**Developing English Conversation Performance through Online
Lessons and Classroom Interaction: A Study of Thai
Lower Secondary School Students**

Hayas Saniboo

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Teaching English as an International Language
Prince of Songkla University
2016**

Developing English Conversation Performance through Online

Lessons and Classroom Interaction: A Study of Thai

Lower Secondary School Students

Hayas Saniboo

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts in Teaching English as an International Language

Prince of Songkla University

2016

Thesis Title   Developing English Conversation Performance through Online
Lessons and Classroom Interaction: A Study of Thai Lower
Secondary School Students

Author   Ms. Hayas Saniboo

Major Program Teaching English as an International Language

Major Advisor   **Examining Committee**

…………………………….…….. ……...…………….……Chairperson

(Asst. Prof. Dr. Kemtong Sinwongsuwat) (Asst. Prof. Dr. Premin Karavi)

             ……………………………....Committee

             (Asst. Prof. Dr. Compol Swangboonsatic)

             ……...……………….....…Committee

             (Asst. Prof. Dr. Kemtong Sinwongsuwat)

    The graduate School, Prince of Songkla University, has approved this thesis as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in Teaching English as an International Language.

           ..………………………………….

           (Assoc. Prof. Dr. Teerapol Srichana)

            Dean of Graduate School

This is to certify that the work here submitted is the result of the candidate's own investigations. Due acknowledgement has been made of any assistance received.

……………………………….Signature

(Asst. Prof. Dr. Kemtong Sinwongsuwat)

Major Advisor

……………………………….Signature

(Ms. Hayas Saniboo)

Candidate

I hereby certify that this work has not been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any degree.

…………………………….Signature

(Ms. Hayas Saniboo)

Candidate

ชื่อวิทยานิพนธ์   การพัฒนากฤตกรรมการสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้บทเรียนออนไลน์และการปฏิสัมพันธ์ในชั้นเรียน: กรณีศึกษานักเรียนไทยระดับมัธยมศึกษาตอนต้น

ผู้เขียน   นางสาวฮายาศ สนิบู

สาขาวิชา   การสอนภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษานานาชาติ

ปีการศึกษา   2558

บทคัดย่อ

       งานวิจัยฉบับนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อศึกษาพัฒนาการด้านการพูดของนักเรียนไทยระดับชั้นมัธยมศึกษาตอนต้นปีที่ 2 ที่ได้รับการสอนด้วยการฝึกทักษะการสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้บทเรียนออนไลน์และการฝึกกิจกรรมการปฏิสัมพันธ์ในชั้นเรียน โดยมุ่งตอบคำถามวิจัยดังนี้ 1) การใช้กิจกรรมการสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษด้วยตนเองโดยใช้บทเรียนออนไลน์สามารถช่วยพัฒนาทักษะการสนทนาได้หรือไม่ เปรียบเทียบกับกิจกรรมการสนทนาโดยการปฏิสัมพันธ์ในห้องเรียน 2) มีลักษณะกฤตกรรมการพูดด้านใดบ้างที่พัฒนาขึ้นด้วยการใช้กิจกรรมการสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้บทเรียนออนไลน์ **และ**3) มีลักษณะกฤตกรรมการพูดด้านใดบ้างที่พัฒนาขึ้นด้วยการใช้กิจกรรมการสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษโดยการปฏิสัมพันธ์ในชั้นเรียน กลุ่มตัวอย่างที่ศึกษาประกอบด้วยนักเรียนระดับมัธยมศึกษาปีที่ 2 ปีการศึกษา 2557 จากโรงเรียนราชประชานุเคราะห์ ๔๓ จังหวัดสงขลา จำนวน 50 คน ซึ่งได้แบ่งกลุ่มตัวอย่างเป็น 2 กลุ่ม กลุ่มละ 25 คน กลุ่มที่ 1 เข้ารับการฝึกโดยใช้บทเรียนออนไลน์ และกลุ่มที่ 2 เข้ารับการฝึกกิจกรรมสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษโดยการปฏิสัมพันธ์ในชั้นเรียน ผู้เรียนแต่ละกลุ่มได้ผ่านการสัมภาษณ์ก่อนและหลังกิจกรรมโดยครูต่างชาติ เพื่อวัดระดับ

ความสามารถด้านการพูดสนทนาของผู้เรียนแต่ละคน โดยทุกครั้งที่มีการทดสอบด้วยวิธีการสัมภาษณ์ จะมีการบันทึกวีดีโอและถอดเทปเสียงบทสนทนาเพื่อวิเคราะห์ข้อมูลตามหลัก Conversation Analysis (CA) และให้คะแนนโดยพิจารณาคุณลักษณะต่อไปนี้ ด้านความคล่องแคล่ว ด้านการใช้ คำศัพท์ ด้านความเข้าใจและความเหมาะสม ด้านการออกเสียงและด้านความถูกต้องตามหลักไว-ยกรณ์ เครื่องมือที่ใช้ในงานวิจัยครั้งนี้ประกอบด้วย 1) แผนการสอน จำนวน 12 แผน 2) กิจกรรม การสื่อสารด้วยการพูดซึ่งประกอบด้วย การทดสอบการพูดก่อนฝึก การทดสอบหลังการฝึก

ผลการวิจัยจากการวิเคราะห์เชิงสถิติและการวิเคราะห์บทสนทนาตามแนว CA พบว่าในภาพรวมผู้เรียนกลุ่มที่เรียนด้วยการปฏิสัมพันธ์ในชั้นเรียนมีพัฒนาการในการสนทนา ภาษาอังกฤษที่ดีขึ้นกว่ากลุ่มที่เรียนโดยอาศัยการฝึกด้วยบทเรียนออนไลน์เพียงอย่างเดียว ผู้เรียนกลุ่ม แรกที่เรียนในชั้นเรียนมีความคล่องแคล่วในการสนทนามากขึ้นและมีการใช้วงศัพท์ที่กว้างขึ้นอย่าง เห็นได้ชัดกว่ากลุ่มหลัง อย่างไรก็ตามพัฒนาการด้านการออกเสียงภาษาอังกฤษของผู้เรียนกลุ่มหลังที่ ใช้กิจกรรมการสนทนาภาษาอังกฤษโดยใช้บทเรียนออนไลน์นั้นอยู่ในระดับสูงเมื่อเทียบกับลักษณะ การพูดด้านอื่นๆ ด้วยเหตุนี้ครูผู้สอนจึงสามารถประยุกต์ใช้บทเรียนสนทนาออนไลน์ให้เกิดประโยชน์ เป็นสิ่งช่วยเสริมการเรียนการสอนโดยอาศัยการปฏิสัมพันธ์กับผู้เรียนในห้องเรียน

คำสำคัญ บทเรียนออนไลน์ การปฏิสัมพันธ์ในชั้นเรียน คุณลักษณะการพูด กฤตกรรมการพูด ภาษาอังกฤษ

Thesis title: Developing English Conversation Performance through Online Lessons and Classroom Interaction: A Study of Thai Lower Secondary School Students

Author: Ms. Hayas Saniboo

Major Program: Teaching English as an International Language

Academic year: 2015

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to improve oral English performance of Thai lower-secondary school students. It attempts to address the following questions: a) Can online lessons better develop learners' conversation performance than classroom interaction?; b) Which features of conversation performance can particularly be enhanced by online lessons?; and c) Which features of conversation performance can especially be developed through classroom interaction? Fifty students from grade eight at Rajaprachanukroh Songkhla Province School in the academic year 2014 participated in this study. They were purposively sampled and divided into two groups: one group learning English conversation through online lessons and the other via classroom interaction with an English speaker. They were individually interviewed to assess their oral English performance before the treatments and after completing the lessons. Students' interviews and conversations were video-recorded for close analysis following Conversation Analysis (CA) principles and rated in the following features: fluency, vocabulary, appropriacy, pronunciation, and grammar. The research instruments employed in this study were oral communication tasks for pre- and post-tests.

The research findings based on statistical and CA analysis show that overall the students learning conversation through classroom interaction performed better those learning through the use of online lessons. The learners engaged in classroom interaction became significantly more fluent and deployed a wider range of vocabulary than those in online conversations. While fluency as well as grammar was better developed through classroom interaction, pronunciation features can especially

be enhanced through online lessons. Thus, it was suggested that teachers utilize online conversation lessons as a supplementary aid to classroom teaching and learning.

Keywords: Online Conversation Lessons; Classroom Interaction; Speech Features; Oral English Performance

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

LIST OF PAPERS

This thesis is based on the following paper:

IJLS Submission Acknowledgement

From:	**IJLS Journal** (ijls.editors@yahoo.com)
reply-to:	IJLS Journal (ijls.editors@yahoo.com)
to:	Happy (manisbitanghayas@gmail.com)
date:	6 September 2015 at 13:53
subject:	Re: Manuscript Submission

Dear Author,
We have received the reviewers' reaction to your recent submission to *IJLS*. All of the three peer reviewers have ACCEPTED pending minor editorial revisions. Congratulations.

Once a paper is accepted (pending minor revisions), we post its title, abstract, and keywords online at (http://www.ijls.net/inpress.html). This is done to help authors to have verifiable evidence if they want to add an entry to their CVs. Please see the above link and check the record of your own submission which we posted online right now.

From:	IJLS Journal <ijls.editors@yahoo.com>
date:	1 December 2015 at 17:40
subject:	Volume 10 Number 1 Attached

Dear Authors
Attached please find the PDF version of IJLS, vol 10, no 1, January 2016 (along with the cover art). If you need a print copy, please go to this LINK and place your order. You have the right to share your own paper on the Internet (on Research Gate, Academia, etc.).
The editor can be reached on Research Gate at this ADDRESS.
In case there is any thing you want to know, please do not hesitate to let us know.
Thank you.
Yours sincerely
The IJLS Team

Mohammad Ali Salmani Nodoushan
Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics/TESOL
Editor in Chief
International Journal of Language Studies
Web: www.ijls.net
Skype: nodushan
Cellphone: +98-933-798-6820
Office: +98-(21)-2486-2126
Fax: +98-(21)-2207-3227
Follow me: Research Gate; Academia; Linked-In

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE STUDIES (IJLS)
Web: http://www.ijls.net/
e-mail: contact@ijls.net

TRANSFER OF COPYRIGHT FORM

Dear Corresponding Author

Please complete this form and return it to *IJLS*. Please complete the form in Adobe Acrobat Professional and use your digital signature. You may alternatively print, complete, and sign the form in ink, then scan the completed form and email it to *IJLS* as a PDF attachment. Please send the completed form to: ijls.editors@yahoo.com). Please notice that you are also signing this form on behalf of your co-authors (if applies). Thank you very much.

Date	Nov 22, 2015
Author(s):	Hayas Saniboo and Kemtong Sinwongsuwat
Paper Title:	Improving English conversation skills through Online conversation lessons and classroom interactions with English s
Phone:	+660984013575, +660848593292
Fax:	074-286-771, 074-286-762
Email:	manisbitanghayas@gmail.com, ksinwong@gmail.com
Address:	Department of Languages and Linguistics , Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkhla University-Hat Yai, Songkhla 9

I hereby give permission by transferring copyright to *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE STUDIES (IJLS)* to publish the indicated paper in an upcoming issue, in whole or in part, on the following conditions:

☒ The above paper is not published, nor is it under consideration, elsewhere, and it will not be published in any form anywhere else. I also acknowledge that the paper is free from any form of author insincerity (e.g., plagiarism, fraud, etc.).

☒ I assure *IJLS* that my paper is free from legal and/or ethical issues; I also give *IJLS* full permission and consent to retract this paper from the journal if legal and/or ethical issues are found in my paper after publication.

☒ I acknowledge that I have followed all of *IJLS* author guidelines and codes of conduct (as displayed on *IJLS* web site).

☐ I have permission to transfer copyright on behalf of my co-authors. (only if applies)

☒ I accept full responsibility for all aspects of my paper (including legal and ethical issues), and acknowledge that *IJLS* is ONLY responsible for editorial and screen design of the paper.

☒ I hereby transfer full copyright for this paper to *INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE STUDIES (IJLS)*.

Please type your Name here: Hayas Saniboo , Kemtong Sinwongsuwat

Your signature:

Digitally signed by Hayas Kemtong
DN: cn=Hayas Kemtong, o=Prince of Songkhla University, ou=Thailand,
email=manisbitanghayas@gmail.com, c=TH
Date:

END OF FORM	Print Form	Reset Form

1. INTRODUCTION

English has long been used as a language for global communication. With the advent of the ASEAN community, its role as a global language has been even greater emphasized, especially in the Thai educational system. The Ministry of Education of Thailand has released the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) as a guideline for primary and secondary levels which endorses learning English as a foreign language from Grades 1-12. The focus has been placed on developing learners' positive attitudes towards learning the language and ability to efficiently communicate in English and use it as a medium for life-long autonomous learning (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Regardless of the level of the learners, the aim is to enable them to express ideas, engage in English conversation on various topics, and search for information necessary for higher studies and future career choices. According to the current curriculum, young learners, especially at the lower secondary level are expected to be able to know 2,100 to 2,250 words and talk about everyday topics such as oneself and family, environment, food and drink, health, weather and climate (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Nevertheless, according to Prapphal (2003), even though Thai students learn English from primary or even kindergarten level, many still fail to use the language with confidence in real-world speech events or when required to talk about everyday topics. Regardless of the established curriculum, it is apparently insufficient for second language learners to spend only a few hours a week learning English in classes that typically focus very little on conversation (Brooks, 2009; Wei & Zhou, 2002). Outside the classroom, they also lack opportunities to interact in English and often fail to perform essential speech acts (Salmani Nodoushan, 2014). Certainly, these hindrances can be overcome if we as teachers try hard not only to create classroom environments which involve them in more intense English speaking activities, but also to encourage them to engage in autonomous learning afterwards. Fujii (2012) notes that as teachers allow students to share their ideas with one another and possibly generate some new vocabulary words, the

adaptation to features of natural conversation will follow and this can be strengthened further as the learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their language learning by engaging in after-class tasks of their choice.

Apart from increasing classroom spoken interaction, learners are therefore encouraged to take advantage of bountiful computer-mediated language learning (CMLL) materials. Through the Internet, learners of various groups can access a wide variety of target web-based English learning materials with much ease. The availability of online resources has made language practice even more convenient, especially for EFL learners, most of whom have limited opportunity to get exposed to English outside the classroom. Numerous websites now offer online English conversation lessons, giving the learners the opportunity to improve their conversation skills right at their fingertips. In fact, there are numerous websites providing English conversation lessons for EFL learners' self-study free of charge.

Shomoossi, Moinzadeh and Ketabi (2007) and Barrs (2012) contend that computer-mediated language lessons can actually complement face-to-face classroom-based learning. While face-to-face learning of EFL learners remains mostly in the classroom setting and relies much on teachers' instruction, online learning can be done conveniently from inside and outside the classroom through available technology applications and language training websites with little reliance on teachers. Mayer (2003) suggests that CMLL can in fact facilitate learners in improving vocabulary skills better than face-to-face learning. Audiovisual texts provided online would allow for recurring practice and help correct learners' misunderstanding of the target language, whereas in face-to-face teaching the learners are often deprived of such opportunity and have to pay close attention to teachers. Thus, the current research on CMLL in teaching speaking and learning language has been conducted on relationships and the differences between online discussion and face-to-face interaction.

As the objectives of interaction in second language classrooms have been shifted from solely improving students' accurate production of linguistic forms to including the active production of meaningful talk with the goal of improving their L2 fluency, it becomes especially important for teachers to

understand the organization of the learners' talk and learning experiences in the classroom. Conversation analysis (CA), as originated in the works of Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson, has particularly started to play an important role in helping us to understand L2 learning and to investigate L2 classrooms as it offers an effective means of recording, transcribing, and analyzing naturally occurring talk-in-interaction (Seedhouse, 2004). CA is the study of recorded, naturally occurring talks to discover how social participants understand and respond to one another in their turns at talk, with a central focus on how sequences of action are organized such that social order can be constructed and maintained. Thus, CA perspective emphasizes enabling teachers to recognize the patterns of communication that establish and maintain second language classroom interactions and to help learners to fulfill their talk in the interactions.

The language teaching material design of CA in particular presents dialogues in audio or video clips together with transcription, allowing learners to experience their authenticity while learning linguistic expressions (Wong, 2002 cited in Seedhouse 2004, p. 228).

With the application of CA, teachers are also able to select authentic online conversation lessons to appropriately suit learners' needs and make the best use of bountiful online resources as supplementary learning materials for learners' autonomous learning.

Given the great number of online language learning resources today, there has been a dearth of studies specifically assessing their effectiveness, especially in facilitating learners' development of conversation skills, compared to traditional face-to-face classroom-based teaching. Therefore, this study aims to determine whether the employment of online conversation lessons can really help to enhance learners' conversation skills compared to face-to-face classroom interactions with English speakers, and in what ways, if it can. It also attempts to unveil how each learning approach can lend itself to the improvement in different aspects of the learners' conversation skills.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The advancement of technology has contributed immensely to the development of computer-mediated language learning resources. A variety of online conversation lessons have been created to facilitate learners' acquisition of conversational skills. This study attempts to pinpoint particular performance improvement benefits the learners obtain from learning through online lessons compared to learning from face-to-face interaction with English speakers.

The purposes of this study are to compare the speaking improvement of learners using online English conversation lessons and those learning through face-to-face interaction, to determine whether there are performance differences between learners learning conversation via online lessons and those through face-to-face interaction with English speakers, and to discover how each learning approach can differently benefit learners' development of their conversation skills. The research questions are:

2.1 Can online lessons better develop learners' conversation performance than classroom interaction?

2.2 Which features of conversation performance can particularly be enhanced by online lessons?

2.3 Which features of conversation performance can especially be developed through classroom interaction?

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Computer-mediated Language Learning (CMLL)

The use of Computer-Mediated Language Learning (CMLL) was derived from Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in the mid-1990's with the classification of Warschauer (1996) and Kern (1995). In the 1960's, CALL was presented through the introduction of computer-based language teaching programs and rapidly developed with the advent of the Internet, online courses and e-learning. Suggesting three stages of development in CALL as Structural CALL, presented

between 1960 and 1980, Kern (1995) argued that language is a set of prescribed structures and forms following the audio-lingual method. The CALL software products then provided mechanical repetitive drills, memory exercises and translation texts. Between 1980 and 1990, the development in computer technology led to a change into the communicative CALL. The software products fostering the learner's mental processing, implicitly involved grammar teaching, and students were encouraged to generate original sentences. Errors were considered a natural product of practice. The third stage is integrative CALL, in which students learn to use a variety of technology tools in the process of language learning. The multimedia CALL with CD-ROMs and DVDs provides an authentic learning environment.

Fall, Adair-Hauck and Gilsan (2007) maintains that the Internet makes communication activities really active as it offers the possibility of distance learning. Thus, this type of language learning could be called computer mediated language learning (CMLL), which can be organized in classroom frameworks and should be accessible through virtual private network (VPN), enabling the expansion of online communication, training speaking and listening skills. The benefits of CMLL are that it serves the language learning process in teacher-learner and computer-learner interactions through the use of multimedia and network- based applications.

Further, CMLL is the use of intelligent computers to assist language learning in both synchronous and asynchronous learning environments (Warschauer, 1997). Synchronous refers to the real-life communication which occurs at the same time but in different places such as video conferencing, audio conferencing, chat and instant messaging, which requires/involves immediate response and message immediacy. The interaction is similar to face-to-face or telephone conversations. However, the asynchronous learning situation does not require a specific time; rather, it allows learners to login and participate at their own convenience hours, through web logs, messaging or e-mail, websites links and discussion boards. The interaction can be recorded to capture the history of conversations.

Sotillo (2000) compared synchronous and asynchronous communication and identified stronger resemblance to spoken language in the former which is similar to face-to-face conversation for second language acquisition. Kern (1995) studied the

advantage of online chatting on various topics in French via computer before proceeding to oral discussion in the classroom. The study showed that learners performed better and there were signs of improvement in their grammatical accuracy after having gone through online chatting. The sentences in computer sessions were short and simple, which are easy to respond to, rather than long and complex sentences.

Warschauer's (1996) experimental study comparing face-to-face and electronic discussion of 16 ESL students showed that the language used for electronic discussion was more complex than face-to-face conversation whereas that in face-to-face interaction was casual language. Hegelheimer and Chaplle (2000) examined methodological issues in research on learner-computer interactions in CALL and stated that the most useful interactions were those which help students to understand and comprehend language structure and the relationship between form and meaning through face-to-face conversation. In addition, Blacke (2000) studied the relationship between Interactional Hypothesis in a computer mediated communication with learners of Spanish working in pairs to find out if learners struggled in lexical confusions over syntax. The study showed that lacks of vocabulary would decrease learners' performance. Thus, the use of online lessons and visual medium can help expand learners' vocabulary range and grammar structure.

The advantages of online lessons also are flexibility in classroom hours and learners can study the lessons anywhere through the accession of Internet connection. Learners can interact with other users which is similar to face-to-face conversations. The lesson involves engaging learners in self-monitoring where learners can correct their linguistic errors. Online lessons will help students feel comfortable while learning outside the classroom in the absence of face-to-face learning. Online lessons can be accessed through Internet connection; the medium would contain text-based conversations and audio visual methods which have been adapted to improve listening, speaking, reading and writing skills.

Thus, an appropriate online lesson should provide equal opportunity and useful information for students to gain knowledge and develop essential language

skills (Dodge, 2002). The content of online lessons provides users with knowledge required at all levels. It usually starts at the basic level and continues to the advance level. In online English conversation lessons, in particular, students will practice in two ways--watching and listening to the video performance, and reading and listening to the text that has been given. Learners can repeat the conversations or read the text again for their understanding and comprehend the meaning of each conversation.

3.2 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)

According to Brown (2000), Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is an approach to teaching a second language in the classroom in which interaction and communication are initiated to approximate activities in real-life situations. In the mid-1960s, CLT was first introduced by Hymes and the teaching was geared towards the practicing of basic structures in meaningful task-based contexts and focused on learners' fluency rather than accuracy. The goal of CLT is to develop learners' communicative competence (Richards & Rodgers, 2001), which encompasses both social and cultural knowledge of the target language. The theories and practices of the CLT approach were developed by a multitude of researchers (Brown, 1987; Hymes, 1971; Littlewood, 1981; Nunan, 1989; Richards & Rodgers,1986; Widdowson,1978).

The CLT classroom is focused on all language components so as to develop learners' grammatical, discourse, functional, sociolinguistic, and strategic communicative competence. The design technique in teaching is to engage learners in the language for meaningful purposes. According to its goal, learners have to use the language productively and receptively in unrehearsed contexts outside the classroom, which will enhance interaction with people in the real community. Brown (2000) stated that interaction is the heart of communication and the best way to learn to interact in a language is through interaction itself and the oral interaction in the classroom happens through a process of face-to-face interaction. Hence, classroom interaction is necessary and useful as an educational strategy to enhance speaking skills. The role of interaction in a classroom context in enhancing speaking skills comes from the understanding of its main types: teacher-learner interaction and

learner-learner interaction, where negotiation of meaning and the provision of feedback are highlighted. Classroom interaction involves verbal exchanges between learners and CLT teachers and teachers should know that the learners need to do most of the talk to activate their speaking, since speaking skills require practice and exposure.

According to Goh (2007), speaking is an essential skill for language learners; speaking can facilitate language acquisition and development. One of the most important elements of oral communication is conversation. Richards & Rodgers (1986) noted that the conversation class is something of an enigma in language teaching and the goal for teaching conversation is diverse, depending on the student, teacher, and classroom context. There are two major approaches to teaching conversation, an indirect approach in which learners are engaged in meaningful interaction tasks that focus on using language to complete the task rather than practicing language. Second is a direct approach which involves planning conversation programs where students pay attention to conversational rules, convention and strategies.

Hall (2000) examined 12 ESL studies of activities constructed in classroom interaction ranging from primary to university levels, indicating the development of classroom interaction through various aspects such as material design, teacher-learner interaction and learner-learner interaction. Ohta and Morimoto (cited in Hall, 2000) studied young Japanese learners' abilities in language learning over a period of two years and found that as students progressed in their learning, they became more active in their own learning and more creative in using language in oral interaction. Reporting on a project investigating talk and interaction between a teacher and a small group of young learners at the age of10-15, Dumhuis (cited in Hall, 2000) found that the youngsters were capable of extending their talk and constructed talks that exhibited high cognitive levels of thinking in the target language.

Besides language classrooms, video/audiotapes, television programs, the Internet and computer software can also aid teachers as they provide learners chances to understand their own learning styles , learn at their own pace, and focus on

their own learning process. The teacher can thus fully serve as a facilitator and guide in a CLT context.

3.3 Conversation Analysis (CA)

Conversation Analysis (CA) is an approach to studying the nature of conversations in turn-talking and in talk-in-interactions which occur both verbally and non-verbally in real life interaction (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 1998). CA was originally developed by Harvey Sack, Emanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson in the mid-1960s. It focused on investigating social order constructed in everyday social interaction among people. The study of CA included the practice of all social interactions. It included the aspect of conversational organization that makes any action possible such as turn taking or sequence structure, asking questions or making complaints, and repair (i.e., the ways of dealing with problems of hearing, speaking or understanding).

According to Schegloff (2007), the rules of turn taking in conversation which the speaker initially faces is *turn constructional unit* (TCU) or units of conduct. The basic shapes that TCUs take are sentences, clauses, phrases, and lexical items. The participants in interaction adjust to the completion of such a unit as a transition-relevance place, where speaker change may occur. The turn refers to one speaker talking and then stopping for the other speaker to start talking.

The patterns of course of action through talking are sequences which act as the vehicle for getting some activities accomplished (Schegloff, 2006). The important sequence construction is called *adjacency pair,* which is composed of two turns often by different speakers; one turn is "first pair part" (FPPs), which initiates utterance types such as question, request, offer, invitation, and announcement. The other turn is "second pair part" (SPPs), which is responsive to the action of a prior turn being of such utterance types as answer, grant, rejection, acceptance, decline, agreement/disagreement, and acknowledgement. However, not every second pair part can follow the first pair part. To establish pair-types, exchanges such as greeting-greeting, question-answer, and offer-accept/decline are used. The relationship between the first and second pair parts is strict; if the second pair part does not come forth, the first speaker can repeat the first action or give the explanation to make the

second pair part speaker understand and respond. The different functions of adjacency pairs include starting and closing conversation and constructing remedial exchanges.

During interactions, there may be certain aspects of misunderstandings between learners and interlocutors. Thus, learners use their ability through verbal and non-verbal tools to repair the miscommunications (Wong, 2010). The repair involves the one who initiates the repair (self or other) and the other who resolves the problem (self or other). This helps in manipulation and is a useful strategy in interaction. In the study of face-to-face interaction, learners are often asked to perform talk sequences to reflect their interaction competence and to enable investigators to identify the strategies they use to overcome struggle in their turn taking.

In this study, CA is used as the approach to analyzing the learners' performance in talk-in-interaction with each other and with testers. While Drew and Heritage (1992) argue that CA is focused on the mechanisms and principles which people use to interact with each other by means of language and social action, this study tries to use the mechanisms revealed via CA to assess how learners understand and respond to other interactions while talking. Just like CA, it uses transcripts to record the primary data of learners' talk.

3.4 Language Proficiency Interview (LPI)

The Language Proficiency Interview (LPI) is one of the test tasks used in assessing individual second language learners' oral proficiency. The tester interviewed each learner with different or similar questions. According to Seedhouse (2004) LPI is implemented in imitation of natural conversation in order to evaluate a learner's conversational proficiency. Thus, the assessments of language proficiency interviews are systematic of turn taking and repair different from ordinary conversation. Moreover, LPI often aims to determine learners' ability and readiness to communicate in a second language, especially at the beginning of a language course in an institution. Thus, the use of flexible rubrics for scoring the oral assessment not only is practically essential (Foster, Tonkyn & Wigglesworth, 2000) but provides essential time for individual assessment.

This research used a scoring rubric adapted from Barraja-Rohan (2011) and Tsang & Wong (2002), which comprises five features: fluency, vocabulary, pronunciation, appropriacy, and grammar. The rubric was identified on 5-point scale, ranging from 1 being unacceptable to 5 excellent (See Appendix A). Apart from using the rubric to score learners' performance, the use of analytical procedures were also included such as locating action sequences, characterizing the action by looking at the nature of students' responses to the interviewer, characterizing the language form in action performance, and looking at the interviewer elicitation-student response to describe turn-taking, sequence of actions or adjacency pair, preference, use of L1, and use of wait time. This examining process stresses the collaborative nature of talk-in-interaction.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To answer the questions regarding the learners' development of English conversation performance through online lessons and classroom interaction, the research methodology employed in this study was described in the following sections: 4.1 Participants of the Study, 4.2 Instructional Materials, 4.3 Data collection, as well as 4.4 Data Analysis.

4.1 Participants of the Study

The participants of this study were fifty grade 8 students from Rajchaprachanukroh 43 Songkhla province school under the Bureau of Special Education, Office of the Basic Education Commission. Their ages ranged from 13-15. They were selected by the purposive sampling method for a quasi-experimental treatment in the academic year 2014. The students had chosen English as a core course of a foreign language required for secondary level students. The class was divided into three proficiency levels; i.e. high, middle and low according to their grades of a compulsory English course of the academic year 2013. Based on the grades, 25 students were chosen to be the experimental group and 25 students were selected as the control group. Before the training, all of the participants were involved in an oral proficiency interview test to ensure the same speaking proficiency level.

4.2 Instructional Materials

The teaching materials used in this study consisted of (1) a commercial book titled "Conversation in daily life" (Carver & Fotinos, 2000); (2) classroom handouts provided by the teacher (3) an online lesson guide book provided by the researcher; and (4) video conversations selected by the researcher and reviewed by the researcher's supervisory committee for accuracy and appropriateness before being applied to the class.

4.3 Data collection

The data was collected from the 50 student samples, which were divided into two groups of 25 each. One group was assigned to learn to converse via online conversation lessons and the other practice orally through classroom interaction. In this study, the participants were first engaged in the oral proficiency interview as a pre-test and subsequently involved in 6 weeks of treatment. After completing the lessons, a post-treatment interview was conducted to determine the learners' conversation improvement.

4.3.1   Online conversation group

The online conversation group was involved in autonomous learning. The students learnt through the use of computers and followed the instructions provided in the guide book. They were asked to spend three hours a week on the lesson after school hours.

4.3.2   Classroom interaction group

The classroom interaction group was taught by an English teacher who obtained a degree in Education and majored in English and had five years of experience in teaching English as a foreign language. The duration of the class, conducted after school hours, was three hours a week. Students learnt through the lesson provided where the teacher taught step by step following the structure prescribed by the researcher and there were six lessons taught in total. In each lesson,

students had to practice and master the same conversation as provided in the online lesson.

4.4 Data analysis

In the beginning, the pre-test was conducted as all of the students were asked to converse with an English speaker to determine their conversation performance. The performance was assessed by an English speaker who was not the students' class teacher and videotaped for subsequent scoring by the researcher in the following features: 1) frequency (speech flow), 2) vocabulary (use of words and accuracy), 3) appropriacy (turn responding), 4) pronunciation (segmental sounds), 5) grammar (range of structures used). The scoring rubric had been adapted from Barraja-Rohan (2011), O'Loughlin (2001), Luoma (2004), and Tsang & Wong (2002) (See Appendix A).

After the pre-test conversation, the students were engaged in weekly conversation lessons on the following topics: Week 1, students were engaged in introducing one-self and others, giving personal information. Week 2, they talked about family. Week 3, they learned about school and community. Week 4 deals with food. In weeks 5 and 6 they talked about daily activities and hobbies respectively.

The training took place three hours a week over the course of six consecutive weeks. The Online Conversation group practiced English conversation online in a computer lab with guidebooks containing specific instructions, conversation scripts, and exercises prepared by the researcher. At the beginning of the first session, the researcher as teacher oriented them towards the training goal. The teacher was available during their practice only to help them with technical problems, allowing them to maneuver freely through the lesson until they mastered the target conversation. The students in the other group learnt conversation on the same topics through classroom face-to-face interaction with an English teacher and they were provided only with conversation scripts and exercises.

In week 7 after completing their six training lessons, 1) introduction and personal information 2) family 3) school and community 4) food 5) daily activities

and 6) hobbies, the students were engaged in a post-test conversation with the same English speaker as in the pre-test. Their conversations were videotaped and assessed by the English speaker and the researcher, using the same rubric as in the pre-test.

The videotaped conversations from both the pre- and the post-test interviews were recorded and transcribed for subsequent comparative analysis. The comparative analysis threw light on the strengths and weaknesses of the students and the various difficulties they faced during these sessions.

The interactions were transcribed following the transcription convention below, adapted from Seedhouse (2004) and Barraja-Rohan (2011).

No.	Symbols	Description
1	.	(period) Falling intonation
2	,	(comma) Continuing intonation
3	: :	(colon(s)) Prolonging of sound
4	WORD	(all capital letters) Loud speech
5	*CAP ITALLICS*	Utterance in subject's L1
6	°word°	(degree symbols) Quiet speech
7	< >	Pauses of more than 5 seconds (e.g. <8>)
8	( )	(empty parentheses) Non-transcribable segment of talk
9	?	Indicates rising intonation
10	bold	Emphasis

11	=	(a) Turn continue below, at the next identical symbol
		(b) If inserted at the end of one speaker's turn and at the next beginning speaker's adjacent turn, it indicates that there is no gap at all between the two turns
		(c) Indicates that there is no interval between adjacent utterances
12	T:	Teacher
13	→	Mark features of special interest
14	ja((.: yes))	Non-English words are italicized and are followed by an English translation in double parentheses
15	[gibee]	In the case of inaccurate pronunciation of an English word, an approximation of the sound is given in square brackets
16	((T show picture))	Nonverbal actions or editor's comments

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To answer research questions 1, 2 and 3, *t*-test was used to determine the differences between the mean scores from the pre- and post-speaking tests of the two groups of students. Close analysis of the students' video-recorded conversation was also undertaken to identify the strengths, weaknesses and improvements of each aspect of their English conversation performance.

Given the pre-test scores shown in Table 1 below, it was confirmed that the two groups of students had the same level of speaking proficiency. The mean score and standard deviation of Group 1, trained with online conversation lessons, were 6.32 and 2.15 respectively, whereas those of Group 2 with classroom interaction were 6.24 and 1.64. The Sig. (2-tailed) scores were 0.72 for fluency, 0.49 for vocabulary, 1.00 for appropriacy, 0.83 for pronunciation, and 0.39 for grammar structure, with $\alpha = 0.05$. This verifies that there were no performance differences between the two groups in every feature prior to the training.

Table 1: *Pre-test scores of Group1 and Group 2*

Features	GROUP				*t*	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	1 Online		2 Classroom				
	Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.			
Fluency	1.16	0.37	1.20	0.41	-0.36	48	0.72
Vocabulary	1.24	0.44	1.16	0.37	0.70	48	0.49
Appropriacy	1.24	0.44	1.24	0.44	0.00	48	1.00
Pronunciation	1.52	0.71	1.56	0.58	-0.22	48	0.83
Grammar	1.16	0.37	1.08	0.28	0.86	48	0.39
Total 25	<u>6.32</u>	2.15	<u>6.24</u>	1.64	0.15	48	0.88

5.1 Learning through online conversation lessons and classroom interaction

Comparison between the videotaped conversations and the pre- and post-test scores obtained from the interview interaction showed that learning through online lessons and classroom interaction can both improve the learners' conversation performance. However, as shown in Table 2, the learners participating in online lessons fell behind those engaged in classroom interactions.

Table 2: *Post-test scores of Group 1and Group 2*

Features	GROUP				t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	1 Online		2 Classroom				
	Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.			
Fluency	1.60	0.71	2.16	0.94	-2.37	48	0.02*
Vocabulary	1.68	0.80	1.96	0.79	-1.24	48	0.22
Appropriacy	1.68	0.80	2.04	0.84	-1.55	48	0.13
Pronunciation	2.36	0.64	2.32	0.99	0.17	41.033	0.87
Grammar	1.56	0.71	1.96	0.84	-1.82	48	0.08
Total = 25 points	8.88	3.48	10.44	4.12	-1.45	48	0.15

*significant at 0.05 level

After the treatment, the students assigned online conversation lessons were outperformed by those trained through classroom interaction. However, significant difference was not found in all the features except fluency where classroom interaction gave the latter group the edge over those learning through online conversation lessons.

As show above, the overall mean scores from the post-test of Group1 *(mean=8.88)* were slightly lower than those of Group 2 *(mean=10.44)*, indicating that most of the learners in the two groups were similar in their performance and there were only a few students from Group 2 who performed better.

Even though the post-test conversation performance of the two groups

was not significantly different overall, the improvement in fluency was especially noticeable among the learners learning through classroom interaction with the teacher (*t =2.37, sig*= 0.02). This indicates that learners can still greatly benefit from frequent classroom interaction not only with their peers but with their teacher in the classroom. The classroom teacher in particular helped motivate them to talk, provided supportive scaffolding, and created contexts in which the learners could become familiar with language in interaction through repetitive tasks as well as giving them oral feedback. These classroom practices are all considered essential for the development of their oral fluency and overall conversation skills (Garbati & Mady, 2015).

While showing more confidence and demonstrating ability to perform self-repair in the post-test, the students in Group 1, trained through online lessons, appeared to be less fluent and accurate than those in Group 2 in responding to turns. Some delay and mistakes were observable in their turn delivery, as shown in Wa's pointed turns in excerpt 1 below. In line 2, Wa failed to verbally respond to the teacher's greeting and in line 4 she also delayed her uptake of the teacher' question in line 3. Additionally, in lines 7 and 12, Wa, from Group 1, also failed to understand the question, prompting the teacher to repeat it. Especially in line 8, the teacher even needed to provide a model answer before she was able to deliver an appropriate response to the question.

Excerpt 1 [Post-test: Foreign teacher- Student] Group1

1	T:	Good afternoon
2→	Wa:	((nod))
3	T:	What is your name
4→		(0.5)
5	Wa:	Wanida Midtongkam
6	T:	Where do you live.
7→	Wa:	((shook head))
8→	T:	Where do you live. I live in Songkhla.
9		Where do you live.
10	Wa:	Yala

11	T:	What is your favourite food.
12→	Wa:	=I (…)((smile))
13	T:	What is your favourite food.
14→	Wa:	(0.2) er: cake
15	T:	What is your favourite sport.
16	Wa:	=I like volleyballs.

Unlike the students in Group 1, those in Group 2 were noticeably more fluent. As shown in excerpt 2 below, they were able to promptly deliver appropriate and more grammatical responses to the teacher's turns. As can be seen below, Ru, a Group 2 student, promptly delivered appropriate responses to the foreign teacher's turns. Neither hesitation nor major problems were found in her speech. Despite a minor grammatical mistake in line 8, overall her response exhibited no delay and was more impeccable than Wa's in the previous excerpt.

Excerpt 2 [Post-test: Foreign teacher- Student] Group2

1	T:	Do you have any brothers and sister.
2	Ru:	I have one sister.
3	T:	What is your favourite food.
4	Ru:	=I like fried rice.
5	T:	What is your favourite sport.
6	Ru:	Badminton.
7	T:	What are you doing in you free time.
8 →	Ru:	=I like reading book.

5.2 Conversation improvement through online lessons

Shown in Table 3, online conversation lessons can significantly enhance the learners' performance in all the features such as fluency ($t = 4.43$, $sig= 0.00$), appropriacy of turn responding ($t = 4.43$, $sig= 0.00$), grammar ($t = 4.00$, $sig= 0.00$), vocabulary ($t = 4.43$, $sig= 0.00$), and pronunciation ($t = 8.89$, $sig= 0.00$).

Table 3: *Pre- and post-test scores of online group*

Features	Online Group				(post-pre) Mean Differrence	*t*	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Pre-test		Post-test					
	Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.				
Fluency	1.16	0.37	1.60	0.71	0.44	4.34	24.00	0.00*
Vocabulary	1.24	0.44	1.68	0.80	0.44	4.34	24.00	0.00*
Appropriacy	1.24	0.44	1.68	0.80	0.44	4.34	24.00	0.00*
Pronunciation	1.52	0.71	2.36	0.64	0.84	8.89	24.00	0.00*
Grammar	1.16	0.37	1.56	0.71	0.40	4.00	24.00	0.00*
Total (25)	6.32	2.15	8.88	3.48	2.56	6.03	24.00	0.00*

*significant at 0.01 level

The improvement in the students' performance was also evidenced through close analysis of the learners' talks. Nevertheless, their interview interaction with the teacher still exhibited a high degree of disfluency in their turn delivery. Besides low voice, several pauses were observable within and between turns as shown in excerpt 3, indicating hesitation and lack of fluency in turn delivery among the students trained through online conversation lessons.

Excerpt 3, *[Post-test: teacher-student] Group1*

1	T:	Where do you live.
2→	Ni:	(.)
3		I live in Yala.
4	T:	Do you have any brothers or sisters.
5→	Ni:	(.)
6		I have one brother.
7	T:	What kind of food do you like.
8→	Ni:	(.)
9		I like all kind of food.
10	T:	Do you like spicy food.

11	Ni:	=I love food
12→		(.)
13		I love °spicy° food.
14→	Ni:	(.)
15		What about you, can you eat Thai or Mexican food.
16	T:	=yes
17		yes, I can, but only if it's really
18		(.) really plain.
19→	Ni:	(.)
20		Do you eat out very often.
21	T:	=sometimes.
22	Ni:	Thank you, bye.
23	T:	=bye

Excerpt 4 below shows that besides slower on the uptake, indicated by the micro-pauses in lines 8, 11, and 13, the students in this group sometimes fell back into the native language, as seen in line 4, and they constructed turns with grammatical mistakes as illustrated in lines 2, 6 and 13.

Excerpt 4, *[Post-test: teacher-student] Group1*

1	T:	What is your name.
2→	Su:	=name is Suchada Suksawat
3	T:	How old are you.
4→	Su:	=I am *sib-see* ((tr:.fourteen))
5	T:	Where do you live.
6→	Su:	=I live Songkhla.
7	T:	What is your favourite food.
8→	Su:	(.)
9		((smile)) pizza.
10	T:	What are you doing in your free time.
11→	Su:	(.)

12	T:	What are you doing in your free time.
13→	Su:	(.)
14→		I ((smile)) read book.

5.3 Conversation improvement through classroom interaction

Seen in Table 4, the mean score differences between the pre- and post-tests were also noticeably different in the students learning conversation through classroom interaction with a teacher.

Table 4: *Pre- and post-test scores of classroom interaction group*

Features	Classroom Interaction Group				(post-pre) Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Pre-test		Post-test					
	Mean	SD.	Mean	SD.				
Fluency	1.20	0.41	2.16	0.94	0.96	6.08	24.00	0.00*
Vocabulary	1.16	0.37	1.96	0.79	0.80	5.66	24.00	0.00*
Appropriacy	1.24	0.44	2.04	0.84	0.80	5.66	24.00	0.00*
Pronunciation	1.56	0.58	2.32	0.99	0.76	4.88	24.00	0.00*
Grammar	1.08	0.28	1.96	0.84	0.88	6.06	24.00	0.00*
Total (25)	6.24	1.64	10.44	4.12	4.20	6.36	24.00	0.00*

*significant at 0.01 level

While the approach can significantly help enhance the learners' conversation performance, the degree of improvement in this group also varied among the features investigated. Fluency appeared to be the most improved feature in Group 2 (t =6.08, sig= 0.00), whereas pronunciation (t =4.88, sig= 0.00), appropriacy of turn responding (t =5.66, sig= 0.00), grammar (t =6.06, sig= 0.00), and vocabulary (t =5.66, sig= 0.00) were readily developed through classroom interaction. As suggested in Segalowitz and Freed (2004), for young learners, fluency or speech flow is easier to improve as they become more frequently engaged in authentic, meaningful conversation practice.

Compared with the results in Table 3, the degree of conversational

improvement of Group 1 learners who learned through online conversation lessons was smaller than that of the second group in all the features except for pronunciation. This suggests that although classroom interaction with the teacher is essential for the development of learners' conversation skills, online resources such as conversation lessons are still proven beneficial for their pronunciation development (Cheng, 2003; Hismanoglu, 2010). Through online lessons, the learners can repeat the conversations learned, practice, and polish speaking at their own pace.

Excerpt 5 below illustrates the post-test performance of the students engaged in classroom interaction. As can be observed, their interaction with the teacher occurs more smoothly than those in Group 1, shown previously in excerpt 4. Although the student also resorted to her first language when referring to a dish in line 11 due to her limited vocabulary range and there was some delay in her responses indicated by micro-pauses in lines 4 and 7, she still managed to perform self-repair and deliver appropriate responses in lines 7 and 9 to the questions respectively posed by the teacher in lines 3 and 8.

Excerpt 5, *[Post-test: teacher-student] Group 2*

1	T:	What is your name.
2	Korn:	=my name is Kornkamol Marttong.
3	T:	How many brothers and sisters do you have.
4→		(.)
5	Korn:	I have two brother
6→		(.)
7→		two brothers and two sisters.
8	T:	Where do you live.
9→	Korn:	=I live Songkhla (.) I live in Songkhla.
10	T:	What is your favourite food.
11 →	Korn:	=I like *kawpad* ((tr.: fried rice))
12	T:	What is your favourite sport.
13→	Korn:	=I (.) ((smile)) love. I love volleyball.

Via classroom interaction with teachers and their peers, students apparently not only became more fluent but also mastered self-repair, being able to fix their own mistakes without having to rely on the teacher.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study investigated the development of English conversation performance of Thai lower secondary school students through online lessons and classroom interaction. A rubric containing five distinct features; namely, fluency, vocabulary, appropriacy, pronunciation, and grammar was used in the assessment of the learners' performance. The results of this study suggest that while both online conversation lessons and classroom interaction can both significantly improve learners' conversation performance, learners practicing conversation through online lessons apparently have the edge over those learning through classroom interactions in their pronunciation. However, when it comes to fluency, they appear to fall behind those regularly engaged in face-to-face classroom interaction.

Accordingly, while learners can enjoy the benefits of online conversation lessons due to their flexibility and practicality, classroom interaction with the teacher remains indispensable as the source of scaffolding supports and meaningful interactions to help students to master face-to-face social interaction. Online lessons can be given to provide the learners with more opportunities to practice what they have learned and to reinforce what they have heard especially with regard to pronunciation of the target language. The teacher can therefore play the role as a guide and facilitator encouraging learners to use available technology as an aid for their language learning while they also try to create a healthy class environment which fosters interaction with others, providing them a number of opportunities to communicate in the target language.

Further studies examining the effectiveness of online conversation lessons and classroom interaction should consider learners with different levels of proficiency and

closely-supervised training may be needed for particular groups of students. The rubric used for assessing student's performance should also be made more relevant to naturally occurring conversations. Moreover, it is also worth exploring such interactional issues as sequential organization and repair.

REFERENCES

Barrs, K. (2012). Fostering Computer mediated L2 interaction beyond the classroom. *Language Learning & Technology*, *16*(1), 10-25.

Barraja-Rohan, A. M. (2011). Using conversational analysis in the second language classroom to teach interactional competence. *Language Teaching Research, 15*(4), 479-507.

Blake, R. (2000). Computer mediated communication: A window on L2 Spanish interlanguage. *Language learning & Technology*, 4(1), 120-136. Retrieved February 20, 2012, from: http://llt.msu.edu/vol4num1/blake/default.html

Brooks, L. (2009). Interacting in pairs in a test of oral proficiency: Co-constructing a better performance. *Language Testing, 26*(3), 341-366.

Brown, H. D. (1987). *Principles of language learning and teaching*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.

Brown, H. D. (2000). *Teaching by principles: an interactive approach to language pedagogy*. Longman.

Burns, A. (2008). Research in Applied Linguistics: Becoming a Discerning Consumer. Fred L. Perry, Jr. *TESOL Quarterly*, *42*(1), 157–159.

from: doi:10.1002/j.1545-7249.2008.tb00218.x

Burns, R. B. (2000). *Introduction to Research Methods*. SAGE Publications.

Carver T.K. & Fotinos S.D. (2000) *A Conversation book 2: English in Everyday Life*. New York: Pearson Education Company.

Cheng, L. (2003). Online resources and materials: what do they mean to students?. *STETS Language & Communication Review, 2*(1): 18-23.

Chun, D. M., & Plass, J. L. (2000). Networked multimedia environments for second language acquisition. In M. Warshauer & R. Kern (Eds.), *Network-based language teaching: Concepts and practice* (pp. 151-170). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Dodge, Bernie, Adapted by ILAST. (2002) *Web clinic for mathematics.* from: http://ets.tlt.psu.edu/learningdesign/onlinecontent/good_lesson

Drew, P., & Heritage, J. (1992). *Analyzing talk at work: Interactional in institutional settings*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Fall, T., Adair-Hauck, B., & Gilsan, E. (2007). Assessing students' oral proficiency: A case for online testing. *Foreign Language Annals, 40*(3), 377-406.

Foster, P., Tonkyn, A., & Wigglesworth, G. (2000). Measuring spoken language: A unit for all reasons. *Applied Linguistics*, *21*(3), 354-375.

Fujii, Y. (2012). Raising awareness of interactional practices in L2 conversations: Insights from conversation analysis. *International Journal of Language Studies, 6*(3), 99-126.

Fulcher, G., Davidson, F., & Kemp, J. (2011). Effective rating scale development for speaking tests: Performance decision trees. *Language Testing, 28*(1), 5-29.

Garbati, J. F., & Mady, C. J. (2015). Oral skill development in second languages: A review in search of best practices. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 5*(9), pp. 1763-1770. from: DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0509.01

Goh,C. C. M. (2007). *Teaching Speaking in the Language Classroom* (PP. 50). Singapore: SEAMEO Regional Language Centre.

Hall, J. K.,& Verplaetse, L.S. (2000). *Second language and foreign language learning through classroom interaction*. Mahwah, NY: Lawrance Erlbaum Associates.

Hegelheimer, V.,& Chapelle, C. (2000). Methodological issues in research on learner-computer interactions in CALL. *Language learning & Technology*, 4(1), 41-59. Retrieved May 26, 2003, from: http://llt.msu.edu/vol4num1/hegchap/ default.html

Hingle, I., & Linington, V. (1997). English proficiency test: The oral component of a primary school [Electronic version]. *Forum, 35(*2), 26. Retrieved from: http://skn.ac.th/kan2551.html

Hismanoglu, M. (2010). Online Pronunciation Resources: Hobbies or Fobbies of EFL Teachers? *IJONTE, 1*(2), 40-53.

Hui W. (2008) et al. Technology-assisted learning: a longitudinal field study of knowledge category, learning effectiveness and satisfaction in language learning, *Journal of Computer assisted learning 24*, 245-259

Hutchby, I. & Wooffit, R. (1998). *Conversation analysis: Principles, practices and applications*. Oxford: Polity Press.

Hymes, D.H. (1971). *On Communicative Competence*. University of Pnnsylvania Press.

Kern, R. (1995). Restructuring classroom interaction with networked computers: Effects on quantity and characteristics of language production. *The Modern Language Journal*, 79, 457-476

Lai,C.,& Zhao, Y. (2006). Noticing and text-based chat. *Language Learning & Technology*, 10(3), 102-120

Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative Language Teaching*. Cambridge University Press.

Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Makeh,A., & Sinwongsuwat, K. (2013). Using scripted role-play to improve oral English performance: A study of Grade six students at Chariyathamsuksa Foundation School, Songkhla. The 11th International Conference on Developing Real-Life Learning Experience: Learning Experience: Learning Innovation for ASEAN. King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Proceeding, Bangkok, Thailand.

Mayer R. (2003). Elements of science of e-learning. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 29*, 297-313.

McCarthy, M. (1998). *Spoken Language and Applied Linguistics*. Cambridge University Press.

Ministry of Education. (2008). The basic education core curriculum. B.E. 2551. from: http://www.skn.ac.th/kan2551.htm

Nunan, D. (1989). *Understanding language classrooms*. Hemel Hempstead, England: Prentice Hall.

Nunan, D. (1996).Towards autonomous learning: some theoretical empirical and practical issues. *Thinking control: Autonomy in language learning*. Hong Kong University Press.

O'Loughlin, K. (2001). *Studies in language testing: The equivalence of direct and semi-direct speaking test*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Prapphal, K. (2003). English proficiency of Thai and directions of English teaching in Thailand. *Journal of English Studies*, *1*(1), 6-12.

Richard, J. C. & Rodgers, T. S. (1986).*Approaches and methods in language teaching: A description and analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richard, J. C., & Rodgers, T. S. (2001). *Approaches and methods in language teaching* (2nd ed.). Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Salmani Nodoushan, M. A. (2007). Are task type and text familiarity predictors of performance on tests of English for specific purposes? *Asian ESP Journal*, *3*(1), 67-96.

Salmani Nodoushan, M. A. (2014). Speech acts or language micro- and macro-games? *International Journal of Language Studies, 8*(4), 1-28.

Schegloff, E. A. (2006) Sequence Organization in Interaction. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Schegloff, E. A. (2007) Sequence Organization in Interaction: A Primer in Conversation Analysis, Volume 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Seedhouse, P. (2004). *The interactional architecture of the language classroom: A conversation analysis perspective*. London: Blackwell.

Segalowitz, N., & Freed, B. F. (2004). Context, contact, and cognition in oral fluency acquisition: Learning Spanish at home and study abroad. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *26*(2), pp 173 – 199.

Shomoossi N., Moinzadeh A., & Ketabi S. (2007). Web-based English language teaching: Preconceptions from university teacher in Iran. *Iranian Journal of Language Studies, 1*(4), 249-266.

Smith E. (1988) The role of English in Thailand: Transition and Traditions. *ELT Newsletter*, Vol.4 No.1 January

Sotillo, S. (2000). Discourse functions and syntactic complexity in synchronous and asynchronous communication. *Language Learning & Technology*, 4(1), 82-119. Retrieved May 26, 2003, from: http:// llt.msu.edu/vol4num1/sotillo/ default.html

Tsang, W. K., & Wong, M. (2002). Conversational English: An interactive, collaborative, and reflective approach. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*, (pp. 212-224). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tudini V. (2002) The role of on-line chatting in the development of competence in oral interaction. *Innovations in Italian teaching workshop*, Griffith University, 40-57

Tudini V. (2010) Online *Second Language Acquisition: Conversation Analysis of Online Chat*. Continuum, London

Ussama R., & Sinwongsuwat, K. (2014). Conversation proficiency assessment: A comparative study of two-party peer interaction and interview interaction implemented with Thai EFL learners. *International Journal of Language Studies, 8*(4), 95-106.

Warschauer, M. (1996). Comparing face-to-face and electronic communication in the second language classroom. *CALICO Journal*, 13, 7-26.

Warschauer, M. (1997). Computer-mediated collaborative learning: Theory and practice. *The Modern Language Journal*, 81(4), 470-481.

Wei, Y., & Zhou, Y. (2002). Insights into English pronunciation problems of Thai students. Retrieved from eric.ed.gov.

Widdowson, H.G. (1978). *Teaching Language as communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wong, J. & Waring H.Z. (2010). *Conversation analysis and second language pedagogy: A guide for ESL/EFL teachers*. New York: Routledge.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Scoring criteria and descriptors adapted from Barraja-Rohan (2011), O'Loughlin (2001), Luoma (2004), and Tsang & Wong (2002)

Features	Scoring Criteria
1. Fluency	Excellent:5 marks Speech is effortless and students can speak fluently and manage to keep the conversation going smoothly.
	Good : 4 marks Speech is occasional hesitant, with some unevenness caused by rephrasing and grouping for word.
	Satisfactory : 3 marks Speech is frequently hesitant and jerky; sentence may be left uncompleted.
	Poor : 2 marks Speech is very slow and uneven, except for short or routine sentences; frequently punctuated by silence or long pauses.
	Very poor/ unacceptable : 1 marks Speech is so halting and fragmentary that conversation is virtually impossible
2. Vocabulary	Excellent:5 marks Students have mastered a wide range of vocabulary learned and correctly used.
	Good : 4 marks Vocabulary adequate to discuss special interest and special nontechnical subject with some circumlocution.
	Satisfactory : 3 marks A fairly wide range of vocabulary is used. Some content words are repeated several times.
	Poor : 2 marks Range of vocabulary used is fairly narrow. Some words in the student's language or Thai are used.
	Very poor/ unacceptable : 1 marks Vocabulary limited to minimum courtesy requirement.
3. Appropriacy	Excellent:5 marks Students can appropriately respond to their interlocutor's turns. Response to all questions asked with confidence.
	Good : 4 marks Response well to most of the questions asked. Continue the turn appropriately to the context.
	Satisfactory : 3 marks Response fairly well to some turns and slow to continue the talk.

Features	Scoring Criteria
	Poor : 2 marks Response very quickly then got paused after turn.
	Very poor/ unacceptable : 1 marks Mostly used many pauses to respond and take long time to response the answer.
4. Pronunciation / Comprehensibility	Excellent:5 marks Students can produce speech confidently which can be understood by their interlocutor.
	Good : 4 marks One or two words are incorrectly pronounced but meaning is not affected.
	Satisfactory : 3 marks Speak slowly and show some signs of nervousness and hence speech becomes fairly monotonous but clear.
	Poor : 2 marks Lack confidence. Speech is monotonous and unclear.
	Very poor/ unacceptable : 1 marks Most of the words are not correctly pronounced.
5. Grammar	Excellent:5 marks Grammar is correct.
	Good : 4 marks Students can employ a range of structures learned with only minor mistakes.
	Satisfactory : 3 marks One or two major errors which affect meaning.
	Poor : 2 marks Almost every sentence contains a grammatical mistake.
	Very poor/ unacceptable : 1 marks A lot of grammatical errors are made that meaning of the message is not clear.

APPENDIX B

Evaluation Form for Pre- and Post-test

Name of the student: …………………………………………..

Date of evaluation: …………………………………………..

Score Features	Excellent 5	Good 4	Satisfactory 3	Poor 2	Very poor/ unacceptable 1
Fluency					
Vocabulary					
Appropriacy					
Comprehensibility					
Grammar					

Total score (25) : …………………………………………..

Teacher's signature: …………………………………………..

Teacher's name: …………………………………………..

APPENDIX C

Oral Proficiency Interview Questions

The test is based on 10 minutes casual conversation with an English speaker on personal information and everyday topics. The tester will interview each learner with similar questions of the same topics.

Topic 1 Personal information

1) What is your name? How to spell it?

2) How old are you?

3) Where do you live?

Topic 2 Family

4) Do you have any brothers or sisters?

5) Does anyone else live at home with you?

6) How is your grandparent?

Topic 3 School

7) How do you go to school?

8) Do you have any brothers or sisters in this school?

9) Which subjects do you like the most? Why?

10) Do you study English at your school?

Topic 4 Food

11) What kind of food do you like?

12) What does your mother cook for dinner?

13) Can you tell me how she cooks it?

14) Why do you all enjoy this food most?

Topic 5 Daily activities

15) Now tell me, what do you all do when you get up in the morning?

16) What do you do in the evening?

17) What time do you go to sleep? Why?

Topic 6 Hobbies

18) What are you doing in your free time?

19) Do you listen to the radio/watch TV in your house?

20) What is your favorite program?

21) What is your favorite sport? /Why do you enjoy it most?

APPENDIX D

Sample of the Lesson

Online Practice

Topic: Interviewing   Time: 3 period/ 150
minutes

Instructions: Practice the following conversation until you are confident that you can conduct a similar conversation with an English speaker.

Objectives

    1. Students will be able to speak and give information about themselves.

    2. Students will be able to practice asking and answering questions about their name, school and where they live.

Procedure

    1. Students will connect to the internet and follow the link

URL: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwlBZc9MrJA
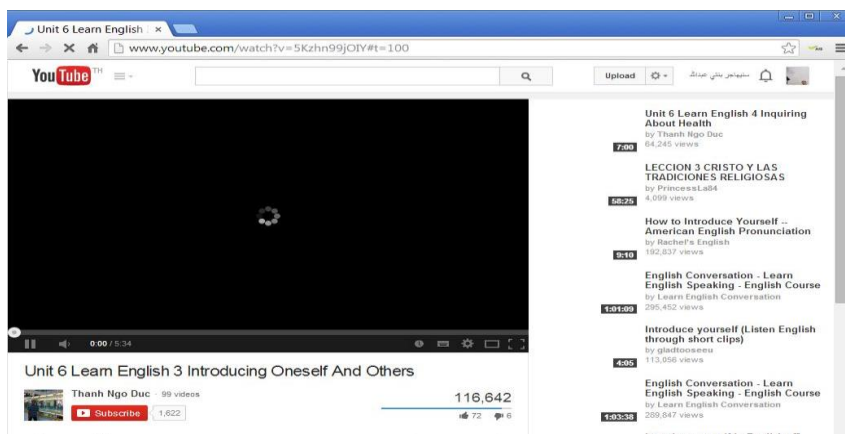
Watch the video from the link and practice.

Conversation script 1

Jenny: Good morning,

Victoria and Chiara: Hi.

Jenny: Can I have your mark sheet please.

Victoria and Chiara: Sure

Jenny:	I'm Jenny Cook and this is Ann Marine Magee.
Victoria and Chiara:	Hello
Jenny:	She's just going to listen to yours. Now, what's your name?
Victoria:	Victoria
Jenny:	Thank you. And What's your name?
Chiara:	Chiara.
Jenny:	Thank you. Chiara, what is your surname?
Chiara:	Falbo
Jenny:	How do you spell it?
Chiara:	F-A-L-B-O
Jenny:	Thank you. And Victoria, what is your surname?
Victoria :	Desvigad
Jenny:	How do you spell it?
Victoria :	D-E-S-V-I-G-A-D
Jenny:	Thank you. Victoria, where do you live?
Victoria:	I'm in Finch.
Jenny:	And do you study English at school?
Victoria:	Er, yes. Em I'm work for four hours a week.
Jenny:	Do you like it?
Victoria:	Yeah, I love it.
Jenny:	Thank you. And Chiara, where do you live?
Chiara:	I live in Italy, Rome.
Jenny:	Do you study English at school?
Chiara:	Yes, we have three hours a week.
Jenny:	Do you like it?

Chiara: A lot.

Jenny: Thank you. Chiara, What's your favorite school subject?

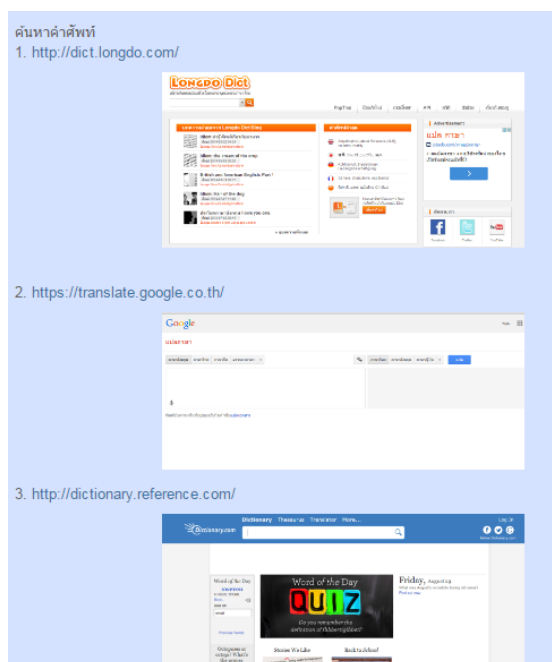Chiara: Er, I really like languages and history. And I like Maths but I really like Italian because it's all we start. We started Italian.

Jenny: And Victoria, tell us about your English teacher?

Victoria: My English teacher is old and she has studied English for twenty-years in England. So we have a good teacher.

Jenny: Thank you.

The English dictionary website as bellow:

Appendix E

Sample of the Lesson

Classroom Practice

Topic: Interviewing   **Time: 3 period/ 150 minutes**

Learning Objective

- Function   : Asking and giving information
- Vocabulary   : Introducing name → surname, spell

                     Subjects   → English, history, science, maths, art, music

                     Sport   → football, tennis

                     Country   → Italy, Germany, Thailand

Terminal Objective

1. To give information to the partner by using short information correctly.

Enabling Objective

1. To speak and exchange information about oneself and others.
2. To introduce themselves with English speaker correctly.

Sequence

Presentation

1. Teacher introduces herself to the class and then writes the phrases on the board. "Good morning, my name's… I come from…"
2. Teacher points to each student to answer the question "What's your name?"What's your surname? How do you spell it?"
3. Teacher asks students to do the conversation in pair by using the sentence prompt "What's your name? What's your surname? How do you spell it?"
4. Teacher asks one student to present in front of the class. Then asking again "What's your name? How do you spell it?" and then writes on the board.
5. Teacher says "Now, listen, I live in Songkhla, Thailand" then ask students "Where do you live?"
6. Students answer to the teacher "I live in…"

7. Teacher presents the schedule of subject in the school to the class and asks students "What's your favorite subject?"

8. Teacher asks students to look at the dialogue and tells students to listen carefully.

9. Teacher plays the CD player.

Dialogue 1A   Look. Listen and repeat.

Jenny:	Good morning,
Chiara:	Good morning.
Jenny:	I'm Jenny Cook. Now, what's your name?
Chiara:	Chiara.
Jenny:	Thank you. Chiara, what is your surname?
Chiara:	Falbo
Jenny:	How do you spell it?
Chiara:	F-A-L-B-O
Jenny:	Thank you.
Jenny:	Where do you live?
Chiara:	I live in Italy, Rome.
Jenny:	Do you study English at school?
Chiara:	Yes, we have four hours a week.
Jenny:	Do you like it?
Chiara:	A lot.

Jenny: Thank you. Chiara, What's your favorite school subject?

Chiara: Er, I really like languages and history. And I like Maths but I really like Italian because it's all we start. We study Italian.

10. Teacher tells students to listen again second time and now repeat the sentences. At the third time, teacher read each sentences and asks students to repeat after the teacher.

11. Teacher asks students to read the dialogue.

12. Teacher asks each student to prepare about their own personal information.

Practice

1. Teacher divided students into a pair to practice the dialogue.

2. Students will do an exercise 1. Filling in the blank and practice with partner.

   A: Good morning, what's your name?

   B: My name is _____

   A: what's your surname?

   B: _____

   A: How do you spell it?

   B: _____

   A: Where do you live?

   B: _____

   A: What's your favorite school subject?

   B: _____

Production

1. Teacher matched students in pairs and asked to prepare a conversation according to their answer on the exercise 1.

2. The pair will perform freely with appropriate time.

3. The interaction will be recorded.

Materials

1. Work book

2. CD

3. Dictionary English-Thai

Evaluation

1. Observation

2. Assignment and result from interview

PAPER 1

Improving English conversation skills through online conversation lessons and classroom interactions with English speakers

PAPER I

Improving English conversation skills through online conversation lessons and classroom interactions with English speakers

Hayas SANIBOO, Prince of Songkhla University, Thailand
Kemtong SINWONGSUWAT, Prince of Songkhla University, Thailand

The purpose of this study was to improve the oral English performance of Thai lower-secondary students. The participants in the study were 50 Grade 8 students from Rajaprachanukroh Songkhla Province School in academic year 2014. They were purposively sampled and divided into two groups, one learning through online conversation lessons and the other via classroom interaction with an English speaker. They were individually interviewed to assess their oral English performance before the treatments and after completing the lessons. Students' interviews and conversations practices were video-recorded for close analysis following Conversation Analysis (CA) principles and rated on the following features: fluency, vocabulary, appropriacy, pronunciation, and grammar. The research instruments employed in this study were oral communication tasks for pre- and post-tests. The research findings based on statistical and CA analyses shows that the students' oral English performance considerably improved through the use of online lessons and classroom interaction with an English speaker. The learners engaged in classroom interaction, however, became significantly more fluent and had a wider range of vocabulary than those learning through online conversations, even though their performance in pronunciation were similar. Thus, it is recommended that teachers utilize online lessons not as the sole language learning activity but as a supplement to classroom interaction to strengthen particular speech features.

Keywords: Online Conversation Lessons; Classroom Interaction; Speech Features; Oral English Performance

1. Introduction

This study compares the speaking improvement of learners using online English conversation lessons and those learning through face-to-face interaction It is aimed at determining whether there are performance differences between learners learning conversation via online lessons and those learning through face-to-face interaction with English speakers, and at discovering how each learning approach can differently benefit learners'

development of their conversation skills. The research questions are:

1) Can the employment of online conversation lessons help to improve learners' conversation skills compared to face-to-face classroom interactions with English speakers?

2) Are there any differences in the performance improvements contributed to by the two learning approaches? Which learning approach better improves the learners' conversation performance?

3) Which aspect of the learners' conversation performance can be better strengthened by each approach?

2. Background

English has long been used as a language for global communication. With the upcoming merger of the ASEAN community, its role as a global language has been even greater emphasized especially in the Thai educational system. The Ministry of Education of Thailand, in particular, has released the Basic Education Core Curriculum B.E. 2551 (A.D. 2008) as a guideline for primary and secondary levels, which enforces learning English as a foreign language from Grades 1-12. The focus has been placed on developing learners' positive attitudes towards learning the language and ability to efficiently communicate in English and use it as a medium for life-long autonomous learning (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Regardless of the level of learners, the aim is to enable them to express ideas, engage in English conversation on various topics, and search for information necessary for higher studies and future career choices. According to the current curriculum, young learners especially at the lower secondary level are expected to be able to know 2,100 to 2,250 words and talk about everyday topics such as oneself and family, environment, food and drink, health, weather and climate (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Nevertheless, according to Prapphal (2003), even though Thai students learn English from primary or even kindergarten level, many still fail to use the language with confidence in real-world speech events or when required to talk about everyday topics. Regardless of the established curriculum, it is apparently insufficient for second language learners to spend only a few hours a week learning English in classes that typically focus very little on conversation (Brooks, 2009; Wei & Zhou, 2002). Outside the classroom, they also lack opportunities to interact in English and often fail to perform essential speech acts (Salmani Nodoushan, 2014). Certainly, these hindrances can be overcome if we as teachers try hard not only to create classroom environments which involve them in more intense English speaking activities,

but also to encourage them to engage in autonomous learning afterwards. Fujii (2012) noted that as teachers allow students to share their ideas with one another and possibly generate some new vocabulary words, the adaptation to features of natural conversation will follow and this can be strengthened further as the learners are encouraged to take responsibility for their language learning by engaging in after-class tasks of their choice.

Apart from increasing classroom spoken interaction, learners are therefore encouraged to take advantage of bountiful computer-mediated language learning (CMLL) materials. Through the Internet learners of various groups can access a wide variety of target web-based English learning materials with much ease. The availability of online resources has made language practice even more convenient especially for EFL learners, most of whom have limited opportunity to get exposed to English outside the classroom. Numerous websites now offer online English conversation lessons, giving the learners the opportunity to improve their conversation skills right at their fingertips. In fact, there are numerous websites providing English conversation lessons for EFL learners' self-study free of charge.

Shomoossi, Moinzadeh and Ketabi (2007) and Barrs (2012) contend that computer-mediated language lessons can actually complement face-to-face classroom-based learning. While face-to-face learning of EFL learners remains mostly in the classroom setting and relies much on teachers' instruction, online learning can be done conveniently from inside and outside the classroom through available technology applications and language training websites with little reliance on teachers. Mayer (2003) suggests that CMLL can in fact facilitate learners in improving vocabulary skills better than face-to-face learning. Audiovisual texts provided online would allow for recurring practice and help correct learners' misunderstanding of the target language, whereas in face-to-face teaching the learners are often deprived of such opportunity and have to pay close attention to teachers.

As the objectives of interaction in second language classrooms have been shifted from solely improving students' accurate production of linguistic forms to including the active production of meaningful talk with the goal of improving their L2 fluency, it becomes especially important for teachers to understand the organization of the learners' talk and learning experiences in the classroom. Conversation analysis (CA), as originated in the works of Harvey Sacks, Emanuel Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson, has particularly started to play an important role in helping us to understand L2 learning and to investigate L2 classrooms as it offers an effective means of recording, transcribing, and analyzing naturally occurring talk-in-interaction (Seedhouse, 2004). CA is the study of recorded, naturally occurring talks to discover how social participants understand and respond to one another in

their turns at talk, with a central focus on how sequences of action are organized such that social order can be constructed and maintained. Thus, CA perspective emphasizes enabling teachers to recognize the patterns of communication that establish and maintain second language classroom interactions and to help learners to fulfill their talk in the interactions.

The language teaching material design of CA in particular presents dialogues in audio or video clips together with transcription, allowing learners to experience their authenticity while learning linguistic expressions (Wong 2002 cited in Seedhouse 2004, p. 228).

With the application of CA, teachers are also able to select authentic online conversation lessons to appropriately suit learners' needs and make the best use of bountiful online resources as supplementary learning materials for learners' autonomous learning.

Given the great number of online language learning resources today, there has however been a dearth of studies specifically assessing their effectiveness, especially in facilitating learners' development of conversation skills, compared to traditional face-to-face classroom-based teaching. Therefore, this study aims to determine whether the employment of online conversation lessons can really help to enhance learners' conversation skills compared to face-to-face classroom interactions with English speakers, and in what ways, if it can. It also attempts to unveil how each learning approach can lend itself to the improvement in different aspects of the learners' conversation skills.

3. Method

3.1. Participants

The participants of this study were 50 class 8 students from Rajchaprachanukroh 43 Songkhla province school under the Bureau of Special Education, Office of the Basic Education Commission. They were taking English as a core course of a foreign language required for secondary level students. The ages of students ranged from 13-15. They were selected by the purposive sampling method for a quasi-experimental treatment. The students were divided into two groups of 25. One group was assigned to learn speaking through face-to-face interaction with English speakers and the other via online conversation lessons.

3.2. Instruments

The instruments used in this study were lesson plans and oral communication tasks.

There were 6 lesson plans prepared by the researcher. Each lesson plan had

duration of 150 minutes including the topics of introducing oneself and others, interview, food and family.

The oral communication tasks were pre-test and post-test. In the pre-test conversation, the participants were asked about their personal information and the conversations were recorded for subsequent assessment. After the treatment students were engaged in a post-test to see individual improvement.

3.3. Procedures

The data was collected from the 50 student samples. In the beginning, the pre-test was conducted as all of the students were asked to converse with an English speaker to determine their conversation performance. The performance was assessed by an English speaker who was not the students' class teacher and videotaped for subsequent scoring by the researcher in the following features: frequency (speech flow), vocabulary (use of words and accuracy), appropriacy (turn responding), pronunciation (segmental sounds), grammar (range of structures used). The scoring rubric had been adapted from Barraja-Rohan (2011), O'Loughlin (2001), Luoma (2004), and Tsang & Wong (2002) (See Appendix). After the pre-test conversation, the students were engaged in weekly conversation lessons on the following topics: introduction and leave taking, likes and dislikes, family, and community. The training took place three hours a week over the course of four consecutive weeks. One group of the students practiced English conversation online in a computer lab with guide books containing specific instructions, conversation scripts, and exercises prepared by the researcher. At the beginning of the first session, the researcher as teacher oriented them towards the training goal. The teacher was available during their practice only to help them with technical problems, allowing them to maneuver freely through the lesson until they mastered the target conversation. The students in the other group learnt conversation on the same topics through classroom face-to-face interaction with an English teacher and they were provided only with the scripts and exercises.

There were 6 lessons prepared by the researcher for both groups. In week 5, after the students completed their training, they were engaged in a post-test conversation with the same English speaker as in the pre-test. Their conversations were videotaped and assessed by the English speaker and the researcher, using the same rubric as in the pre-test.

As shown in Table 1 below, the students in both groups obtained similar scores in the pre-test, showing that they had the same level of speaking proficiency.

Table1
Comparison between the Pre-Tests of Groups 1 & 2

	GROUP						
	1 (n=25)		2 (n=25)				
Features	M	SD	M	SD	t	df	Sig.
Fluency	1.20	0.41	1.16	0.37	0.36	48	0.72
Vocabulary	1.16	0.37	1.24	0.44	-0.70	48	0.49
Appropriacy	1.24	0.44	1.24	0.44	0.00	48	1.00
Pronunciation	1.56	0.58	1.52	0.71	0.22	48	0.83
Grammar	1.08	0.28	1.16	0.37	-0.86	48	0.39
Total 25	6.24	1.64	6.32	2.15	-0.15	48	0.88
Total 100	24.96	6.56	25.28	8.62	-0.15	48	0.88

Additionally, the videotaped conversations from both the pre- and the post-test were transcribed for subsequent comparative analysis. The comparative analysis threw light on the strong and weak areas of the students and difficulties they faced during these sessions.

4. Results and discussion

Comparison between the videotaped conversations and the pre- and post-tests scores obtained from the face-to-face interactions showed that learning through classroom interaction with a teacher and through online lessons can both improve the learners' oral performance. However, as shown in Table 2, the learners participating in face-to-face classroom interactions outperformed those engaged in online lessons.

Table 2
Comparison between the Post-Tests of Groups 1& 2

	GROUP						
	1 (n=25)		2 (n=25)				
Features	M	SD	M	SD	t	df	Sig.
Fluency	2.16	0.94	1.60	0.71	2.37	48	0.02
Vocabulary	1.96	0.79	1.68	0.80	1.24	48	0.22
Appropriacy	2.04	0.84	1.68	0.80	1.55	48	0.13
Pronunciation	2.32	0.99	2.36	0.64	-0.17	41.033	0.87
Grammar	1.96	0.84	1.56	0.71	1.82	48	0.08
Total 25	10.44	4.12	8.88	3.48	1.45	48	0.15
Total 100	41.76	16.50	35.52	13.92	1.45	48	0.15

After the treatment the students who were assigned classroom interaction performed better in all speech features except in pronunciation where both groups were equal (2.32 for Group1 and 2.36 for Group2). Even though the improvement in the conversational skills of the two groups was not

significantly different overall, the improvement in one feature, particularly fluency, was especially noticeable among the learners learning through classroom interaction with the teacher (*t* =2.37, *sig*= 0.02). This indicates that learners can still greatly benefit from frequent face-to-face interaction not only with their peers but with their teacher in the classroom. The classroom teacher in particular helped motivate them to talk, provided supportive scaffolding, and created contexts in which the learners could become familiar with language in interaction through repetitive tasks as well as giving them oral feedback. These classroom practices are all considered essential for the development of their oral fluency (Garbati & Mady, 2015).

As for the question regarding differences in performance improvements contributed to by the two learning approaches, the results showed that both approaches can help enhance the learners' oral English proficiency. However, indicated by the pre- and post-test score differences in each group, the degree of improvement varied among the features. Shown in Table 3 below, fluency appeared to be the most improved feature in Group 1, whereas pronunciation, appropriacy of turn responding, grammar, and vocabulary were readily developed through face-to-face interaction with an English speaker. As suggested in Segalowitz and Freed (2004), for young learners, fluency or speech flow is easier to improve as they become more frequently engaged in authentic, meaningful conversation practice.

Table 3
The Pre-Test and Post-Test Performance of Group 1

	GROUP 1							
	Pre-test		Post-test					
Features	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M Diff.*	*t*	*df*	*Sig.*
Fluency	1.20	0.41	2.16	0.94	0.96	6.08	24.00	0.00
Vocabulary	1.16	0.37	1.96	0.79	0.80	5.66	24.00	0.00
Appropriacy	1.24	0.44	2.04	0.84	0.80	5.66	24.00	0.00
Pronunciation	1.56	0.58	2.32	0.99	0.76	4.88	24.00	0.00
Grammar	1.08	0.28	1.96	0.84	0.88	6.06	24.00	0.00
Total (25)	6.24	1.64	10.44	4.12	4.20	6.36	24.00	0.00
Total (100)	24.96	6.56	41.76	16.50	16.80	6.36	24.00	0.00

Demonstrated in Table 4, the degree of conversational improvement of Group 2 however was smaller than that of the first group in all the features except for pronunciation. This suggests that online resources such as conversation lessons are still proven greatly beneficial for students' pronunciation development (Cheng, 2003; Hismanoglu, 2010).

Table 4
The Pre-Test and Post-Test Performance of Group2

| | GROUP 2 | | | | | | | |
| | Pre-test | | Post-test | | | | | |
Features	M	SD	M	SD	M Diff.	T	df	Sig.
Fluency	1.16	0.37	1.60	0.71	0.44	4.34	24.00	0.00
Vocabulary	1.24	0.44	1.68	0.80	0.44	4.34	24.00	0.00
Appropriacy	1.24	0.44	1.68	0.80	0.44	4.34	24.00	0.00
Pronunciation	1.52	0.71	2.36	0.64	0.84	8.89	24.00	0.00
Grammar	1.16	0.37	1.56	0.71	0.40	4.00	24.00	0.00
Total (25)	6.32	2.15	8.88	3.48	2.56	6.03	24.00	0.00
Total (100)	25.28	8.62	35.52	13.92	10.24	6.03	24.00	0.00

Close analysis of the videotaped conversations in the pre-test and post-test additionally affirmed the improvement of the young learners' conversational skills. The improvement was observable particularly in their responses to questions, turn delivery, turn size, voice volume, and self-repair as illustrated in the following excerpts obtained from the pre- and post- test interviews of a student in Groups 1 and 2 with a foreign teacher.

The pre-training interaction often showed the students' delay in turn delivery and their lack of understanding a previous turn. Excerpt 1 below illustrates the pre-test interview interaction between a student from Group 1, Rungarunee (Ru), and the teacher. The latter asked numerous general questions to elicit the student's responses. In this interaction, there are several noticeable micropauses indicating delay in the student's turn delivery, e.g., lines 2, 5, and 9. While slow on her uptake, in line 5 the longer pause also indicated Ru's lack of understanding the question; therefore, the teacher had to repeat it and initiated the answer which Ru was able to finish in a low voice in line 7. Aside from the apparent lack of confidence in turn responding, in line 10 Ru also lacked the vocabulary to finish her response in English. So, the teacher's question in line 8 was responded to in Thai.

Excerpt 1 [Pre-test: Foreign teacher- Student] Group1

1		T:	What is your name?
2			(.)
3 →		Ru:	My name is Rungarunee Churnmadan
4		T:	How to spell it?
5 →		Ru:	(0.5) ((smile))
6		T:	How do you spell your name? R U
7 →		Ru:	°R U N G A R U N°
8		T:	What kind of food do you like?
9 →		Ru:	(.)((smile))

10 →   I like.

11   T: What do you like? Fried chicken or.
12 →   Ru: = *khow-pad* ((tr:.Fried rice))

Similar problems were also found in the pre-test interview of a student from Group 2, as illustrated in the excerpt below.

Excerpt 2 [Pre-test: Foreign teacher- Student] Group2
1   T: What is your name?
2   (.)
3 →   Su: My name is Suchada Suksawatdee
4   T: Where do you live?
5 →   Su: ((smile))
6   T: Where do you live? Songkhla or Pattanee
7 →   Su: =°Songkhla°
8   T: What time do you go to sleep?
9 →   Su: ((smile)) *mai ru* ((tr:.don't know))
10   T: What time?((T show picture of sleeping))
11 →   Su: *sam tum* ((tr:.nine pm.))

The students, however, became more confident in the post-test. Shown in excerpt 3, Ru, Group 1 student, promptly delivered appropriate responses to the foreign teacher's turns. Neither hesitation nor major problems were found in her speech. Despite a minor grammatical mistake, as in line 6, overall her response was completely understandable.

Excerpt 3 [Post-test: Foreign teacher- Student]Group1
1   T: Do you have any brothers and sister?
2   Ru: I have one sister.
3   T: What is your favourite sport?
4   Ru: Badminton.
5   T: What are you doing in you free time?
6 →   Su: =I like reading book.

The students in Group 2, trained through online lessons, also showed more confidence in the post-test. While demonstrating ability to perform self-repair, as in line 6 below, they appeared to be less fluent than those in Group 1 in responding to turns. Some hesitation and mistakes were still observable in their turn delivery, shown in Suchada's pointed turns in excerpt 4 below.

Excerpt 4 [Post-test: Foreign teacher- Student] Group2

1	T:	Where do you live?
2→	Su:	=I live Songkhla.
3	T:	What is your favourite food?
4	Su:	=I like cakes and pizza.
5	T:	What are you doing in your free time?
6→	Su:	=I (.)((smile)) read book. I like reading books.

5. Conclusion

The study investigated the improvement of conversation skills through classroom interaction with an English speaker and online conversation lessons using the assessment rubric containing five distinct features; namely, fluency, vocabulary, appropriacy, pronunciation, and grammar. The results of this study suggest that online conversation lessons and classroom interactions with English speakers both are flexible and practical ways to enhance learners' conversational skills. While classroom interaction with the teacher has proven indispensable as the source of scaffolding supports and meaningful interactions to help students to master face-to-face interaction, the implementation of online lessons can also provide them more opportunities to practice what they have learned and reinforce what they have heard especially when it comes to pronunciation of the target language. A teacher may accordingly serve as a facilitator and a guide encouraging learners to engage in meaningful interaction with others and to use online conversation lessons to enhance their speaking ability.

Further studies examining online conversation lessons and classroom interaction should consider learners with different levels of proficiency and closely-supervised training may be needed for particular groups of students. The rubric used for assessing student's performance should also be made more relevant to naturally occurring conversations.

The Authors

Hayas Saniboo (Email: manisbitanghayas@gmail.com) is studying for a Master of Arts degree in Teaching English as an International Language in the Faculty of Liberal Arts at Prince of Songkhla University, Thailand. She is also an English teacher at Rajchaprachnkroh 43 Songkhla Province School.

Kemtong Sinwongsuwat (Email: ksinwong@gmail.com) has a Ph.D. in English with specialization in English Language and Linguistics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She currently is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Liberal Arts, Prince of Songkla University-Hat Yai, and has special interest in Conversation Analysis (CA), corpus linguistics, and the development of Thai EFL learners' oral communication skills.

55

References

Barrs, K. (2012). Fostering Computer mediated L2 interaction beyond the classroom. *Language Learning & Technology*, *16*(1), 10-25.

Barraja-Rohan, A. M. (2011). Using conversational analysis in the second language classroom to teach interactional competence. *Language Teaching Research, 15*(4), 479-507.

Brooks, L. (2009). Interacting in pairs in a test of oral proficiency: Co-constructing a better performance. *Language Testing, 26*(3), 341-366.

Cheng, L. (2003). Online resources and materials: what do they mean to students?. *STETS Language & Communication Review, 2*(1), 18-23.

Fujii, Y. (2012). Raising awareness of interactional practices in L2 conversations: Insights from conversation analysis. *International Journal of Language Studies, 6*(3), 99-126.

Garbati, J. F., & Mady, C. J. (2015). Oral skill development in second languages: A review in search of best practices. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 5*(9), 1763-1770. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17507/tpls.0509.01

Hismanoglu, M. (2010). Online pronunciation resources: Hobbies or fobbies of EFL teachers? *IJONTE, 1*(2), 40-53.

Luoma, S. (2004). *Assessing speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mayer R. (2003). Elements of science of e-learning. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 29*, 297-313.

Ministry of Education. (2008). The basic education core curriculum. B.E. 2551.

O'Loughlin, K. (2001). *Studies in language testing: The equivalence of direct and semi-direct speaking test*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Prapphal, K. (2003). English proficiency of Thai and directions of English teaching in Thailand. *Journal of English Studies, 1*(1), 6-12.

Salmani Nodoushan, M. A. (2007). Are task type and text familiarity predictors of performance on tests of English for specific purposes? *Asian ESP Journal, 3*(1), 67-96.

Salmani Nodoushan, M. A. (2014). Speech acts or language micro- and macro-games? *International Journal of Language Studies, 8*(4), 1-28.

Seedhouse, P. (2004). *The interactional architecture of the language classroom: A conversation analysis perspective.* London: Blackwell.

Segalowitz, N., & Freed, B. F. (2004). Context, contact, and cognition in oral fluency acquisition: Learning Spanish at home and study abroad. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 26*(2), 173-199.

Shomoossi N., Moinzadeh A., & Ketabi S. (2007). Web-based English language teaching: Preconceptions from university teacher in Iran. *International Journal of Language Studies, 1*(4), 249-266. (Old title: *Iranian Journal of Language Studies*)

Tsang, W. K., & Wong, M. (2002). Conversational English: An interactive, collaborative, and reflective approach. In J. C. Richards & W. A. Renandya (Eds.), *Methodology in Language Teaching: An Anthology of Current Practice*, (pp. 212-224). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ussama R., & Sinwongsuwat, K. (2014). Conversation proficiency assessment: A comparative study of two-party peer interaction and interview interaction implemented with Thai EFL learners. *International Journal of Language Studies, 8*(4), 95-106.

Wei, Y., & Zhou, Y. (2002). Insights into English pronunciation problems of Thai students. Retrieved from eric.ed.gov.

Appendix A

The transcription convention adapted from Seedhouse (2004) and Barraja-Rohan (2011):

.	(period) Falling intonation
,	(comma) Continuing intonation
: :	(colon(s)) Prolonging of sound
WORD	(all capital letters) Loud speech
CAP ITALLICS	Utterance in subject's L1
°word°	(degree symbols) Quiet speech
< >	Pauses of more than 5 seconds (e.g., <8>)
( )	(empty parentheses) Non-transcribable segment of talk
?	Indicates rising intonation
Bold	Emphasis
=	(a) Turn continue below, at the next identical symbol
	(b) If inserted at the end of one speaker's turn and at the next beginning speaker's adjacent turn, indicated that there is no gap at all between the two turns
	(c) Indicates that there is no interval between adjacent utterances
T:	Teacher

Appendix B

Scoring criteria and descriptors adapted from Barraja-Rohan (2011), O'Loughlin (2001), Luoma (2004), and Tsang & Wong (2002)

Fluency	Students can speak fluently and manage to keep the conversation going smoothly.
Vocabulary	Students have mastered a range of vocabulary learned
Appropriacy	Students can appropriately respond to their interlocutor's turns.
Pronunciation/ Comprehensibility	Students can produce speech which can be understood by their interlocutor.
Grammar	Students can employ a range of structures learned with only minor mistakes.

Criteria for assessment

Both groups were videotaped while having a conversation with an English speaker and rated by two assessors. Scoring criteria and descriptors for oral interaction adapted from Barraja-Rohan (2011), O'Loughlin (2001), Luoma (2004), and Tsang & Wong (2002) were employed to rate students' conversation performance. The raters were provided with the rubric with five different aspects of speaking: fluency, vocabulary, appropriacy, comprehension and grammar and the evaluation sheet was given to the raters to evaluate each student's performance. The evaluation sheet is composed of a 5-point scale: 1=very poor/unacceptable; 2= poor; 3=average; 4= good and 5= excellent.

Appendix C

Oral Proficiency Interview Questions

The test is based on a 10-minute casual conversation with an English speaker on personal information and everyday topics. The tester interviewed each learner with similar questions on the same topics.

Topic 1 Personal information
1. What is your name? How do you spell it?
2. How old are you?
3. Where do you live?

Topic 2 Family
4. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
5. Does anyone else live at home with you?
6. How is your grandparent?

Topic 3 School
7. How do you go to school?
8. Do you have any brothers or sisters in this school?
9. Which subjects do you like the most? Why?
10. Do you study English at your school?

Topic 4 Food
11. What kind of food do you like?
12. What does your mother cook for dinner?
13. Can you tell me how she cooks it?
14. Why do you all enjoy this food most?

Topic 5 Daily activities
15. Now tell me, what do you all do when you get up in the morning?
16. What do you do in the evening?
17. What time do you go to sleep? Why?

Topic 6 Hobbies
18. What are you doing in your free time?
19. Do you listen to the radio/watch TV in your house?
20. What is your favorite program?
21. What is your favorite sport? /Why do you enjoy it most?

VITAE

Name   Ms. Hayas Saniboo

Student ID   5611121070

Educational Attainment

Degree	Name of Institution	Year of Graduation
Bachelor of Arts Major in Communicative English	Loreto Collage, Culcutta University, India	2011

List of Publications

Saniboo, H.,& Sinwongsuwat, K. (2016) Improving English conversation skills through online conversation lessons and classroom interactions with English speakers. *International Journal of Language Studies*. 10(1), 111-122.

http://www.ijls.net/vol10no1.html