ABSTRACT

The purposes of the study were 1) to design a course incorporating Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach to enhance students’ productive English language skills, 2) to design a course incorporating TBLT approach to enhance students’ knowledge of TBLT approach, 3) to investigate the extent to which a course can enhance students’ productive English language skills, and 4) to investigate the extent to which a course can enhance students’ knowledge of TBLT approach. The course was designed based on the Grave’s framework of course development processes including assessing needs, formulating goals and objectives, conceptualizing content, developing materials, organizing the course, designing an assessment plan, defining the context, and articulating belief.

The sample of the study was 38 undergraduate students studying in English teaching program, Faculty of Education, Ramkhamhaeng University. The students’ productive skills (writing and speaking skills) and knowledge of task-based language teaching approach were assessed through both quantitative and qualitative assessment. For
quantitative assessment, descriptive statistics analysis of pre- and post-test scores was employed to investigate the extent to which a course could improve students’ productive English language skills and knowledge of TBLT approach. In addition, qualitative assessment was carried out through narrative inquiry including learning logs and bi-weekly focus group interviews. Data were interpreted, analyzed and verified with the inter-rater approach. The results revealed that participants’ post-test scores on productive skills as well as knowledge of TBLT were significantly higher than the pre-test scores. The factors influencing their language development were categorized into two main themes - 1) feedback and 2) personality traits and learning strategies. First, teacher feedback and peer feedback (providing and receiving peer feedback) had major influence on their language improvement. Second, personality traits (introvert and extrovert) and learning strategies (visualization, memorization, deductive reasoning, practice and monitoring strategies) also helped them improve their productive skills. The factor that helped them increase their knowledge of TBLT was demonstration.

Results from the study suggested that the TBLT course provided students with opportunities to produce or use the language through tasks, resulting in language development. Properly designed tasks suitable for the learners would create a language-rich environment for the students. The lessons and tasks should be developed with a careful consideration of students’ needs due to the fact that they have major influence on language development. In keeping with the needs expressed by the pre-service teachers for improving both language skills and teaching skills, the teacher as a researcher employed more authentic, but still controlled, practice situations which included many diverse, real-life examples. The teaching method needed to partner well with the objective of providing students opportunity to make practices authentic as they will complete activities in realistic situations. In addition, knowledge and skills were strengthened throughout the process of task completion. In
addition, it was important to note that language grammar or forms should not be ignored so that students could make their best effort to correct their mistakes for more effective communication. The feedback the students received from the teacher or peer could help them improve their language skills.