CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction
In order to seek for effective ways to improve students’ speaking proficiency in an EFL classroom, it is necessary to review existing literature and research as a means of devising more effective methods and strategies to address the challenges teachers face when teaching English in a non-English speaking country. This chapter presents (1) nature of context; (2) speaking ability for communication; (3) developing oral communication skills; (4) language teaching and learning; (5) language learning strategies; (6) communicative language teaching (CLT); (7) communicative activities (tasks); (8) motivation in learning speaking skills; (9) testing and assessing speaking proficiency; and (10) related research studies.

2.1 Nature of context
2.1.1 Language for communication
People use language for communication not only in their own community but also across the world. In using a language other than the native one, people need to use that language as a medium focusing on either spoken or written language.

In using the language competently and communicatively, learners must know the characteristics of that language. First are the rules of grammatical structure, vocabulary, as well as the language in use when people want to communicate in writing. But when speaking, people use the sounds of the language, including pitch change, intonation and stress to convey meanings. This is called paralinguistic feature which takes place outside the formal system of the language. These features fall into two broad categories: those that involve the voice and those that involve the body. Crystal (1995: 249) states that the tone of
voice may convey attitude or intention in some way while the physical features contain facial expressions, gesture and posture. It can be stated that both characteristics of the language are crucial for communication.

2.1.2 Overview of oral communication
To communicate with other people, one has to be able to use the language. In using a new language, one must learn to *speak* that new language. Of the four skills required in language learning (listening, reading, speaking and writing), speaking is considered the most difficult in particular for EFL students (Aungwattankul, 1994; Shumin, 1997). Speaking requires command of both listening and oral production. In real life, people react and communicate among each other, they misunderstand each other, interrupt, get distracted by other people or things. Not only do they use language, they also use facial expressions, gesture, and non-verbal behaviours such as eye-contact, posture and stance (Argyle, 1972). These are features of oral communication which learners from non-English speaking countries have to recognize when speaking the language.

In learning a language, oral communication is the primary concern. People need to be able to communicate with others through the oral mode. Communication is not only complex but also dynamic, systematic, and composed of simultaneous causes and effects (Porter, 1982). In real life, people act out and communicate through their oral interaction. Inside the classroom, speaking and listening are the skills most often used (Brown, 1994). In English as a Foreign Language teaching, speaking is the primary skill a learner needs to master in order to facilitate listener’s comprehension of what he/she says.

2.2 Speaking ability for communication (Speaking proficiency)
2.2.1 Definition
Many language theorists have defined the term ‘speaking abilities or speaking proficiency’ as the speakers’ abilities in communication using appropriate
vocabulary, structures, expressions in situations with non-verbal behaviours (facial expression, eye-contact, gesture, gaze and stance) while interacting with the listeners (Byrne, 1988; Richards and Schmidt, 1983; Valette, 1977). In second language learning, people must learn to use the language for different purposes. The ability to speak a foreign language (English) well is a very complex task since learners have to possess appropriateness of communicative competence, which include a number of components.

2.2.2 Components underlying effective speaking ability
In relation to communicative competence, a model was developed by Canale and Swain (1980) to account for the components of speaking ability. This model describes speaking proficiency as depending on four dimensions: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic. Grammatical competence refers to grammatical and lexical capacity. Sociolinguistic competence refers to an understanding of the social context in which communication takes place, including role relationship, the shared information of the participants, and the communicative purpose for their interaction. Discourse competence refers to the interpretation of individual message elements in terms of their interconnectedness and of how meaning is represented in relationship to the entire discourse or text. Strategic competence refers to the coping strategies that communications employ to initiate, terminate, maintain, repair, and redirect communication. These four components need to be addressed in a speaking course.

In addition, among many language theorists whose studies concern development of speaking ability, the following theorists propose the notion which is relevant to this study. Harris (1990: 84) divides the components of speaking ability into the following areas.

1. Pronunciation which includes vowels, consonants, stress, intonation and rhythm while speaking.
2. Grammar which includes the rules of the language and its implication.
3. Vocabulary which are the key components of the language that facilitate fluency.
4. Fluency which refers to one’s ability to speak fluently and in appropriate speed.
5. Comprehensibility which allows listeners to comprehend the message effectively.

Some of these components are in accordance with Weir (1993: 43), who states that there are six components which influence speaking proficiency: (1) appropriateness, (2) adequacy of vocabulary for purpose, (3) grammatical accuracy, (4) intelligibility, (5) fluency, and (6) relevance and adequacy of content.

In brief, to be able to speak a language proficiently, one must possess grammatical rules, appropriate selection of vocabulary and expressions to be employed in spontaneous situations, discourse competence and strategies in speaking that language.

2.3 Developing oral communication skills

Many scholars have provided contributions to the analysis and theory of spoken language and oral communication. Brown and Yule (1983: 3-8) define the spoken language as short, fragmentary utterances in a range of pronunciation. There is a great deal of repetition and overlap between one speaker and another, such as loosely organized syntax, the use of non-specific words and phrases, and the use of fillers.

Pattison (1987) argues that there is lack of transfer to genuine communicative interaction. She then considers a range of strategies by a selection of speaking tasks for making classroom practice more closely resemble communication outside the classroom.
Nunan (1989) presents a summary of successful oral communication skills which involves developing the following areas: ability to articulate phonological features of the language comprehensibly: mastery of stress, rhythm, intonation; degree of fluency; transitional and interpersonal skills; taking short and long speaking turns; management of interaction; negotiation of meaning; conversational listening skills; knowledge of negotiating purposes of conversation; using appropriate conversational formulae and fillers.

Backlund (1990) assigns three areas of knowledge that influence oral communication effectiveness: social knowledge, self-knowledge, and content knowledge. If any of these is weak, oral communication will be impaired. Other problems that hinder effective oral communication are: dominating the conversation, using inappropriate volume and pitch, using excessive small talk, ignoring someone, and constantly interrupting people (Newcombe, 1982).

A number of scholars in language teaching, such as Littlewood (1981), Brown and Yule (1983), Byrne (1986), Scarcella and Oxford (1992), and Dornier and Thrill (1994), have offered ideas about how to help learners achieve oral communication and how to monitor them as they develop their speaking ability at various levels. In sum, to develop oral communication skills, writers in the field propose three main elements which need to be involved for developing oral communication skills: conversation/dialogues, activities, and interaction strategies (communication strategies).

2.3.1 Conversation/dialogues
One of the biggest challenges to current language teaching methodology is to find effective ways of preparing students for spontaneous communication. One answer to this challenge is a new type of language lesson, the conversation class, whose main teaching objective is to improve the students’ conversational skills.
In spite of the growing popularity of such conversation classes, they are often not systematic enough. They have usually been put together from a variety of communicative activities. The teachers who run the courses can hardly apply these teaching techniques to their classroom. Though the communicative language teaching methodology has offered guidelines for how to create genuine communicative situations in the language classroom, it has failed to specify which conversational skills and what kind of language input the teachers should focus on.

Many people believe that informal everyday conversation is random and unstructured. Dornier and Thrill (1992) argue that conversation may take many forms and the speakers and situations vary widely, all conversation follows certain patterns. There are, for example, subtle rules determining who speak and when, and for how long. By following these rules, people in conversation can take turns neatly, and avoid overlaps and simultaneous talk.

To prevent the class from breaking down into chaos, Dornier and Thrill (1992: 21), therefore, provide the following points which are relevant to a conversation class:

1) Opening. Students need to learn how to start a conversation, for example, in greetings and introductions (e.g. *How are you? / Fine, thanks. And you?*).

2) Turn-taking. There are some suitable rules and signals to determine who talks, when, and for how long. The language classroom does not offer too many opportunities for students to develop their turn-taking rules or to practice turn-taking skills. This is very difficult for many students from cultures whose turn-taking conventions are very different from those in the target language.

3) Interrupting. This is very special point that need to be taught. Interruptions are always introduced by set phrases (e.g. *Sorry to interrupt, but.....*). Students should be familiar with these phrases which provide
polite and natural ways of performing this kind of task.

4) **Topic shift.** When the subject changes, certain conversation routines such as *Oh, by the way,...* Or *That reminds me of...* Should be produced. Students should know how to do it smoothly and some phrases are needed to teach.

5) **Adjacent pairs.** There are some utterances which require an immediate responses or reaction from the partner. For language learners, these skills require practice.

6) **Closing.** Actually, people apply a sequence of pre-closing and closing formulae to prepare for the ending of the conversation. For example, *It’s been nice talking to you* indicates that conversation ends. It is therefore important to teach closing strategies explicitly, and to raise students’ awareness of the kind of phrases they might encounter in face-to-face conversation or on the telephone.

Because of these reasons, in teaching speaking skills, teachers need to provide the learners with a wide repertoire of set expressions, phrases, and essential vocabulary to be used in conversation. Conversational skills do come automatically with the exposure to the target language. Through the use of communicative activities such as information-gap, situational role-play, and problem-solving tasks, students are likely to become better conversationalists (Dornier and Thrill, 1992: 34).

Why dialogues are taught and how? The answers are that learners are able to practice the language from dialogues as models of the given language functions. Then they can apply to be used in real communication. To develop language learners’ communicative competence in a foreign or second language, the specific and well-planned materials are needed. Dialogues are often simplistic and imitations of real life conversation, they also provide the learners with basic communicative experiences.
For these reasons, current English-speaking teaching textbooks written by native speakers and other teaching materials are based to a considerable extent on dialogues, and therefore a lot of what is happening in the language classroom nowadays is centered around instructional dialogues.

2.3.2 Activities

Various types of activities have been proposed to language teachers for implementation in the classroom. The activities that play important roles in developing speaking proficiency and that are taken as models or examples of this study are drawn from the following theorists.

Harmer (1991: 122-152) provides activities which can provoke spoken communication and are divided into seven categories: reaching a consensus, discussion, relaying instruction, communicative games which include finding differences, describing and arranging pictures, and story reconstruction which includes problem-solving, interpersonal exchange and simulation, and role-play.

Littlewoods (1995: 22-64) provides two main types of activities: activities for language functions and social interaction activities. There are four main types of activities for language functions: (1) sharing information with restricted cooperation including identifying picture, discovering identical pairs, discovering sequences or locations, discovering missing information, and discovering secrets; (2) sharing information with unrestricted cooperation including communicating patterns and picture, communicating models, discovering differences, and following directions; (3) sharing and processing information including reconstructing story sequences and pooling information to solve a problem; (4) processing information which focus on problem-solving. The second type is social interaction activities which focus on using classroom-based simulation and role-playing.
Bygate (1995: 76-84) also provides activities for developing speaking skills. There are four main types: information-gap activities; communication games including describing and drawing pictures, describing and arranging pictures, find the differences and ask the right questions; simulations and project-based interaction activities.

As activities are a key factor in helping teachers to run the teaching process successfully, two communicative activities, Information-gap and Role-play, were selected by the researcher as the main activities to be embedded in the lessons for a speaking class. Details of these choices are set in the following chapter.

2.3.3 Interaction Strategies (Communication strategies)

2.3.3.1 Definition

Interaction strategies or communication strategies refer to strategies used to communicate when the learner lacks the necessary language knowledge, for example mime or paraphrase (Hedge, 2000: 407). To develop students’ speaking abilities, interaction strategies need to be explored and defined. Long and Porter (1985) conducted a review of L2 literature on group work and showed that group work provides L2 learners with more opportunities to use that target language. Gas and Varnish (1994) define ‘interaction’ as learners engage themselves in pair and in group and perform tasks in a language classroom which allow them more opportunities to use the language. Dörnyei (1995) provides the definition of ‘interaction’ as a method of managing language classroom which students are assigned to work in small groups like pair work or group work.

The principle underlying current English language teaching (ELT) practice is that interaction pushes learners to produce more accurate and appropriate language while they are talking together in the classroom. This is the reason why pairwork and group work have become common features of CLT classroom such as in Thailand.
In order to gain strategic competence, communication strategies are necessary to be trained for learners to acquire confidence in speaking efficiently and maintain conversation longer (Dörnyei, 1995; Nimtiparat, 1993). Many studies conducted by many language theorists indicate that communication strategies can lead to success in speaking.

In relation to this study, ‘interaction strategies’ refers to strategies the students use for communication while they are having conversation with other students in class.

2.3.3.2 Types of interaction strategies
There are many types of interaction strategies, but the most relevant to this study are described as follows. Gass and Varonis (1994) offer two types of interaction: repair mechanism and negotiation of meaning which includes comprehension check, clarification request and confirmation check. Similarly Dörnyei (1995) also provides two types of interaction: appealing for help and meaning negotiation which includes comprehension check, clarification request and confirmation check.

Bejarano et al. (1997) provide two main types on two types of interaction strategies. Modified interaction strategies include checking for comprehension and clarification, appealing for assistance, giving assistance and repairing. Social interaction strategies include elaborating, facilitating flow of conversation, responding, seeking information or an opinion and paraphrasing.

A number of language theorists have put forth an array of ideas concerning communication strategies and speaking ability. Bialystok (1984, 1990) asked native speaker students to perform picture reconstruction tasks in French and reported three types of communication strategies: L1-based strategy or using first language (L1)-based strategy, which includes language switch, foreignizing, and
transliteration; second language (L2)-based strategy, which includes semantic contiguity, description and word coinage; and gaining strategies fillers or hesitation devices.

Bialystok’s types of communication strategies focus on the content of language, while Dörnyei’s focus on students’s behaviour when confronting problems in communication. However, Bialystok’s subtopics are parts of Dörnyei’s communication strategies.

Other language teaching experts have also presented various types of communication strategies (message adjustment and resource expansion strategies). Most of them are the same as or similar to Bialystok’s and Dörnyei’s. Corder (in Faerch and Kasper, 1984: 17-18) also divides communication strategies into two main types: message adjustment and resource expansion strategies. Faerch and Kasper(1984) divide communication strategies into two types: avoidance behavior and achievement behavior. The first one involves learners’ use of forms and functions of the target language; and the latter involves the use of two types of strategies: non-cooperative strategies, which include L1-L3 based strategies, transfer language-based strategies which include substitution, generalization, restructuring, and non-linguistic strategies, which include mime, gesture, sound imitation, and cooperative strategies. In sum, the categories of these writers’ communication strategies mentioned above have provided great contribution to this study.

Haastrup and Philipson (1984: 144) divide communication strategies into five categories: L1-based strategies which include borrowing, foreign sing, and translation; transferred language-based strategies which include referencing, paraphrasing, word coinage and restructuring; cooperative strategies; non-verbal strategies; and strategies aimed at solving retrieval problems. Si-Qing (1990) divides communication strategies into five categories: linguistic-based
communication strategies, which include met language, super ordinate, synonym, antonym, and componential analysis: knowledge-based communication strategies, which include giving examples, using cultural knowledge, and giving comparison; repetition communication strategies; paralinguistic communication strategies; avoidance communication strategies; transfer language-based strategies which include substitution, generalization, restructuring; and non-linguistic strategies, which include mime, gesture, sound imitation and cooperative strategies.

In applying interaction strategies in the speaking classrooms, the adaptation of conversation has been applied. Tsui (1991, 1996) suggests that comprehensible input and negotiation in second language instruction have to be considered in adapting the language use. There are six types of strategies: comprehension check, clarification request, confirmation check, self repetition, group repetition, and decomposition. In addition, Plough and Gass (1993: 39-42) present the adaptation of the use of the language as follows: confirmation check, echoes, back channel cues, clarification requests, overlaps, interruptions, and sentence completion.

Hedge (2000) provides five components of communicative language ability: linguistic competence, pragmatic, discourse, strategic, and fluency. She demonstrates an extract of authentic conversation between native speakers, which shows three aspects of competence in conversational use of language: how to perform the turns in discourse, how to maintain the conversation, and how to develop the topic. Moreover, second language learners need to acquire useful language in order to employ strategies such as initiating, entering, interrupting, checking, and confirming in conversation. She also provides communication strategies in frameworks of learners’ strategies. When learners use gesture, mime, paraphrases, and words from their own language to make themselves understood and to maintain conversation, this means they are using
communication strategies. The value of these is that they keep learners involved in conversation through their language practice.

To sum up, when a conversation is opening, the students need more than linguistic knowledge to keep it going. They need to learn to manage it by using various interaction strategies. These strategies thus need to be taught.

2.3.3.3 The use of communication strategies in speaking

In the literature concerning communication strategies, two main factors: ability in using the language and tasks were reported that they affect the use of communication strategies. In relating to the ability in using the target language, Tarone (1985: 183) reports that students with low language ability like to use topic avoidance rather than achievement strategy. This is consistent with Ellis (1985) who concludes that low language ability students prefer topic avoidance in L1 or L2 whereas high language ability students prefer paraphrasing.

Bialystok (1990) states that it is possible for speakers with high language ability to prefer L2 strategies because in using communication strategies, linguistic knowledge plays an important role and those with low language ability cannot do this. According to Bialystok, there are two components of language ability in the area of sociolinguistics: analysed dimension and automatic dimension. The former deals with knowledge of structures, while the latter is concerned with the application of that knowledge. He also gives examples of these competencies with students of varied abilities: high, medium, and low in different situations.

Hedge (2000) provides a number of strategies from a conversation between a native speaker of English and a Swedish student. The student uses various strategies such as using a Swedish word in place of the English word she does not know and gives a literal translation of it. Then she uses paraphrasing and invites co-operation from her listener through the implicit appeal for help using
gestures. She is trying to speak and finds ways of compensating for her insecure or inadequate knowledge of English.

Similar examples may be found in Ellis (1985) and Haastrup and Phillipson (1984). The advantages of using achievement strategies or taking risks with the language is clearly seen that they keep conversation going and may encourage the listener to provide the language. The question is whether these types of strategies can be learnt. Very little in current ELT materials suggest that learners receive much help in dealing with problems themselves as they try to speak in English.

Eggins and Slade (1997) provide an account of casual conversation as a site for active social work by focusing explicitly on the achievement of interactivity. This involves, firstly, a functional interpretation of dialogue as the exchange of speech functions; secondly, each ‘move’ in casual talk involves taking on a speech role and positioning other interactants in predicted speech roles; and thirdly, the sequencing of moves involves the joint accomplishment of turn-taking and exploring conversational exchanges. Their analysis illustrates the patterns of confrontation and support through conversational structure. These enable the interactants to explore and adjust their intimacy with each other, and provide evidence of the ongoing negotiation of differences. They also provide the relevance of analyzing casual conversation in EFL teaching which they claim to be extremely useful. Without the ability to participate in casual conversation, people from non-English speaking backgrounds are excluded from social intimacy with English speakers.

These analyses have presented have demonstrate that casual conversation does have a consistent and describable structure, at a number of distinct levels. Systematic descriptions could form the basis of a syllabus design for language teachers. The analyses suggest that explicit features of casual conversation can be
taught at two levels: the generic, and the micro level of the clause, move and speech function. Syllabus design can be complemented by a communicative methodology whereby the students are actively involved in practicing the task of casual talk in English.

Cook (1989) discusses conversational principles: co-operation, politeness, social basis, speech acts, declarations and performatives. She also suggests ways to teach conversation. The characteristic features of conversation include greater varieties and freedom, and a greater equality among participants than in other discourse types.

Nalasco and Arthur (1987) suggest an approach to conversation development. They divide activities into four types and give detailed and various activities within each category. The four categories are: controlled activities, awareness, fluency, and feedback. It is clear that the realization of the politeness principle in communication varies greatly from culture to culture (Brown and Levinson: 1987), particularly in interactions whose primary motive is establishing and maintaining social relationship. It is, therefore, possible to make general statements about the culturally variable implications of almost any aspect of conversation: of the significance of overlap and interruption, of repetition of offers, of phatic noises during a long turn, of the distance between speakers, of the conversational rights of women and men, old and young.

Rost and Ross (1991) indicate three main factors that affect interaction strategies: the learners’ proficiency position, the context, and their learning styles. Oliver (1998) also offers four different factors: the learners’ ability differences, their jobs, sex and age.

The implications for this present study of the information provided by the above studies are that in planning successful interaction to occur in the speaking
classroom, strategies of interaction have to be taught. Firstly, model dialogues are given in order to help students to have ability to participate. Then turn-taking is introduced in conversation exchanges. Next paraphrasing is suggested to help ongoing conversation. Finally, using gesture appropriately to appeal for help is also taught.

To facilitate the use of these strategies, pairwork and group work are organized in order to serve the students’ need to interact in the speaking practice. This means the students have opportunities to practice speaking English in the classroom. Next, the well-organized materials for the speaking class which include the designated functions of the language with communicative activities within life-like situations are required. This means students will have time to talk as if they are in real event. Spontaneous communicative activities in the form of ‘genuine communication’ (Wessels, 1987:11) enable students to achieve the ability to communicate outside the classroom.

2.4 Language teaching and learning
A large body of literature on language teaching and learning provides a number of theories on teaching methodology in the field. In this section, the review will focus on the specific teaching method and activities employed for developing speaking proficiency.

2.4.1 Teaching methods for developing English speaking proficiency
A number of language theorists provide a variety of methods for developing speaking proficiency. Richards (1990) gives two types: direct and indirect methods of teaching speaking, Byrne (1990) offers the stages of language teaching: presentation, practice and production to facilitate the teaching process systematically. Harmer (1992) provides three things to develop speaking. They are introducing new language, practice and using communicative activities.
Bygate (1993) also mentions that in developing speaking, learners should possess skills for understanding and developing their interaction skills.

Two major current thoughts have been debated on the teaching of oral communication. Firstly, the development of skills for accurate production of speech forms are focussed, while the second is on enhancing fluency through communicative tasks (Nunan, 1989). This thought enables opportunities for developing functional language use through non-controlled activities.

The question of what teaching approaches and activities best support the process involved in the development of oral communication. Current approaches are broadly categorized as ‘direct’ or ‘indirect’ (Richards, 1990). Direct or controlled approaches are those that include ‘skill-getting’ (Rivers and Temperley, 1978), ‘pedagogic’ (Nunan, 1989), ‘pre-communicative’ (Littlewood, 1981), and ‘part-skill’ practice (Littlewood, 1992), where learners focus on specific elements of communicative ability which are isolated and practiced. These activities, drills, pattern practice, structure manipulation, serve to develop skills that can be facilitated through ‘language awareness’ (Carter, 1996; van Lier, 1995) and ‘consciousness-raising’ practice (Ellis, 1993) Fotos, 1994). Such activities might involve typical structures of spoken genres, the use of feedback and the learning of metalinguistic knowledge.

Indirect approaches assume increased learner autonomy with a focus on the production of authentic and functional language use. This approach focusses on tasks, negotiation, and sharing the information. Theoretical concepts on this approach are related to ‘skill using’ (Rivers and Temperley, 1978), ‘real-life’ (Nunan, 1989), ‘communicative’ (Littlewood, 1981), and ‘whole-task’ practice (Littlewood, 1992). A wide range of activities proposed in the second language instruction to promote oral communication, including discussions (Ur, 1981), information gaps (Yorkey, 1985), role-plays (Ladousse, 1989), simulations
(Crookall and Oxford, 1990), and talking circles. These activities are typically conducted through varieties of dyadic, small-group, and whole-class interaction patterns (Byrne, 1987; Klippel, 1987). Such tasks can be utilized to enhance learners’ abilities to involve strategically oral communication needs that may arise in conversational management.

These two methodological positions indicate that the relationship between them is complex. Pedagogical processes pertaining to the development of forms and function-accuracy and fluency- will depend on different contextual factors such as learners’ language level and proficiency, teacher’s knowledge and perception of learners’ need and progression, the nature in interaction. Hence, these two broad approaches most effectively constitute a conceptual map where analytical tasks are embedded within communicative tasks with a view to learners deriving communicative goals from linguistic data (Aston 1995).

For communicative approaches, the notion is on learner-centred with student responsibility for learning, while dynamic shifts between the roles of the teacher and the students are clearly addressed. Nevertheless, types of interactional roles adopted by teachers are likely to be posted between teacher intervention and guidance in a more complex way. More extensive research in the development of oral language skills is needed to identify the relationships between explicit instruction and increasing learner independence and autonomy.

2.4.2 Activities for developing English speaking proficiency
Activities have been addressed as important tools in teaching success. A number of activities are provided as hints to language teachers. There are three types of activities: activities for language functions, social interaction activities and, activities for developing speaking strategies.
2.4.2.1 Activities for language functions
The following lists are examples of activities that help fostering language functions.

1) Identifying pictures
2) Discovering identical pairs
3) Discovering sequences of locations
4) Discovering missing information
5) Communicating patterns and pictures and models
6) Discovering differences
7) Following directions
8) Reconstructing story sequences
9) Problem solving

2.4.2.2 Social interaction activities
1) Using classroom-based activities
2) Simulation and role-play
(Littlewood, 1995: 22-64)

2.4.2.3 Activities for developing speaking strategies.
1) Information-gap activities
2) Communication games
   2.1 Describe and draw pictures
   2.2 Describe and arrange pictures
   2.3 Find the differences
   2.4 Ask the questions
3) Simulations
4) Project-based Interaction Activities
(Bygate: 1995: 76-84)
2.5 Language learning strategies
Some researchers make a distinction between learning and communication strategies (O’Molley and Chamot, 1990). These researchers say that communication strategies such as changing the topic, using gestures, or asking for help, are used to achieve communicative goals when a person runs into a problem of missing knowledge. A number of learning strategies: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective and social strategies, on the other hand, are used for learning. Oxford (1990) disagrees with this division, because communication strategies result in the person’s participation in the conversation, and thus provide the opportunities for further learning as well as communication- both of which would be cut off if the person did not use these strategies. Communication strategies, which could be considered as overlapping with learning strategies, have been studied by Selinker (1972) in his work on interlanguage, and followed by Tarone (1983), and Faerch and Kasper (1984). Oxford (1990) has shown that the whole range of learning strategies can influence learners’ speaking skills development.

In sum, in planning the teaching program, the communicative activities are to be constructed and carefully chosen to fit the learner’s level and the process of teaching in the classroom

2.6 Communicative Language Teaching (CLT)
2.6.1 Definition
In the field of English-as-a-second or a foreign language teaching (ESL, EFL), a number of teaching approaches have been developed over the time. Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), according to Savigon (2001: 13), is the identification of learner communicative needs and goals as the first step in the development of a teaching program that involves learners as active participants in the interpretation, expression, and negotiation of meaning. This approach has
been put forth around the world as the ‘new’ or ‘innovative’ way to teach English.

Hymes (1971) proposed the term ‘communicative competence’ to represent the use of language in the social context. His concern was with speech communities and the integration of language, communication and culture. He focused on language as social behaviour. Another theorist is Savignon (1972) who used the term ‘communicative competence’ to characterize the ability of classroom language learners to interact with other speakers, to make meaning as distinct from their ability to recite dialogues or perform on tests of grammatical knowledge (Celce-Murcia, 2001:16).

It can be seen that CLT derives from a multidisciplinary perspective that includes linguistics, psychology, philosophy, sociology, and educational research. The focus has been the elaboration and implementation of programs and methodologies that promote the development of functional language ability through learner participation in communicative events.

By definition, CLT puts the focus on the learner. Learner communicative needs provide a framework for elaborating the program goals in terms of functional competence. This approach has been favoured of a focus on meaning and of developing learner ability to actually use the language for communication. The more immediate the communicative needs, the more readily communicative methods seem to be adopted.

In an ESL classroom where English is the language of instruction, there is an immediate and natural needs for learners to use English. In an EFL setting, where teacher may have a language other than English in common with learners, special attention needs to be given to providing opportunities for English language experience.
With encouragement and help from the teacher in developing the strategic competence the need to interpret, express, and negotiate meaning, learners express satisfaction and even surprise by the results. The most successful teaching programs are those that take into account the affective as well as the cognitive aspects of language learning.

In planning for CLT, teachers should perhaps remember that not everyone is comfortable in the same role. Within classroom, there are leaders and those who prefer to be followers. Both are essential to the success of group activities. The essence of CLT is the engagement of learners in communication in order to allow them to develop their communicative competence. Unlike the ESL setting, an EFL setting has a challenge for greater incorporating the ‘real-world’ into classroom, which is essential for both teachers and learners. In brief, CLT is an approach that focuses on developing learner ability to use the language for communication meaningfully within varied situations.

2.6.2 Characteristics

To Littlewood (1981: 1), one of the characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it ‘pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language.’ To others, communicative language teaching may mean exercises which: (a) constitute communication challenges for students (Brumfil, 1983: 183-191), (b) look at students’ predicted communicative needs (Johnson, 1983:23), (c) use procedures where learners work in pairs or groups in problem-solving tasks (Richards and Rodgers, 1986), and (d) provide activities in which students can use the second language in unrehearsed and novel situations requiring their own creativity (Savignon, 1978).

Thus, in a communicative language teaching classroom, the purpose of communication is to bridge the information gap, to give the students the freedom to choose their own linguistic form for expressing their ideas at a given moment,
and to get feedback from an interaction (Morrow, 1981: 59-66). The role of the teacher is not a controller. He or she becomes a facilitator, an organizer of resources and a resource himself of herself, and a guide within the classroom procedures and activities (Breen and Candlin, 1980: 89-112). The format of the language classroom is student-centred or learner-centred. Students have to involve themselves in seeing, asking, understanding and expressing their ideas actively. They have more freedom in learning but in fact assume more responsibility in learning.

2.6.3 Strengths and weaknesses
Though communicative language teaching provides great contributions to EFL learning and teaching, many articles evaluating or recommending the application of communicative activities such as Information-gap and Role-play in the classroom for learning English as a second or a foreign language have been introduced. However, there were also some articles addressing the drawbacks of this particular teaching method.

2.6.3.1 Strengths of communicative language teaching
Communicative language teaching covers a wide range of classroom practices, with strong underlying principles. It provides strong support for the language teaching in EFL setting in three main areas.

1. Goal achievement in teaching
Many language theorists have provided strengths of communicative language teaching. From Richards and Rodgers (1986), communicative language teaching aims to (1) make communicative competence the goal of language teaching and (2) develop procedures for the teaching of the four language skills that acknowledge the interdependence of language and communication.
It is also claimed that role-play activities are not only adaptable to students with different linguistic competence (Porter, 1986), but are also helpful in reducing the self-consciousness of the students while they are using the language in communication (Dent-Young, 1977). In addition, role-play activities contribute to the ESL or EFL teaching as follows.

i) Provide students with an opportunity to interact in the target language. To develop their communicative competence in the very limited context of the classroom (Byrn, 1976; Johnson and Morrow, 1981; Morrow, 1981; Via, 1976).

ii) Give teachers rapid feedback about students’ needs to improve their English speaking (Tillitt and Bruder, 1989).

iii) Develop students’ motivation, confidence and willingness to take risks in using English in group interaction (Stern, 1980; Via, 1976).

iv) Facilitate acquisition of the target language as a result (Littlewood, 1981; Maley and Duff, 1982; Scarcella, 1978; Via, 1976).

Lynch (1977) also pointed out that in language teaching situations, role-play activities can be designed to teach about culture and to teach communication skills.

2. Changes in teacher role
According to Harmer (2001), the teacher needs to play a number of roles during the speaking activities. However, three important items have particular relevance if the teacher is trying to get the students to speak fluently: (1) Prompter, to help them to progress by offering suggestions; (2) Participant, in a role-play activity, for example, to ensure continuing students’ engagement and maintain a creative atmosphere; and (3) Feedback provider. This helpful and gentle correction method may get students out of different misunderstandings and hesitations. It also responded to the context of the activity as well as the language used. Additionally, for the purpose of oral fluency, while students act out the scene in
pairs or groups, the teacher can go round the class, listening, prompting if necessary, when the pairs or the groups have completed their role-plays then let students compare what happened. Moreover, Breen and Candlin (1980) describe teacher roles in the following terms

“The teacher has two main roles: the first role is to facilitate the communication process between all participants in the classroom, and between these participants and the various activities and texts. The second role is to act as an independent participant within the learning teaching group. The latter role is closely related to the objectives of the first role and arises from it. These roles imply a set of secondary roles for the teacher, first, as an organizer of resources and as a resource himself, second as a guide within the classroom procedures and activities...A third role for the teacher is that of researcher and learner, with much to contribute in terms of appropriate knowledge and abilities, actual and observed experience of the nature of learning and organizational capacities.”

Breen and Candlin (1980: 99)

After examining this, it is apparent that the communicative activities in the language classroom support social interaction which leads to improving students’ speaking abilities. Pica (1987) and Bygate (1993) provided their perspectives in teaching speaking English for communication in two items: (1) to get students to understand the content of the target language and produce it appropriately, (2) to increase interaction by allowing students to use the target language as a ‘real-life’ situation that they actually perform in the classroom.

This means that in teaching speaking skills, students should be provided the knowledge of language functions before embedding the interactive activities for
students’ engagement. That is, to bring in both direct and indirect teaching methods of teaching speaking to enable students to gain speaking abilities effectively and fluently.

3. Decreasing affective barriers
CLT provides useful teaching processes which can lessen the degree of anxiety in language teaching and in speaking class in particular. McCoy (1979) states that in overcoming anxiety in language learning, the following processes are employed systematically. Firstly, a person imagines a situation that would cause anxiety. In the language classroom, such situations are often used as an imaginary dialogue, e.g. one at the train station or a telephone conversation. Then students act out in such situational learning. Secondly, participation in real-life situation is engaged as another process to necessitate positive reaction. In the classroom, the teacher needs to create an atmosphere of trust and make students aware that the teacher as the language model needs to use the target language as much as possible.

Cognitive restructuring is another process which can take students in discussions about their feelings and rationalization concerning language learning. Such talking can become the basis for honest exchanges and the creation of trust between students and students and the teacher.

Modeling and guided participation is the third technique based on the recognition that successful performance is the most effective means of modifying anxieties. The basic principle of this technique involves arranging the environment and supporting the person so that the occurrence of anxiety in reduced sufficiently to ensure a successful experience. Two steps are involved: modeling leads students to successful interaction, and to overcome the anxieties of being able to interact successfully in the target language. It is also very difficult to master since the facial expressions and gestures are available as clues.
Techniques employed by social learning model of behavior modification to help students overcome their anxieties and to experience success instead of failure. Once the teacher understands the goals and processes of behavior modification techniques, his/her creative thinking will endless application of them.

2.6.3.2 Weaknesses of communicative language teaching

The practice of CLT although widespread, has not been without its critics. The major charges leveled against have been its artificiality (Di Pietro, 1982; Maley and Duff, 1978; Scarcella, 1978). Its scripted dialogue with highly controlled language and its unreal situations or the world of ‘Let’s pretend’ (Holden, 1981).

Like all activities in the classroom, role-play is not real. There are a number of ways of using role-play, however, which can be made quite closely realistic. For example, students might take parts as doctors, nurses, cashiers, shopkeepers, or even a neighbour, who always plays a record late at night. By creating their own reality and, by doing so, they can experiment with their knowledge of the real world and developing their ability to interact with other people. In these roles, they will feel realistic, and the activity is enjoyable and does not threaten their personality. This playing in these roles will build up self-confidence in producing the language because they take the roles in a safe environment.

In relation to the matter of scripted, dialogues with controlled language, an information-gap activity with students working in pairs seems not to be a drawback. They feel more confident in speaking the language using structures and functions that have been presented to them at an early stage of the lesson. To refute the ‘unreal-life language’ of the scripted dialogues, the teacher could introduce non-verbal features of the language (e.g. eye-contact, gestures, facial expression, and stance) to the students. These features of the language could help reducing their apprehension or providing feelings at case when speaking English.
As far as ‘unreal situations’ as students playing imaginary roles are concerned, it is close enough to their experience to participate meaningfully in a given scenario. This type of situations could not only provide students with the liberating imagination, but also with a mask of a role to help them become less fearful in speaking. However, some may feel precisely by its not being real, others find they could release their creativity by pretending to act out those roles, which increase their motivation to learn to speak.

In sum, although some comments of the CLT are mentioned, the researcher find it worth using and its weaknesses can be outweighed by bridging the gap between the classroom and the world outside.

### 2.7 Communicative Activities (Tasks)

Communicative activities are types of task in which language learners engage in the practice of the language in classroom. A task is a workplan; the form of materials for researching or teaching language (Ellis, 2000). Typically it involves some input and some instructions. In order to distinguish a ‘task’ from an ‘exercise’. Skehan (1998), reflecting a broad consensus among researchers and educators, suggests four criteria of tasks: (1) meaning is primary; (2) there is a goal which needs to be worked towards; (3) the activity is outcome-evaluated; and (4) there is a real-world relationship. There are number of communicative activities that are relevant to the speaking class.

#### 2.7.1 Types of communicative activities

Since communicative activities are the keys, language theorists provide a number of them for the speaking class. Littlewood (1981) provides two kinds of language learning activities: pre-communicative activities and communicative activities. The aim of these activities is for the learners to practice using acceptable language with reasonable fluency, and then integrate their pre-communicative knowledge and skills with whole task practice in the classroom. In his second
type of activity, tasks are divided into two kinds: functional communicative and social activities. In the case of functional communicative activities.

“…the main purpose is that learners should use the language they know in order to get the meanings across as effectively as possible. Success is measured primarily according to whether they cope with the communicative demands of the immediate situation.”

Littlewood (1981: 18)

In these tasks, learners have to overcome an information gap or solve a problem. The term ‘information gap’, according to Littlewood, means a type of activity in which one or more of the students has to get information from somewhere or someone else. Because activities are controlled by instruction and information, it seems that learners’ freedom is controlled to enable interaction skills.

Van Lier (1998) states that one of the most outstanding assumptions in L2 methodology is the existence of an “information-gap”, which is a prerequisite for communication to occur. It is an interaction based on the transmission of information from one speaker to another, involving explanations, descriptions, instructions, and so on. However, if learners examine the purposes and contexts of most of their verbal interactions during a day, they are likely to come to the conclusion that transmission of information is a very minor concern compared to such vital tasks as creating and maintaining social relationships, establishing accommodation between speaker and hearer, getting people to do things for them, making sense of the situation they are in, creating a good impression of themselves. Van Lier also suggests that classroom authenticity may not exactly mirror world authenticity, but there may be sufficient correlates for the former to be viable as a training ground for the latter.
Hedge (2000) identifies four needs in determining the characteristics of speaking activities which equip students with knowledge and skills for communication. They are: contextualized practice, which linguistic forms and communication functions are considered to be; personalizing language; building awareness of the social uses of language, and building confidence. She suggested three basic types of activity that contribute to the development of speaking skills: free discussion, role-play, and information-gap activities.

Harmer (1983) offers views of information gap activities as task types of communicative activities. In these types, students in pairs each have a card containing complementary information. Each student asks the other for their missing pieces of information as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Store list A</th>
<th>Store list B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apples 15 kilos</td>
<td>apples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bananas</td>
<td>bananas 5 kilos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pears 10 kilos</td>
<td>pears</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A: How many bananas do we need?
B: Five kilos (A writes 5 kilos on his list)
   How much pears do we need?
A: Three kilos

In his view, the second kind of communicative activity is role-play, which is usually applied in the form of controlled cued dialogues: precise turn-by-turn cueing on individual role cards. In this activity type, learners are asked to do the following: firstly, imagine themselves in a situation which could occur outside the classroom. This could range from something like meeting a friend in the street, which is rather simple, to something much more complex, such as business negotiations; secondly, learners are asked to adopt a specific role in this
situation; finally, they are asked to behave as if the situation really exists. For example;

**Cued dialogues**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learner A</th>
<th>Learner B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your meet B in the street.</td>
<td>You meet A in the street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Greet B.</td>
<td>A:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B:</td>
<td>B: Greet A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Ask B where he is going.</td>
<td>A:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B:</td>
<td>B: Say you are going for a walk.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Suggest somewhere to go together.</td>
<td>A:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B:</td>
<td>B: Reject A’s suggestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A: Accept B’s suggestion.</td>
<td>B: Make a different suggestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B:</td>
<td>A:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B: Express pleasure.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Littlewood (1981) identifies the purpose of providing both communicative meanings and correct language as: whole-take practice through various kinds of communicative activity structured to improve learners’ motivation to achieve increasing success; allow natural ease with process; and create the context which supports learning.

There are various types of communicative activities available for teachers: for example, jigsaw, information-gap, information-exchange, problem solving, role-play, and other task types. But for the EFL setting as in Thailand, the information-gap and the role-play activities are chosen. A number of factors are taken into consideration in choosing these two kinds. Firstly, for the information-
gap tasks, EFL students have the opportunity to speak English using the worksheets, which have different information to be exchanged. Secondly, they are able to practice using English in various language functions to be applied in the real world. Thirdly, classroom interaction can create a comfortable and non-threatening atmosphere in which students can learn the language. Finally, this activity type assists their language acquisition.

Role-play is another communicative activity which has been chosen for this EFL classroom instruction. Role-play is one way of giving students more time to talk. It also gives them a change of activity and takes the focus off the teacher. To do a role-play, the class is usually divided into small groups or pairs. These pairs or groups are given situations and roles to act out in order to practice the language learned. When beginning role-play the students need and want an amount of structure. Until students get used to the idea of role-play, teachers may have to set the ‘score’ and even the dialogue. As they get more used to this creative speaking activity, teachers can give students more freedom. That might mean just giving them the situation, or even just a picture, and allowing them to create the story for the picture themselves.

2.7.1.1 Learner role

In the Information-gap and the Role-play activities, the teacher creates a situation and sets an activity in motion. However, it is the learners themselves who are responsible for conducting the interaction to its conclusion. Usually, there will be several groups or pairs performing the task simultaneously. This might cause undirected activity because the learners are unfamiliar with the task of first. In preventing difficulties and tensions which could undermine students’ confidence, teachers need to warn learners gradually. For example, a group’s response to undirected activity may be tested by introducing it initially in small classes. This will develop the learners’ confidence and independence. Then, to make sure learners understand what they are required to do, activities can be selected that
make demands on the learners’ linguistic and creative abilities. These types of activities can serve as a bridge between controlled and uncontrolled language use.

2.7.1.2 Teacher role

Unnecessary involvement of the teacher in communicative activities may prevent learners from experiencing genuine situations, and hide the development of their communication skills. The teacher, therefore, can offer advice or provide necessary language items, becoming available as a source of guidance and help. Then he can monitor strengths and weaknesses while learners are performing the tasks. The teacher can take part as a helper and maintain this role without becoming dominant.

In conclusion, there are a number of communicative activities that teachers may bring into class. But in the current research, the two activities types, Information-gap and Role-play, are taken into consideration for the purposes of developing students’ speaking proficiency, particularly in the EFL classes.

2.7.2 Information-gap activities

2.7.2.1 Definition

An Information-gap activity is an activity which involves each learner in a pair or group having information which the other learners do not have. The learners’ information must be shared in order to achieve an outcome. There are three main features of this type of activity: it involves interaction which becomes less controlled by artificial conventions; it resembles communication situations learners might encounter outside the classroom; learners must draw on a wide range of skills and strategies in order to get new meanings across. At the same time, learners need to develop greater skills for managing the interaction, such as signalling disagreement or interrupting.
Many language teaching theorists have conducted research to prove the efficacy of this activity type. Doughty and Pica (1986) set up a study of “dyads”, which students worked in pairs. The study confirmed their hypothesis and seemed to indicate the usefulness of pairwork information-gap activities for language acquisition.

2.7.2.2 Procedure

Students are given different information in Student Cards A and B (worksheets) and they share this information in order to complete a task. The following example uses the information-gap to provoke the practice of specific items of language.
**Student Card A:** You and Student B have different maps.

Ask Student B where these places are:

- The Art Theater
- McDonald’s
- a men’s store
- a high school
- a library
- the Garden Restaurant
- a church
- Joe’s Café

*Notice* that some of the squares on the map are blank. Student A is told to find out where the Art Theater is, for example. Student B has the answer of course since she or he looks at the following material

Student Card B: You and student A have different maps.

Ask Student A where these places are:

- the E-Z Hotel
- a Chinese restaurant
- a record store
- a pharmacy
- the National Bank
- Burgerland

Don’t look at Student A’s map. When Student A gives you the information write the name of the place in the right place on your map.

2.7.2.3 Learner role
The role of the learner is to have a worksheet with some information, language functions to be used and some specific vocabulary and expressions.

2.7.2.4 Teacher role
The teacher needs to create a learner-centred classroom where real communication occurs. The teacher can motivate the learners by providing practical, real-life situations that the learners can apply to everyday life.

2.7.2.5 Benefits of the Information-gap
The advantages of the information-gap activities are that they:
1. encourage real communication;
2. offer learners’ interaction-information exchange;
3. assist language acquisition;
4. help develop learners’ speaking ability;
5. create comfortable/less threatening atmospheres in which to learn the target language, and
6. enable students to find different solutions to problems.

2.7.2.6 Drawbacks of the Information-gap
In attempting to communicate by using the information-gap activity, five significant limitations are found as follows.
1. It does not involve students in conversation.
2. There is a lack of negotiation of meaning.
3. The meanings learners have to express cross over into the language function. In fact, there is a wide range of communicative functions that are unlikely to occur for example, greeting, inviting, or asking permission.
4. The situations which learners are asked to perform are sometimes far from the outside world, such as matching pictures or sorting out
jumbled sentences.

5. As a result of this lack of similarity with real-life situations, the learners’ social role is not clear and becomes irrelevant to the functional purpose of the interaction.

However, to compensate for these limitations, the teacher provides a new classroom management style, allowing students to work in pairs and in a small groups of four, which creates a less threatening atmosphere in learning to speak.

Thus, the Information-gap activities needs to be extended so learners can experience a wider range of communicative needs in situations more similar to those outside the classroom under the influence of more varied and clearly defined social conditions.

2.7.3 Role-play activities

2.7.3.1 Definition

Role-play is a type of communicative activity, in which a learner plays a part as somebody else in a specific situation. Ladousse (1987) views role-play as a quite simple, brief and flexible activity. In role-playing, the participant is representing and experiencing some character types known in everyday life (Scarcella and Oxford, 1992).

Role-play ranges from simple dialogues on role cards to more complex simulations (Ladousse, 1987). What they have in common is that the setting, the situation and the role, may be constructed by the teachers or drawn from textbooks. While taking on a variety of roles, students will be able to practice language according to the setting, the formality of the situation, the degree of politeness or emotion required, and the function required for a particular role, such as persuading, discussing, complaining, and inviting.
2.7.2.2 Procedure

The role playing procedure described here adopted from Ladousse’s (1987) format applied to ‘The job interview’ Ladousse describes factors in role plays. These factors are: level, time, aim, language, organization, preparation, warm-up, procedure, follow-up, remarks and variations. Various role-playing exercises are then described in terms of these factors. ‘Level’ indicates the minimum (and sometimes maximum) level at which the activity can be carried out. ‘Time’ may depend on whether students need to read article, or reports. ‘Aim’ indicates the broader objective of each activity, such as developing confidence or becoming sensitive to concepts expressed in language. ‘Language’ indicates the language the students will need, such as structures, functions, different skills, an understanding of register, or intonation patterns. ‘Organisation’ describes whether the activity involves pair work or group work, and, in the latter case, how many students should be in each group. ‘Preparation’ indicates anything that needs to be done before class. Warm-up involves ideas to focus the students’ attention and get them interested.

Procedure involves a step-by-step guide to the activity. Richards (1985), for example, recommends a six-step procedure for role-playing: preliminary activity, a model dialogue, learning to perform the role-play with the help of role cards, listening to recordings of native speakers performing the role play with role cards, follow-up, and repeating the sequence. However, many role-playing procedures do not follow these steps. Follow-up indicates activities that are done after the activity, perhaps as homework. Remarks may be of general interest or may be warnings about special difficulties that may arise. Variations can be used with different types of class or different levels.

In terms of speaking skills, role-play usually provides a chance to involve all students in practice. It can provide equality of opportunity for practice when roles have equal significance. It also encourages interactive skills which depend on
how the interaction is structured by the group or by the teacher. The role-playing method meets Skehan’s (1998) four criteria for task-based instruction: meaning is primary; there is a goal which needs to be worked towards; the activity is outcome-evaluated; there is a real-world relationship. An ‘ice breaking’ game such as ‘the Famous People’ described by Ladousse (1987) can introduce students to simple role-playing. In his simple guessing game, a student volunteer adopts the role of a famous person. Other students ask questions of the volunteer in order to guess his or her identity.

Sadow (1987) gives an interesting example of student and teacher activities in a simple role play. The teacher tells the class that they are extraterrestrials who, for the first time, are coming into contact with earthly objects such as toothbrushes, watches and keys. The participants must draw conclusions about the objects’ functions. This role play stimulates students to use their imagination and challenges them to think and speak as well.

Students have some new responsibilities in role play that they might not be accustomed to. Burns and Gentry (1998), looking at undergraduate learning experientially, suggest that some students have not been exposed to experiences requiring them to be proactive and to make decision in unfamiliar contexts. They recommend that instructors understand the knowledge level that students bring to the scene, and pay close attention to the introduction of the exercises so that students do not become discouraged. This advice seems more relevant for L2 Learners, who may be from a culture in which teacher-centred classrooms are the rule, and who may have knowledge gaps that make the role play difficult and threatening.

As Littlewood (1981) mentions, the classroom is often an artificial environment for learning and using a foreign language. In monitoring classroom interaction,
four approaches to exploiting the environment as a social context for foreign language use are provided:

1. using the foreign language for classroom management,
2. using the foreign language as a teaching medium,
3. conversation or discussion sessions, and
4. using dialogues and role-plays.

2.7.2.3 Learner role
Traditionally, learner roles have been specifically defined in the role-play method, either through verbal instructions or role cards. However, Kaplan (1997) argues against role plays that focus solely on prescriptive themes emphasizing fields of vocabulary, as they do not capture the spontaneous, real-life flow of conversation. Perhaps a better model for learner roles in the role playing method is Scarcella and Oxford’s (1992) ‘tapestry approach’. Learners, according to this approach, should be active and have considerable control over their learning. The students should help select the themes and tasks and provide teachers with details of their learning processes.

2.7.2.4 Teacher role
The teacher defines the general structure of the role play, but generally does not participate once the structure is set. To quote Jones (1982), ‘…The teacher becomes the controller, and controls the event in the same way as a traffic controller, helping the flow of the role play. Again, this is consistent with Scarcella and Oxford’s (1992) principles. Rather than a traditional, teacher-centred classroom structure, the teacher keeps a low profile and students are free to interact with each other spontaneously. This reduces student anxiety and facilitates learning. Also, the teacher must take on some additional responsibilities in role play. In particular, the teacher must keep learners motivated by keeping the material relevant, creating a ‘tension to learn’ (Burns and Gentry, 1998).
2.7.2.5 Benefits of Role-play
Outstanding characteristics of the Role-play activities on EFL speaking classroom are as follow.

1. Role-play promotes effective personal relations and social transactions among participants.
2. A wide variety of experiences are brought into the classroom through role play. Students can be trained in speaking skills in any situations.
3. Students can be put in situations in which they use and develop the forms of language necessary in social relationships.
4. Role-play can prepare students for specific roles in their lives; for example, people prepare themselves to work or travel abroad.
5. Role-play helps shy students participate in the activity.
6. Role-play develops fluency in speaking the language, which promotes interaction in the classroom and increases motivation.
7. Teachers and students share responsibility for the learning process.

2.7.2.6 Drawbacks of Role-play
Though the Role-play activities have strong support on the speaking class, some limitations occur as follow.

1. In situations outside the classroom, learners will need to satisfy a much wider variety of communicative needs, arising from the events of everyday life.
2. Learners will need to cope with a greater variety of patterns of interaction. These may vary from the formal interview, with a tightly controlled structure, to the informal gathering,
where everybody competes on an equal basis for turns to speak.

3. Learners will need to become involved in different kinds of social relationships, for which different kinds of language will be appropriate.

4. There can be difficulties in asking students to take on roles. The teacher can take action as a facilitator in managing the class.

5. Students may not be able to empathize with the role they choose or are given. Again, the teacher can provide more suggestions on this event.

6. Role-play creates a degree of distance between the reality of the students’ own roles in life and the fantasy of the role imposed.

(Hedge, 2000: 280)

To compensate for these drawbacks a change was made in the role. A well-planned classroom activities, the teacher needs to focus on the students. To achieve success to speak, he/she needs to break the students up into pairs and in small groups, and provides students with support while they perform the activities.

### 2.8 Motivation in learning speaking skills

Various studies have found that motivation is very strongly related to achievement in language learning (e.g. Gardner, 1980; Gardner and Lambet, 1972). The following reviews on motivation in relation to teaching English speaking skills is explored and discussed.

Two distinctive kinds of motivation: integrative and instrumental motivations, have recently been concentrated in connection with language classroom. The
‘integrative’ relates to the desire of the learners to integrate themselves with the culture of that language, while the ‘instrumental’ relates to the ability to use that language effectively (Crookes, 2003: 128).

From Keller’s (1983) theory of motivation, there are four major determinants of motivation: interest, relevance, expectancy, and outcomes. Interest refers to positive response as a result of which learners’ curiosity is aroused and sustained. Relevance is a prerequisite for “sustained motivation and requires the learners to perceive that important personal needs are being met by the learning situation” (Keller, 1983: 406). Expectancy refers to what learners think they are likely to succeed and think they control their own learning. Outcomes are activities which result in as the motivating forces to attract the learners to engage in tasks.

Gardner (1985) defines motivation in the language learning context as the combination of effort and desire to achieve the goal of language learning, plus the development of favourable attitudes towards learning the language. Thus, according to Gardner, attitude is a component of motivation which is considered as one of the main determining factors in success in developing a second or foreign language.

Gardner and Lambert’s research was conducted in Canada where French is regarded as a second language; then people need French for social, economic and professional reasons and hence the learning situation might affect the students’ proficiency and their motivation to learn (Dörnyei, 1990; Oxford and Shaearin, 1994). In the situation where a language is studied as a foreign language, and students do not have to use it for social and communicative functions within the community (Oxford, 1990), there was evidence that motivation was relevant, as revealed in the study by Dörnyei (1994). Dörnyei (1994) investigates this integrative and instrumental theory and argues that in foreign language learning situations, integrative motivation might be less relevant because the language is
learned in the place where it is not typically used as a medium of ordinary communication. Dörnyei suggests that instrumental motivation and the need for achievement are associated with each other. These two factors particularly affect foreign language learners at intermediate level and above (Dörnyei, 1990).

Among many motivational subsystems, self-efficacy and self-confidence are described in relation to teaching speaking proficiency. According to Bandura (1986), self-efficacy is a cognitive view of motivation which refers to personal beliefs about one’s capabilities to learn or perform at a designated level and it is also related to developing learner autonomy. Oxford and Shearin (1994) state that goals, expectancies, and self-efficacy affect performance because they lead an individual to persist longer at a task and exert more effort. Self-confidence is a motivational subsystem which is used to refer to the belief that one has about their ability to produce results, accomplish goals or perform tasks completely. Self-confidence in using the L2 is operationally defined in terms of low anxious affect and high self-perceptions of L2 competence (Clement et al., 1994:442). Thus self-confidence includes language use anxiety, which is regarded as a cognitive aspect (Dörnyei, 1994: 277). Self-confidence is regarded as a major motivational subsystem in foreign language situations (Clement et al., 1994:441-443).

In summary, motivation appears to be a key factor to consider in encouraging the learners in the speaking class. This perspective plays important role in teacher’s planning the activities and adopting the materials carefully to achieve the goal of the teaching program for this study.

2.9 Testing and assessing speaking proficiency

The testing of speaking is often thought of as the most challenging of all tests to prepare, give and score. In an oral test, a learner speaks and is assessed on what he/she says. This type of test can be used alone or combined with tests of other
skills. There are variations on the oral test model. Some models incorporate more than three people, some have fewer. The most common type of oral test involves two people, the learner or the speaker, and a person who is both listener and assessor (Underhill, 2001).

In order to assess learners’ speaking proficiency, pronunciation is an important aspect that can identify the speakers’ identity/nationality. Sound production can create comprehension between the speaker and the listener. Stress and intonation also play important roles in English speaking.

Besides, in testing students’ oral ability, teachers need to keep in mind that the development of language ability includes successful interaction in that language, and this involves comprehension as well as production. Setting oral performance task is essential for students. The tasks should elicit a behaviour which truly represents the students’ speaking abilities. Then these abilities can be scored validly and reliably.

A number of issues are investigated in constructing an oral test, the design, the procedures, test-takers, assessor or marker, time, and how it is to be marked. Oral tests involve a subjective judgment by one person or another. They are likely to be less reliable; when we test a person’s ability to perform in a foreign language, we want to know how well they can produce and communicate with other people, not with an artificially constructed object called a language test.

2.9.1 Testing methods
A number of language testing theorists (Heaton, 1990; Hughes, 1992; Underhill, 2001; Ur, 1996; Weir, 1990; Wongsothorn, 1995) provide ways to assess speaking or oral skills using various methods. There are two ways in testing and assessing speaking proficiency: direct and indirect methods. The most outstanding ones are: interviews, pictures, tapes, and short talks. Heaton (1990),
for example, states that pictures are very helpful for testing speaking skills. Students have to describe them orally. This method is often best to use in an assessment it has been claimed although it is very time-consuming. Secondly, map can be used for testing students’ speaking ability to give directions. If they are tested in pairs, one student can be required to give directions while the other follows these directions and traces the route on his maps. Oral interviews are the most involving communication in testing speaking; they are an excellent way to be assessed both listening and speaking in a natural situation. Detailed descriptions of methods are as follows.

### 2.9.1.1 Direct methods

Three main types of direct methods in testing speaking skills are as follow.

1. **Pictures**
   i) Pictures for descriptions
   ii) Pictures for comparison
   iii) Sequences of pictures
   iv) Pictures with speech bubbles (Heaton, 1990: 59; Ur, 1996: 125-28)
   v) Using a picture or picture story (Underhill, 1994: 45-66)
   vi) Problem-solving (Ur, 1996: 125-28; Wongsothorn, 1995: 72)
   vii) Using pictures, tables, figures, then let students describe, explain, compare, reasoning, predict, or imagine (Wongsothorn, 1995: 73)

2. **Interviews**
   i) Oral interview using maps, asking questions or testing students in pairs
   ii) Interaction by allowing students with examiner/interlocutor or students with students format (Heaton, 1990: 60)
   iii) Oral presentation
   iv) Using sentence repetition
v) Mini-situation on tape
vi) Information transfer, e.g. narration on a series of pictures
   (Weir, 1993: 48)
vii) Role-play

3. **Tapes**
i) Students make a short tape as a follow up to an activity done in the classroom.

ii) Using tapes is advantageous as it allows an assessor/teacher to listen and compare students’ oral presentations over and over again.

iii) Students speak freely onto the tape.

iii) Using tapes allows the teacher to set up evaluation scales for assessing students. (Teacher might note down the pronunciation errors or language difficulties a student has and use the notes when giving feedback to the students).

### 2.9.1.2 Indirect methods

In this type of testing, scores are used to interpret the speaking performance. As Harris (1990) suggests the following stages: (1) let students repeat sentences or words; (2) let students read short sentences; and (3) change the sentence patterns. Wongsothorn (1990) also proposes the scores to count by using the multiple-choice, matching and understanding dialogues. This method of testing is inappropriate for testing speaking skills since the scores cannot measure the performance.

### 2.9.2 Assessing methods

#### 2.9.2.1 Criteria in assessing speaking proficiency

To evaluate students’ oral skills, a standard set of criteria for assessment is needed. The criteria of a speaking test should cover the knowledge of the
language in all areas of the following aspects. That means a teacher will have to decide what to evaluate and stick to these criteria for all students.

Harris (1990) proposes the following criteria: (1) pronunciation; (2) grammar; (3) vocabulary; (4) fluency; and comprehensibility. Underhill (1994) also provides criteria in assessing speaking proficiency: grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation and stress, style and fluency, and content. Each level contains the characteristics of speaking ability.

The teacher can evaluate students using the methods based on several relevant criteria set up in advance. The scale of 1-5 might be set up for evaluation in the following areas.

1. **Accuracy**
   How accurate was the student in using English? What difficulties did he or she have?

2. **Fluency**
   How easily did the student carry out the conversation? What difficulty did he or she have?

3. **Pronunciation**
   How easily understood was the students’ pronunciation? What pronunciation problems did he or she have?

4. **Listening comprehension**
   As listening is an important part of a communication situation you also need to evaluate how well your student understood what you have been saying. How accurate were the students’ answers to your questions? What difficulties did he or she have?

5. **Range**
   How wide a range of vocabulary or expression was the student able to demonstrate? (Weir, 1990: 42)
2.9.2.2 Marking speaking tests

In order to avoid tension and nervousness, it is appropriate not to mark the test in front of the students, and they should be reassured that they are going to be assessed on what they say rather than how they say it.

Testing students in pairs would help ease this tension (Hughes, 1987; Underhill, 2001). A task to perform in pairs or in groups would be able to demonstrate students’ ability to use language naturally for a real purpose. Even though this kind of test is very time-consuming, it is the most efficient way to gain an idea of students’ real speaking abilities.

However, it is very difficult to grade oral ability in a language progress test. Grammatical accuracy and fluency are important problems to be considered. Also, it is hard to interpret the students’ performance in scoring. Consequently, using a rating scale is strongly recommended for grading students’ performance on speaking tests.

The rating scale containing short descriptions of each grade in the scale is used. When a teacher has to grade a student’s speaking ability, she simply reads through the scale and chooses the most appropriate description for the particular student. In other words, it is much better for a teacher to produce their own scale, which will be more suitable for their students and purposes (Heaton, 1990).

The following is an example of an individual scoring sheet: an example of ‘Fluency’ might be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Band 1-1.5</th>
<th>Uses memorised sentences, searches for words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Band 2-2.5</td>
<td>Speaks haltingly; can handle some very common questions without hesitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Band 3-3.5</td>
<td>Can have conversation on simple topics without too many distracting hesitations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Band 4-4.5  Speaks to questions with few hesitations; shows flexibility and independence in speech
Band 5+  Holds rather fluent conversation with few linguistic distractions

In the present study, the researcher adapted the 5-band scale from the language test which was administered by ORIC, by adding some elements of non-verbal behaviours such as eye-contact, gestures, stance and posture. (Appendix A6)

2.10 Related Research Studies
2.10.1 Research in Second language teaching and learning

In this section, the researcher chose research that its findings contribute to the teaching methods leading to the improvement of students’ speaking abilities, such as the research on learner strategies by Naiman et. al. (1976), which gave an insight into how learners use strategies to deal with language tasks. Wenden (1978), who is interested in learner strategies, thinks that one of the goals of the research on learner strategies is to produce an autonomous language learner because this will guide the development of learner training activities so that students become more efficient at learning and using the language, and capable of self-directing their own learning. This opinion is adopted in this study in the section on its methodology.

Second language research has shown that interaction between learners helps classroom organization. Long et. al. (1976) reports that there is a significantly greater number of student pedagogical moves, social skill behaviours, and rhetorical acts in group work than in a teacher-fronted classroom. Doughty and Pica (1986) performed a similar quasi-experimental comparison between teacher-fronted and group work on a problem-solving task. They used a “required” information exchange task. The interactive behaviours were comprehension checks, confirmation requests, clarification requests, repetitions,
repairing, and reacting acts. They found these behaviours were significantly more frequent in the group activities requiring information exchange than in the teacher-fronted classroom. This was different from their finding in 1985, where teacher-fronted work had slightly more conversational adjustments than the optional information-exchange task in groups. Even in the comparison for task effects in the group condition, the required information exchange had more conversational adjustments.

Chaudron (1995) provides a factor in interaction-questioning strategies—as a means of eliciting more or less learner speech. Mitchell (1981) studied EFL classrooms and found a high positive correlation between learner proficiency and speaking. It is difficult to determine what constituted the speaking activities observed. Learners’ speaking activities were likely composed of freer responses to questions as well as more drill-like interaction.

To sum up, when seeking to design the activities which can help the development of speaking ability, factors that affect the learners’ speaking abilities should be considered (Oxford, 1990). Firstly, learners should be provided with an opportunity to interact with more proficient peers and native speakers. Then, fluency and accuracy activities need to be organized and applied to the classroom. Finally, strategies of speaking skills must be taught. Students need to participate in the widest possible range of situations with a variety of speakers who can help them develop their language proficiency. Paired and small group activities increase the amount of meaningful and interesting interaction and greatly multiply the number of opportunities available to speak English (Long et al., 1976; Long and Porter 1985).

In relation to teaching strategies, Cohen (1995) and Cohen (1996) studied the impact of strategy training on a group of 55 foreign language students at the University of Minnesota. The researchers sought to identify the effect of explicit
instruction in strategies on speaking proficiency and the relationship between reported frequency of use of strategies and ratings of task performance. They were also interested in how students characterized their rationale for strategies use while performing speaking tasks.

In the study, three experimental groups received the same instruction as three comparison groups. In addition, the experimental groups were given explicit instruction in the application of speaking strategies to the skill of speaking. On the question of whether strategy training made a difference on task performance, they found that the experimental groups outperformed the comparison group on two of the three post-test tasks used in the experiment. While the researchers argue for the beneficial effect of strategy training, they point out that the results were complex and in some cases not easy to interpret.

A number of classroom studies have been conducted by many scholars in the area of second language teaching. Brown (1984) conducted experiments with communication activities in Scottish schools. The aim was to find out what kinds of activities promoted development of oracy, and also to find reliable ways of assessing students oral proficiency on the basis of interaction with peers rather than the usual oral interviews or tests. Brown found that similar work was done by Dickson (1982), who merged sociolinguistic and experimental methodology in an effort to study communicative contexts created by different communication games in the classroom.

Doughty and Pica (1986) conducted a quasi-experimental study to investigate the nature of classroom interaction in the new language using Information-gap task in three kinds of organization. In this study, the independent variable was class organization: teacher-fronted, groups (of four students), and pairs. Students attending regular classes in a university ESL program were assigned randomly to the three classes. In the teacher-fronted class, the teacher read out the instructions
and stayed to run the class and complete the task; in the group and pair-work classes, the teacher gave out written expressions and left. The dependent variables were amount of interaction (measured by the number of turns taken by all the participants), quality of interaction (the proportions of interactional modification such as comprehension and clarification checks and confirmations), and accuracy on task. The task set in all the classes was to plant a garden using a feltboard and a number of icons of garden features such as flowers, flower beds, lawn, patio and garden equipment, according to instructions which required some interactional decision-making. The hypothesis was that interaction would differ in amount and quality according to the class organization adopted.

The results showed that both amount and quality of interaction did differ between the three treatment groups. Briefly, there was more interaction in the teacher-fronted class than in pairs, and more in the pairs than in the groups. There was more modification through comprehension and clarification checks in the groups and pairs than in the teacher-fronted class. This study illustrates the neatness of an experimental approach, though the interpretation of the experiment is not clear because too many issues remained uncontrolled.

Pica (1988) studied the language produced by mixed pairs of native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) of English working on various communication tasks. She found that in 95% of cases the NS indication of a comprehension problem-the “negative input”- led to the NNS making their next contribution comprehensible, and that in nearly half the cases the NNS was able to produce the correct form. Nobuyoshi and Ellis (1993) further looked for evidence of longer-term effects on learning from story-telling tasks. They found that some learners were able to self-correct when they were asked to clarify what they had said, and that they did not make the same errors on a similar task a week later. More recently Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Paninos, and Linnell (1996) have come to a similar positive conclusion. Their study was, again, a comparison of NS-
NNS and NNS-NNS pairs, but in a non-classroom setting. They concluded that, although learners’ interaction was found to provide less quantitatively rich data for L2 learning than interaction between learners and NSs, it did offer data of considerable quality, particularly in the areas of feedback (Pica et al., 1996: 79)

The studies cited here, and others reviewed in Lightbow and Spada (1993) and Pica (1994), suggest that learners can be pushed to produce more accurate language by the demands of classroom speaking tasks, especially those involving information-gap. In fact there is a branch of classroom-centred research which has conducted some interesting investigations into types of tasks likely to stimulate interactive language use. In an early study, Long et al. (1976) found that small-group work prompted students to use a greater range of language functions than whole-class activities. Doughty and Pica (1986) found that there was more negotiation of meaning in activities in which the exchange of information was essential for the successful completion of the activity. Duff (1986) discovered that problem-solving tasks prompted more interaction than debating tasks.

Nunan (1989) hinted that the distinction between real-world and pedagogic tasks may be more apparent. In Long’s (1985) approach to course design, tasks start out as pedagogic, but gradually work towards the in-class simulation of real-world behaviours. Pedagogic activities such as problem-solving may look artificial, particularly in terms of their content; however, under closer analysis, students are practicing enabling skills such as fluency, discourse and interactional skills, mastery of phonological elements and mastery of grammar. Shehadeh (1991) conducted a classroom study of learners of English interacting with NSs and fellow NNSs in pairs and small groups. What he found was that the learners tended to correct their output in terms of pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary in response to negative input from a task partner, no matter whether that partner
Kitano (2001) studied anxiety in the College Japanese language classroom by investigating two potential sources of anxiety in oral practice. They were: (1) an individual students’ fear of negative evaluation and (2) his or her self-perceived speaking abilities. The study found that: (1) an individual students anxiety was higher as his/her fear of negative evaluation was stronger and the strength of his tendency dependent on the instructional level and the experience of going to Japan; (2) and individual students’ anxiety was higher as he/she perceived his/her ability as lower than that of peers and native speaker; (3) the anxiety level of male students became higher as their competence reduced; and (4) the fear of negative evaluation and the self-perceived speaking abilities did not interact to influence the anxiety level of an individual student.

In sum, the results of many studies cited above have provided contributions to this present study in terms of managing the English speaking classroom, particularly in EFL setting.

2.10.2 Research in language teaching in Thailand

Most research conducted in Thailand seems to be interested in areas of achievements of the four language skills, and communication strategies. The following section presents research findings in language teaching in Thailand, which are relevant with this present study.

Ton (1989) studied communication strategies in English of fourteen Thai undergraduate students from the Faculty of Science, Mahidol University. These students were divided according to their language ability levels: high and low. They were asked to describe certain pictures to their American teachers. Four major findings were found: (1) communication strategies which Thai students
used are: asking for help, paraphrasing, avoidance, borrowing, asking for explanation, context, direct translation and mime; (2) the two groups of students did not use different communication strategies, but they used different types of communicative situation. Students with low language ability used avoidance, word borrowing, direct translation, and mime, more than students with high language ability; (3) the most effective communication strategies were mime and paraphrasing; and (4) factors affecting the effectiveness of communication strategies were high comprehension rates of native speakers and basic knowledge used to introduce themselves.

Another example study was conducted by Nimtiparat (1993), who studied the development of communication strategies in speaking skills of four first-year students at King Mongut Institute of Technology Thonburi, using communication strategies. The study focused on using words or mime. There were two activity types: word-mime games, and describe and draw tasks, used in order to assess communicative ability. The pretest-posttests were applied, and the different communication strategies students use in communication were surveyed. The results of the study illustrated that students were able to develop their communication strategies in speaking skills, particularly describing through words or mime. The results also showed the pretest and the posttest scores. Moreover, students expressed their attitudes towards communication strategies training. It can be observed that students were more confident and motivated to learn English when they were able to use description and mime strategies. Also, cooperative learning among students helped increase their abilities in communication strategies.

After the National Education Act 1999 in Thailand, Prapaisit (2003) studied changes in teaching English after learning reform has been proposed. Learner-centred approach is mainly focused in the language classrooms. The finding are: (1) it was found that policy makers, distributors, supervisors and teachers has
similar definitions of a learner-centered approach. Learning and teaching activities were designed to meet learners’ needs and interests. However, they all had different concepts of this perspective in terms of the implementation of a learner-centred approach in the classroom. (2) The policy makers emphasized five major roles teachers should take in order to meet learners’ differences. On the other hand, the Ministry of Education had its own interpretation of this approach. (3) Based on a classroom interaction patterns, it was found that none of the three teachers used group work or pairwork, which is the most important feature of CLT.

In brief, the results in language teaching in Thailand forshadowed background information of the current situations that are in need of change.

2.11 Chapter Summary

In summary, the review of literature and theories on the development of speaking proficiency cited above offers invaluable contributions for the current research. It illustrates methods and techniques for the researcher to investigate the efficacy of two communicative activities, Information-gap and Role-play, in the Thai language classrooms. Moreover, classroom management in an EFL setting is challenging in that skills in organizing students, preparing the materials, designing the activities and changing relationships between students and teachers are highly required. The researcher as teacher, then, established a plan of action for conducting this research study. Process and methodology are described in Chapter Three.