigation of the use of TBLT in contexts such as the one in this study and the impact of mediation integrated into TBLT could be potentially useful in providing teachers with guidelines on this approach.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A Consent letters, and participation and recording consent form

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Language Pedagogy Culture
Centre for Applied Linguistics

20 April 2012

Dear Student,

I would like to ask you to help by participating in my project. This information letter tells you about the project including what would be expected of you, so that you can decide whether you wish to take part. The purpose of this project is to find out whether the designed task-based lessons are appropriate, and whether task-based language teaching (TBLT) and mediation procedures are effective approaches for the teaching of business presentations. Your opinions and feedback will be very useful for improving the lessons and my teaching.

Data collection in this study will involve:

- Surveying your attitudes and perceptions before and after the implementation of teaching
- Teaching your class, in which the class (not you individually) will be video and audio recorded, subject to your consent. Observation of your class (not you individually) by two observers to evaluate the appropriateness of tasks and the effectiveness of TBLT and mediation.
- Interviewing some of you individually, in case in-depth information is required

If you need further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. I would be happy to discuss issues with you before, during and after the data collection, including whether you want to be filmed, withdraw from the project, or change any of your responses on the video recording consent form.

You are free to decide and have full rights to withdraw at any time without negative effects to your study. I can assure you that your participation will not affect your grade. Participating in this project may help improve your knowledge about business presentations and presentation skills. If you are willing to take part in this project, please sign and date the agreement in the space provided below. Thank you very much.

Signature of participant: Date:

Yours sincerely,

Wuttiya Payukmag, MPhil/PhD Student, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL
Email: W.Payukmag@warwick.ac.uk Tel. 085-253-4108

Signature of researcher: Date:

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Language Culture Pedagogy
Centre for Applied Linguistics

20 April 2012

Dear Colleague,

I would like to ask you to help by participating in my project. This information letter tells you about the project including what would be expected of you, so that you can decide whether you wish to take part. The purpose of this project is to find out whether the designed task-based lessons are appropriate, and whether task-based teaching and mediation procedures are effective approaches for the teaching of business presentations. Data will be collected from questionnaires, interviews, audio and video recordings of classes, research journal and class observation.

I believe that to gain the best feedback about lessons and teaching, I must seek opinions, feedback and suggestions from experienced instructors. Therefore, I would like to invite you to observe my classes and participate in a follow-up interview after completing all observations. Details of how the observation and interview will be carried out are as follows:

- You and the other instructor will be invited to observe classes, 12 periods in total.
- General guidelines and an observation form will be provided to write your feedback.
- A follow-up interview will be arranged after the observation at your convenience.

I can assure you that the observation and interview will not affect your job. Your rights and privacy will be protected as follows:

- Your names will be anonymised in all publications and you will not be audio/video-recorded during your observation.
- You will not be pressured to give your opinions or answer any questions you feel uncomfortable with. Sensitive issues such as administration, policies and other instructors' performance will be avoided.
- You will be invited to review all transcripts and a report of findings. You can suggest withdrawing some data or adjusting the content you consider inappropriate.
- You are free to decide whether to participate and have full rights to withdraw from the project at anytime.

Thank you very much for considering for participating. If you need further information or have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you are willing to take part, please sign and date the agreement in the space provided below.

Signature of participant: Date:

Yours sincerely,
Wuttiya Payukmag, MPhil/PhD Student, University of Warwick, Coventry CV4 7AL
Email: W.Payukmag@warwick.ac.uk Tel. 085-253-4108

Signature of researcher: Date:

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Language Culture Pedagogy

Centre for Applied Linguistics

Participation & Recording Consent Form

Research Project Title:

The Perceived Effectiveness of the Implementation of Task-Based Language Teaching and Mediation Procedures for the Teaching of Business Presentations at a Thai University

Name of MPhil/PhD Student (Researcher): Wuttiya Payukmag

As part of this project I would like to video record the class, audio record the interview, and use the obtained data for writing my PhD thesis and probably academic papers. Please indicate below what uses of the video recordings and interview you are willing to consent to. This is completely up to you. I will only use the records in ways that you agree to.

In any use of these records, names, places and organisations will be anonymised.

Please indicate your consent in the table below:

1. The interview can be audio recorded.	Yes	No	Please circle 'Yes' or 'No'
2. The class can be video recorded.	Yes	No	
3. The class can be audio recorded.	Yes	No	
	Transcript Yes (✓), No (X)	**Audio Recording Yes (✓), No (X)**	**Video Recording Yes (✓), No (X)**
4. The records of the class and interview can be studied by the researcher for use in her PhD thesis.			
5. The records of the class and interview can be used for academic and professional publications.			
6. Extracts from the interview and video recording can be shown/played in classrooms to students.			
7. Extracts from the interview and video recording can be shown/played at meetings of academics and professionals interested in the research topic.			
8. Extracts from the interview and video recording can be shown/played in public presentations to non-specialist groups.			

I have read the above descriptions and give my consent for the use of the records as indicated in the table above.I confirm that I have read and understood information of the Consent Letter for the above project dated 20 April 2012 and that I agree to take part in the study as described. I confirm that I have had the opportunity to ask any questions that I may have and that I may keep the Consent Letter for my records.

Name(Please print): Signature:

Email: Date:

Appendix B Aljaafreh and Lantolf's regulatory scale

Regulatory Scale – Implicit (strategic to Explicit)

* selected items included in a mediation inventory used in this study

0	Tutor asks the learner to read, find the errors, and correct them independently, prior to the tutorial.
1	Construction of 'a collaborative frame' prompted by the presence of the tutor as a potential dialogic partner
2	Prompted or focus reading of the sentence that contains the error by the learner or the tutor
***3**	Tutor indicates that something may be wrong in a segment (e.g., sentence, clause, line) – 'Is there anything wrong in this sentence?'
4	Tutor rejects unsuccessful attempts at recognizing the error.
5	Tutor narrows down the location of the error (e.g., tutor repeats or points to the specific segment which contains the error).
***6**	Tutor indicates the nature of the error, but does not identify the error (e.g. 'There is something wrong with the tense marking here?').
7	Tutor identifies the error ('You can't use an auxiliary here').
8	Tutor rejects learners' unsuccessful attempts at correcting the error.
***9**	Tutor provides clues to help the learner arrive at the correct form (e.g. 'It is not really past but something that is still going on').
10	Tutor provides the correct form.
***11**	Tutor provides some explanation for use of the correct form.
12	Tutor provides examples of the correct pattern when other forms of help fail to produce an appropriate responsive action.

Appendix C Questionnaire items used in studies of learners' preferences for learning activities and teaching methods (Littlewood and Liu, 1996; Spratt (1999)

** borrowed items that were used/adapted for the pre-/post-intervention questionnaires*

Littlewood and Liu (1996)		Spratt (1999)	
<u>Learners' preferences for learning activities</u> How well students liked these activities? (High) *Reading comprehension *Watching videos *Listening comprehension *Listening to teacher (Medium) •Role play /drama *Answering teacher's questions *Writing essays *Group discussion (Low) *Pair work *Error correction •Vocabulary exercises	<u>Learners' preferences for teaching methods</u> *A lot of attention is paid to listening and speaking. •Learning focuses on the importance of fluency. •A lot of attention is paid to using everyday language. *Materials contain a lot of communication exercises e.g. role-plays, discussions, etc. •Students do most of the talking. *Teacher corrects most of the mistakes that students make. *A lot of materials from real-life (e.g. TV, radio) are used. *There is a lot of pair work and group work. *Teachers help students to find out for themselves the language they need to get things done. *Learning focuses on the importance of correct grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. •Teacher explains the learning purposes of class activities. •There is a lot of teacher guidance and explanation.	In my university English classes, I like *1. Taking parts in discussions 2. Doing teacher-direct library search *3. Watching and listening to training videos *4. Giving individual oral presentations 5. Taking part in language games *6. Reading texts for language analysis e.g. tenses, connectives *7. Studying grammatical rules *8. Finding out information on my own *9. The teacher giving oral/written feedback to the whole class *10. Working in small groups (maximum 5 students) *11. Writing short passages (less than one page) in class in small groups 12. Practising writing exam answers within a time limit *13. Listening to others using English in class 14. Learning in class of 21 to 30 students *15. Working on my own in class 16. Planning exam answers e.g. analysing questions and organising answers *17. Talking to classmates in English in class 18. Using the language laboratory 19. Doing formal, assessed tests *20. Listening to classmates giving oral presentations 21. Writing assignments outside class e.g. letters, summaries, memos, reports *22. Classmates giving me oral/written feedback in class *(Continue 4th column)*	*23. Doing project work *24. Listening to the teacher giving explanations about skills e.g. how to write a report *25. Reading teacher-produced reference materials silently 26. Learning in class of 15 to 20 students 27. Doing practical tasks e.g. surveys, oral presentations *28. Writing short passages (less than one page) individually in class *29. Working in pairs 30. Doing written exercises e.g. gap filling, sentence correction *31. The teacher giving oral/written feedback to small groups *32. Listening activities *33. Checking other students' writing 34. Doing informal, unassessed tests *35. Interacting in English with classmates in class *36. the teacher giving oral/written feedback to individuals *37. Working in a group of 6 to 10 classmates *38. Listening to the teacher giving explanations about language e.g. use of active/passive voice *39. Reading silently in class for information e.g. newspapers, journal articles 40. Being tested on my learning *41. Giving group oral presentations *42. Checking my own writing 43. Learning in a class of 31+ students *44. Taking part in role-plays *45. Listening to audio recordings 46. Reading aloud in class *47. Watching myself on a video recordings e.g. presentations, meetings *48. Taking part in oral exercises e.g. grammar/pronunciation drills

Appendix D Pre-/post-questionnaire constructs / overlapping items

Adapted questionnaire items and overlapping items in the PRE-/POST-questionnaires (for analysis)

PRE-Intervention questionnaire			POST-Intervention questionnaire
Area	**Preferences for classroom activities**	**Familiarity with TBL and feedback**	**- Appropriateness of the designed tasks** **- Effectiveness of TBL, DA, teacher's teaching**
1. Listening	1. Teaching focused on listening e.g. listening for main ideas, doing listening comprehension exercises.	28. Listen to the teacher giving explanations about skills e.g. how to write a report, how to give a presentation 34. Listen to business presentations e.g. about a company, products and services (from recordings, websites etc.)	19. Listening to and watching different people giving presentations helped me learn about effective presentations.
2. Speaking	5. Teaching focused on pronunciation practice. 7. Teaching focused on speaking e.g. discussions, role plays.	23. Take part in oral exercises, such as grammar or pronunciation drills 31. Take part in role-play	21. This task-based teaching helped improve my speaking skills.
3. Reading	2. Teaching focused on reading e.g. reading for gist, reading for details.	38. Read texts for language analysis e.g. tenses, connectives 45. Read silently in class to find out information from e.g. newspapers, journal articles	10. Reading website materials about companies was useful for a study of language e.g. tenses, verbs, connectives. 24. Reading materials from the companies' websites helped me learn new words about business.
4. Writing	3. Teaching focused on writing e.g. writing reports, writing short passages.	44. Write short passages (less than one page) in small groups 39. Check your own writing	25. Taking notes on important ideas and writing short passages helped me remember the content of my presentations better.
5.Oral presentations	8. Individual students preparing and giving oral presentations. 11. Preparing and giving an oral presentation in large groups. 20. Students in small groups preparing and giving an oral presentation.	*(Giving a presentation)* 27. Study techniques for giving effective presentations 36. Plan and give an individual oral presentations 24. Plan and give group oral presentations 37. Listen to classmates giving oral presentations 41. Watch yourself on video recording e.g. presentations, meetings *(Planning a presentation)* 46. Consult dictionaries or grammar books for the language you need 33. Search for information from websites, magazines, journal articles, etc. 49. How do you feel when you have to give a presentation to the class?	8. Overall, after these lessons I feel …nervous/ confident…in giving presentations about a company. 13. Each student had to prepare their own presentation. 18. I learnt a lot from listening to my classmates' presentations. 34. Practising giving a presentation to my group and to the class helped to boost my self-confidence. 17. While preparing presentations, I was worried about correct grammar and making mistakes.
6. Participation mode **▪ Working individually** **▪ Working in pairs** **▪ Working in groups**	14. Each student working on his/her own in class. 9. The whole class working together in activities. 17. Working in small groups of 3-5 students. 21. Students working in pairs.	*(Working in pairs and in small groups)* 26. Ask classmates questions or for help when you don't know/understand something 29. Work in pairs 43. Do project work in groups 40. Work in small groups of 3-5 students 32. Offer your ideas/opinions during group discussions	5. Working with other classmates in a small group is …not enjoyable/enjoyable. 11. I worked productively on my own. 26. Planning and drafting our presentations in groups helped us gather different ideas. 30. I could easily ask my classmates for helps (if needed) when we worked in groups. 31. Taking part in pair work e.g. role-play, information exchange made me feel relaxed and learn better. 29. I felt relaxed when I participated in group discussions.
7. Feedback/ error correction (mediation in DA)	16. Classmates giving feedback to each other in class. 10. The teacher giving explanations every time students make mistakes.	42. Get oral/written feedback from the teacher to the class (as a whole) 35. Get oral/written feedback from the teacher to you individually 25. Get oral/written feedback from classmates in class	6. I think the teacher's ways of giving feedback by asking you guided questions (not telling you correct answers straightaway) are …ineffective/effective. 12. It was effective that the teacher gave feedback to individuals.

7. Feedback/ error correction (mediation in DA)	12. The teacher asking students to find and correct their own mistakes. 13. The teacher giving oral/written feedback to the class as a whole. 15. The teacher giving oral/written feedback to individuals. 18. The teacher helping identify and correct errors. 19. The teacher giving oral/written feedback to small groups. 22. The teacher correcting most of the mistakes students make.	30. Get oral/written feedback from the teacher in small groups 47. Give feedback to classmates on their writing 48. How would you prefer your teacher to give you feedback on language?	15. Everyone in the group learnt about mistakes when the teacher gave feedback to the group. 20. I prefer my classmates to give me feedback on writing and my presentations. 23. It was helpful when the teacher tried to get us find out things by ourselves, instead of giving us the answers. 28. I felt relaxed when interacting with the teacher to solve the problems or mistakes 32. It was effective that the teacher corrected most of the mistakes students made 35. It was effective that the teacher gave feedback to the whole class, not individuals. 40. Do you want to receive the kind of language support/feedback (where the teacher does not tell you correct answers straightaway but helps you to find out the answers) in your future English classes? - If 'Yes', in what ways will it be useful for your learning? - If 'No', why don't you want to have this kind of language support? - Please suggest how feedback should be given to you
Others	4. Teaching focused on correct grammar e.g. identifying and correcting errors in paragraphs, doing sentence correction. 6. Teaching focused on learning new language items.	50. Which of the following do you perceive as your language proficiency? (Beginner, Elementary, Pre-intermediate, Intermediate, Upper-intermediate, Advanced)	■ **About the designed tasks** 1. These task-based lessons are ..useless/useful for improving presentation skills. 2. These task-based lessons are …useful/useless… for learning about presenting a company. 3. Materials used in these lessons are …difficult/easy… to understand. 4. I found the lessons…not motivating/motivating… 9. Most activities in these lessons matched my English ability (not too difficult or too easy). 14. My communication and presentation skills have improved from participating in these activities. 16. These activities were useful for my future job. 27. Time was sufficient to do the activities. 36. Please list the TWO things you liked most about these lessons 37. Please list the TWO things you disliked most about these lessons. 38. In what ways do you think classroom activities in these lessons helped or did not help improve your knowledge and English skills? ■ **About task-based teaching (in this context)** 39. Does the kind of teaching you experienced in the lessons (e.g. working in groups to plan and prepare presentations, solving problems, getting feedback from the teacher) help you learn and practise presentations about a company? - If 'Yes', in what ways do you think it is helpful? - If 'No', why do you think it isn't helpful? - Are there anything about the teaching that could be improved? 42. Would you like task-based teaching (these lessons) to be implemented in your future English classes (strongly recommend/ recommend/not sure/no). - If 'No', please tell us briefly what kind of teaching would you prefer? ■ **About the teacher's teaching** 7. The teaching techniques used by the teacher are …not helpful/helpful.. for practising presentations. 22. The teacher provided us adequate support during lessons. 33. It was helpful that the teacher helped us analyse language e.g. grammar, useful expressions during of the activity. 41. To what extent are you satisfied with the teacher's teaching performance? (dissatisfied →satisfied)

Appendix E Interview guide

● **Some general questions**

1. In general, what do you think about this course?
2. What would learners gain after completing all tasks?
3. Which specific part of the course do you like the most? Why?
4. If you were the teacher of this course yourself, what would be your main concerns with the delivery of the lessons?

● **Res.Q1: The appropriateness of the designed tasks**

(leading questions)

5. What is your general feeling about the designed tasks?
6. Are there any aspects of the tasks that you'd like to suggest for improvement?

(The usefulness of the tasks)

7. Do the designed tasks cover necessary areas about giving presentations on companies?
   If no, what other areas would you like to suggest?
8. You commented that most tasks were useful for developing presentation skills. Can you please tell me a bit more in what ways they were useful?
   How would the practice of business presentations benefit learners in their future jobs?
9. You wrote in your note: 'using VDO clips showing examples of the presentations was interesting',
   What are good things about using the VDO clips for the teaching of business presentations?
   Are there any problems regarding the use of VDO clips that need to be improved?

(The complexity/difficulty of the tasks)

10. Overall, what do you think about the steps or processes of doing the tasks?
    Are they too complicated or hard to follow?
11. Are instructions, especially in the task worksheet, clear and easily understood?
12. Do the designed tasks match with learners' language abilities?

(Time allocation)

13. Do you think time allotted for the main task is adequate in order for students to complete the tasks based on the situation given?
14. What could be the problems regarding time allocated in this course?
15. Are 12 periods enough for the practice of presenting a company?

● **Res.Q2: The effectiveness of the implementation of TBLT**

16. What do you know about TBLT? Can you describe this approach?
    After observing my class, is there anything new or different from what you already know about TBLT?
17. Why do you think TBLT is a suitable or unsuitable approach for the teaching of business presentations in this course?
18. In general, do you think the teaching methods adopted in this course are effective?
    What are your opinions on getting learners to work in groups and develop their own presentations?
19. From your feedback, it seems to me that learners enjoyed participating in most tasks, can you describe or give examples of their participation that clearly show they enjoyed doing the tasks?

20. You mentioned that low participation in some activities was caused by students' limited language abilities. Can you elaborate more on this issue? What would be your suggestions to increase their participation? 21. If you were the teacher yourself, what things about teaching would you change or improve? 22. You mentioned that using Thai can be useful in some situations. Can you give examples of the situations that using Thai would be useful? Can you suggest the situations that only English should be used for communication?
● ***Res.Q3: The effectiveness of mediation (the teacher's feedback)*** 23. From your observations, what are your views on how feedback was handled in this class? 24. What were the learners' reactions to the teachers' feedback? 25. If you teach this class, how would you give the feedback?
● ***Res.Q4: Suggestions for future teaching*** 26. What do you think about the teacher's teaching? 27. What should be improved regarding the teaching? 28. Would you recommend integrating the designed tasks into our English for Communication syllabus? What are the reasons of your answer? 29. How do you feel about being the observer in this course? What do you like or dislike about being the observer? Is there anything that puts you in a difficult position? 30. Finally, is there anything else you'd like to add or suggest?
● ***(Additional)*** 31. I feel that I sometimes gave too much explanation when there was no response from students. What would you do in this situation? 32. I found it's hard sometimes to encourage learners to speak out during discussions, do you have any suggestions for this?

Appendix F Class observation form

Group:…… Date: …… Time: ……..
Task: …… Period:……

Pre-task (Introduction/ warm-up activity) 1. Are activities… - interesting? -too difficult/ /easy? - too complex/easy to follow - too short/long? enough time? - useful and help develop skills? 2. Are instructions clear enough? 3. Things that worked well 4. Things that did not work, and your suggestions 5. Overall, is <u>this warm-up activity appropriate</u> for developing presentation skills?	…… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……
Main Task 1. Is this activity - interesting? -too difficult/ /easy? - too complex/easy to follow - too short/long? enough time? - useful and helps develop skills? 2. Are instructions clear enough? 3. Things that worked well 4. Things that did not work, and your suggestions 5. Overall, is <u>this activity appropriate</u> for developing presentation skills?	…… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… …… ……
Post-task (Language focus)	…… …… …… …… ……

More comments/suggestions

Class activities/ tasks

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Class atmosphere

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Learner participation/Engagement in tasks
(e.g. doing group work, sharing ideas, their efforts in trying to solve tasks /problems, asking/responding to questions/feedback etc.)

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The effectiveness of giving feedback on language

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(Other aspects)

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Appendix G Questionnaire (Reliability analysis)

Pre-intervention questionnaire

Teaching focus

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.770	14

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Pre01	45.02	28.812	.269	.766
Pre02	45.16	28.848	.236	.768
Pre03	45.27	29.199	.152	.775
Pre04	45.08	28.618	.223	.770
Pre05	44.80	29.666	.115	.776
Pre06	44.76	29.355	.224	.769
Pre07	44.84	27.931	.404	.757
Pre23	45.04	23.790	.556	.737
Pre28	44.47	25.588	.460	.749
Pre31	45.27	24.782	.506	.743
Pre34	45.20	25.624	.429	.752
Pre38	44.92	24.118	.564	.736
Pre44	45.18	25.195	.524	.742
Pre45	45.10	25.260	.522	.742

Oral presentations

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.621	.605	10

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Pre08	30.73	19.203	.080	.636
Pre11	30.18	19.468	.026	.649
Pre20	30.14	19.161	.147	.621
Pre24	29.96	16.998	.305	.593
Pre27	30.00	15.280	.474	.547
Pre33	29.37	16.158	.429	.563
Pre36	30.29	16.932	.338	.585
Pre37	29.45	17.653	.299	.595
Pre41	30.71	14.652	.401	.567
Pre46	29.71	17.052	.373	.579

Reliability – participation mode

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.639	.642	9

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Pre09	27.56	10.578	.241	.629
Pre14	28.02	11.816	-.021	.685
Pre17	27.34	9.168	.569	.551
Pre21	27.46	10.458	.340	.609
Pre26	26.98	10.265	.225	.637
Pre29	26.66	11.045	.158	.645
Pre32	27.32	9.528	.351	.603
Pre40	26.88	9.496	.553	.561
Pre43	27.06	8.833	.530	.552

Reliability - Feedback/error correction (mediation)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.775	.759	13

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Pre10	39.00	28.083	.269	.771
Pre12	39.65	26.023	.417	.759
Pre13	39.08	28.452	.211	.775
Pre15	39.43	27.583	.218	.777
Pre16	39.78	26.844	.279	.772
Pre18	38.98	28.437	.269	.772
Pre19	39.39	26.909	.354	.765
Pre22	39.29	28.125	.201	.777
Pre25	39.94	24.225	.487	.751
Pre30	39.39	24.034	.557	.743
Pre35	39.53	22.463	.619	.733
Pre42	39.43	23.042	.612	.735
Pre47	39.69	23.384	.564	.741

Post-intervention questionnaire

Students' overall feelings and opinions about lessons and teaching

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.774	.780	8

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Post01	41.13	15.090	.421	.759
Post02	41.26	15.010	.419	.759
Post03	42.18	13.019	.523	.742
Post04	42.00	14.216	.399	.764
Post05	41.92	13.913	.415	.763
Post06	41.76	14.240	.495	.747
Post07	41.37	14.617	.531	.745
Post08	41.61	12.516	.646	.717

Students' opinions and perceptions of designed tasks, feedback (mediation) and TBLT

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.784	.784	27

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Post09	112.09	45.701	.425	.773
Post10	112.19	45.448	.401	.774
Post11	112.84	47.426	.144	.785
Post12	111.72	46.983	.183	.783
Post13	112.25	47.226	.141	.785
Post14	112.06	46.964	.229	.781
Post15	111.88	46.113	.282	.779
Post16	111.59	47.604	.178	.783
Post17	112.16	46.136	.266	.780
Post18	112.28	45.757	.327	.777
Post19	112.03	46.160	.294	.778
Post20	112.13	46.113	.199	.784
Post21	112.00	46.452	.225	.782
Post22	111.69	47.254	.210	.782
Post23	111.84	46.588	.224	.781
Post24	112.13	44.758	.461	.770

Post25	111.91	46.475	.313	.778
Post26	111.81	40.802	.685	.753
Post27	112.22	41.273	.531	.762
Post28	111.75	40.065	.692	.751
Post29	112.13	47.790	.072	.789
Post30	112.03	45.902	.293	.778
Post31	112.03	45.773	.236	.782
Post32	112.00	46.065	.176	.787
Post33	111.88	45.984	.384	.775
Post34	111.91	44.668	.516	.769
Post35	112.41	46.443	.151	.788

Students' opinions on improvement of English skills

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.652	.654	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Post10	17.47	2.656	.333	.633
Post19	17.33	2.743	.281	.657
Post21	17.33	2.514	.357	.625
Post24	17.42	2.079	.672	.457
Post25	17.22	2.692	.420	.597

Students' opinions on improvement of oral presentations

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.148	.144	4

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Post13	12.74	1.172	.053	.140
Post17	12.68	1.195	.049	.145
Post18	12.74	1.064	.140	.002
Post34	12.45	1.281	.036	.158

Students' opinions on individual/pair/group work

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.459	.464	5

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Post11	17.35	3.068	.175	.446
Post26	16.32	2.947	.077	.535
Post29	16.59	3.248	.064	.513
Post30	16.54	2.311	.527	.195
Post31	16.54	2.255	.451	.233

Students' opinions on feedback (mediation)

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.264	.279	7

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
Post12	26.08	4.410	.114	.234
Post15	26.27	4.369	.119	.231
Post20	26.57	4.586	-.055	.348
Post23	26.16	4.195	.193	.190
Post28	26.16	3.306	.310	.059
Post32	26.38	4.186	.033	.294
Post35	26.76	4.023	.096	.245

Appendix H Questionnaire (T-test)

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Pre01	Equal variances assumed	1.333	.256	.577	36	.567	.106	.183	-.265	.476
	Equal variances not assumed			.572	33.177	.571	.106	.185	-.270	.481
Pre02	Equal variances assumed	.000	.991	1.754	36	.088	.339	.193	-.053	.731
	Equal variances not assumed			1.728	31.490	.094	.339	.196	-.061	.739
Pre03	Equal variances assumed	.106	.747	.818	35	.419	.182	.223	-.270	.635
	Equal variances not assumed			.814	33.306	.421	.182	.224	-.273	.638
Pre04	Equal variances assumed	.006	.939	.028	36	.978	.006	.198	-.396	.407
	Equal variances not assumed			.028	35.436	.978	.006	.198	-.397	.408
Pre05	Equal variances assumed	7.994	.008	-1.413	36	.166	-.233	.165	-.568	.102
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.445	32.693	.158	-.233	.161	-.562	.095
Pre06	Equal variances assumed	.087	.770	-.147	36	.884	-.022	.151	-.329	.285
	Equal variances not assumed			-.147	35.721	.884	-.022	.151	-.329	.284
Pre07	Equal variances assumed	.516	.477	.193	36	.848	.033	.173	-.317	.384
	Equal variances not assumed			.190	32.366	.850	.033	.175	-.323	.390
Pre08	Equal variances assumed	.207	.652	.332	36	.742	.089	.268	-.454	.632
	Equal variances not assumed			.331	35.025	.743	.089	.269	-.457	.634
Pre09	Equal variances assumed	.000	.998	.831	36	.412	.194	.234	-.280	.669
	Equal variances not assumed			.820	32.469	.418	.194	.237	-.288	.677
Pre10	Equal variances assumed	20.934	.000	-2.475	36	.018	-.439	.177	-.799	-.079
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.561	27.649	.016	-.439	.171	-.790	-.088
Pre11	Equal variances assumed	.320	.575	-.747	36	.460	-.183	.245	-.681	.314
	Equal variances not assumed			-.746	35.336	.461	-.183	.246	-.682	.316
Pre12	Equal variances assumed	.018	.894	-1.298	36	.202	-.278	.214	-.712	.156
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.315	35.461	.197	-.278	.211	-.707	.151
Pre13	Equal variances assumed	.000	.985	-.375	36	.710	-.067	.178	-.428	.294
	Equal variances not assumed			-.371	33.514	.713	-.067	.180	-.432	.298
Pre14	Equal variances assumed	.388	.538	-1.109	36	.275	-.272	.246	-.770	.226
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.098	33.207	.280	-.272	.248	-.777	.232
Pre15	Equal variances assumed	2.246	.143	1.130	36	.266	.283	.251	-.225	.792
	Equal variances not assumed			1.106	28.815	.278	.283	.256	-.241	.808
Pre16	Equal variances assumed	.648	.426	-1.275	36	.211	-.317	.248	-.821	.187
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.271	35.087	.212	-.317	.249	-.822	.189
Pre17	Equal variances assumed	.046	.832	-1.775	36	.084	-.311	.175	-.667	.044

	Equal variances not assumed			-1.787	35.983	.082	-.311	.174	-.664	.042
Pre18	Equal variances assumed	9.660	.004	-1.427	36	.162	-.189	.132	-.457	.080
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.455	33.790	.155	-.189	.130	-.453	.075
Pre19	Equal variances assumed	.207	.652	-.767	36	.448	-.150	.196	-.547	.247
	Equal variances not assumed			-.765	35.103	.450	-.150	.196	-.548	.248
Pre20	Equal variances assumed	1.461	.235	-2.114	36	.041	-.356	.168	-.697	-.015
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.117	35.739	.041	-.356	.168	-.696	-.015
Pre21	Equal variances assumed	.009	.926	.119	36	.906	.022	.186	-.355	.400
	Equal variances not assumed			.119	35.538	.906	.022	.186	-.355	.400
Pre22	Equal variances assumed	1.466	.234	-.110	35	.913	-.021	.186	-.399	.358
	Equal variances not assumed			-.109	30.938	.914	-.021	.190	-.407	.366
Pre23	Equal variances assumed	.232	.633	-2.007	35	.053	-.626	.312	-1.259	.007
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.019	34.017	.051	-.626	.310	-1.256	.004
Pre24	Equal variances assumed	.720	.402	-2.798	36	.008	-.794	.284	-1.370	-.219
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.821	35.935	.008	-.794	.282	-1.366	-.223
Pre25	Equal variances assumed	2.245	.143	-.617	36	.541	-.189	.306	-.810	.432
	Equal variances not assumed			-.624	35.610	.537	-.189	.303	-.803	.425
Pre26	Equal variances assumed	.034	.855	.102	36	.919	.028	.273	-.525	.581
	Equal variances not assumed			.102	35.774	.919	.028	.272	-.525	.580
Pre27	Equal variances assumed	.315	.578	-2.666	36	.011	-.883	.331	-1.555	-.211
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.691	35.847	.011	-.883	.328	-1.549	-.217
Pre28	Equal variances assumed	.187	.668	-2.017	36	.051	-.528	.262	-1.059	.003
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.030	35.992	.050	-.528	.260	-1.055	.000
Pre29	Equal variances assumed	.524	.474	-1.636	36	.111	-.372	.228	-.834	.089
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.628	34.681	.113	-.372	.229	-.837	.092
Pre30	Equal variances assumed	.865	.359	-1.300	36	.202	-.400	.308	-1.024	.224
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.321	34.665	.195	-.400	.303	-1.015	.215
Pre31	Equal variances assumed	2.966	.094	-.973	36	.337	-.289	.297	-.891	.313
	Equal variances not assumed			-.952	28.891	.349	-.289	.303	-.910	.332
Pre32	Equal variances assumed	.004	.950	-1.986	36	.055	-.611	.308	-1.235	.013
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.993	35.917	.054	-.611	.307	-1.233	.011
Pre33	Equal variances assumed	3.076	.088	-3.522	36	.001	-1.000	.284	-1.576	-.424
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.586	34.184	.001	-1.000	.279	-1.567	-.433
Pre34	Equal variances assumed	2.186	.148	-1.399	36	.171	-.444	.318	-1.089	.200
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.389	34.140	.174	-.444	.320	-1.095	.206
Pre35	Equal variances assumed	.361	.552	-1.238	36	.224	-.433	.350	-1.143	.277
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.250	35.802	.219	-.433	.347	-1.137	.270
Pre36	Equal variances assumed	.458	.503	-1.001	36	.323	-.328	.327	-.992	.336
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.000	35.426	.324	-.328	.328	-.993	.337
Pre37	Equal variances assumed	.864	.359	-1.168	36	.250	-.317	.271	-.866	.233
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.186	35.036	.244	-.317	.267	-.859	.226
Pre38	Equal variances assumed	2.066	.159	-1.568	36	.126	-.439	.280	-1.007	.129
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.586	35.571	.122	-.439	.277	-1.000	.123

Post34	Equal variances assumed	.003	.954	-1.447	36	.157	-.256	.177	-.614	.103
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.455	36.000	.154	-.256	.176	-.612	.101
Post35	Equal variances assumed	.006	.936	-1.391	36	.173	-.367	.264	-.901	.168
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.395	35.912	.171	-.367	.263	-.900	.166
Post41	Equal variances assumed	.810	.375	-.152	33	.880	-.029	.193	-.422	.363
	Equal variances not assumed			-.152	31.076	.880	-.029	.194	-.425	.366

Appendix I Questionnaire (Correlations analysis)

Correlations

			Pre01	Pre28	Pre34	Post19
Kendall's tau_b	Pre01	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.196	.084	.314
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.198	.575	.054
		N	38	38	38	36
	Pre28	Correlation Coefficient	.196	1.000	.450**	.084
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.198	.	.002	.586
		N	38	38	38	36
	Pre34	Correlation Coefficient	.084	.450**	1.000	.027
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.575	.002	.	.858
		N	38	38	38	36
	Post19	Correlation Coefficient	.314	.084	.027	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.054	.586	.858	.
		N	36	36	36	36
Spearman's rho	Pre01	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.215	.094	.327
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.196	.576	.051
		N	38	38	38	36
	Pre28	Correlation Coefficient	.215	1.000	.508**	.095
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.196	.	.001	.580
		N	38	38	38	36
	Pre34	Correlation Coefficient	.094	.508**	1.000	.031
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.576	.001	.	.858
		N	38	38	38	36
	Post19	Correlation Coefficient	.327	.095	.031	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.051	.580	.858	.
		N	36	36	36	36

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

			Pre05	Pre07	Pre23	Pre31	Post21
Kendall's tau_b	Pre05	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.235	.183	.261	-.029
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.143	.231	.084	.854
		N	38	38	37	38	38
	Pre07	Correlation Coefficient	.235	1.000	.300*	.427**	.107
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.143	.	.050	.005	.497
		N	38	38	37	38	38
	Pre23	Correlation Coefficient	.183	.300*	1.000	.461**	.009
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.231	.050	.	.001	.950
		N	37	37	37	37	37
	Pre31	Correlation Coefficient	.261	.427**	.461**	1.000	.191
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.084	.005	.001	.	.197
		N	38	38	37	38	38
	Post21	Correlation Coefficient	-.029	.107	.009	.191	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.854	.497	.950	.197	.
		N	38	38	37	38	38
Spearman's rho	Pre05	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.241	.200	.282	-.030
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.145	.236	.086	.858
		N	38	38	37	38	38
	Pre07	Correlation Coefficient	.241	1.000	.327*	.469**	.112
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.145	.	.049	.003	.503
		N	38	38	37	38	38
	Pre23	Correlation Coefficient	.200	.327*	1.000	.506**	.011
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.236	.049	.	.001	.947
		N	37	37	37	37	37
	Pre31	Correlation Coefficient	.282	.469**	.506**	1.000	.209
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.086	.003	.001	.	.208
		N	38	38	37	38	38
	Post21	Correlation Coefficient	-.030	.112	.011	.209	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.858	.503	.947	.208	.
		N	38	38	37	38	38

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

			Pre02	Pre38	Pre45	Post10	Post24
Kendall's tau_b	Pre02	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.054	.131	-.224	-.101
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.715	.374	.148	.509
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre38	Correlation Coefficient	.054	1.000	.520**	.139	.114
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.715	.	.000	.350	.440
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre45	Correlation Coefficient	.131	.520**	1.000	-.028	.092
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.374	.000	.	.851	.529
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Post10	Correlation Coefficient	-.224	.139	-.028	1.000	.427**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.148	.350	.851	.	.006
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Post24	Correlation Coefficient	-.101	.114	.092	.427**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.509	.440	.529	.006	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38
Spearman's rho	Pre02	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.068	.143	-.236	-.109
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.685	.392	.154	.514
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre38	Correlation Coefficient	.068	1.000	.585**	.145	.128
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.685	.	.000	.384	.445
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre45	Correlation Coefficient	.143	.585**	1.000	-.030	.104
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.392	.000	.	.856	.533
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Post10	Correlation Coefficient	-.236	.145	-.030	1.000	.453**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.154	.384	.856	.	.004
		N	38	38	38	38	38
	Post24	Correlation Coefficient	-.109	.128	.104	.453**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.514	.445	.533	.004	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

			Pre03	Pre39	Pre44	Post25
Kendall's tau_b	Pre03	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.016	-.053	-.129
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.915	.722	.420
		N	37	37	37	37
	Pre39	Correlation Coefficient	.016	1.000	.443**	.167
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.915	.	.002	.270
		N	37	38	38	38
	Pre44	Correlation Coefficient	-.053	.443**	1.000	.272
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.722	.002	.	.075
		N	37	38	38	38
	Post25	Correlation Coefficient	-.129	.167	.272	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.420	.270	.075	.
		N	37	38	38	38
Spearman's rho	Pre03	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.019	-.070	-.134
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.910	.679	.428
		N	37	37	37	37
	Pre39	Correlation Coefficient	.019	1.000	.511**	.181
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.910	.	.001	.276
		N	37	38	38	38
	Pre44	Correlation Coefficient	-.070	.511**	1.000	.293
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.679	.001	.	.075
		N	37	38	38	38
	Post25	Correlation Coefficient	-.134	.181	.293	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.428	.276	.075	.
		N	37	38	38	38

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

			Pre08	Pre11	Pre20	Pre24	Pre27	Pre33	Pre36	Pre37	Pre41	Pre46	Post08	Post13	Post17	Post18	Post34
Kendall's tau_b	Pre08	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.026	-.091	-.051	.134	.045	.375**	-.004	.207	.012	.316*	.032	.323*	.415**	-.031
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.861	.551	.720	.340	.754	.009	.977	.135	.931	.028	.828	.030	.005	.841
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre11	Correlation Coefficient	-.026	1.000	.288	.052	.014	-.150	-.067	-.071	.135	-.013	.023	.092	.028	.212	.181
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.861	.	.062	.718	.921	.301	.641	.628	.335	.931	.874	.541	.850	.158	.242
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre20	Correlation Coefficient	-.091	.288	1.000	.173	.146	.037	-.056	.055	.103	.088	.007	.011	-.116	.142	.269
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.551	.062	.	.251	.323	.805	.707	.717	.481	.565	.963	.946	.458	.364	.094
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre24	Correlation Coefficient	-.051	.052	.173	1.000	.261	.423**	.131	.232	.028	.193	.068	-.223	-.109	.137	.028
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.720	.718	.251	.	.059	.003	.353	.104	.837	.177	.631	.128	.459	.348	.854
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre27	Correlation Coefficient	.134	.014	.146	.261	1.000	.340*	.372**	.085	.520**	.209	.108	-.268	-.079	-.082	.049
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.340	.921	.323	.059	.	.014	.007	.544	.000	.137	.438	.062	.587	.567	.742
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre33	Correlation Coefficient	.045	-.150	.037	.423**	.340*	1.000	.316*	.208	.205	.337*	.177	-.045	-.160	.130	.041
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.754	.301	.805	.003	.014	.	.025	.144	.134	.018	.211	.760	.277	.376	.784
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre36	Correlation Coefficient	.375**	-.067	-.056	.131	.372**	.316*	1.000	.176	.228	.390**	-.069	-.043	.310*	.050	-.081
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.641	.707	.353	.007	.025	.	.217	.095	.006	.628	.768	.034	.733	.589
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre37	Correlation Coefficient	-.004	-.071	.055	.232	.085	.208	.176	1.000	.200	.248	-.280	.254	.140	-.141	-.038
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.977	.628	.717	.104	.544	.144	.217	.	.148	.086	.051	.086	.347	.341	.803
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre41	Correlation Coefficient	.207	.135	.103	.028	.520**	.205	.228	.200	1.000	.137	.068	-.044	.072	.105	.291*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.135	.335	.481	.837	.000	.134	.095	.148	.	.323	.623	.755	.612	.457	.046
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre46	Correlation Coefficient	.012	-.013	.088	.193	.209	.337*	.390**	.248	.137	1.000	.012	.053	.306*	-.190	-.173
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.931	.931	.565	.177	.137	.018	.006	.086	.323	.	.932	.723	.040	.201	.256
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post08	Correlation Coefficient	.316*	.023	.007	.068	.108	.177	-.069	-.280	.068	.012	1.000	-.246	.061	.163	.081
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	.874	.963	.631	.438	.211	.628	.051	.623	.932	.	.095	.678	.270	.593
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post13	Correlation Coefficient	.032	.092	.011	-.223	-.268	-.045	-.043	.254	-.044	.053	-.246	1.000	.077	.096	-.062
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.828	.541	.946	.128	.062	.760	.768	.086	.755	.723	.095	.	.616	.526	.690
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post17	Correlation Coefficient	.323*	.028	-.116	-.109	-.079	-.160	.310*	.140	.072	.306*	.061	.077	1.000	.023	.039
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	.850	.458	.459	.587	.277	.034	.347	.612	.040	.678	.616	.	.880	.803
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post18	Correlation Coefficient	.415**	.212	.142	.137	-.082	.130	.050	-.141	.105	-.190	.163	.096	.023	1.000	.150
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.005	.158	.364	.348	.567	.376	.733	.341	.457	.201	.270	.526	.880	.	.336
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post34	Correlation Coefficient	-.031	.181	.269	.028	.049	.041	-.081	-.038	.291*	-.173	.081	-.062	.039	.150	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.841	.242	.094	.854	.742	.784	.589	.803	.046	.256	.593	.690	.803	.336	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
Spearman's rho	Pre08	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.037	-.100	-.057	.147	.054	.417**	-.007	.223	.010	.350*	.033	.362*	.452**	-.033
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.826	.550	.735	.378	.746	.009	.967	.179	.952	.031	.842	.026	.004	.845
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre11	Correlation Coefficient	-.037	1.000	.302	.059	.019	-.168	-.078	-.078	.173	-.012	.028	.098	.031	.227	.195
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.826	.	.065	.725	.912	.312	.641	.644	.299	.941	.868	.557	.854	.171	.240
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre20	Correlation Coefficient	-.100	.302	1.000	.194	.161	.042	-.063	.059	.116	.095	.011	.011	-.123	.147	.276
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.550	.065	.	.244	.334	.804	.709	.727	.489	.569	.949	.947	.461	.379	.093
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre24	Correlation Coefficient	-.057	.059	.194	1.000	.311	.476**	.150	.261	.034	.221	.071	-.238	-.117	.149	.032
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.735	.725	.244	.	.058	.003	.369	.114	.840	.183	.671	.151	.484	.371	.848
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre27	Correlation Coefficient	.147	.019	.161	.311	1.000	.392*	.435**	.097	.622**	.243	.126	-.302	-.092	-.094	.054
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.378	.912	.334	.058	.	.015	.006	.564	.000	.141	.451	.066	.583	.576	.748
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre33	Correlation Coefficient	.054	-.168	.042	.476**	.392*	1.000	.354*	.234	.243	.380*	.212	-.050	-.178	.146	.048
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.746	.312	.804	.003	.015	.	.029	.157	.142	.019	.202	.768	.286	.383	.775
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre36	Correlation Coefficient	.417**	-.078	-.063	.150	.435**	.354*	1.000	.200	.258	.442**	-.081	-.050	.358*	.053	-.089
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	.641	.709	.369	.006	.029	.	.228	.118	.005	.629	.766	.027	.753	.595
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre37	Correlation Coefficient	-.007	-.078	.059	.261	.097	.234	.200	1.000	.224	.254	-.317	.281	.162	-.154	-.042
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.967	.644	.727	.114	.564	.157	.228	.	.176	.124	.053	.088	.330	.357	.802
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre41	Correlation Coefficient	.223	.173	.116	.034	.622**	.243	.258	.224	1.000	.152	.087	-.054	.088	.114	.323*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.179	.299	.489	.840	.000	.142	.118	.176	.	.363	.605	.750	.600	.496	.048
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre46	Correlation Coefficient	.010	-.012	.095	.221	.243	.380*	.442**	.254	.152	1.000	.015	.060	.342*	-.207	-.183
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.952	.941	.569	.183	.141	.019	.005	.124	.363	.	.929	.720	.035	.211	.272
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post08	Correlation Coefficient	.350*	.028	.011	.071	.126	.212	-.081	-.317	.087	.015	1.000	-.276	.072	.181	.088
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	.868	.949	.671	.451	.202	.629	.053	.605	.929	.	.093	.669	.276	.599
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post13	Correlation Coefficient	.033	.098	.011	-.238	-.302	-.050	-.050	.281	-.054	.060	-.276	1.000	.081	.102	-.066
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.842	.557	.947	.151	.066	.768	.766	.088	.750	.720	.093	.	.629	.541	.693
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post17	Correlation Coefficient	.362*	.031	-.123	-.117	-.092	-.178	.358*	.162	.088	.342*	.072	.081	1.000	.026	.042
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.854	.461	.484	.583	.286	.027	.330	.600	.035	.669	.629	.	.876	.803
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post18	Correlation Coefficient	.452**	.227	.147	.149	-.094	.146	.053	-.154	.114	-.207	.181	.102	.026	1.000	.159
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.171	.379	.371	.576	.383	.753	.357	.496	.211	.276	.541	.876	.	.340
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post34	Correlation Coefficient	-.033	.195	.276	.032	.054	.048	-.089	-.042	.323*	-.183	.088	-.066	.042	.159	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.845	.240	.093	.848	.748	.775	.595	.802	.048	.272	.599	.693	.803	.340	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

			Pre09	Pre14	Pre17	Pre21	Pre26	Pre29	Pre32	Pre40	Pre43	Post05	Post11	Post26	Post29	Post30	Post31
Kendall's tau_b	Pre09	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.009	.070	.104	.091	-.200	.051	-.128	.018	.156	-.069	.030	.331*	.021	.032
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.951	.652	.500	.536	.180	.722	.394	.903	.283	.656	.848	.028	.888	.834
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre14	Correlation Coefficient	.009	1.000	.351*	.044	.055	-.101	-.101	.071	.009	-.096	-.230	.163	-.025	-.283	-.169
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.951	.	.022	.774	.704	.492	.482	.635	.953	.506	.135	.284	.867	.059	.267
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre17	Correlation Coefficient	.070	.351*	1.000	.320*	-.016	.239	.086	.420**	.284	-.103	-.008	-.039	.020	.013	-.044
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.652	.022	.	.044	.914	.120	.566	.007	.061	.494	.960	.807	.898	.936	.780
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre21	Correlation Coefficient	.104	.044	.320*	1.000	.085	.362*	.130	.035	-.109	.208	-.090	.081	.189	.167	.132
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.500	.774	.044	.	.572	.018	.380	.818	.468	.163	.572	.606	.221	.281	.402
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre26	Correlation Coefficient	.091	.055	-.016	.085	1.000	.163	.120	.162	.017	-.071	-.267	.101	.071	.135	.014
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.536	.704	.914	.572	.	.265	.397	.272	.908	.619	.079	.502	.632	.362	.927
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre29	Correlation Coefficient	-.200	-.101	.239	.362*	.163	1.000	.151	.380*	.170	.113	.000	-.249	.069	.092	-.065
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.180	.492	.120	.018	.265	.	.293	.011	.244	.434	1.000	.102	.647	.542	.672
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre32	Correlation Coefficient	.051	-.101	.086	.130	.120	.151	1.000	.258	.375**	-.146	.309*	.159	.177	.272	.446**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.722	.482	.566	.380	.397	.293	.	.074	.008	.296	.040	.280	.223	.062	.003
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre40	Correlation Coefficient	-.128	.071	.420**	.035	.162	.380*	.258	1.000	.718**	-.266	-.034	-.061	-.123	.036	.136
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.394	.635	.007	.818	.272	.011	.074	.	.000	.068	.828	.690	.416	.814	.377
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre43	Correlation Coefficient	.018	.009	.284	-.109	.017	.170	.375**	.718**	1.000	-.320*	.122	.016	-.027	.069	.360*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.903	.953	.061	.468	.908	.244	.008	.000	.	.025	.424	.914	.857	.641	.017
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post05	Correlation Coefficient	.156	-.096	-.103	.208	-.071	.113	-.146	-.266	-.320*	1.000	.089	.166	.119	.095	-.222
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.283	.506	.494	.163	.619	.434	.296	.068	.025	.	.553	.264	.416	.516	.137
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post11	Correlation Coefficient	-.069	-.230	-.008	-.090	-.267	.000	.309*	-.034	.122	.089	1.000	-.032	-.060	.144	.340*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.656	.135	.960	.572	.079	1.000	.040	.828	.424	.553	.	.841	.703	.359	.033
		N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
	Post26	Correlation Coefficient	.030	.163	-.039	.081	.101	-.249	.159	-.061	.016	.166	-.032	1.000	-.149	.106	.238
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.848	.284	.807	.606	.502	.102	.280	.690	.914	.264	.841	.	.333	.495	.129
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post29	Correlation Coefficient	.331*	-.025	.020	.189	.071	.069	.177	-.123	-.027	.119	-.060	-.149	1.000	.456**	.116
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	.867	.898	.221	.632	.647	.223	.416	.857	.416	.703	.333	.	.003	.452
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post30	Correlation Coefficient	.021	-.283	.013	.167	.135	.092	.272	.036	.069	.095	.144	.106	.456**	1.000	.431**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.888	.059	.936	.281	.362	.542	.062	.814	.641	.516	.359	.495	.003	.	.005
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post31	Correlation Coefficient	.032	-.169	-.044	.132	.014	-.065	.446**	.136	.360*	-.222	.340*	.238	.116	.431**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.834	.267	.780	.402	.927	.672	.003	.377	.017	.137	.033	.129	.452	.005	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
Spearman's rho	Pre09	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.004	.074	.112	.099	-.218	.061	-.139	.021	.182	-.073	.031	.373*	.021	.035
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.979	.657	.502	.554	.189	.716	.404	.903	.275	.667	.854	.021	.898	.836
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre14	Correlation Coefficient	.004	1.000	.375*	.047	.063	-.111	-.113	.088	.014	-.111	-.249	.177	-.027	-.308	-.182
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.979	.	.020	.780	.706	.508	.499	.600	.933	.505	.138	.288	.871	.060	.275
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre17	Correlation Coefficient	.074	.375*	1.000	.324*	-.019	.258	.095	.439**	.305	-.115	-.008	-.039	.021	.012	-.046
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.657	.020	.	.048	.909	.118	.571	.006	.062	.492	.961	.818	.899	.944	.785
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre21	Correlation Coefficient	.112	.047	.324*	1.000	.090	.386*	.147	.037	-.117	.233	-.091	.086	.204	.174	.139
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.502	.780	.048	.	.590	.017	.380	.825	.483	.159	.592	.607	.220	.295	.407
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre26	Correlation Coefficient	.099	.063	-.019	.090	1.000	.186	.143	.178	.019	-.090	-.289	.112	.079	.144	.011
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.554	.706	.909	.590	.	.265	.391	.286	.910	.590	.082	.503	.636	.388	.950
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre29	Correlation Coefficient	-.218	-.111	.258	.386*	.186	1.000	.168	.406*	.187	.130	.002	-.270	.077	.107	-.069
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.189	.508	.118	.017	.265	.	.313	.011	.261	.438	.990	.102	.645	.524	.681
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre32	Correlation Coefficient	.061	-.113	.095	.147	.143	.168	1.000	.288	.433**	-.182	.340*	.176	.184	.312	.497**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.716	.499	.571	.380	.391	.313	.	.080	.007	.275	.040	.289	.268	.057	.001
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre40	Correlation Coefficient	-.139	.088	.439**	.037	.178	.406*	.288	1.000	.758**	-.303	-.038	-.066	-.132	.040	.142
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.404	.600	.006	.825	.286	.011	.080	.	.000	.064	.825	.694	.431	.810	.394
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Pre43	Correlation Coefficient	.021	.014	.305	-.117	.019	.187	.433**	.758**	1.000	-.370*	.129	.017	-.023	.078	.398*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.903	.933	.062	.483	.910	.261	.007	.000	.	.022	.446	.917	.889	.643	.013
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post05	Correlation Coefficient	.182	-.111	-.115	.233	-.090	.130	-.182	-.303	-.370*	1.000	.091	.176	.133	.107	-.248
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.275	.505	.492	.159	.590	.438	.275	.064	.022	.	.594	.289	.426	.521	.133
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post11	Correlation Coefficient	-.073	-.249	-.008	-.091	-.289	.002	.340*	-.038	.129	.091	1.000	-.030	-.063	.145	.356*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.667	.138	.961	.592	.082	.990	.040	.825	.446	.594	.	.858	.711	.393	.030
		N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
	Post26	Correlation Coefficient	.031	.177	-.039	.086	.112	-.270	.176	-.066	.017	.176	-.030	1.000	-.159	.117	.250
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.854	.288	.818	.607	.503	.102	.289	.694	.917	.289	.858	.	.340	.483	.130
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post29	Correlation Coefficient	.373*	-.027	.021	.204	.079	.077	.184	-.132	-.023	.133	-.063	-.159	1.000	.481**	.125
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.021	.871	.899	.220	.636	.645	.268	.431	.889	.426	.711	.340	.	.002	.455
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post30	Correlation Coefficient	.021	-.308	.012	.174	.144	.107	.312	.040	.078	.107	.145	.117	.481**	1.000	.450**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.898	.060	.944	.295	.388	.524	.057	.810	.643	.521	.393	.483	.002	.	.005
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38
	Post31	Correlation Coefficient	.035	-.182	-.046	.139	.011	-.069	.497**	.142	.398*	-.248	.356*	.250	.125	.450**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.836	.275	.785	.407	.950	.681	.001	.394	.013	.133	.030	.130	.455	.005	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Correlations

			Pre10	Pre12	Pre13	Pre15	Pre16	Pre18	Pre19	Pre22	Pre25	Pre30	Pre35	Pre42	Pre47	Post06	Post12	Post15	Post20	Post23	Post28	Post32	Post35
Kendall's tau_b	Pre10	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.274	.098	.285	.134	.375*	.051	.360*	.060	.253	.287	.127	.117	-.028	.285	.043	-.131	-.053	.105	.101	-.049
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.075	.537	.064	.377	.020	.746	.026	.686	.089	.051	.388	.425	.851	.075	.786	.389	.738	.496	.513	.747
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre12	Correlation Coefficient	.274	1.000	.077	.350*	.393**	.025	.117	.089	.113	.257	.275	.186	.186	-.004	-.006	.064	.020	.121	.347*	-.080	-.104
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.075	.	.621	.020	.008	.873	.446	.572	.438	.076	.055	.197	.196	.976	.971	.678	.891	.431	.021	.595	.481
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre13	Correlation Coefficient	.098	.077	1.000	.138	-.074	.285	.282	.199	.133	.092	.096	.104	.017	-.158	.156	-.066	.322*	.119	.140	-.130	-.097
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.537	.621	.	.374	.630	.080	.076	.221	.374	.540	.515	.484	.911	.302	.333	.678	.036	.455	.371	.406	.526
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre15	Correlation Coefficient	.285	.350*	.138	1.000	.341*	-.028	.240	-.005	.174	.076	.014	.000	.070	-.314*	-.039	-.224	.060	-.082	-.026	-.093	-.161
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.064	.020	.374	.	.021	.860	.118	.974	.230	.598	.920	1.000	.624	.034	.800	.144	.686	.594	.864	.539	.275
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre16	Correlation Coefficient	.134	.393**	-.074	.341*	1.000	.099	.289	-.013	-.094	.081	.232	.055	.271	-.116	-.118	-.233	.078	-.007	.159	-.066	-.123
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.377	.008	.630	.021	.	.521	.057	.935	.514	.572	.101	.700	.055	.427	.444	.124	.593	.962	.287	.659	.397
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre18	Correlation Coefficient	.375*	.025	.285	-.028	.099	1.000	.182	.346*	-.075	.034	.240	.227	.185	-.009	.279	.059	-.021	-.161	-.006	-.050	-.162
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.020	.873	.080	.860	.521	.	.259	.036	.623	.821	.110	.131	.218	.954	.088	.715	.892	.317	.968	.751	.295
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre19	Correlation Coefficient	.051	.117	.282	.240	.289	.182	1.000	-.057	.157	.150	.200	.369*	.057	-.005	.000	-.173	.410**	.104	.188	-.259	-.169
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.746	.446	.076	.118	.057	.259	.	.723	.292	.313	.174	.012	.700	.976	1.000	.273	.007	.507	.224	.094	.262
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre22	Correlation Coefficient	.360*	.089	.199	-.005	-.013	.346*	-.057	1.000	-.048	.012	.126	.045	.080	-.025	.139	.139	.033	-.089	.098	.107	-.108
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.572	.221	.974	.935	.036	.723	.	.751	.937	.400	.767	.595	.872	.394	.388	.833	.579	.535	.497	.484
		N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	36	37	37	37	37	37	37
	Pre25	Correlation Coefficient	.060	.113	.133	.174	-.094	-.075	.157	-.048	1.000	.506**	.436**	.341*	.365**	-.084	-.060	-.263	.002	.187	.070	-.277	.308*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.686	.438	.374	.230	.514	.623	.292	.751	.	.000	.002	.014	.009	.557	.690	.077	.988	.208	.631	.058	.031
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre30	Correlation Coefficient	.253	.257	.092	.076	.081	.034	.150	.012	.506**	1.000	.659**	.504**	.468**	-.112	-.026	-.128	.000	.058	.293*	-.170	.226
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.089	.076	.540	.598	.572	.821	.313	.937	.000	.	.000	.000	.001	.431	.862	.389	1.000	.698	.044	.242	.112
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre35	Correlation Coefficient	.287	.275	.096	.014	.232	.240	.200	.126	.436**	.659**	1.000	.599**	.586**	-.101	.003	-.131	-.092	.112	.387**	-.040	.132
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.051	.055	.515	.920	.101	.110	.174	.400	.002	.000	.	.000	.000	.473	.986	.372	.514	.445	.007	.782	.350
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre42	Correlation Coefficient	.127	.186	.104	.000	.055	.227	.369*	.045	.341*	.504**	.599**	1.000	.515**	.080	.171	-.088	.117	.221	.540**	-.103	.117
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.388	.197	.484	1.000	.700	.131	.012	.767	.014	.000	.000	.	.000	.573	.252	.551	.410	.133	.000	.475	.409
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre47	Correlation Coefficient	.117	.186	.017	.070	.271	.185	.057	.080	.365**	.468**	.586**	.515**	1.000	.092	-.125	-.127	-.105	.032	.402**	-.055	.189
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.425	.196	.911	.624	.055	.218	.700	.595	.009	.001	.000	.000	.	.516	.402	.387	.460	.830	.005	.704	.179
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post06	Correlation Coefficient	-.028	-.004	-.158	-.314*	-.116	-.009	-.005	-.025	-.084	-.112	-.101	.080	.092	1.000	.154	.160	.051	.036	.016	.060	.033
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.851	.976	.302	.034	.427	.954	.976	.872	.557	.431	.473	.573	.516	.	.316	.290	.725	.813	.915	.685	.818
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post12	Correlation Coefficient	.285	-.006	.156	-.039	-.118	.279	.000	.139	-.060	-.026	.003	.171	-.125	.154	1.000	.205	.109	.108	.092	.014	-.029
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.075	.971	.333	.800	.444	.088	1.000	.394	.690	.862	.986	.252	.402	.316	.	.200	.478	.499	.556	.927	.848
		N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	36	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
	Post15	Correlation Coefficient	.043	.064	-.066	-.224	-.233	.059	-.173	.139	-.263	-.128	-.131	-.088	-.127	.160	.205	1.000	.016	-.045	.124	.309*	-.011
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.786	.678	.678	.144	.124	.715	.273	.388	.077	.389	.372	.551	.387	.290	.200	.	.914	.777	.421	.045	.939
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post20	Correlation Coefficient	-.131	.020	.322*	.060	.078	-.021	.410**	.033	.002	.000	-.092	.117	-.105	.051	.109	.016	1.000	.097	.149	-.219	-.087
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.389	.891	.036	.686	.593	.892	.007	.833	.988	1.000	.514	.410	.460	.725	.478	.914	.	.525	.318	.142	.551
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post23	Correlation Coefficient	-.053	.121	.119	-.082	-.007	-.161	.104	-.089	.187	.058	.112	.221	.032	.036	.108	-.045	.097	1.000	.194	-.073	.276
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.738	.431	.455	.594	.962	.317	.507	.579	.208	.698	.445	.133	.830	.813	.499	.777	.525	.	.209	.636	.067
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post28	Correlation Coefficient	.105	.347*	.140	-.026	.159	-.006	.188	.098	.070	.293*	.387**	.540**	.402**	.016	.092	.124	.149	.194	1.000	.036	-.058
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.496	.021	.371	.864	.287	.968	.224	.535	.631	.044	.007	.000	.005	.915	.556	.421	.318	.209	.	.813	.694
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post32	Correlation Coefficient	.101	-.080	-.130	-.093	-.066	-.050	-.259	.107	-.277	-.170	-.040	-.103	-.055	.060	.014	.309*	-.219	-.073	.036	1.000	.206
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.513	.595	.406	.539	.659	.751	.094	.497	.058	.242	.782	.475	.704	.685	.927	.045	.142	.636	.813	.	.166
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post35	Correlation Coefficient	-.049	-.104	-.097	-.161	-.123	-.162	-.169	-.108	.308*	.226	.132	.117	.189	.033	-.029	-.011	-.087	.276	-.058	.206	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.747	.481	.526	.275	.397	.295	.262	.484	.031	.112	.350	.409	.179	.818	.848	.939	.551	.067	.694	.166	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
Spearman's rho	Pre10	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.297	.102	.308	.148	.382*	.055	.372*	.065	.280	.316	.142	.135	-.032	.300	.046	-.140	-.055	.112	.105	-.056
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.070	.541	.060	.376	.018	.741	.024	.700	.089	.053	.396	.420	.846	.071	.782	.402	.741	.502	.530	.740
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre12	Correlation Coefficient	.297	1.000	.081	.377*	.431**	.026	.128	.095	.119	.291	.321*	.216	.210	-.010	-.006	.067	.023	.130	.376*	-.089	-.111
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.070	.	.628	.019	.007	.876	.445	.575	.476	.076	.049	.193	.206	.951	.970	.689	.889	.437	.020	.595	.507
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre13	Correlation Coefficient	.102	.081	1.000	.143	-.074	.288	.291	.205	.143	.103	.104	.117	.019	-.167	.160	-.067	.345*	.124	.148	-.135	-.103
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.541	.628	.	.392	.659	.079	.076	.224	.391	.539	.534	.483	.908	.317	.343	.688	.034	.460	.376	.420	.539
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre15	Correlation Coefficient	.308	.377*	.143	1.000	.364*	-.029	.255	-.003	.192	.086	.014	.001	.077	-.355*	-.042	-.237	.065	-.085	-.029	-.101	-.174
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.060	.019	.392	.	.025	.863	.122	.987	.249	.607	.933	.994	.644	.029	.803	.152	.697	.614	.862	.546	.295
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre16	Correlation Coefficient	.148	.431**	-.074	.364*	1.000	.105	.304	-.014	-.102	.095	.280	.062	.315	-.135	-.130	-.245	.086	-.006	.174	-.065	-.138
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.376	.007	.659	.025	.	.529	.064	.935	.542	.569	.088	.711	.054	.418	.443	.139	.606	.973	.297	.700	.410
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre18	Correlation Coefficient	.382*	.026	.288	-.029	.105	1.000	.186	.350*	-.081	.037	.263	.248	.202	-.009	.285	.060	-.022	-.164	-.007	-.052	-.172
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	.876	.079	.863	.529	.	.264	.034	.629	.824	.111	.133	.223	.955	.088	.721	.894	.324	.969	.756	.301
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre19	Correlation Coefficient	.055	.128	.291	.255	.304	.186	1.000	-.060	.173	.168	.231	.411*	.064	-.006	.000	-.181	.438**	.109	.200	-.273	-.184
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.741	.445	.076	.122	.064	.264		.722	.300	.312	.162	.010	.704	.972	.999	.277	.006	.514	.230	.097	.268
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre22	Correlation Coefficient	.372*	.095	.205	-.003	-.014	.350*	-.060	1.000	-.053	.014	.139	.049	.090	-.027	.143	.145	.035	-.093	.102	.115	-.115
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.024	.575	.224	.987	.935	.034	.722	.	.755	.934	.412	.771	.596	.876	.404	.390	.839	.586	.548	.496	.496
		N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	36	37	37	37	37	37	37
	Pre25	Correlation Coefficient	.065	.119	.143	.192	-.102	-.081	.173	-.053	1.000	.578**	.506**	.396*	.423**	-.098	-.068	-.288	.006	.205	.070	-.312	.363*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.700	.476	.391	.249	.542	.629	.300	.755	.	.000	.001	.014	.008	.560	.691	.080	.970	.218	.675	.056	.025
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre30	Correlation Coefficient	.280	.291	.103	.086	.095	.037	.168	.014	.578**	1.000	.724**	.576**	.543**	-.128	-.031	-.137	-.001	.064	.343*	-.193	.250
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.089	.076	.539	.607	.569	.824	.312	.934	.000	.	.000	.000	.000	.444	.857	.413	.996	.703	.035	.245	.129
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre35	Correlation Coefficient	.316	.321*	.104	.014	.280	.263	.231	.139	.506**	.724**	1.000	.678**	.659**	-.128	.001	-.139	-.109	.125	.457**	-.050	.144
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.053	.049	.534	.933	.088	.111	.162	.412	.001	.000	.	.000	.000	.443	.996	.405	.516	.453	.004	.765	.390
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre42	Correlation Coefficient	.142	.216	.117	.001	.062	.248	.411*	.049	.396*	.576**	.678**	1.000	.586**	.095	.194	-.095	.139	.246	.613**	-.130	.140
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.396	.193	.483	.994	.711	.133	.010	.771	.014	.000	.000	.	.000	.570	.251	.570	.406	.137	.000	.436	.402
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Pre47	Correlation Coefficient	.135	.210	.019	.077	.315	.202	.064	.090	.423**	.543**	.659**	.586**	1.000	.112	-.138	-.144	-.126	.033	.450**	-.063	.223
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.420	.206	.908	.644	.054	.223	.704	.596	.008	.000	.000	.000	.	.503	.417	.388	.453	.842	.005	.705	.179
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post06	Correlation Coefficient	-.032	-.010	-.167	-.355*	-.135	-.009	-.006	-.027	-.098	-.128	-.128	.095	.112	1.000	.164	.173	.057	.039	.014	.074	.039
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.846	.951	.317	.029	.418	.955	.972	.876	.560	.444	.443	.570	.503	.	.332	.298	.735	.816	.935	.658	.816
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post12	Correlation Coefficient	.300	-.006	.160	-.042	-.130	.285	.000	.143	-.068	-.031	.001	.194	-.138	.164	1.000	.210	.118	.113	.099	.016	-.028
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.071	.970	.343	.803	.443	.088	.999	.404	.691	.857	.996	.251	.417	.332	.	.212	.488	.504	.562	.923	.869
		N	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	36	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37	37
	Post15	Correlation Coefficient	.046	.067	-.067	-.237	-.245	.060	-.181	.145	-.288	-.137	-.139	-.095	-.144	.173	.210	1.000	.020	-.047	.133	.329*	-.013
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.782	.689	.688	.152	.139	.721	.277	.390	.080	.413	.405	.570	.388	.298	.212	.	.903	.781	.426	.044	.938
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post20	Correlation Coefficient	-.140	.023	.345*	.065	.086	-.022	.438**	.035	.006	-.001	-.109	.139	-.126	.057	.118	.020	1.000	.106	.171	-.237	-.097
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.402	.889	.034	.697	.606	.894	.006	.839	.970	.996	.516	.406	.453	.735	.488	.903	.	.526	.304	.153	.564
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post23	Correlation Coefficient	-.055	.130	.124	-.085	-.006	-.164	.109	-.093	.205	.064	.125	.246	.033	.039	.113	-.047	.106	1.000	.208	-.078	.302
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.741	.437	.460	.614	.973	.324	.514	.586	.218	.703	.453	.137	.842	.816	.504	.781	.526	.	.211	.642	.065
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post28	Correlation Coefficient	.112	.376*	.148	-.029	.174	-.007	.200	.102	.070	.343*	.457**	.613**	.450**	.014	.099	.133	.171	.208	1.000	.041	-.054
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.502	.020	.376	.862	.297	.969	.230	.548	.675	.035	.004	.000	.005	.935	.562	.426	.304	.211	.	.805	.748
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post32	Correlation Coefficient	.105	-.089	-.135	-.101	-.065	-.052	-.273	.115	-.312	-.193	-.050	-.130	-.063	.074	.016	.329*	-.237	-.078	.041	1.000	.225
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.530	.595	.420	.546	.700	.756	.097	.496	.056	.245	.765	.436	.705	.658	.923	.044	.153	.642	.805	.	.174
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38
	Post35	Correlation Coefficient	-.056	-.111	-.103	-.174	-.138	-.172	-.184	-.115	.363*	.250	.144	.140	.223	.039	-.028	-.013	-.097	.302	-.054	.225	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.740	.507	.539	.295	.410	.301	.268	.496	.025	.129	.390	.402	.179	.816	.869	.938	.564	.065	.748	.174	.
		N	38	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38	37	38	38	38	38	38	38

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Appendix J Student interview and pre-/post-intervention questionnaire Nvivo nodes

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
overal content	1	1	29/3/2013 14:59	WP	22/4/2013 11:42	WP
amount of studying time	2	4	22/4/2013 11:50	WP	22/4/2013 15:05	WP
class time	0	0	22/4/2013 11:50	WP	22/4/2013 11:50	WP
complexity&difficulty	2	3	22/4/2013 11:43	WP	22/4/2013 14:42	WP
individual&groupwork	2	2	22/4/2013 14:16	WP	22/4/2013 14:54	WP
TBLT procedures	2	10	22/4/2013 11:48	WP	22/4/2013 14:59	WP
use of Thai&English	2	2	22/4/2013 11:36	WP	22/4/2013 14:58	WP
coverage	1	1	22/4/2013 14:33	WP	22/4/2013 14:34	WP
feedback&mediation	0	0	29/3/2013 15:01	WP	29/3/2013 15:01	WP
peer feedback on language	1	1	29/3/2013 15:02	WP	22/4/2013 14:21	WP
peer evaluation on skills	0	0	29/3/2013 15:02	WP	1/10/2014 17:39	WP
Pre-Q feelings when presenting	0	0	31/3/2013 11:34	WP	31/3/2013 11:34	WP
nervous&shy	1	12	31/3/2013 11:36	WP	31/3/2013 11:46	WP
positive attitudes	1	10	31/3/2013 11:36	WP	31/3/2013 11:46	WP
Pre-Q ways of feedback	0	0	31/3/2013 11:01	WP	31/3/2013 11:33	WP
individual&group	1	13	31/3/2013 11:03	WP	31/3/2013 11:26	WP
methods	1	18	31/3/2013 11:05	WP	31/3/2013 11:26	WP
types of feedback	1	15	31/3/2013 11:06	WP	31/3/2013 11:21	WP
teacher mediation	3	4	29/3/2013 15:02	WP	22/4/2013 15:01	WP
future implementation	1	2	29/3/2013 15:03	WP	22/4/2013 14:25	WP
Post Questionnaire	0	0	31/3/2013 12:21	WP	31/3/2013 12:21	WP
36.1&36.2 things you like	0	0	31/3/2013 12:26	WP	31/3/2013 12:59	WP
feedback	1	6	31/3/2013 12:45	WP	31/3/2013 13:05	WP
task content	1	20	31/3/2013 12:44	WP	31/3/2013 13:08	WP
teaching	1	19	31/3/2013 12:45	WP	31/3/2013 13:08	WP

Lesson 1: Developing Presentation Skills (periods 1&2, 100 mins.)

(plus U. 2 February - An important visitor)

Objectives: - To practise using useful expressions for introducing a business presentation (opening and introduction)
- To practise giving feedback on a presentation to the speaker

Pre-task Time: 25 mins.	Materials - a YouTube video clip 'a bad presentation' - Steve Jobs's iPhone presentation - a checklist p.7 Effective Presentation - Get Ready for Business U.2, listening 1.06 p.12 - a slide (ordering) *Effective Presentation U.2, p.12*	Steps A teacher-led class discussion about stages of introducing a presentation ▪ Compare a YouTube video clip of 'a bad presentation' and Steve Jobs's iPhone presentation ▪ Ask learners for their opinions on what a business presentation is all about, what makes a good presentation and how to introduce a presentation *(without textbook)* ▪ Listen to an introduction of a business presentation (1.06) and discuss what to be included and some useful phrases ▪ Listen to different introductions, and make notes of useful phrases under four parts of the introduction: opening, subject, message, outline ▪ Watch Geoff Maxwell's introduction (Version 2), and tick which items are included in the intro. (using a checklist)	Target language An introduction Opening Subject Message Outline
Task Time: 30 mins.	- Ex.4, p.12 (put the information on a slide)	▪ (In pairs), plan an introduction based on the information given (choose one topic) and practise with a partner. ▪ (with a different partner), plan and practise introducing the presentation about **'A job I want to do after graduation'**	
Language Focus Time: 45 mins.	- U.2, listening 1.06-1.09, Ex.4, p.14 (as task repetition)	***(Introduction)*** ▪ Do listening exercises, identify useful language and details of the introduction ▪ (In groups), practise giving an introduction (choose one topic)	

Lesson 2: Describing Company Profile (periods 3&4, 100 mins.)

Objectives: To introduce topic areas or details that should be included in a presentation of a company profile and practise giving a presentation

Pre-task Time: 20 mins.	Materials - Pre-task slide (2.1) about Nike - a recording (3 extracts) - Listening work sheet (2.1)	Steps A teacher-led discussion on what topics or details should be included in a presentation ▪ The teacher shows quizzes about Nike on a slide and asks learners (in group of 5) to respond to the questions. ▪ Listen to three extracts from a recording about three company's profiles, take notes and share with their group members. ▪ The teacher helps define the topic (a company profile) and brainstorm on the areas to be included in the presentation of a company profile. ▪ Check meanings of new/unknown words (i.e. turnover, subsidiaries),	Target language a company profile = company description i.e. vision, location, headquarters, overseas branches, subsidiaries, no. of employees, turnover (revenue), company strengths, main customers, main products, current projects
Task Time: 25 mins.	- printed info. about 4 companies - Reading worksheet (2.1) with sub-topics (of the four companies)	1. Reading ▪ Each group skims through printed company information, make notes of the company profile (incl. interesting information) and then fill in an information sheet. Group 1- Mandarin Oriental Hotel / Group 2- IKEA Group 3- FitnessFirst / Group 4- Samsung / Group 5- Starbucks ▪ Each group prepares 5-6 questions to ask other groups about their company profiles (take turns), and fills the obtained info. in a reading sheet provided.	
Time: 30 mins.	A task worksheet	2. Preparing and practising giving a presentation ▪ Prepare a presentation about the company profile of the company they have read (based on the situation given below). ▪ Group members share feedback received from their partners, help prepare a group presentation, and select one member to present to the class. Other groups, along with the teacher, give feedback. *Situation: You work in the Human Resources Department and are in charge of receiving the company's visitors. There is a group of students doing an international program on business study visiting your company. You are asked to give a short presentation about your company profile. Prepare a three-minute presentation.*	
Language Focus Time: 25 mins.	Supplementary materials	▪ Check new words from transcripts and printed materials. The groups suggest interesting words/sentences found in the texts they have read ▪ Study an example of a presentation on company profiles and do language focus exercises (2 gap-filling exercises of useful phrases for the presentations of company profiles)	

* Note: Lesson 3 Feedback and Pause Practice (periods 5-6) was not pre-planned in this course so, there was no lesson plan for this lesson.

Lesson 4: Describing Company Products (periods 7&8, 100 mins.)

Objectives: To study useful language for describing products and services and practise giving a presentation

Pre-task Time: 25 mins.	Materials Pre-task worksheet 2.2 (a list of jumbled words/phrases describing products/services	Steps 1. Class discussion ▪ In pairs, categorise the words and phrases given as being used for describing products or services. ▪ Discuss answers with the class and guess what kinds of products and services are described. 2. Reading ▪ Each group reads one text, identifies sentences containing these words and discusses meanings. ○ Text A product description - Samsung mobile phone ○ Text B service description - Evason Hua Hin Resort & Spa ▪ Draw conclusions about what should be included when describing products and services.	Target language 1. Adjectives used for describing products/services 2. Nouns/noun phrases describing product specification, services offered and facilities and location
Task Time: 45 mins. (30 mins. preparation, 15 mins. for all group presentations)	Task worksheet 2.2	Preparing and giving a presentation ▪ Study examples of product and service presentations. ▪ Search a company's information on their products/services and make notes of the features, specification, facilities and services offered. ▪ Prepare a script, based on situation (below) and give a three-minute presentation of the selected product/services. *Situation: You work in the Human Resources Department and are in charge of receiving company's visitors. There is a group of students doing an international program on business study visiting your company. You are asked to give a three-minute presentation about your company product(s) and/or services.*	
Language Focus Time: 30 mins.	Supplementary materials	Studying useful language for describing products and services ○ supplementary material p.67 - product/service description ○ Business Objectives (new edition) pp. 40-41 - list of adjectives p.42 - size and dimension p. 47 - listening about product specification	

Lesson 5: Describing Business Situations (Trends), periods 9&10, 100 mins.)

Objectives: To practise describing graphs and presenting information from the graphs to inform about changes in business situations

Pre-task Time: 35 mins.	Materials (matching) Business Objectives workbook p. 38 (listening) Business Objectives (International ed.) pp. 89,188	Steps Introducing a topic and unfamiliar/useful words 1. Matching phrases to pictures (10 mins.) ▪ Descriptions are read in front of the class by six volunteers (twice); others match each description with a picture. First readthrough: listen and decide; second readthrough: note down vocabulary. ▪ In pairs, underline verbs and adverbs describing changes in the descriptions. 2. Listening and studying a transcript, and (teacher-led) drawing mind-maps (25 mins.) ▪ Listen and draw a graph ▪ Study and underline words/phrases in the transcript ▪ Draw mind-maps of verbs, nouns, adverbs representing changes i.e. ↓ went down ↑ increased by ↓ decreased ↑ rose to ▪ Discuss what information / language should be included in a presentation of business situations	Target language Describing trends/changes ○ nouns i.e. a peak, a dip ○ verbs i.e. rose, increased, declined, recovered ○ adverbs - degree of change i.e. slightly, sharply, steadily - speed of change i.e. gradually, dramatically - prepositions i.e. by, of, to
Task Time: 20 mins. Time: 30 mins.	Business Objectives (International ed.) pp. 93,164 Task worksheet 3.1	1. Pair work Describing and drawing two different graphs (one with information, the other with missing information). After finishing, each pair should have similar graphs. ▪ Individually, study the graph provided and make notes of important changes ▪ In pairs, describe the graph to partners. The partner listens and draws the graph, and then takes his/her turn. ▪ Compare whether their results contain the same information. 2. Presenting a graph to another group ▪ In groups of 4, study the graph provided. ▪ Write one or two short paragraphs describing trends/changes (based on situation below). ▪ Consult mind-maps (of verbs, nouns, adverbs), a listening transcript and a dictionary ▪ Pass the work to other groups for their feedback. ▪ With two groups working together, individuals take turns presenting the graph to other group members (encourage them not to look at their notes) ▪ The other members give feedbacks after the presentation. *Situation: After presenting a company's profile and products/services, you also want to include information about the company's business situations. Look at the graph provided and prepare a three-minute presentation.*	