LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network
(ISSN: 2630-0672 (Print) | ISSN: 2672-9431 (Online)
Volume: 14, No: 1, January – June 2021
Language Institute, Thammasat University
https://so04.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/LEARN/index

Effects of Oracy Building Instruction via Blended-learning Environment on Thai Students' Metacognitive Awareness and Oracy Skills

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APA Citation:
Bangkom, K., & Sukavatee, P. (2021). Effects of oracy building instruction via blended-learning environment on Thai students' metacognitive awareness and oracy skills *LEARN Journal: Language Education and Acquisition Research Network*, *14*(1), 240-293.

Received 28/07/2020

Received in revised form 01/12/2020

Accepted 04/12/2020

Keywords
Oracy Building Instruction, Blended-Learning, Metacognitive Awareness, Thai students

Abstract

Oracy skills are considered as a problematic area for Thai students. Despite years of learning, students could not improve the skills at a satisfactory level due to internal and external hindrance such as cognitive load while communicating and insufficient practice time in class to achieve their communication (Flavell, 1979). In addition, to provide more in-class oracy practice time, blended-learning method is considered to be an effective platform in which students can learn grammar and vocabulary at their own pace outside of class. Oracy Building Instruction via Blended-learning Environment (OBIBLE) was developed to improve metacognitive awareness and oracy skills by using blended-learning environment. The research was conducted to investigate the effectiveness of the OBIBLE instruction on students' oracy skills and metacognition, and perception towards blended-learning environment. The instruction

model has integrated activities to promote metacognitive awareness and oracy skills in the environment of a blended approach. Twenty-nine high school students in a public school in Rayong were chosen as the sample group. The research employed a single group experimental design method to estimate the effectiveness of the instruction. The data was analysed quantitively and qualitatively using pre- and post-test scores, task performance scores, questionnaires, and stimulated recall interviews. The finding shows that there was a significant improvement of the participants' English metacognitive awareness and oracy skills after taking the learning through OBIBLE, and that the students had awareness in the aspects of background, engagement, outcome and convenience of the instruction. This research provides empirical evidence for the effectiveness of blended-learning environment and gives useful insights for future students, teachers, and institutions in developing metacognitive awareness and teaching oracy skills of English.

1. INTRODUCTION

Oracy skills refer to speaking and listening skills and they are as important as other fundamental skills such as numeracy and literacy (Millard & Menzies, 2016) and it should be taught to all children at a young age for their benefit in learning through their speaking (Alexander, 2010; Goh, 2014). A similar vein is also raised in Singapore, where English is used as a medium in classes. The students are required to use their second language (L2) to acquire the ability to understand multiple subjects (Goh, 2014). Learning speaking and listening skills in EFL context in Thai schools is not used primarily as a classroom language medium but rather to practise the skills themselves. Instead of practicing one skill at a time, two skills are more beneficial since it happens naturally in conversations, and oracy skills integrate both.

However, in many research studies, oracy skills are often seen as two distinctly separate skills, speaking and listening, and conducted individually, but the skills often occur together. Therefore, this research will focus on the two skills: speaking and listening, and will group these

under the term 'oracy'. There are four strands of oracy skills: physical, linguistics, cognitive, and social and emotion. Firstly, physical strand refers to pronunciation and body language. Secondly, linguistics strand refers to grammar and vocabulary used in the talk. Next, cognitive strand refers to the organization and contents of the talk. Lastly, social and emotion strand refers to interaction made during the communication e.g. checking understanding and listening attentively. To effectively perform oracy skills, one needs be both a good speaker and a good listener. Since speaking and listening are activities that occur when one performs oracy skills, heavy cognitive load is inevitable. Metacognitive awareness could be considered to help reduce the cognitive load.

Metacognitive awareness means knowledge and condition about cognitive phenomena (Flavell, 1979) in speaking and listening skills. There are three dimensions of metacognitive awareness: experience, knowledge (person, task, and strategies), and strategy use (language use and language development). The strategies combine planning, monitoring, and evaluating processes (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Tang, 2016; Anderson, 2002). Metacognitive awareness is one of the important factors. Ghapanchi and Taheryan (2012) found that metacognitive awareness is one of the important factors in oracy skills and the more language learners possess metacognitive knowledge, the more proficient they are. Furthermore, the study indicates that speaking proficiency is highly related to metacognitive knowledge while listening comprehension has a positive relationship with vocabulary knowledge. However, in this study, the pre-test score showed that students still lack metacognitive awareness since their performance mean score was 40 out of 100. As a result, improving their metacognitive awareness to finally help enhance their skills seems very possible. Oracy skills teaching in the classroom has limitations due to required time and practice, and blended-learning is considered as another approach to resolve these problems.

As blended learning can promote self-learning, it can save time in the class. The purpose in the Sokol et al. (2013) study is to research the effectiveness of general English in a blended learning course for high school student in Latvia. The objective of the course is to promote independent learning of grammar and vocabulary by the students outside of class and to provide more conversation practice time in class. The result was that the students had more motivation and a deeper understanding when creating tests for themselves, and also that learning autonomy

increased. However, there are some negative comments from the students that online tasks required more concentration than in-class tasks and that technological problems caused them to be frustrated. A similar vein is also applied in Banditvilai's (2016) which found that blended-learning could have helped students improve their English skills in a business communication course. The three skills, listening, reading and writing were the ones in which students progressed the most. Speaking, however, was found to be the least improved. Therefore, acquiring speaking skill still requires face-to-face sessions. In order to excel at the skill, a holistic speaking teaching cycle presented by Goh and Burns (2012), which has been viewed as teaching stages where metacognitive awareness is highlighted (Thomas, 2019), was applied to this study. This teaching cycle promotes students' speaking and listening skills, and metacognition through task activities. However, the context that she is using the strategies is in Singapore, where people use English as a second language. In the area of EFL, research about English oracy is limited. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the extent in which metacognitive awareness and oracy skills can be improved by the OBIBLE teaching model, in which the three theories are embedded: blended-learning, speaking cycle teaching, and metacognitive awareness.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This section provides core theories and approaches embedded in OBIBLE instruction which are 1) oracy strands, 2) metacognitive awareness, and 3) blended-learning approach.

2.1 Oracy and its Characteristics

Oracy consists of 4 strands: physical, linguistic, cognitive, and social and emotional (Maxwell et al., 2015). The physical strand refers to body language and voice control. The linguistic strand refers to the correct use of grammar and vocabulary which is suitable for a particular context. The cognitive strand refers to the way students organise and choose related information in their speaking, as well as be prepared for being asked to clarify their points with the understanding of listeners' intent. Lastly, the social and emotional strand refers to the extent of listeners' understanding as a speaker and to listen attentively as a listener. If the students are able

to apply all oracy outputs, they are considered as competent communicators, and are likely to succeed in expressing themselves. Barnes (1988) believed that combining the two skills of listening and speaking will help develop communicative competence and enhance the ability to learn the subject matter. Oracy does not only focus on student's speaking skill, but it focuses on learning environment, in which exchanging knowledge through speaking is provided. To explain, oracy skills can be obtained naturally through classroom talk not only when oral communication task is required. Therefore, classroom atmosphere should be relaxing to lower students' affective filter so that they would be more outspoken. Consequently, sequencing speaking tasks based on its difficulties is important. In so doing, the students will be gradually developing their speaking. To achieve this, tasks were sequenced as presentation, semi-scripted role play, and debate.

2.2 Metacognitive Awareness

Metacognitive awareness is important for language learning. Firstly, *metacognitive experience* refers to memory of communication experiences. For example, a non-native speaker may recognise the need of a word at the time of speaking. Metacognitive experiences last for short time period and are easily forgotten if nothing is done to reinforce them. Secondly, *metacognitive knowledge* can be presented through the way students structure their speaking, namely strategy knowledge, and knowing what is needed to achieve their task, namely task knowledge. Not only do students know the gaps to overcome and strategies to achieve the task, but they also know their learning styles and how to adjust them to yield a better result. This is called person knowledge. Lastly, metacognition can be shown by the *strategies* used to solve problems or enhance learning in a particular task (Goh & Burns, 2012). According to Cohen (1998), strategies for language use are different from strategies for language learning. *"Strategies for speaking consist of those used during spoken interactions (language use), and those used for general speaking development and specific speaking task (language learning)"* (as cited in Goh & Burns, 2012, p.243). Students need to manage these strategies, which are beneficial to their speaking, within the three functions of planning, monitoring and evaluating as suggested by Brown (1978).

A holistic approach suggested by Goh and Burns (2012) is applied in this study. According to Thomas (2019),*"Not only does it incorporate aspects of both indirect and direct approaches, but it also includes a heavy focus on pre-task planning, task repetition, and metacognition to help guide and regulate these processes"* (p.137). Since teaching oracy skills requires time and practices, blended-learning method is considered as another approach to resolve the problems. Therefore, in this study a holistic approach in teaching L2 speaking is conducted in the blended-learning environment.

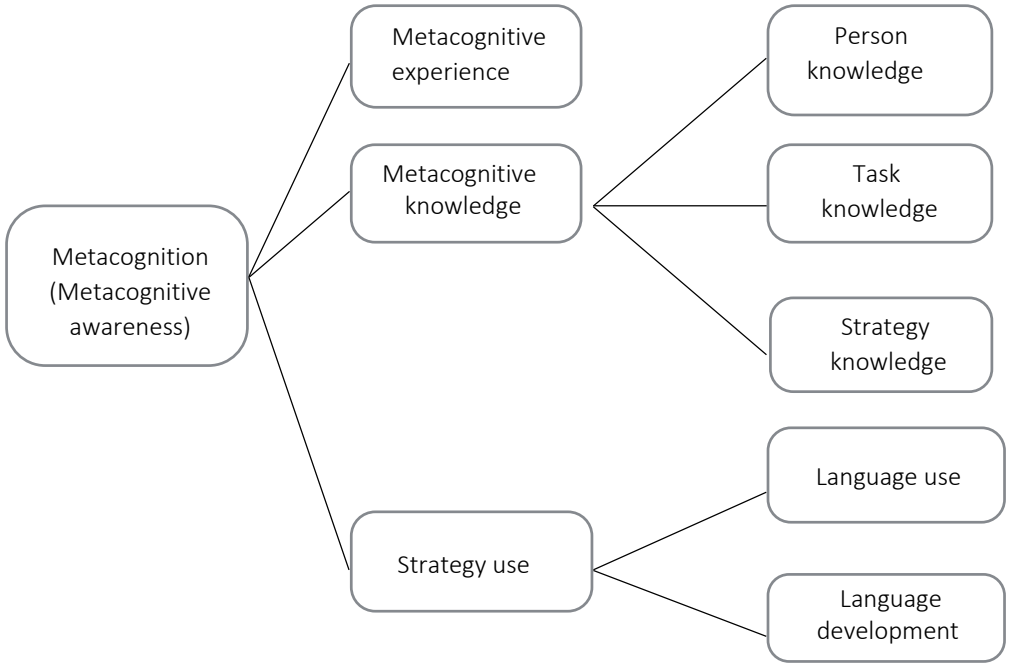


Figure 1: Metacognitive Awareness in Second Language Speaking

Activities that are recommended to improve metacognition are included in planning, monitoring and giving feedback (Anderson, 2002). These activities can be embedded in the stages of teaching. Goh and Burns (2012) have proposed stages 1, 2 and 6 to highlight metacognitive awareness activities for speaking skills (see figure 2). In addition to that, modes to provide metacognitive awareness activities will be done via the blended-learning environment to suit the research objectives.

2.3 Blended-learning Approach

Definitions of blended learning (BL) are varied (Sharma, 2010). Sharma gives examples of three combinations: a combination of face-to-face and online teaching, a combination of technologies, and a combination of methodologies. In this research we will do the experiment which pertains to the first definition: a combination of face-to-face and online teaching. Blended-learning approach has an advantage in promoting self-learning autonomy and providing opportunities for the students to practise and build their learning community online. It has proven to have benefits in complementing face-to-face lessons. Related research studies are done on global and local levels. The effectiveness of blended learning in (Adair-Hauck, et al., 2013) could help French language learners improve their writing and reading on achievement tests but not their speaking and listening skills. However, Chenoweth and Murday (2003) revealed a different result in stating that only writing skills had significantly improved while the other three skills showed no significant improvement. This may be because of the effects of the online writing task assignment, where the experimental group was assigned to correspond with their peers via emails and discussion board meetings. From the results of the two research studies, it seems that blended learning could benefit writing skills but others skills, such as speaking and listening are still in doubt. In contrast, the research by Young (2008) in a redesigned Spanish course demonstrated that using blended learning approach could improve university students' language skills, particularly speaking skills. In the data, students in experimental group got higher

Stimulated Oral Proficiency Interview (SOPI) scores compared to the comparison group. However, it needs to be done in a good balance and made interesting for the students to feel motivated to learn. The blended learning model was designed as an asynchronous form where students could learn at a time of their convenience. Each online unit consists of five modules: pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar exercises, listening comprehension, unit task examples, and unit feedback.

Figure 2 shows the OBIBLE framework illustrating the highlighted theories in this research about metacognitive awareness and oracy skills. These are areas in which the research aims to study. The areas are then promoted in the environment of blended-learning where two learning modes, face-to-face and online are offered. Integrated into one learning approach, the oracy building instruction is generated based on Goh and Burns (2012) speaking teaching cycle. The instruction includes seven stages providing students' opportunities to build and practise their metacognitive awareness and oracy skills both in face-to-face and in online modes. The first box on the left shows the theories and approach adopted by the current study: metacognition in oracy tasks by Goh and Burns (2012), and metacognition in active listening by Vandergrift et al. (2006). Face-to-face and online modes are used. While online was designed to provide self-practice time for grammar, vocabulary, listening and reading comprehension, face-to-face was reserved for interactive activities in class. The box in the middle displays how each stage of teaching is conducted in a particular mode. Lastly, the box on the right shows the expected outcomes of students after taking the course.

Finally, the hypotheses of the research suggest the positive improvement of metacognitive awareness and oracy skills of students together with an optimistic view of the blended-learning environment.

3. METHODOLOGY

The aims of this study are to determine if Thai students' are able to achieve better oracy skills when learning with a combined English communication instruction using blended learning approach that promotes metacognitive awareness in L2 speaking and listening skills, and also to investigate students' perceptions towards the blended learning approach model. This research is a 15-week quasi-experimental study in which two main phases are used, the first being the creation of the course with the development of communicative tasks, both in-class and online activities, and the second being the implementation and evaluation of the developed materials in which the oracy four strands and active listening are embedded.

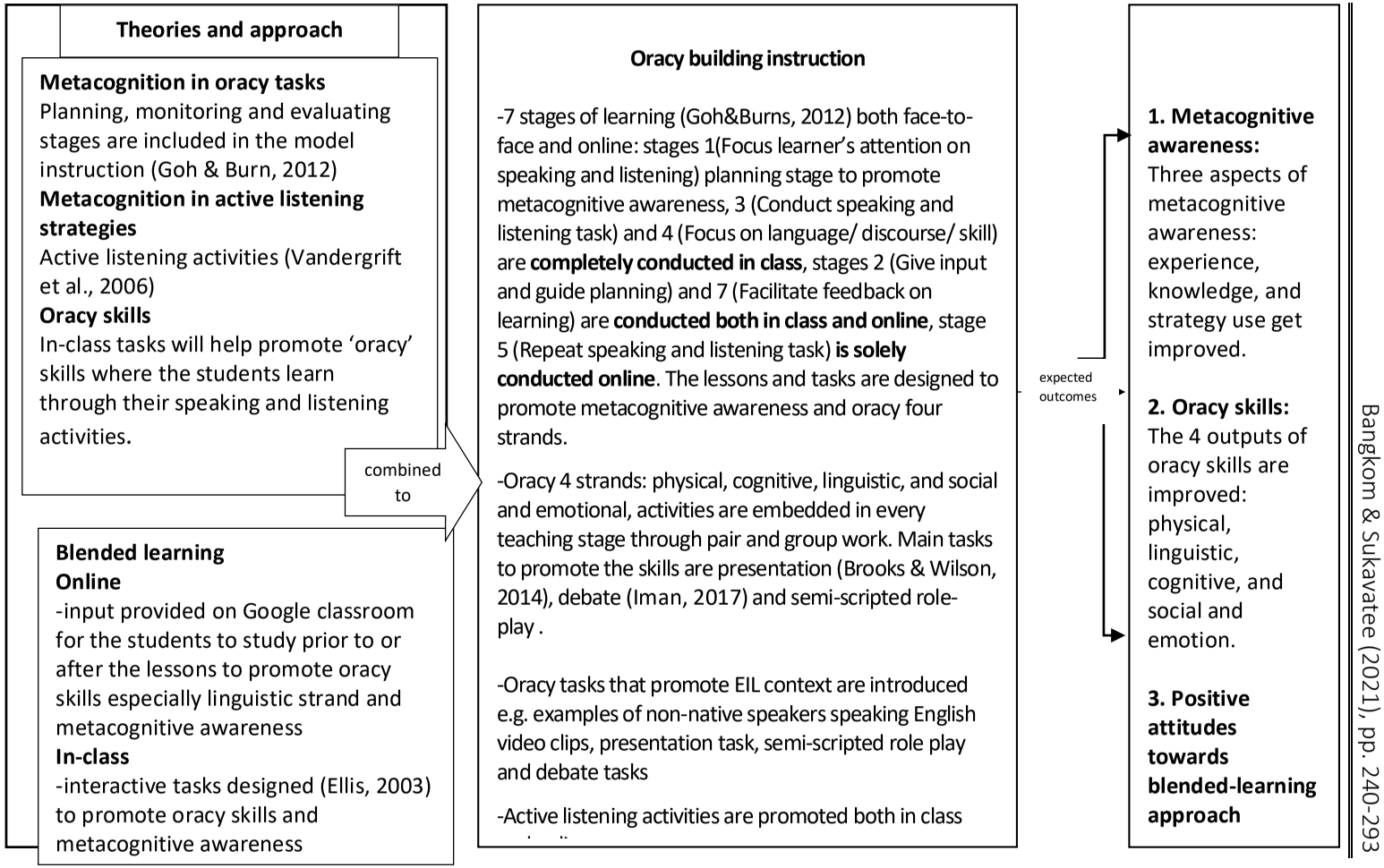
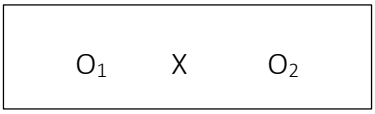


Figure 2: Research Framework

First the oracy instruction using blended-learning approach was designed as a method for this study. To measure the students' metacognitive awareness improvement in speaking and listening ability, three oracy tasks were designed: presentation, semi-scripted role-play, and debate from the three different units of the coursebook. The oracy skills pre-test was designed to collect students' pre-test score. The Inventory of Metacognitive Awareness in Oracy Skills Questionnaire, which was created based on Metacognitive knowledge about second language speaking and MALQ questionnaires, was conducted to gather the students' speaking and listening metacognitive awareness in quantitative data form. Later in the implementation phase, the scores were collected and analysed to provide evidence of improvement in the oracy instruction via blended-learning environment. Hence, the one-group pretest and post-test design was used to explore oracy skills (Edmonds & Kennedy, 2017). The following figure shows the diagram of the research design for investigating students' oracy skills ability.



X means the oracy instruction using blended-learning approach

O means pretest and post-test

After the students' oracy skills had been explored, the student's opinion towards blended-learning approach questionnaire was distributed to gather the level of satisfaction of using blended-learning approach. Following this section, the participants, instructional plan, and research instruments and data analysis of the study will be explained.

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study were 29 students (14 males and 15 females) aged between 14 and 15 years old, studying grade 9 in Mathayom Taksin Rayong School. These students shared the same English learning background since each of them also had two other English courses during that term: fundamental English and English for reading and writing. They

were students from the Gifted Programme and their English proficiency was at a pre-intermediate level assessed by both the teacher who had taught them the term before and the pre-test administered by this researcher. After the pre-test, nine students were divided into three groups according to their pre-test scores: low,- mid-, and high-proficiency levels, were labelled as L, M, and H (3 students for each group) through the study. Data from the focus group will represent the three levels of students.

3.2 Research Instrument and Data Analysis

A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches was used in this study. There are four research instruments which provide quantitative data: English Oracy Skills Test, English Oracy Unit Tasks, The Inventory of Metacognitive Awareness in Oracy Skills Questionnaire, and Blended-Learning Questionnaire. There are four instruments as well which provide qualitative data: Blended-learning Semi-Structured Interview, Questions, and Stimulated Recall Interview. Descriptive statistics are used to analyse quantitative data by SPSS programme, and the identifying, coding, categorizing, and interpreting are done to analyse qualitative data by NVivo programme. The details of the instruments and the data analysis are presented as follows.

3.1.1 English Oracy Skills Test

The English oracy skills pre-test and post-test (see appendix A) were conducted twice, once before and once after the course instruction to observe the progression of the students' improvement. The test is adapted from Cambridge ESOL's test since "it is suitable for level-based tests and allowed for different types of interaction between the participants" (as cited in Taylor, 2006, p. 56). The test consists of four parts: self-introduction, comparing hobbies, giving opinion, and negotiating, and all are open-ended questions. The first three parts are asked by the examiner and the forth part is interacted between the examiner and the student. Afterwards the examiners finished rating the students by using the oracy rubric 5-scale scoring system, in which is 100 in total (see appendix B). Inter-raters reliability was checked by using Pearson Correlation. The results were .992 and .969. Therefore, it could be said that the scores were reliable.

3.1.2 English Oracy Unit Tasks

The English Oracy Unit Tasks are presentation, semi-scripted role plays, and debates. These three tasks were separately conducted in each unit with all students. Cronbach's alpha for the two scores of each task were .515 and .616 for the first performance of the presentation, .996, and .958 for the second performance of the presentation, and .929, and .928 ($p < 0.0005$) for the semi-scripted role play and debate. To demonstrate how a target task can be implemented in a unit lesson, the sample lesson plan is provided.

From the lesson plan shown in Table 1, it could be seen that the lesson plan covers 7 stages of oracy teaching cycle. The first day, the students were introduced to the unit and the unit task. They then had to write a planning guide worksheet where they had to state the objective of the unit task, what they knew which would be beneficial for their task performance, what they felt they needed to learn before performing the task, and how they could achieve the task. During the second stage, students were supported by linguistic knowledge instruction such as vocabulary and grammar both in class and online. At this stage, simulated real world activities were acted out which required the students to use the target language interactively. Online activities were supplied and most of them emphasised grammar and vocabulary. In so doing, each student could learn at their own pace. At stage 3, students had to perform the unit task in class. They were also asked to record their performance. In stage 4, the teacher gave feedback about the first performance, either in class or individually online, and the students had to revise the performance accordingly. Then at stage 5, students had to perform again online and send the recording to the teacher. During stage 6, students were asked to give feedback on their own performance and unit learning using oracy strands as a guide. To complete stage 7, students were required to write their self-reflection either in class or online.

Table 1

Lesson Plan Showing Oracy Strands and Metacognitive Process Instruction

Stages (time)	Activities	Metacognitive awareness/ Oracy strands	Modes of delivery	Resources/ Materials
Stage 1 (DAY 1): Focus learners' attention on oracy skills	a) Students write responses to questions about oracy skills learning experience b) Students answer questionnaire c) Teacher tells the students that in this unit they will: - learn how to give a short presentation - be comparing two things - be listening to talks about jobs d) Students complete a unit task preparation worksheet e) Teacher states the task expectation and shows the task rubric score	Metacognitive awareness	face-to-face	Worksheet 1&2 Inventory of Metacognitive Awareness in Oracy Skills Questionnaire
	Task: present their idea about job they want to have			

Stage 2 (DAY 1): Give input and guide planning	a) Students sit in group and list some jobs that they know and brainstorm responsibilities of each job b) Students practice pronunciation (p.12) c) Students learn gerund phrases as subject (p.9) d) Students listen to career choices discussion, and ask and answer each other if they agree or disagree (p.9) e) Students practice 'giving reasons' using phrases like 'In my opinion…' f) Teacher introduces 'back channeling' strategy (i.e. strategy of showing the others if they are listening by using verbal and non-verbal e.g. uh-huh, oh, really?) to the students. g) Students practice saying opinions to each other while the listeners practice 'back channeling' strategy h) The teacher gives students two things and instructs the students to compare them. i) Students learn comparative adjective j) Students prepare their main task in completing:	a) linguistic b) physical c) linguistic d) social and emotional e) linguistic and cognitive f) metacognitive awareness, cognitive g) social and emotional h) social and emotion, linguistic, physical, cognitive, metacognitive awareness i) linguistic j) linguistic, cognitive, metacognitive awareness k) physical, linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional, metacognitive awareness linguistic	face-to-face	

	- Which job do I choose? - What are the advantages and disadvantages of this job compared to the other? - What questions can be asked about my talk? k) Students talk about a career they would like to have, other students use back channeling strategy and ask some follow-up questions HW: students do ex. 6 p.10, listening to conversation (ex.7, p.11) and do word power 'suffixes' ex. 4 p.10		online	

Stage 2 (DAY 2):	**Task:** compare 2 job possibilities, choose one, and discuss why they chose that one. a) [INTRO] Students sit in group and watch a presentation VDO (uploaded on Google Classroom) answer questions in - presentation organization: introduction, body and conclusion - expressions used in each part of a presentation - body language (These are done by teacher demonstrating) b) Students practise body language c) Students look at pairs of jobs then compare in 3 respects: money, security and stressfulness d) Teacher elicits comparative structures (ex.8 p.11) e) Students listen to an audio programme and write down their answer in 3-entry answer sheet (ex.10 p.12) f) [ASSESSMENT] Student compare 2 jobs	a) metacognitive awareness, cognitive, linguistic, physical b) physical c) cognitive d) linguistic e) metacognitive awareness f) metacognitive awareness, cognitive, linguistic, physical linguistic	face-to-face online	3-entry listening answer sheet planning worksheet

	HW :students do ex.13 p.13 reading and answer questions, students prepare their presentation for next class			
Stage 3	Task :students give a short presentation saying why they choose a job not the other one			

(DAY 3): Conduct oracy task	a) Students sit in groups of 4 b) [INTRO] Teacher discusses the task assessment criteria again c) Students in group, take turn to give their presentation (3 minutes each), while the listeners ask at least 1 follow-up question	b) metacognitive awareness c)physical, linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional	face-to-face	Assessment criteria

Stage 4 (DAY 3): Focus on language/ skills/ strategies	a) Teacher asks the students to watch a presentation VDO again b) Teacher asks the students to reflect and revise their own work in three areas: - language use (vocabulary and grammar) - presentation procedures and phrases - body language and pronunciation	b) metacognitive awareness, physical, linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional	face-to-face	VDO Planning worksheet
Stage 5 (DAY 3): Repeat speaking task	Students perform the task again in group and post their recording online: Google classroom	metacognitive awareness, physical, linguistic, cognitive, social and emotional	online	Google Classroom
Stage 6 (DAY 4): Direct learners' reflecting on learning	**Task**: students can tell the differences of L1 and L2 presentation			
	a) [INTRO] Students complete the speaking and listening diary b) [ASSESSMENT] Students are asked to compare and contrast presentation procedure and comparative in L1 and L2	metacognitive awareness	face-to-face	Speaking and listening diary

Stage 7 (DAY 4): Facilitate feedback on learning	a) Teacher gives comment (paper form) b) Students give comment to each other in group (verbally) c) Students reflect on their performance and strategies use HW :Students give feedback to their friend's work online	metacognitive awareness	face-to-face online	Self-assessment

3.1.3 The Inventory of Metacognitive Awareness in Oracy Skills Questionnaire

This questionnaire was purposely invented to explore students' metacognitive awareness in terms of metacognitive knowledge and metacognition in L2 speaking active listening skill. The questionnaire consists of two main parts: speaking and listening, and were translated into Thai. The first part is adapted from the metacognitive knowledge of the second language speaking questionnaire by Goh and Burns (2012) and the second part is partly adopted from the metacognitive awareness listening questionnaire (MALQ) by Vandergrift et al. (2006). The questionnaire is a 6-Likert scale to avoid neutral point (Vandergrift et al., 2006). The scale is: totally disagree (1), quite disagree (2), disagree (3), quite agree (4), agree (5) and totally agree (6). The questionnaire was tried before the actual use in the pilot study with the students from the same program and administered to all 29 students.

3.1.4 Blended-learning Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a form of quantitative survey (Mackey & Gass, 2005). This blended-learning questionnaire was conducted to gather all 29 students' opinions towards blended-learning approach at the end of the term. The 19-item questionnaire was conducted to elicit students' opinions about whether blended-learning approach benefited in 4 areas: background of blended-learning, engagement, outcome, and convenience. It was translated into Thai and conducted once at the pilot study before the actual use with grade 9 students of academic year 2018 from the same programme at Taksin School.

3.1.5 Blended-Learning Semi Structured Interview Questions

In addition to the questionnaire, the students' perception towards blended-learning environment was also asked in an interview in order to gain more insightful data. The interview was followed a week after the questionnaire was conducted with the focus group which consisted of 9 students from low-, mid-, and high-level students, each group with 3 students. Each interview was approximately 8 to 10 minutes and it was conducted in Thai. There were 8 questions and all of them were validated by three doctorate professors from three different Thai universities.

3.1.6 Stimulated Recall Interview

The students' performances were recorded on videos. The focus group (9 students) was interviewed to elicit their thoughts when they were performing the task. The purpose of the interview was to triangulate the data of metacognitive experience and metacognitive knowledge. Stimulated Recall Interview (SRI) 'gives participants a chance to view themselves in action as a means to help them recall their thoughts of events as they occurred.' (as cited in Nguyen et al., 2013, p.2). The questions were open-end probes, which helped the students remain focused on the issues.

To measure metacognitive experience, four questions were used: 1) How did you feel when you performed the task? 2) Did you forget any words or sentence structures? 3) How did you manage to solve the problem? and 4) Could you perform better the second time?

To measure metacognitive knowledge, the four questions were: 1) Did you plan carefully before performing the task? How? 2) What did you know before performing the task? Was it enough to achieve the task target? 3) How did you manage to solve the problem? and 4) Could you perform better the second time?

3.2 Data Analysis

The analysis of the research was divided into quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative analysis, the pre- and post-test scores of the oracy test task, was collected and analysed by SPSS to find the means and standard deviation, relationship, and reliability using the following statistics: the Pearson Correlation Coefficient, and the Cronbach's Alpha Internal Consistency. Secondly, the metacognition in listening

questionnaire (MALQ) was collected and analysed to see the factors in which learners used during their listening. Despite the suggested 30 participants in other studies (Fraenkel et al., 2019) a sample t-test could be used to compare two means since "t-test assumes that the criterion measure scores are normally distributed, and that both groups also have equal variation in terms of the criterion measure." (as cited in Drew et al., 2008, p. 313). Therefore, it is more flexible in numbers of participants e.g. n = 12 to 30 or above (Drew et al., 2008). The qualitative data was transcribed, coded and categorised by the researcher using NVivo (Davidson & Jacob, 2008). Table 2 below shows the research questions and data analysis methods. There are two phases of measuring students' metacognition: one is during- and after- unit learning and the other is before-and after-course learning. Starting with during- and after-unit learning, students will be asked to write three-entry listening diary when they do listening exercises both in and outside class. This data will be analysed quantitively to see the mean score of correct answer from first, second and third listening. Furthermore, stimulated recall will be done to explore students' reflection on their unit task. This will be done one week after they finish the unit. To triangulate this data, each task performance: presentation, semi-scripted role play and debate will be recorded and scored by the two teachers (inter-rater) using assessment forms in accordance with four-oracy-strand assessment. Before- and after-course learning measurement on metacognitive awareness, there will be two activities to conduct. Firstly, Inventory of Metacognitive Awareness in Oracy Skills Questionnaire will be used to explore students' metacognitive awareness in oracy skills. Eventually, pre- and post- oracy skills test will be assessed by the teacher to compare the level of metacognitive awareness before and after the course.

3.2.1 Instructional Plan of OBIBLE

After the theories and approach had been studied, the instructional plan was generated. Table 2 illustrates learning outcomes and oracy tasks: presentation, semi-scripted role play and debate which were conducted within seven teaching stages in two different modes: face-to-face and online.

Table 2

OBIBLE Instructional Plan

Unit	Oracy Tasks	Learning Outcomes/ Oracy strategies	Teaching methods (Applied to every unit)
Unit 1 Working 9 to 5 (2 weeks)	Presentation	Students will be able to present their opinions of their dream job with supporting details, e.g. advantages and disadvantages of the job. - speaking strategies: sequencing talk - listening strategies: back channeling, asking for specification	**Stage 1** (face-to-face): **Introduction** unit introduction and task planning **Stage 2** (face-to-face & online): **Language input** - Interactive speaking and listening activities in class - listening, vocabulary and grammar exercise online **Stage 3** (face-to-face): **1st task performance** **Stage 4** (face-to-face & online): **1st performance revision** **Stage 5** (online): **2nd performance** **Stage 6** (face-to-face): **Comparison L1&L2** **Stage 7** (face-to-face & online): **Self-reflection**
Unit 2 What happened? (3 weeks)	Semi-scripted role play	Students will be able to narrate/ tell what happened in the past. - speaking strategies: asking for clarification - listening strategies: asking for repetition	
Unit 3 A law must be passed! (4 weeks)	Debate	The students can be able to debate their opinions about social issues. - speaking strategies: exemplification: offering examples to make one's point clear - listening strategies: comprehension checks: paraphrasing what is heard to confirm one's understanding	

Instructional plan demonstrates the themes and duration of each unit. Each unit was conducted by using Oracy Building Instruction which applied the seven stages of teaching in the two different modes of learning: face-to-face and online (see table 1). Unit 1: 'Working 9 to 5' was

given two weeks to finish. The main objective of this unit is to promote sequencing talk, back channeling, and asking for specification strategies. The students were expected to present and ask questions. In addition, Unit 2: 'What happened?' was conducted in three weeks. The main objective is to highlight asking for clarification and asking for repetition strategies. Finally, 4 weeks was spent achieving Unit 3: 'A law must be passed!' The main speaking and listening strategies are offering examples and paraphrasing.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study is conducted to assess the impact of oracy building instruction via the blended-learning environment on EIL students' metacognitive awareness and oracy skills. The results and discussion in relation to this study are based on the following three aspects of findings: 1) the development of students' metacognitive awareness after implementing OBIBLE; 2) the development of students' oracy skills after implementing OBIBLE, and 3) the students' perception towards blended-learning instruction.

The overall findings are that metacognitive awareness mean scores were higher at the end of the course, except for person knowledge, which is only one facet of the task knowledge. In addition, the scores of post-test and second oracy task performance were significantly higher than that of the pre-test and the first performance. Finally, the perception towards blended-learning was seen as positive in all aspects, including background, engagement, outcome, and convenience.

4.1 The Effects of the OBIBLE on the Learners' Oracy Skills

This section will display the results of oracy skills improvement after implementing OBIBLE instruction. Speaking skills will be first explained through the oracy strands and followed by the listening skills, which will be demonstrated based on social and emotional strand, Metacognition on Active Listening Questionnaire (MALQ), and listening comprehension. Not only did OBIBLE offer interactive tasks in class such as presentation, semi-structured role play, and debate, but also allowed students to repeat the tasks twice. Apparently, the second performance score improved in every unit task which means that students' oracy skills got improved.

4.1.1 Speaking Skills

Table 3

Paired Samples T-Test between the Pre-Test and Post-Test of Oracy Skills

Oracy tasks	Average 1 First (1st) performance		Average 2 Second (2nd) performance		t-test
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Presentation	**30.5**	2.4275	**33.86**	2.4528	7.327
Semi-scripted role play	**28.6**	5.3924	**34.27**	4.1973	6.615
Debate	**38.259**	2.9082	**50.776**	4.1696	19.032

Table 3 presents a descriptive statistic of the two samples in this paired sample t-test analysis. Average 1 represents an average of the participants' first presentation scores and Average 2 represents an average of the participants' second presentation scores (N = 29). It can be observed that the participants' average second performance score (M = 33.862 , SD = 2.452) is higher than the first performance (M = 30.5 , SD = 2.427). For semi-scripted role play, the participants' average second performance score (M = 34.276, SD = 4.197) is also higher than the first performance (M = 28.603, SD = 5.392). For the debate task, the participants' average second performance score (M = 50.776 , SD = 4.1696) is again higher than the first performance score (M = 38.259, SD = 2.9082).

This demonstrates the result of paired samples t-test scores between the participant's first and second performance scores. It has been found in this paired sample t-test that the difference between pre-test and post-test scores of the participants seems to be significant in these three tasks; $t(28) = 7.327, 6.615$, and 19.032 $p < 0.001$, respectively.

The higher scores of the second performance show that students' speaking skill was improved. First of all, the *physical strand* is considered as the most noticeable area for students to improve. This study found that lower level students were still trying to be able to pronounce unknown

words, while higher level students wanted to have a clear pronunciation and intonation to be able to convey the meaning more effectively.

Secondly, in the *linguistic strand*, students agreed that they gained new words and sentence structures from each unit, however, it seemed not enough to enable them to confidently perform the task. Despite the difficulties, students were able to perform the three tasks with the aid of scripts, especially the debate task where most of them were reciting what they had written. However, the higher level students could apply specific vocabulary and sentence structures learned from the unit quite well. On the contrary, lower level students tended to memorise the script and struggled with new vocabulary. It is worth noting that as some scholars emphasised that linguistic knowledge requires a long time to process (Jong, et al., 2012), it is not appropriate here in saying that students had acquired grammar and vocabulary from the course permanently.

For *the cognitive strand*, it seemed that all the students were more focused at the second performance of each oracy task. They could select and organise the contents they wanted to say in presentation and semi-scripted role play tasks better in the second performance. In addition, students could support and explain their thoughts thoroughly in the debate task during the second performance. A similar vein was discovered by Iman (2017) where the debate task was considered as a task which could promote reason giving. In this light, students were required to speak longer than usual with the use of examples, explanations, statistics, and experts' opinions of the task. Nonetheless, for low and intermediate level students, the task could be too challenging, since they had to construct long and complex sentences. For that reason, lower level students needed scripts throughout the performance and could not improvise their speaking in a limited amount of time. For higher level students, difficult tasks could draw their attention away from grammatical forms, and hence manifest in less accuracy and fluency (Skehan, 2001). As a result, it is important to mark here that challenging tasks, in which the cognitive aspect is highly demanded, such as debate, require more time to practice, especially for lower level students in order to achieve the task target. Otherwise, it would be an occasion when the task is poorly achieved, and students' motivation is reduced.

For the *social and emotional strand*, the students worked well with their partner in the second performance as suggested by the higher score in the social and emotional strand, in which listening skill was assessed.

Importantly, semi-scripted role play could promote the social and emotional strand the most. As semi-scripted role play required students to listen and complete the form while they had to listen to their friend attentively for the missing information. It is a form of a gap filling task where Buck (2007) found it suitable for listening practices because it combines bottom-up and top-down fluency. In contrast monologue tasks, like debate and presentation, can only assess the top-down fluency, in which students must listen for the main idea and comprehend what they hear. Once they were familiarised with the task requirements, the students felt more confident with their interlocutor. Otherwise, they struggled with what they wanted to say. It is frequently seen that incompetent L2 users would pay more attention to what they were going to say rather than thinking about the listeners.

In summary, it could be said that pronunciation, intonation and body language were areas that could be improved the most quickly, while the social and emotional strand needed more time. This may be because students often needed more effort in thinking of what to say, and then they did not fully pay attention to what they were listening to. This depended on the task type. Semi-scripted role play, for instance, required active listening skill more than any other task and it received the highest mean score of the social and emotional strand across the three tasks.

4.1.2 Listening Skills

Listening Strategies in the Target Tasks

Listening strategies were improved after the implementing of OBIBLE. Firstly, the students' listening at the second time of performance received a higher score which shows that the students could apply listening strategies to their communication. The three different tasks required different listening strategies: back channelling, asking for repetition, and paraphrasing. Among the three, back channelling was the most used by the students. Asking for repetition in semi-scripted role play was also utilised in the task, where students used it quite often to be able to complete a police form which was used in the role play. This strategy seemed to be the most successful because the students were requested to write what they heard on the police form. It is suggested that 'listen then write', or so-called interactive activities, could engage students'

attention more with fun and meaningful interaction (Namaziandost, et al., 2018). In contrast, paraphrasing was the strategy used the least by the students because it requires language knowledge and time to construct.

Listening Comprehension

To assess listening comprehension, the 3-entry listening activity was assigned for six times in three units: three times in class and another three times as an online homework to measure the improvement of the students' listening skill. The score that was given ranged from 1 to 4. A score of 1 signifies that the answer of the third listening received fewer correct items than the first or second listening; 2 indicates the answer of the third listening was not correct and was similar to the first or second listening; 3 means the results of the third listening had more correct answers than the first or second listening but there were still some incorrect answers; and 4 denotes that the outcome of the third listening received more correct answers than the first or second listening and all were correct.

Table 4

3-Entry Listening Scores of the 3 Units

Unit	Mean	SD
Unit 1 In-class task	2.45	1.00
Online	3.14	0.97
Unit 2 In-class task	3.3	1.53
Online	2.72	0.69
Unit 3 In-class task	3.03	0.72
Online	3.44	0.84

Table 4 demonstrates that the mean scores of unit 1, 2, and 3 were 2.45 (SD = 1.00), 3.32 (SD = 1.53), and 3.03 (SD = 0.72), respectively. The scores of listening homework of unit 1, 2 and 3 were 3.14 (0.97), 2.72 (0.69), and 3.44 (SD = 0.84), respectively.

The Metacognitive Awareness in Listening Questionnaire (MALQ) embedded in Inventory of Metacognitive Awareness in L2 Speaking and Listening of this research will be revealed in the next section.

Table 5

The Results of MALQ Items in Questionnaire

Question items	Five-factor model	Mean (pre)	S.D. (pre)	Mean (post)	S.D. (post)	Meaning
Question 28-29	Planning and evaluation	4.12	0.446	4.725	0.388	agree
Question 30-31	Problem solving	4.26	0.7071	4.535	0.417	agree
Question 32-33	Mental translation	3.69	0.240	4.535	0.077	agree
Question 34-35	Directed attention	3.71	0.707	4.345	0.289	quite agree
Question 36-37	Person knowledge	4.225	1.096	4.445	1.025	quite agree

Vandergrift et al. (2006) explained that five factors in active listening consist of planning and evaluation, problem solving, mental translation, directed attention, and person knowledge. To begin with, planning and evaluation refers to having a plan, setting goal while listening, relating the recording to similar texts as a guide, and evaluating the effectiveness of one own's strategies. Next, problem solving represents the strategies which listeners use when they have to guess at the answers such as using known words to deduce the meaning of unknown words. In addition, mental translation represents the strategies, translating from L2 to L1 and translating key words, used while listening. Furthermore, directed attention means strategies that listeners use to concentrate and to stay on task. Finally, person knowledge refers to difficulties of the listening task that listeners perceived.

All five factors received a higher mean score after the course. The mean score of the planning and evaluation of the listening task was higher

at the end of the course (mean = 4.725, SD = 0.388). In addition to that, the mean score of the students' problem solving skill while listening post course (mean 4.535, SD = 0.417) was also higher. The directed attention mean score was higher at the end 4.345 (SD = 0.289) as was personal knowledge at 4.445 (SD = 1.025). Mental translation is the act of conscious translating from the target language to the native one. Mental translation post-course mean scores were slightly higher (mean = 4.535, SD = 1.025). It could be said that students translated into L1 more while listening.

Strategies and Listening Comprehension

The 3-entry listening activity was assigned to assess students' listening comprehension and practice their active listening skills by allowing them to stay focused for three times paying attention to each listening task. The results showed that there was no significant relationship between metacognitive strategies and listening comprehension. In other words, despite the three times listening, comprehension was not always improved. This may be explained through the two listening strategy theories: metacognitive strategies, and cognitive strategies. Metacognitive strategies means controlling learning through planning, monitoring and evaluating the learning activity (Ratebi & Amirian, 2013), where students have to plan prior to their listening, stay focused on what they miss from the first listening and listen again for the third time, then evaluate whether they could comprehend the story. This is also called active listening process (Goh & Burns, 2012). The other listening strategy theory is cognitive strategies, which refer to strategies to obtain knowledge and understanding of linguistic systems, for example, learners' abilities in understanding the meaning of words from contexts or linking new information with existing schema (Huy, 2015). In this study, students did not get a higher score as time went by. Instead they seemed to have a problem with unknown words, and the speed of the recording (Azmi, et al., 2014). This confirms the findings of Mecartty (2000) that listening comprehension relies heavily on lexical and grammatical knowledge. When the two issues are applied in a listening task, students are more likely to get confused and not understand what they listened to.

In addition to issues that might affect listening comprehension, the modes of listening were experimented with to see whether the face-to-face mode or the online mode was influencing students' performance the

most. From the interview, more students said that they could focus more when listening at home, because they could control the atmosphere and insure that there was no interruption. However, they still found that mental translation slowed down and negatively affected their ability to comprehend what they were listening to. This was shown by the higher mean score of the questionnaire.

4.2 The Effects of the OBIBLE on the Learners' Metacognitive Awareness

The findings of the study can be summarised and discussed in three areas: metacognitive experience, metacognitive knowledge, and strategy use. To reveal the difference of metacognitive experience and knowledge, the data is analysed quantitatively by using the questionnaire and qualitatively by using the interview. For strategy use, the last facet of the metacognition, scores from pre- and post-test, and oracy three tasks are compared.

4.2.1 Metacognitive Experience

Metacognitive experience refers to the degree that students can recall their memory while performing a task and how they improve the degree for the second time. The data was analysed quantitatively by using the questionnaire and qualitatively by the interview. Overall, both results from quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated that students had higher metacognitive experience by earning higher mean score from quite agree to agree level and retelling their performance experience. Table 6 shows that the level of students' metacognitive experience is higher compared to the beginning of the course. The scales were interpreted in 6 ranges: 1.00-1.49 refers to strongly disagree, 1.50-2.49 means disagree, 2.50-3.49 signifies quite disagree, 3.50-4.49 means quite agree, 4.50-5.49 indicates agree, and 5.50-6.00 means strongly agree. Overall, the end-course mean was 4.665 (SD = 0.284), which was higher than the beginning.

Table 6

Students' Metacognitive Experience Before and After the Course

Questionnaire items 1-4	Mean (before)	S.D. (before)	Mean (after)	S.D. (after)	Meaning
Question 1-4	4.017	0.396	4.665	0.284	agree

As seen in Table 7 below, there are four main behaviors suggesting whether students had the metacognitive experience. They are remembering difficulties during the performance, coming back and checking their work, making use of language and grammar learned, and feeling more confident at the second performance. These four characteristics are displayed with the numbers of entries reported.

Table 7

Metacognitive Experience Behaviours Found in Stimulated Recall Interview

RQ 1.1 Metacognitive experience behaviours	Stimulated recalled Interview	Results and No. of entries reported		Example (from each oracy unit task)
1. remember their difficulties during the performance 2. come back and check their work 3. make use of words and grammar learned in class 4. feel more confident	1. How did you feel when you performed the task?	Negative feelings: nervous, anxious and depressed	21	*"I was anxious because I'm not good at speaking."*
		Positive feelings: confident and excited	6	*"I was feeling fun because I could be both police and the thief."*
	2. Did you forget some words or sentence structures?	Yes	24	*"I forgot some sentences then I just used the other sentences. I had the script so I used it quite a lot. I was more on reading like 80% in debate task."*

	No	3	*"No, because I understood what I was going to say."*
3. How did you manage to solve the problem?	Negative behaviours: stopped speaking, memorized the script	15	*"I went back and recited the script again and recorded it."*
	Positive behaviours: improvisation, circumlocution, synonyms	27	*"I tried other words that I know that might not be exactly the same as the teacher taught in the lesson."*
4. Could you perform better the second time?	felt more confident	27	*"It was better because I was more confident and can flow my talk."* *"It was better because I was practising pronunciation and putting myself in that character."*

After implementing OBIBLE, students' metacognitive experiences were improved. Students could remember their emotional responses while performing the tasks. The students could remember their feelings and solutions they had during their performances, however, at different levels. While lower level students had negative feelings, higher level students felt more confident (Cetinkaya, 2005) before doing the task. When asked, the latter could give detail or give specific areas of revised content, but the former failed to address it. This is also seen in Rosa and O'Neil (1999), and Leow (2000) studies in which students who could show understanding of targeted language structure could outperform the students who only were noticing it. Moreover, Efklides (2009) found that students who lack knowledge would also have a higher negative metacognitive experience. In other words, knowledge has a significant relation to metacognitive experience. To support the claim, there were reports from lower level students that they tended to memorise and had the scripts at hand, while the higher level students would think of synonyms or say something to make the conversation flow. Therefore, it could be said that lower level students had a limitation in improvisation,

and this resulted in a communication breakdown (Leong & Ahmadi, 2017). In brief, to increase metacognitive experience, metacognitive knowledge should be elevated.

4.2.2 Metacognitive Knowledge

Metacognitive knowledge refers to one's individual knowledge, task requirements and strategies which can be used to support students to achieve a particular task. The findings indicate that students had higher level of metacognitive knowledge. The quantitative results showed that students gained higher metacognitive knowledge in the two categories of task and strategic knowledge with the mean scores of 5.02 (SD = 0.46), and 4.71 (SD = 0.55), respectively. However, the mean score of person knowledge was slightly lower from 3.65 (SD = 1.27) to 3.64 (SD = 1.48). The following is the table of mean scores of metacognitive knowledge.

Table 8

Students' Metacognitive Knowledge Before and After the Course

Questionnaire items 5-27	Types of knowledge	Mean (pre)	SD (pre)	Mean (post)	SD (post)	Meaning
Question 5-8	Person	3.65	1.27	3.64	1.48	quite agree
Question 9-20	Task	4.58	0.45	5.02	0.46	agree
Question 21-27	Strategic	4.34	0.59	4.71	0.55	agree

In addition to quantitative data, interviews revealed students' metacognitive knowledge. There are behaviours showing that students had person knowledge: planning their task and knowing their weakness. In Table 5 there are eighteen entries of verbal protocol which show that the students tried to understand demands and twenty-seven entries suggested how they prepared.

Task knowledge is the knowledge about the nature and demands of a speaking task, how to approach the task, and knowing when deliberate effort is required (Wenden, 1998). It can be examined through six actions: thinking of what they want to say, knowing the differences between the

spoken and written discourse, making their talk comprehensible by organizing and using intonations, showing awareness of different English use in different countries, performing the task confidently, and making their speaking natural sounding. In Table 5, the most mentioned behaviour is skills used in L2 speaking followed by factors that influence speaking. However, a few responses revealed other behaviours: social processes, modes of discourse, and ways of improving the skills. There was no report of cultural differences.

Finally, **strategic knowledge** means the knowledge of effective strategies for managing communication or specific speaking tasks, differences between spoken and written discourse, as well as ineffective strategies. Strategies for managing communication was reported the most followed by strategies for specific task types. Ineffective strategies were mentioned the least.

Table 9

Metacognitive Knowledge Behaviours Found in Stimulated Recall Interview

Metacognitive knowledge behaviours	Stimulated recalled Interview	Results and No. of entries reported		Example
Person knowledge 1. plan their task 2. know their gap	5. Did you plan carefully before performing the task? How?	understanding of task demands	18	*"I planned the content, we should search for the information. If we are in the oppositional team, so we should be able to disagree with them."*
		understanding gaps between the task demand and background knowledge	27	*"I wrote a script and recited until I could memorise it. I was searching on the internet to know how to write and how to pronounce."*
Task knowledge 1. think of what they say	6. What did you know before performing	mental, affective, and social processes	3	*"For speaking, I just said what popped up in my mind and then said it as a sentence."*

while interacting with the interlocutor 2. know the difference of spoken and written forms 3. made their talk comprehensive by using intonations and good organization *4. showed that they were aware of difference of English use in different countries 5. performed the task confidently 6. made their speaking tasks sound natural	the task? Was it enough to achieve the task target?	involved in speaking		
		differences between spoken and written discourse	3	*"I think it was enough. I just needed to put it in correct grammar and speak more fluently."*
		skills for second language speaking	16	*"I used different intonations to indicate that it was the question or my opinion or something that I really wanted to know."*
		*cultural and social differences of speakers	0	N/A
		factors that influence speaking	20	*"When I got the topic, I had some ideas to talk about it and I needed to organise those ideas to make it comprehensible."* *"I used vocabulary, accents and word stress."*
		ways of improving overall speaking development	2	*"It was enough because I just did what the teacher said and I got better."*
Strategic knowledge 1. know communicative strategies 2. know specific strategies to	7. What strategies did you use during the task performance? What was effective and what was not?	Strategies for managing communication and discourse	15	*"For listening, if I didn't understand my friend, I would ask her to say it in another words."*
		Strategies for specific types of speaking tasks	14	*"I used sequencing talk, back channelling and asking for repetition: again please."*

achieve the task	ineffective strategies	9	*"I couldn't remember. I memorised the script and then spoke."*

* no entries appeared

Metacognitive knowledge is the strongest predictor of speaking (Ghapanchi & Taheryan, 2012). Learners with high metacognitive knowledge are likely to be better at managing and storing information, and seeking ways to practise and reinforce what they have learned (Vandergrift et al., 2006). Planning, storing information and finding ways to practise, will help students to direct their focus to what is beneficial in improving their speaking.

To begin with, person knowledge found that task complexity could cause anxiety (Révész et al., 2016; Sasayama, 2016) and together with lacking vocabulary repertoire and grammar understanding could hinder students' ability, especially in lower level students. Many participants reported that their focus was on trying to retrieve vocabulary rather than concentrating on the performance of the task. A considerable challenge to perform the task is a significant factor in their diminished confidence. Take a student's answer as an example: *"I wrote a script and recited until I could memorise it. I was searching on the internet to know how to write and how to pronounce."*.

To accomplish the same task, higher level students would use a top-down process. With task knowledge students tended to focus on how to achieve the task rather than paying attention to particular vocabulary or sentence structures, whereas the lower level students would do the opposite and use a bottom-up process. As a result, when they are assigned the work, higher level students would think of content and how to accomplish the task, while lower level students would work with words and pronunciation (Thornbury, 2005). Take one example from high-level student *"I used different intonations to indicate that it was the question or my opinion or something that I really wanted to know."* and the other is from lower level students: *"I lacked vocabulary and also I didn't know how to pronounce words."*.

Lastly, it is believed that strategic knowledge could enable students to convey a meaningful message statement (O'Malley, et al., 1989). The OBIBLE study found that higher level students tend to know more strategies and could apply them in their tasks, as M2 said "I *used*

sequencing talk, back channelling and asking for repetition: again please.", or M3:"I asked my friend to say again if I didn't understand. I asked my friend what happened, who, how.". while the lower level students may know some of them but could not use what they know in their communicative tasks, and even used ineffective strategies instead such as memorising the script. Take the answer of L2 as an example: "*I couldn't remember. I memorised the script and then spoke.".* It has been found that strategies for specific types of speaking tasks such as asking for clarification and asking for repetition were more often used by the higher-level students. Knowing objectives and strategies is beneficial for students to establish their action plan to achieve tasks. However, to apply those strategies is far more important since it will determine their successfulness despite their prerequisite level. For example, one student from mid-level could outperform the debate task without stating the correct objective. She wrote the correct action plans and applied all strategies required in her performance. On the contrary, some students who could state the correct objective, could not state their strategic action plans but simply wrote general solutions e.g. asking the teacher or studying more vocabulary.

It is apparent that knowing the objective was not enough to reassure that students, specifically lower level students, will be able to achieve their task target. What is more important is they know 'how' to achieve it or could imagine what they are going to do. Many students knew their weaknesses and intended to resolve it, however, they did not truly understand how they could master a particular task within a limited time. Many reflections from the students showed their lack of grammar and vocabulary, however, they did not explicitly explain how they were going to resolve the problems. Despite their task performance, their awareness was generally improved.

4.2.3 Strategy Use

Strategy use refers to language use and language development. The former is the actual language use in an unplanned communication, while the latter is the focused language use in a particular unit task for students to improve their language skills. To measure the strategy use, scores from oracy skills performance were analysed. Pre-and post-test scores were collected to evaluate language use and oracy tasks scores

were gathered to measure language development which are explained through oracy four strands. Overall, there was an improvement of language use and language development during the course of the study. It is clear that language use was improved at the mean score of 40.00 (SD = 12.65) to 61.65 (SD = 7.77) from pre- and post -test of English oracy skills test, respectively (see Table 10).

For language development, scores of each oracy strand were higher during the second performance. For the presentation task, the highest mean score was from the physical strand (mean = 14.72, SD = 2.153), while the social and emotional strand received the lowest mean at 5.00 (SD = .886). Similarly, the physical strand also achieved the highest mean at 11.83 (SD = 1.713) for semi-scripted role play task, whereas the linguistic strand had the lowest mean at 5.55 (SD = .827). For the debate task, however, the cognitive strand achieved the highest mean at 20.93 (SD = .998), and the social and emotional were the lowest at 3.00 (SD = .000) for the second performance (see Table 11).

Table 10

Paired Samples T-Test between the Pre-Test and Post-Test of Oracy Skills (Language Use)

Oracy skills	Pre-test		Post-test		t-test	Sig (2-tailed)
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
	40.00	12.65193	61.65	7.7703	11.118	0.000

Table 11

The Mean Score and S.D. for the Three Unit Tasks (Language Development)

Unit tasks	Oracy strands	First (1st) performance		Second (2nd) performance	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Presentation	Physical	13.34	1.895	14.72	2.153
	Linguistic	4.52	.829	5.41	.867
	Cognitive	8.17	.928	9.28	1.066
	Social and emotional	4.66	1.173	5.00	.886
Semi-scripted role play	Physical	9.66	1.758	11.83	1.713
	Linguistic	4.55	.870	5.55	.827
	Cognitive	5.48	1.214	6.31	1.137
	Social and emotional	7.97	1.742	9.66	1.610
Debate	Physical	9.55	1.502	12.17	1.91
	Linguistic	11.10	1.012	14.48	.986
	Cognitive	15.76	.739	20.93	.998
	Social and emotional	2.00	.000	3.00	.000

For language improvement, most students could apply general and specific task strategies in their performance, which was assessed by performance scores that were increasing. The evidence illustrated that general and task-specific strategies were used. It is believed that L2 students should be trained on how to use strategies because these strategies will help them overcome their anxiety or other psychological barriers (MacIntyre & Noels, 1996). Not only should strategies themselves be introduced, but also how to apply them should be highlighted. The process of applying those strategies is planning, monitoring and evaluating, both in general and specific tasks. In this study, it seems that students had more knowledge in general strategies of clear pronunciation and organisation, but not task-specific strategies. Moreover, it is obvious that lower-level students could not deploy taught strategies to the unit tasks because of their limited vocabulary and strategic knowledge. Similarly, Liu and Jackson (2008) found that vocabulary is one of the big obstacles that hinder Chinese students' second language speaking skill. It was also found in a study by Hauck (2005) that a rich knowledge base in vocabulary and grammar had a positive connection with strategy use. In other words, without appropriate knowledge in vocabulary and grammar, learners may fail to apply strategies in their speaking. It is worth mentioning here that even though high-level proficiency students could

not perform the tasks without a script, they had shown through their performance that they included those strategies.

4.3 Perceptions towards Blended-learning

There are four areas of blended-learning perceptions which will be discussed in this section: background of blended learning, course engagement, learning outcome, and convenience. Table 12 shows that students had a positive opinion towards blended-learning environment (mean = 3.21, SD = 0.266). Amongst the four perceptions, *outcome* earned the highest mean at 3.30 (SD = 0.17695) which suggests that students had a positive perception that the blended-learning environment was beneficial for them in learning the skills. It either helped them understand the contents or prepare for the tasks. Secondly, *engagement* received the mean score at 3.29 (SD = 0.42771) which indicates that the students frequently participated both in face-to-face and online modes. Furthermore, *background* of blended-learning method gained the mean score at 3.05 (SD = 0.19551) which means that students had some experience in using technology for learning and wanted to use it in this course, however, they did not have much understanding in blended-learning method (as the mean score for this question item is 2.76, SD = 0.820). Lastly, students scored *convenience* the lowest at the mean score of 2.81 (SD = 0.26870), and this conveys that students had some difficulties in online learning and found it difficult to manage group work online.

In summary, it can be concluded that students have positive perceptions towards blended-learning environment in terms of background, convenience, engagement, and outcome of using this method in their English learning.

Table 12

The 4 Perception Areas of Blended-Learning Questionnaire

Areas of perception	Question items	mean	SD
1. Background of blended-leaning	1, 2, 4, and 8	3.05	0.195
2. Engagement	5, 6 and 14	3.29	0.427
3. Outcome	3, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16-22	3.30	0.176
4. Convenience	9 and 15	2.81	0.268

Apart from quantitative data analysis, qualitative data was collected to explore the opinions towards blended learning environment. Students reported that online learning was useful in terms of completing and submitting work. There were times students mentioned that the online platform allowed them to review and practise listening comprehension. However, there were mixed feelings whether it benefited their speaking ability. Also there were some suggestions made to improve online activities. Table 13 below shows students' opinions towards blended-learning environment.

Table 13

Four Perceptions Towards Blended-Learning Found in Stimulated Recall Interview

Areas of perception	Question items	Examples
1. Background of blended-leaning	How do you find online activities?	*"It was okay. In the past, we only had face-to-face class. The application was easy to use although it was confusing for the first two weeks."*
	How do you find in-class activities?	*"It was good. I mean when I had a problem, I could ask the teacher immediately."*

2. Engagement	Did you join every time?	*"I participated every time, about 10 minutes for each time. I also went back to the old recordings."* *"No, not many times. I sometimes forgot and it was overdue."*
3. Outcome	How does it help you learn in class? Give specific examples.	*"It helped because you would provide us contents on the worksheet. When the class was over, we could go back and review it again, for example, the strategies worksheet, and debate video clip, which made me know what to speak."* *"When you assigned us the video, I had a chance to practise my listening comprehension."* *In terms of assisting in-class learning, I think video clips helped me learn vocabulary and practise my accent."*
	Compare between the two, which one would you choose? Why	*"I would choose face-to-face learning because we could approach to the teacher and the teacher could help us solve the problem directly."* *"I prefer online because we don't have to go to class. We can learn any place. In case we have problem, we could chat the teacher. Therefore, we could learn listening and speaking skills through video call. It works similar way when we learn in class."*
4. Convenience	How do you find online activities?	*"It was okay in terms of submitting the homework. I don't have to queue up."* *"It was good for note taking. We didn't have to use our notebook. It was convenient."* *"It was convenient. You could do your work anytime. You didn't have to run to the teacher's room to send your work, and it won't get lost."*

Firstly, *background in blended-learning*, it was found that students liked using the computer in helping them learn and wanted to study this

course at the beginning. However, the study found evidence of students with no experience in the blended-learning method or Google Classroom as an online platform before taking this course. Fortunately, the students found the application easy to use despite having no experience (Beaumont, 2018). As suggested by Tawil (2018) that online platform has a great influence on learning and teachers should be able to apply it simply enough to help learners learn effortlessly.

Considering the use of *engagement*, students mentioned that they often participated in both face-to-face and online sessions. Students from all levels mentioned that they tried to finish all the assigned tasks. However, some evidence suggested that students did the online work late because of a technical problem or they forgot. A similar result has been found in other studies claiming that without a teacher, students might lose their attention or ignore the tasks easily (Moore & Kearsely, 2011). For this reason, as it is suggested in a Kintu, et al. (2017) study that teachers should have concern about the connectedness issue by providing balanced interaction between teachers, students, and peers when using this delivery method. In addition, the study also found that students wanted more interactive activities in online mode such as real-time chatting or video call, where they could see their friends or the teacher.

In regard to *outcome*, it is suggested that students from mid and high levels benefitted from this teaching approach. They found that the online platform could enable them to prepare for the communicative tasks in the use of content to talk about as well as improve their oracy skills in terms of pronunciation and listening comprehension, in which they challenged themselves in the 3-entry listening activity. On the other hand, lower level students found the online platform helped them learn new vocabulary and improve listening skill, but not speaking skill. It is argued in Young (2008) that blended-learning could help improve university students' speaking skill, however, in this study, it might be questionable whether it is suitable for all levels. It is suggested here that lower level students might need more support while learning online to achieve the learning objectives. The probe question used in the interview entails that lower level students used Google Translate during their online learning to help them complete the task. Therefore, to aid students' performance, more preparation activities such as vocabulary or expressions should be provided. In so doing, this might motivate them to engage more and be willing to reach for the task target as suggested in Banditvilai (2016) in

which students with a positive attitude towards the approach are most likely to put their effort into blended learning.

Lastly, *convenience* was the area investigated by whether students found blended-learning as a suitable approach. They agreed that the online platform was convenient in terms of retrieving data, submitting their work, and repeating learning activities like listening comprehension. As mentioned, students used the online platform as an available resource of information for their task preparation or for practicing their oracy skills, especially for mid and high proficiency students. However, many students reported that they preferred the face-to-face mode when it comes to asking questions. They liked that they could ask questions immediately in class.

In summary, blended-learning environment in this study helped promote metacognitive awareness especially *metacognitive knowledge*. The quantitative and qualitative data suggested that online learning facilitated students to plan their speaking tasks by both writing script and reviewing their first performance by practising vocabulary and grammar online. Provided with more extra time and space, students could think, compare, and synthesise information at their own pace (Shih & Huang, 2020). Blended-learning environment seems to be an effective approach to provide this opportunity where actual large-class size and limited time do not allow. Furthermore, promoting task knowledge could be done in-class and online. Students could gain task knowledge via examples and resources so that they can adjust their work accordingly.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to express our gratitude to Foreign Language Education and Linguistics (FLEL 2019) and the 2nd International Conference on Teaching, Learning and Education (ICTLE) as they accepted this paper to be presented internationally.

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APPENDIX 1

Oracy skills pre-test and post-test

Part 1: Self-introduction (2-3 minutes)
Instruction: each candidate (student A and student B) will be asked to introduce themselves and questions regarding their leisure activities. Each candidate will be asked the same questions.
Part 2: Short monologue (3-5 minutes)
Instruction: each candidate will choose 2 photos from different activities. They will have 1 minute in looking and preparing their talk. They have to compare the two activities with their own opinions. Each candidate will have 2 minutes to talk.

Part 3: Discussion (3 minutes)
Instruction: candidates will talk to each other about free time activities. They will have to discuss what activities teenagers should do and why. They can use the given photos in part 2 as a prompt.
Part 4: Role-play (5 minutes)
Instruction: student A and B will be given a different role card. They will have 2 minutes to look at their role card and prepare their talk. Then they will start the role play and they will be given 3 minutes.

Part 4: Role-play

Student A's role card

A  B  C 

Situation: You are planning a day out with your friend this weekend. You are thinking of these three activities: watching movie at Central Plaza Rayong, having lunch at a fast food restaurant in Passione Department Store, and going to the water park at Ramayana Chonburi. After you make a decision, call your friend and talk over it. You may need to prepare the second plan if the first one is refused.

Instruction:

Look at the activities, choose one activity that you want to do at this weekend.

Think about the plan on 'how' you will do the chosen activity:

- Where is the place?
- What time shall you meet?
- What things should you prepare? How much money should you have?
- How will you go there?
- What are the good things of doing the activity?

Invite B to come with you. Discuss about the plan to see if he/she would like it.

If you are interested in B's plan, you can agree to do his/her plan. Ask for details about his/her plan.

Student B's role card

A  B  C 

Situation: You are planning a day out with your friend this weekend. You are thinking of these three activities: singing at a karaoke at Central Plaza Rayong, going to PMY beach, and cycling at Srimuang Park. After you make a decision, call your friend and talk over it. You may need to prepare the second plan if the first one is refused.

Instruction:

Look at the activities, choose one activity that you want to do at this weekend.

Think about the plan on 'how' you will do the chosen activity:

- Where is the place?
- What time shall you meet?
- What things should you prepare? How much money should you have?
- How will you go there?
- What are the good things of doing the activity?

Invite B to come with you. Discuss about the plan to see if he/she would like it.

If you are interested in B's plan, you can agree to do his/her plan. Ask for details about his/her plan.

APPENDIX 2

Oracy skills pre-test and post-test assessment form

Oracy skills	Score (1-5)
Physical	
1 a) fluency and pace of speech	
1 b) tonal variation	
1 c) clarity of pronunciation	
2 a) gesture and posture	
2 b) facial expression and eye contact	
Linguistic	
3 appropriate vocabulary choice	
4 a) register	
4 b) grammar	
5 structure and organisation of talk	
Cognitive	
7 a) choice of content to convey meaning and intention	
7 b) building on the views of others	
8 a) seeking information and clarification through questions	
8 b) summarising	
9 a) maintaining focus on task	
10 a) giving reasons to support views	
10 b) critically examining ideas and views expressed	
11 taking account of level of understanding of the audience	
Social & Emotional	
12 b) turn-taking	
13 listening actively and responding appropriately	
14 a) self-assurance	
Overall assessment (100)	