What is an "effective" activity in the second language classroom?

Master's Thesis Language and Education

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CONTENTS

1. Introduction

This paper studies people's perception of activities in the second language classroom and actual practices at school. I chose this topic because it is important to examine the role which a certain kind of activity plays in language teaching. At the same time, we should be critical of what has been done in the classroom; teachers have tried out so many kinds of activities aiming to foster students' language skills, but are they aware of how those activities have exactly worked? I chose to focus on output activities because they are one of the classroom experiences where both teachers and learners are involved and interact with each other. I thought this means that people have various kinds of personal experiences regarding the language learning, and would help me to understand the teachers' and learners' perception. The analysis of people's experiences will allow me to examine the effectiveness of classroom activities.

The motivation for this study originally comes from my personal experience as an English learner and an English teacher. The standard curriculum of English in Japanese public schools has not given learners enough opportunities for output, as it focuses on input. As a result, when I was a student, I had a certain amount of knowledge about English grammar and vocabulary, but I was not confident in my oral communication skills in English because of the lack of output practice. Later, when I was learning Spanish at university, I joined the Spanish-speaking drama club. It allowed me to practice output, which significantly helped me develop overall Spanish skills. From that experience, I started to believe that output is the key to learn a foreign language. Therefore, I have always tried to carry out various kinds of output activities since I started to teach English to secondary students in my country. I certainly felt that some of the activities were very useful for my students to improve their English communication skills. Especially, presentation was helpful. On the other hand, I found some activities not very helpful for the learners. I was not very sure about the reason why some activities were very useful and the others were not, while being aware of some possible reasons. This experience made me start thinking of the elements that produce an effective and useful output activity in the classroom.

Consequently, the research question of this paper is: "what is the best output activity in the classroom? and how can we decide on this?" The hypothesis is that an output activity is regarded "effective" when it includes the following four steps: input, input processing, output, and strategies. The hypothesis is based on an argument from the article "the English lessons that help the development of L2 learners' interlanguage" by Iwanaka (2012), who says that a helpful activity in the second language classroom has four linguistic steps:

   1. Input: learners take linguistic "samples" of the target language.

   2. Input processing: learners select the things that are necessary for them out of the input samples. The production of this process is called "intake". Intake includes two steps. The first is to understand the meaning. The second is to understand the syntactic elements, namely how

the language is used.

    3. Output: this is the act of producing language. It includes lower-level output such as drills without communicative context, and higher-level output with the context where learners have something to communicate. Both are necessary for learners.

    4. Strategies: The use of strategies such as rephrasing, giving examples, and using gestures, is essential for a successful communication. Learners get used to the use of those strategies through output activities, and the language items are acquired through the use of strategies.

    I believe the argumentation by Iwanaka makes a lot of sense, because each step can provide learners with beneficial components, and the combination of the four ensures language acquisition. In this thesis, I am going to study various kinds of classroom activities and see whether they include those steps. By doing this, I will try to figure out criteria that decide on a "good" output activity in the second language classroom.

    This thesis project is significant for two reasons. Firstly, it will help language teachers to make lesson plans. As I mentioned, many English teachers, especially in Japan, do not necessarily have enough ideas or have not been trained on how to conduct an output activity because their English education has not focused on those activities. However, many of them are already aware that they should spend a certain amount of time on output. Then, what is happening is that the teachers are planning and implementing those activities depending only on their limited personal experience or their assumption. This is one reason why I believe that there must be a guideline that helps teachers to design more useful lessons for their students. Secondly, there are not many studies that refer to several kinds of output activities and make a comparison between them, although there have been a lot of studies which discuss one specific classroom practice. This study will look at the features of several activities in order to make a comparison based on the same evaluation points (the four steps mentioned above). This will make it easier to see the difference between each activity and help teachers to choose the best option to achieve their goals.

    This thesis consists of the literature overview (section 2), the description of the methodology which I employed to implement questionnaire and interview (section 3), and the discussion of questionnaire result and interview results (section 4), followed by a conclusion (section 5). In the literature overview, I summarize four theoretical background which seem to be relevant to the analysis of classroom activities: the process of producing output, the functions of output in second language learning, how to measure language proficiency, and psychological aspects of language learning. Those four theoretical background are used to analyze the results of the questionnaire and interview, which were conducted in order to collect data regarding peoples' personal opinion on classroom activities. Finally, in the conclusion part, I answer my research question "what can be the best output activity in the classroom? and how can we decide on this?"

2. Background

I begin this section with the definition of the term "output" in the second language classroom. Then, I discuss the process of our language production. It is beneficial for us to understand this process because it gives us some hints to think of an effective activity in the classroom. In addition, I will mention the characteristics of bilingual output. Furthermore, the three functions of output in second language learning will be discussed. They confirm that output is a key in learning languages, and will enable us to have an insight into how to organize output activities in the second language classroom.

2. 1. "Output" in second language acquisition

According to Muranoi (2011), "output" in second language acquisition can be defined as the act of producing the target language in order to communicate a message. Also, the language production itself is sometimes regarded as "output". The output in second language classroom started to draw attention when Swain (1985) argued for the significance of comprehensible output. She studied the input-output relationships in a French immersion program for English-speaking children. In her study, the children's grammatical competence, the ability to produce coherent and cohesive texts, and sociolinguistic competence to use socially appropriate language in a given situation were assessed. She made a comparison between the three abilities of immersion students and those of native-speaker students. She concluded that there was a significant difference between the two groups, and it was because of the lack of output, even though the immersion students had received plenty of input for as many as seven years. After this study was presented, more and more people started to perceive that output plays a key role in second language acquisition.

What exactly is happening when people produce an output? Regarding the oral output, Levelt (1989) showed the process of output in his production model. According to the model, the first step of output is the conceptualization. In this step, "the intentions the speaker wishes to realize are adapted in such a way that they can be converted into language." (De Bot, 1992: 4) The outcome of this step is often called 'preverbal message'. The second step is the formulation. The preverbal messages are transformed into a speech plan and then, sentences are produced through the selection of vocabulary and lexical units. The lexical items here consist of grammatical encoding and phonological encoding. The last step is the articulation. In this step, the speech plan is converted into actual speech. After the articulators receive information from the formulator, it activates the phonatory organs and articulates oral production. This is the way how an output is produced.

In general, the production model describes the normal and spontaneous linguistic production by an adult in their native language. When thinking of bilingual output, Levelt's model is still applicable, but there are some specific points to be considered. Firstly, according

to De Bot (1992), Levelt argues that the conceptualizer is language specific. This is because concepts are different in each language. For instance, as for spatial reference, English makes only one distinction such as *here* (proximal) and *there* (distal), but Spanish distinguishes three points such as *aquí* (proximal), *ahí* (medial) and *allí* (distal). Because of these kinds of differences, the preverbal message should be different depending on the language even if it comes from the same speech intention. This implies that for a successful bilingual communication, the speaker needs to be aware of language-specific concepts.

The second point is about the storage of words, or the lexicon. As De Bot points out, "information about the words in a speaker's language is stored in the mental lexicon" (1992: 9). The right lexical items to convey the intended meanings are retrieved from the storage. Concerning the question of how the bilingual lexicon is organized, a lot of research has been conducted. It has not been easy to answer the question because it seems various factors play a role in how the words are stored. According to De Bot (1992), the most likely explanation among the options to explain storage of two languages by Paradis (1987), is the "subset hypothesis" because it is in line with Levelt's model. It assumes that all the lexical items are stored in a single storage system and connections between elements are strengthened when they are used together repeatedly. Therefore, it is natural to presume that items from one language are more strongly connected to each other than two items from different languages. At the same time, in bilingual speakers who employ code-switching, the connections between elements across different languages are supposed to be as strong as those between elements within one and the same language. In fact, as De Bot (1992) argues that one of the most predominant characteristics of a non-balanced bilingual is having problems with the lexical retrieval. Accordingly, to strengthen the link of lexical items between different languages is a key for language acquisition. One needs continuous training to make the connections of lexical items stronger.

The third point of the bilingual output is the phonological aspect of language production. Levelt argues that syllables are the smallest units of articulation. The production of a word consists of syllable programs. As De Bot (1992: 15) says, "syllable programs are stored for articulately patterns", so the speaker does not need to generate syllables from scratch every time they produce a word. Although the number of syllable programs varies from language to language, there are some syllable programs which are the same for several languages. In that case, they are stored as one particular syllable program. At the same time, the ones which are specific to languages are uniquely represented. This storage of syllable programs is what Levelt calls internal model. He assumes that speakers have an internal model of the syllables which are supposed to be produced. The model gives the speaker an idea about how to adjust the articulation system in order to produce particular sounds. The existing collection of syllables is extended when the speaker acquires a new language. Therefore, the quality of articulation in second language depends on the amount of exposure to the target language, and the extent to which the speaker can represent subtle differences of language-specific syllables.

As I mentioned above, there are some additional steps in output in the second language. However, Levelt's "speaking model" is still the basis for understanding the process of bilingual output. The model is helpful for us when thinking of an effective activity in the classroom. First of all, as Muranoi (2011) points out, the starting point of language production is to have a message to communicate. In other words, learners are not motivated to produce an output until they have a strong message. This means that output activities need to give a reasonable context to the learners, and it should be interesting enough to motivate them to have a certain message. Next, the model shows that lexical knowledge is essential for the formulation of preverbal message. Therefore, output activities in the classroom should be something that provides learners with opportunities to develop their vocabulary. Finally, the model implies that the process of formulation and articulation should be automatized for smooth language production. In case of native speakers or advanced bilingual speakers, those steps are generally automatized, but it is not easy for learners to reach that level. Thus, output activities should be designed to promote the automatization of those steps.

2. 2 The four functions of output in second language learning

In this section, I discuss the functions of output in second language learning. According to Swain (1995, 2000) and de Bot (1996), output in second language learning has four fundamental functions. The first function is the noticing role. Swain argues that, in producing the target language, learners may realize some of their linguistic problems, such as what they do not know or know only partially. In other words, they notice the gap between what they want to say and what they are actually able to speak. This allows learners to know what specific language item they need to learn. Especially, when the learners are aware of a certain element to fill the gap, their selective attention is directed to it during further input. It will trigger cognitive processes that generate new linguistic knowledge, or that enhance their existing knowledge. This is how output fulfills the noticing function.

Secondly, output has the role of hypothesis testing. It has been argued that learners' spoken production is a type of hypothesis held by them about how the target language functions. Therefore, it is often the case that learners say something to test their hypothesis. If learners feel that their message is understood by the other party, their hypothesis is confirmed, and if they feel the message fails to be understood, they realize that their hypothesis was not correct. In fact, as Swain (1995) argues, learners often modify their output in response to conversational moves. For instance, Pica (1989) demonstrated that over one-third of learners' speech was modified in accordance with clarification requests or confirmation checks during the conversation. This means that learners are always seeing what works and what does not by looking at the feedback from the other party, and they try to make their production "more correct" through their self-corrections. This process of modification can help second language acquisition.

Thirdly, output allows learners to control and internalize linguistic knowledge. This is called metalinguistic function. When learners are given an opportunity for output, they are supposed to process their message syntactically in order to produce something they want to say. It makes learners focus on language form rather than meaning. Also, learners are encouraged to reflect on language form, which cannot be experienced in input process. This contributes to consolidation of the linguistic knowledge of learners.

Finally, output enhances fluency. As the saying "practice makes perfect" shows, the more output a learner produces, the more smoothly it is done. De Bot (1996) calls it automatization of the knowledge. It refers to the phase where learners have a good command of the target language and they are not conscious of grammar or vocabulary while producing output. This process is essential for a learner to become an independent communicator in the target language.

The four functions discussed above confirm that output plays an important role in second language acquisition. To understand those functions could help us to implement output activities in a more effective way because we can see in what way the activity supports learners' language production.

2.3 Complexity, Accuracy, and Fluency

A classroom activity can be considered effective or helpful for learners when their proficiency is enhanced by the activity. So how can we examine the learners' proficiency? A lot of researchers (e.g. Skehan 1998; Ellis 2003, 2008; Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005) have argued that second language proficiency is multi-componential, and that the principal dimensions are complexity, accuracy, and fluency. According to Housen and Kuiken (2009), this triad, henceforth CAF, has been used as performance descriptors to assess oral and written production as well as barometers of learner's proficiency underlying their performance. Also, it has been used to measure progress in language learning. The concept of CAF comes from a distinction between fluency and accuracy. The distinction was made in 1980s to investigate the development of oral proficiency in second language classroom. It was argued that fluency-oriented activities would foster spontaneous oral production, while accuracy-oriented activities were supposed to help grammatically correct production in the second language. It was in 1990s that the third component, complexity, was added to the triad by Skehan (1989). Since then, the three dimensions have been working as principal measures of learners' proficiency.

There is a common recognition as for the three dimensions. First, complexity is usually characterized as "the extent to which the language produced in performing a task is elaborate and varied" (Ellis 2003: 340). The term refers to properties of language task, and to properties of performance in second language, which is often interpreted in language features such as items and structures, or (sub)systems such as phonological and morphological ones. Second,

accuracy is defined as the ability to produce oral output with no errors. Regarding this definition, we have to note that it is often difficult to identify errors, since there are many non-standard usages in some social contexts. Both complexity and accuracy are considered to be relating primality to representation of knowledge of second language. Finally, fluency is defined as ability to process the L2 with rapidity like a native speaker, or it is often characterized by perceptions of easiness, eloquence and smoothness of output. Ellis (2003: 342) describes fluency as "the extent to which the language produced in performing a task manifests pausing, hesitation, or reformulation". In short, the term "fluency" is thought to be relating mainly to learners' control over their linguistic knowledge.

The understanding of CAF is beneficial for this study because the measurement of learners' proficiency is closely connected to how effective an activity is. We can examine whether a certain activity is good to develop learners' proficiency once we know what proficiency exactly means. The three dimensions will be used to analyze aspects of certain classroom activities in the discussion section.

2.4 Psychological aspect of language learning

The support for learners' motivation is one of the important aspects of teaching. How can teachers motivate learners through classroom activities? The Self-determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (2002) argues that the satisfaction of human's three basic psychological needs: the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness, encourages the optimal motivational traits and states of autonomous motivation. They say it also leads to social and personal development of human beings. Consequently, Iwanaka (2012) claims that classroom activities should be designed to meet those three basic needs. In fact, there have been some studies that show the importance of support to satisfy the psychological needs. For instance, the experiment implemented by Deci et al. (1999) demonstrates that people's intrinsic motivation for the target activity was enhanced when their choice was respected and their feelings were acknowledged. This shows the support for autonomy worked to intrinsically motivate them.

Within the implementation of classroom activities, autonomy could be supported by providing learners with an opportunity for making a choice. When learners have things to choose themselves, or they are allowed to plan their learning themselves, their need for autonomy can be satisfied. In respect of the need for competence, it is important for teachers to create a situation where learners can feel they are competent. If the need for competence is not satisfied, people lose intentionality or motivation. This state is called *amotivation* (Deci and Ryan, 2015:488). People tend to be *amotivated* when they feel they are not competent enough to do something. This will make the learning ineffective. Iwanaka (2012) points out that some Japanese universities are recently trying to teach basic English to their students, who haven't been very successful in learning English at secondary school, and most of their attempts are not successful. This is because the attempt does not support their need for

competence. Those students have already recognized they are not competent in English, so their feeling of incompetence is reinforced when they are taught the same fundamental content as at secondary level. This results in *amotivation*, and never encourages learners to learn the language. In terms of the need for relatedness, it could be satisfied when learners are paid enough attention and mental or physical resources are given to them. A good relationship with teachers or other learners can let a learner feel satisfied with respect to relatedness. Iwanaka (2012) says relatedness is often recognized as the feeling of being given by others.

Psychological aspects of language learning are helpful for this study because the effect of an activity is closely connected to learner's motivation. The Self-determination Theory tells us what learners' motivation consists of. It will allow us to have an insight to make activities more useful for learners.

3. Methodology

This section gives the details regarding the methodology used in this research. I will discuss the content of questionnaire, followed by the procedure of interviews I carried out with the teachers at Amity International School Amsterdam, where I worked as an intern for 5 months.

3.1 Questionnaire and its analysis

I conducted a questionnaire to examine the activities that learners and teachers found useful. I got 69 participants aged from 20 to 66. 28 of them are foreign language teachers. The participants' native languages were varied, such as Japanese, Dutch, English, and Spanish. The questionnaire asked the participants to indicate their opinion (useful, sometimes useful, may not be very useful, not useful) on six different output activities in the second language classroom. It also asked for the reasons or specific examples that made the participants think so. The questionnaire focused only on oral output, although the term "output" includes both oral production and written production. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, oral production is more closely connected to learners' real-life experience and that makes it easier for learners to evaluate whether a certain activity is helpful or not. In addition, the oral activity has a wider variety than written activity does. It allows me to make a comparison between several kinds of activities, which is helpful to distill the characteristics of a useful activity for learners.

The six activities mentioned in the questionnaire were: to chat about everyday topics, to answer questions that are related to the content of a text, to summarize a text or to give your own thoughts on a text, to make a presentation or a speech with preparation, to debate a social topic with both preparation and ad hoc dialogues, and to act in a dramatic performance. I give the features of each activity below.

To chat about everyday topics: this refers to conversation practice in the classroom. It is often used as a warm-up at the beginning of the lesson. One popular way of conducting this activity is that the teacher asks learners random questions, and another way is that learners make small groups and converse together on open topics. The learners are not required to get prepared for this activity, and the interaction usually takes place based on ad hoc speech. Their speech is not evaluated.

To answer questions which are related to the content of a text: this activity is a combination of reading/listening comprehension and oral interaction. First, learners are given a text and they read or listen to it. Then, they are asked some questions about the content of the text. In case of reading material, learners are often allowed to look back on the text when answering the questions. The questions are sometimes addressed to a certain person in the classroom, or open to anybody. Also, this activity can be conducted individually, on a one-to-one basis. In any case, learners' responses are based on what the text says. Therefore, the answers are almost the same no matter who answers.

To summarize a text or to give your own thoughts on a text: this is a combination of reading/listening comprehension and output. After the reading or listening, learners are required to summarize the content while paraphrasing it, as well as to give their own opinion about the content. Although their responses are based on the text, the learners' production is frequently varied because it depends on their own evaluation and their word choice.

To make a presentation or a speech with preparation: this activity usually includes three steps, planning, preparation, and presentation in public. When presentation or speech is used as a teaching material, the topic is often given and there are some requirements such as the number of words, speech time, and equipment. It forces learners to plan and organize their own production. After the planning, the learners are in the preparation phase, which allows them to revise the script and do rehearsals. Finally, they present their productions in public. During this activity, teachers have quite a few opportunities to give feedback to the learners. For instance, teachers can help students in their preparation by giving some advice. Also, it is common to give feedback after the public presentation.

To debate a social topic with both preparation and ad hoc dialogues: in this activity, learners are given a topic related to social issues and are told to discuss the topic from the positive side or negative side. This aspect requires some particular steps. First of all, the participants must do enough research to understand the topic. If they don't understand the topic, they cannot prepare the argument to convince the other party. Next, once the debate begins, the participants are asked to interact sufficiently. They need to present their argument, which has been prepared, and at the same time, they should listen to the other party and think of a

counterargument on ad hoc basis. In addition, the new argument should be convincing enough. At the end of the debate, one of the two sides is picked as a winner, so teachers can take advantage of the opportunity to encourage the participants to reflect on their language production during the activity.

To act in a dramatic performance: this activity is usually done in small groups. It has two options at the starting point. The first option is that the script is produced by the learners themselves. In this case, the process of production often includes group discussion, which may not be done in the target language if the learners share a native language. The other option is to use a ready-made script. Once they have set up or get a script to act out, they start rehearsals. It usually takes a certain amount of time before the quality of performance is good enough to be performed. The rehearsals contain two steps, which are the memorization of lines and acting practice. After that, finally, they present the performance in public. The performance is often evaluated.

The motivation of the choice of these six activities was based on the hypothesis, which stated that an "effective" output activity in the classroom should include "input", "input processing", "output", and "strategies". I picked activities which contain those steps in different ways. For instance, chatting about everyday topics seems to require strategies for a smooth communication, but does not require much input and input processing because the dialogue is unprepared. Also, the amount of output is sometimes limited, depending on leaners' proficiency. On the other hand, making a presentation requires enough preparation, which means the learners experience much input and input processing. In addition, during the preparation of a presentation, learners need to think of the strategies to convey the content. In this way, the six activities on the questionnaire have distinct qualities. The distinction is a key to analyze each activity.

Why does the questionnaire help to examine the effectivity of classroom activities? One explanation would be that learning languages is often a subjective and personal experience. It is supposed that each learner has a particular perspective on learning languages, depending on their own experiences. Therefore, the analysis of their personal experiences will lead to understanding of the effectiveness of activities. If a learner feels an activity is helpful, there should be a specific reason that makes the learner feel so. That is why I analyze the participants' individual comments while not putting much emphasis on the options (useful, sometimes useful, may not be very useful, not useful) chosen by the participants.

3.2 Interview

I carried out an online interview with a teacher working at Amity International School Amsterdam. The language of instruction at the school is English, and the students' native

language is varied. The interviewee is a French teacher for Middle Years (11-14 year-olds). Her French lessons are mainly targeted to beginners. I asked her questions related to her view on classroom activities, her actual practices in the classroom, and the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, which is implemented at the school. She agreed that the interview would be recorded and the data from the interview would be used in this paper.

4. Result

This section shows the results of the questionnaire and the interview. The questionnaire part gives an overview of responses, followed by outstanding comments given to support the choices.

4.1 Questionnaire result

Table 1 shows the overall result of the questionnaire. I split the participants between teachers (28 out of 69) and non-teachers (41), and graded their opinion on the activities by giving 10 to "useful", 8 to "sometimes useful", 6 to "may not be very useful", 4 to "not useful", and 2 to "I have no idea". The numbers in the table are the average grade of each activity.
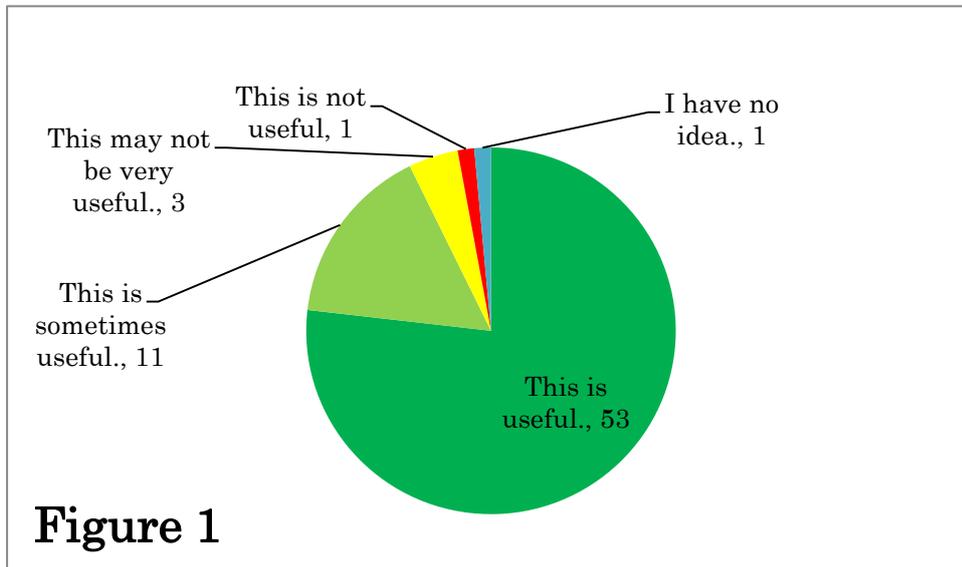
	Teachers	Non-teachers	Overall
1. Chatting about everyday topics	9.5	9.15	9.28
2. Answering questions about a text	8.66	8.8	8.75
3. Summarizing a text	8.66	8.95	8.84
4. Presentation	9.16	9	9.06
5. Debate	8.75	8.75	8.75
6. Dramatic performance	7.58	7.95	7.81

Table 1 Teachers' and non-teachers' evaluation on the activities

It turned out that "chatting about everyday life" was the most favored activity in total, while "acting in dramatic performance" was the least favored. In addition, there are slight differences between teachers' and non-teachers' opinions. "Chatting" and "presentation" were supported more by teachers than the others, while "answering questions", "summarizing", and "dramatic performance" were preferred by non-teachers. In the following part, I elaborate on the questionnaire outcome in detail.

Activity 1 (A1). To chat about everyday topics

Figure 1 summarizes the responses given to this first activity. As we can see in Figure 1, 53 out of 69 people (77%) answered that "to chat about everyday topics" was useful. We have to note that some of them thought of "chatting in everyday life", not the one in the classroom, because there are several comments that refer to their experience of learning languages through everyday conversation when living and working abroad. However, it seems that many people find it helpful to chat about easy topics, without preparation.

Figure 1

What made them judge this activity for the most part as useful? Their comments demonstrate two features of this activity. The first is its nature of improvisation. They say *"talking about personal issues not just memorized scripts (is useful)."* and *"We do this without preparation so we have to think ourselves. It can help us acquire the language."* The second point is that the activity is often personalized, as a person says that *"if you talk about everyday topics, students might feel they are viewed as individuals outside the classroom since these topics they might engage in, are also taken seriously."*

On the other hand, people who did not answer that "this is useful" point out two negative characteristics of the activity. The first is the limitation of topics and the language use. The comments *"students might tend to speak only about this kind of topics, and keep conversations rather superficial"* and *"it is possible that the learners always say the same thing while using the language they already know"* refer to the limitations. Furthermore, some people say that this activity is not very effective because it does not give an opportunity for correction or feedback.

It is interesting that there are 5 comments which make a connection between chatting and business, all of which are given by the participants who are not teachers. They say the skill for small talk is essential in international business scenes and that's why language classrooms should prepare learners to do it. It seems they regard languages as a tool for business. In contrast, teachers show a tendency to focus on learners' internal aspects, while saying "*chatting is a good opportunity where learners can express themselves*" and "*chatting can*

remove learners' feeling of hesitation toward speaking the target language". In addition, there are no teachers who picked "this may not be very useful" and "this is not useful".

A2. To answer questions which are related to the content of a text.
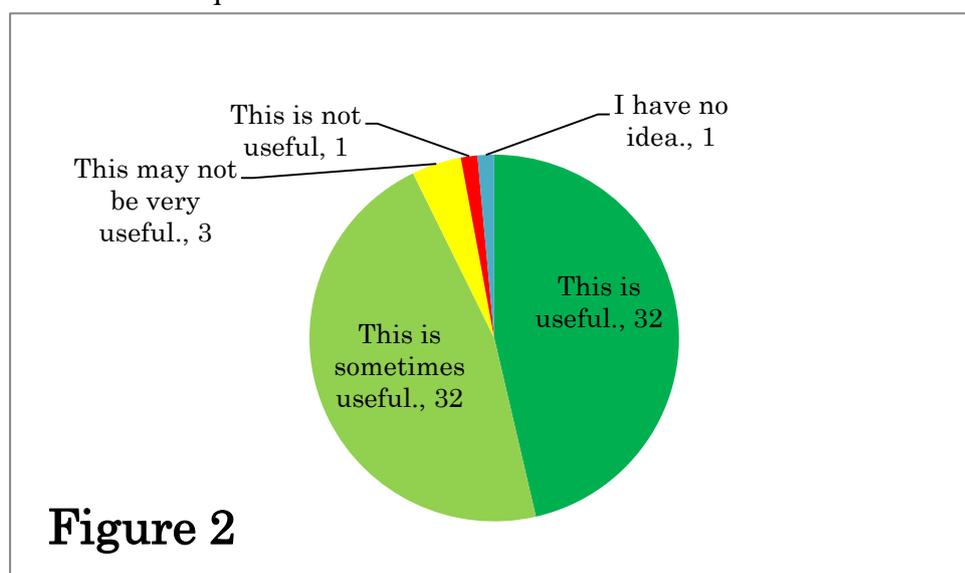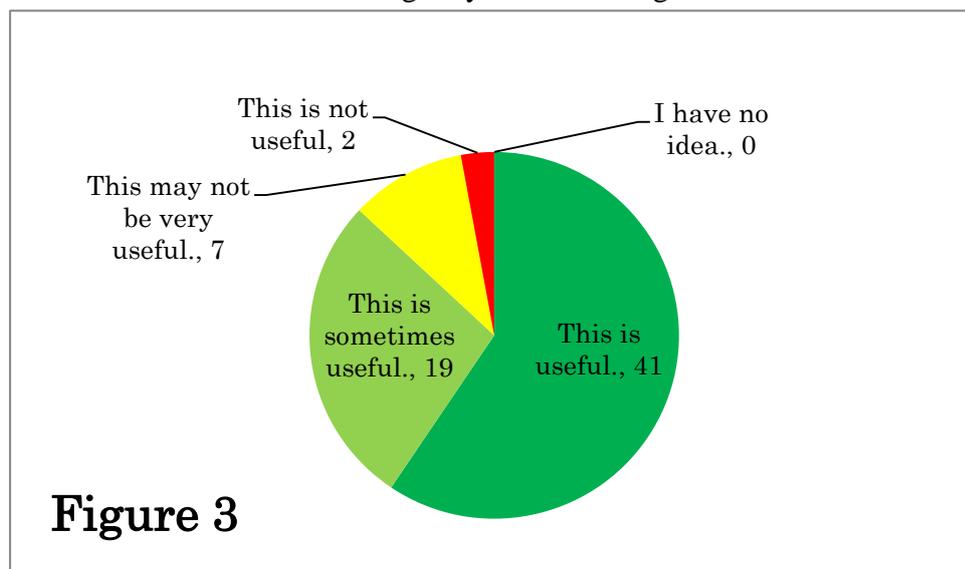

Figure 2

Figure 2 shows that 32 out of 69 people chose "this is useful" while the same number of people picked "this is sometimes useful", followed by four people who thought the activity was not very useful. This result indicates that more than half of the participants have felt this activity had some points to be improved.

People who thought "this is helpful" talk about the connection between comprehension and output. Some teachers say that to answer questions about the content "*tells you if students understood the topic and its background.*" Also, some say from the learners' perspective that *"learners can understand the content better when you try to tell the answer to others."* Those people seem to think the comprehension of the content is significant for language learning.

On the other hand, some people insist that the activity is not very useful when they *"can just copy the text without really understanding it."* Interestingly, to copy the text while answering the question is also perceived in a positive way by some people because "*learners can learn the expressions while citing them."* Moreover, there is a comment that *"it is useful when the questions require critical thinking as well as the target language production.*" From all of those comments, I can say whether the participants feel the effectiveness of this activity depends on the content and the difficulty level of the questions.

For this activity, there seems to be no big differences between the opinions of teachers and learners. The number of people who chose "helpful" was 32, 11 of them were teachers. Also, among the people who picked "sometimes useful", 10 out of 32 were teachers. Moreover, comments by both teachers and learners refer to the same points discussed in the previous paragraph.

A3. To summarize a text or to give your own thoughts on a text.

Figure 3

As Figure 3 demonstrates, more than half of the participants (41 people) answered this activity was useful. At the same time, the total number of people who chose "may not be very useful" and "not useful" (9 people) was larger than for the two activities discussed before.
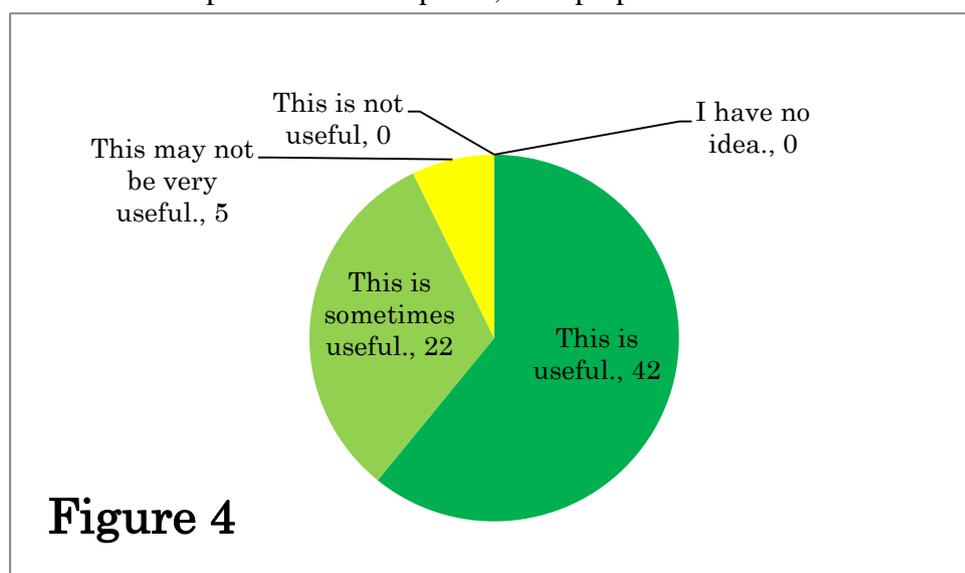
Those who thought this activity was helpful described it as an opportunity for the internalization of the language, as a teacher says "*through this activity, my students can internalize English expressions that they learned in the lesson.*" Also, a learner feels the activity is helpful for her because "*while summarizing and giving my opinions, I can be aware of the limitation of my vocabulary. It encourages me to look up better expressions and then I can learn them.*" Being different from activity 2, this asks learners for their own language production. It is what makes learners feel the task is helpful. The other point which was mentioned by the participants supporting this activity was that "*giving your own thoughts on a matter can cultivate not only language skills but also critical thinking.*" They say the nature of this activity that "*asks students to participate in something where their own thoughts and ideas matter*" can promote the language learning.

Meanwhile, as mentioned above, there are some people who don't think this activity would help learners. They point out that "*to summarize the content and give an opinion is already difficult even in the native language.*" This point was discussed only by learners, while no teachers focus on this point. In addition, some say this activity does not work "*if they don't have enough vocabulary and grammar to express their own thoughts, even though they have something to express.*"

Although both teachers and learners think this activity is useful or sometimes useful, comments given by learners are more concrete than those of teachers. For instance, some teachers say their students have developed their language production skill by summarizing and giving opinion, but those comments don't have very specific descriptions. However, some learners supporting this activity describe how it helps them to learn languages, such as "*while*

summarizing, learners will search for synonyms" and "*learners can develop vocabularies by taking time to look for words that exactly express what they want to say*".

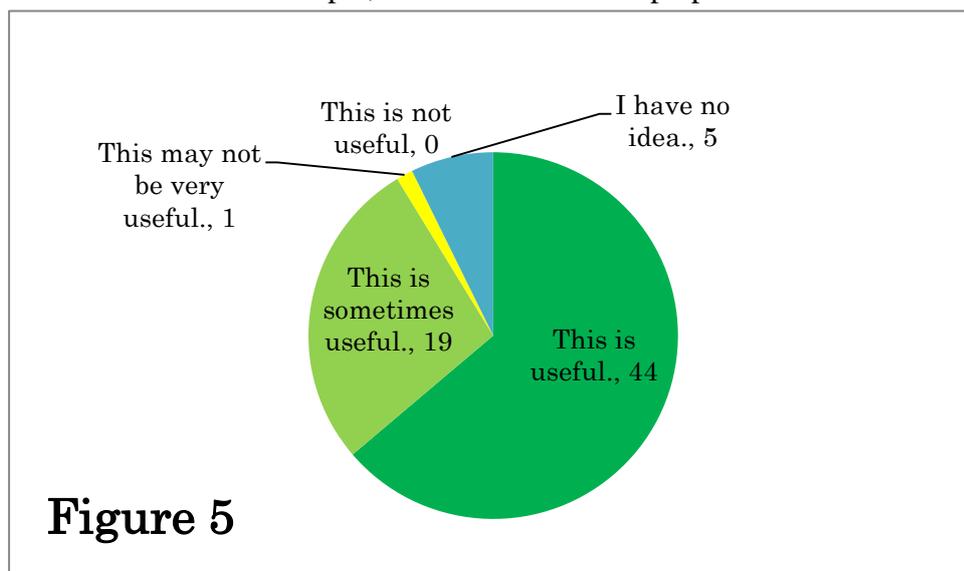A4. To make a presentation or speech, with preparation beforehand.

Figure 4

As we can see in figure 4, 42 out of 69 participants thought the presentation "is useful", followed by 22 saying "sometimes useful" and 5 saying "may not be very useful". There were no participants who picked "not useful".

I found three reasons why people support this activity. The first point is the advantage of preparation time. Since this activity often requires learners to spend a certain amount of time on preparation and practice, learners are allowed to "*acquire the expressions and fluency.*" Moreover, "*time to prepare creates a safe environment for the student*". They say the safe environment functions to keep learners motivated or encourage them to try something out of their comfort zone. A teacher even says "*students in every level can benefit from this activity*" because of the function of preparation. Among the participants, teachers tend to focus more on the psychological advantage of a preparation phase, while learners consider preparation time being beneficial for acquisition of vocabulary and expressions. As a whole, because of those advantages, people say preparation is one of the helpful aspects of the presentation activity. Secondly, there are some participants who mention a merit related to the talk in front of people. One says "*giving a presentation on a topic of your interest can build your language skills and your confidence on those skills as a presentation involves some kind of exposure to public.*" As many learners have experienced, "*presenting in another language is challenging*", and that's what gives learners the confidence when they "*deal with the fear or nervousness.*" One teacher makes a connection between talk in public and language skills, while saying "*it can help learners to think of how to impress the audience and it leads to the development of language skills.*" The third point is that the presentation is often a personalized activity. A learner points out that the choice of the topic is a key because "*if the learners can give a*

presentation about something they personally like, such as their hobby, they will do their best to find the right words to describe it." In addition, a teacher shares an experience that "*when my students were given a personal topic, they were willing to work on their own presentation because they were happy to express themselves*".

While at the same time, people give some points to explain that a presentation may not be the best activity for learners. Firstly, it is likely that the learners may focus on the presentation skill, not on the language skill. They say a good presentation has little to do with language skill, which means the practice of presentation does not help language acquisition. The other point is that time for preparation sometimes makes the language use "not authentic". This is because" *learners just learn the script by heart*" during the presentation project. Also, a participant insists that "*when you prepare beforehand it does not mean that you used your acquired skills, you can have the help of the internet etc. and then just present it in class.*" The characteristics of the presentation, namely to allow learners to take time to prepare, and to encourage learners to engage in impressing the audience, could be both advantages and disadvantages.

A5. To debate a social topic, which includes both preparation and ad hoc dialogues.

Figure 5

As figure 5 shows, more than 60% of the participants (44 people) picked "useful" as for the debate. 19 people thought the activity "is sometimes useful", while one person thought "it may not be very useful." The interesting thing is that there were 5 people who chose "I have no idea", all of which are from Japan. In fact, in Japan, it is not very common to use debate as a teaching activity. That is why there are quite a few people who have never experienced a debate in the language classroom and have no idea how it works.
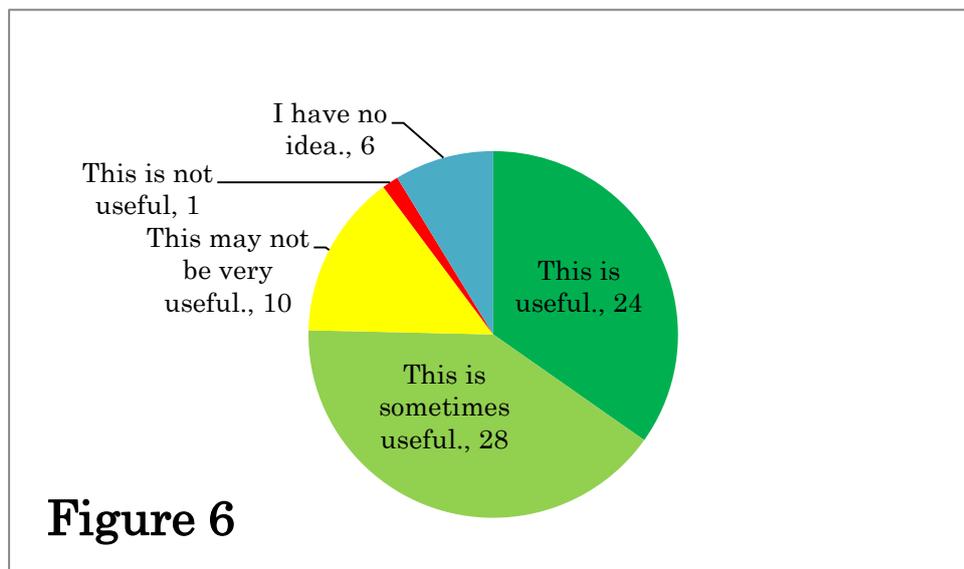
People supporting this activity talk about the combination of prepared speech and spontaneous speech. It can provide learners with a safe environment as well as enable them to practice the language in an authentic context. For instance, a teacher says "*debating seems*

useful since students can come up with their own ideas especially if it is a social topic. Preparation can help students feel more confident in the classroom and can help them think about the topic thoroughly beforehand." Likewise, a statement "*it helps to develop spontaneous arguments and phrases to make a point and present our point of view in a convincing way*" indicates how the debate makes learners feel it is effective. It implies that the debaters are usually asked to be convincing and it promotes the language acquisition. Some of the participants point out another aspect of this activity. They say "*it helps learners to experience a different culture*" because it can offer multiple points of view towards a topic. It can also enable learners to learn how to express and exchange opinions with people from different cultural backgrounds. It is possible that those experiences contribute to the language learning.

Most of the participants saying the debate is not very useful think it is only applicable for advanced learners. A person insists "*unless the learners have enough background knowledge and particular expressions for the debate, this activity will not work.*" In addition, another person says "*this activity is influenced a lot by other factors than the language skill, such as the background knowledge and personality,*" so it may not be effective to develop language skills. The interesting thing is that some people insist that debating can work only for advanced learners but they still say debating is a "useful" activity. Especially teachers show that tendency. The total number of participants who picked "useful" is 44, and 15 of them are teachers. 6 out of the 15 teachers clarify that debating requires advanced language skills, but they still choose "this is useful". On the other hand, the number of non-teachers choosing "useful" while saying it is for advanced learners is only 2.

One more point to note here is that the percentage of the people who chose "I have no idea; I have never experienced activity" is relatively high and all of them are from Japan. Therefore, teachers sometimes do not know how to implement the debate in the classroom, even though they feel the activity can be helpful. In fact, a teacher comments that "*I know debating is very common in overseas classroom, but I am not sure about how exactly I can do that.*"

A6. To act in a dramatic performance in the target language.

Figure 6

As shown in figure 6, the number of participants who chose "this is useful" was 24, which is the smallest among the 6 activities. 28 out of 69 answered the dramatic performance was "sometimes useful", followed by 11 people thinking the drama is not very useful, and 6 people choosing "I have no idea". It seems that the number of people who have not experienced dramatic performance in the classroom is larger than that of other activities.

As an advantage of this activity, some participants indicate the acting allows learners to learn while having fun. A learner says "*through acting in a dramatic performance, we can become familiar to the target language while enjoying ourselves*." The other advantage mentioned by the participants is the acquisition of vocabularies and expressions in the context. A learner affirms, depending on his own experience, that "*in order to have a good performance, it is required to understand the whole situation, the setting and the dialogues, which improves the learner's knowledge of the language*." This could help learners to "*use the learned expressions in the real life situation.*"

The participants who don't support the dramatic performance give 2 reasons. The first one is the lack of metalinguistic awareness. This happens because "*teachers just give students their part and just ask them to learn it by heart*." They say it makes "*the target language end up having a secondary role in the performance. So it is important that the students are aware of the language they use for the play and not just memorize it.*" Secondly, acting involves so many factors other than the language skill, such as learners' personality and acting skill. A person notes that to act in a foreign language could be too challenging for learners so "*students, especially shy students, will be anxious and so scared to mess up in front of their classmates*", which implies the activity is not able to provide a safe environment. Additionally, the comment that "*a drama project may not be suitable for a classroom activity because of the limitation of time and equipment*" was added as a reason why they think a dramatic performance is not the best activity in the classroom.

There is a general tendency that teachers think acting is not helpful for learners. The total

number of participants choosing "useful" is 24, and 6 of them are teachers. Its rate is 25%, which is quite low in comparison with the overall rate of teachers among participants (36%). Furthermore, 50 % of 10 people who pick "this may not be very useful" are teachers. Those numbers demonstrate that teachers tend to think dramatic performance is not very good while focusing on its negative sides mentioned above, and learners are relatively positive about learning through acting.

4.2 Interview result

During the interview, the French teacher I interviewed talked about some classroom activities which she found useful from her teaching experience. She gave four specific examples. According to her, what the four activities have in common is that they are based on a communicative approach. She used the term "authentic situation" several times to describe the advantages of the activities. The first example is role playing. She said role-play in a real life situation, such as making an appointment with a doctor, has helped her students significantly. The role-play is usually practiced by students themselves, but she also uses an application which allows students to produce an animation movie and record their voice along with the movie. The second is a video making project. For example, students are asked to make a video to show around a house as if they were real estate agency staff. All of the video content and script are produced by the students. The third is job interview practice. The teacher said this activity can let learners make a connection between real life and the target language. She sometimes uses an application which is actually used for job interviews, so students can get a general idea about what a job interview looks like. The last one is simple games to practice grammar and vocabulary. She frequently combines grammar with oral production in small groups. The combination of grammar and oral production often takes place in the form of games such as "battleship of verbs" and "guess who", where students are asked to use languages to communicate meaning. She said the use of games allows students to learn expressions while enjoying communication in the target language.

Next, we discussed activities that could have pros and cons. She said presentation in the classroom is controversial. From her teaching experience, she is aware of 2 problematic aspects in regard to presentation. First, while working on the script, students just translate their script and they sometimes rely on Google Translate. She pointed out that this happens because the class hours are usually limited and students do not have enough time to complete the script in the classroom, and work on it at home. She said it would not develop students' language skills if they merely translate the script without communicative context. Another point she referred to is that a presentation is often delivered based on memorization. Students just memorize the script during the presentation, so their oral production is not spontaneous. She argued this is not helpful for learners' communication skills in the target language. While at the same time, she said memorization is an important part of learning languages. Thus,

teachers should offer an opportunity where students can integrate memorization with spontaneous speech.

Finally, we talked about the IB program, which is an internationally recognized curriculum aiming to encourage students to make practical connections between their studies and the real world. Also, it aims at developing multilingual students. In the IB curriculum, the language of instruction is English, and courses to learn additional languages are called Language acquisition. Students are required to complete at least one of the subjects. It seems that French or Spanish is a popular choice. I asked the French teacher what she thought of the IB program from the language teaching perspective. She answered that the overall idea of IB is great, but she felt it does not provide enough specific guidance in terms of implementation of lessons. The course of Language acquisition in the Middle Years Program consists of 6 phases. Each of the phases has assessment criteria which indicate the goals to be achieved from four aspects; A: comprehending spoken and visual text, B: comprehending written and visual text, C: communicating in response to spoken, written and visual text, D: using language in spoken and written form. For instance, criterion C for the phase 1 says "at the end of phase 1, students should be able to respond appropriately to simple short phrases." According to her, teachers are expected to design the whole lessons in accordance with the criteria, but she feels the criteria are not specific enough to make lesson plans. As a result, lesson contents are really dependent on individual teachers. She thinks it is problematic because it may not ensure the quality of lessons to develop students' language skills. Another point she mentioned is the 3 questions that IB encourages teachers to use as essential components of lessons. They are factual questions (e.g. what food do you like?), conceptual questions (e.g. how does food represent the culture of a country?), and debatable questions (e.g. what food do you think is the best?). She points out that the factual questions are useful for learners of all levels, but the other 2 questions are too demanding for beginners. It is not easy to answer those questions even in a native language. Therefore, she finds it difficult to apply those questions in the class, and that's why she thinks the idea of the curriculum is great but it sometimes does not fit actual classroom situation.

The interview gave me an idea about classroom activities which the teacher finds useful or not, as well as an insight into the IB curriculum and teachers' feeling about it.

5. Discussion

In this section, I discuss the questionnaire result in relation to the theoretical background. First, the results are discussed based on the CAF theory, namely a second language acquisition approach. Next, I draw on a psychological approach, the Self-determination Theory, to discuss the result. Then, I discuss the interview outcome while integrating the CAF perspective and the Self-determination Theory perspective. Finally, I examine whether the activities mentioned in this paper include the four steps: input, input processing, output, and

strategies. This will be integrated with all of the previous outcomes of the analyses in the section, and I will answer my research question "how can we decide on an effective activity in the classroom?"

5.1 Analysis of the questionnaire result: Complexity, Accuracy, Fluency

As discussed in the section 2, proficiency of second language is often measured based on complexity, accuracy, and fluency (abbreviated as CAF). In this section, I examine which of these three aspects are developed by the activities mentioned in the questionnaire, and make a connection between those three aspects and people's perception on the effectiveness of activities.

In the "chatting about everyday topics", fluency can be developed because speech is improvised. As learners take part in the conversation without preparation, they are forced to continuously produce output while not paying attention to the details of "correct" language use. Also, the conversation often has personal and familiar topics. This can motivate learners to present their own thoughts or feeling, which makes learners engage in communication. For instance, a comment says that chatting about everyday topics is useful for learners because "*when you learn a language, you want to communicate your needs and usually you will therefore need to learn the everyday topics first.*" This comment shows learners' awareness of their own needs or desire for communication could be a trigger for their engagement in communication. As a result of the engagement, learners try to produce as much output as possible rather than paying attention to accuracy. This is how fluency can be trained through chatting. In contrast, this activity is not very effective to improve accuracy, because chatting does not offer a chance for feedback. In fact, a teacher explains that "*this activity is not good for grammatically correct output, but it can work to encourage learners to communicate themselves while not being afraid of making errors.*" In addition, complexity is not easy to be fostered by this activity because the range of topics and variety of language use are limited in many cases. Learners can only use what they are already familiar to, so their language use is not evolved in terms of complexity.

Concerning activity 2, "answering questions related to the content of a text", comprehension of the content can enhance complexity and accuracy of learners' language. This is because learners pay attention to vocabulary and sentence structures while looking through the text in order to answer the questions. Some of the language items may be new for learners, and the process of comprehending makes it possible to learn those new items. As a result, the range of their vocabulary and expressions that they can use will be broadened. "*Learners can just copy the text in answering the questions*" is a point discussed in the comments on the questionnaire. The comments mostly regard this point as a negative aspect and they say it doesn't help language acquisition. However, it could be considered helpful for complexity, accuracy and fluency. Copying the text can provide input of accurate language

use and a wider variety of language samples, and those can be acquired during the output. Also, learners' fluency can be increased when they copy and internalize the language items and apply them to their own speech.

Internalization of the language is also given as one of the benefits of the activity "summarizing a text or presenting thoughts on a text", activity 3. This can contribute to complexity, accuracy and fluency, as discussed in the previous paragraph, because learners can apply what they get from the text to their own speech. Also, as a questionnaire comment points out, "*students search for synonyms while summarizing*". This can be beneficial to cultivate learners' vocabulary, which could result in development of complexity. Furthermore, in terms of the characteristics of this activity, we should note that it involves learners' subjective thoughts rather than objective answers to questions about the content. It is likely that language samples in the text can be acquired more efficiently when the items are used in line with learners' own thoughts. According to the personal experience which was shared on the questionnaire, a learner started to think not in her mother tongue but in the target language when she was trying to express her opinion in the target language and it helped her learn the language. This shows the connection between self-expression and language acquisition. On the other hand, some comments on the questionnaire argue that summarizing or giving opinion is difficult even in native language. This implies that the complicatedness of this activity can be a factor that prevents learners' output.

In respect of "making a presentation or speech", time for preparation could be helpful for learners in a multiple way. Firstly, complexity can be developed through the preparation because learners take a certain amount of time to organize their thoughts and look for suitable language expressions to represent their thoughts. This process makes it possible for them to explore unfamiliar vocabulary and expressions, and as a result, it can cultivate the complexity of their language. Secondly, the preparation phase allows the script to be revised, which promotes accuracy of the output production. Sometimes teachers can help to correct errors. A learner's comment "*it would be a good idea that teachers check grammar and vocabulary before the presentation in public, as it can make the script grammatically correct*" shows that she regards the preparation time as helpful to enhance accuracy. Also, it is possible that learners review the script themselves and give self-correction. Finally, fluency can also be trained by preparation. Since presentation and speech are supposed to be delivered in front of the public, learners try to practice before presenting it. The more the learner practices, the more fluent the output becomes. One more aspect that could increase fluency is the delivery of presentation. When making presentation in front of people, speakers are often asked to be conscious of physical aspects such as eye contact and gesture to enhance delivery. There are some comments that argue those aspects are related to fluency because "*some learners can internalize language items in connection with physical actions, through repetitive rehearsals.*"

"Debating a social topic, including preparation and ad hoc dialogues", is a combination of prepared speech and spontaneous speech. As I discussed in the previous paragraph, the

prepared speech can help all of the three features: complexity, accuracy, fluency. Furthermore, since the spontaneous speech asks for ad hoc communication, it can provide learners with an opportunity to boost their fluency, while engaging in communicating what they have in mind. Another aspect of debating is that participants are often required to be convincing, or at least, they need to be very clear in communicating their opinion to others. This is because one of the main goals in the debate is to defeat the other part. This aspect of debating activity can develop complexity because participants try to focus on linguistic expressions to communicate their intention in an effective way. In this process, learners are likely to encounter unfamiliar expressions and acquire them while they are focusing on communicating their argument to the other party. Indeed, a teacher explains "*it is important that students know how to share their opinion*" and that is why she thinks debating is a good tool for learners.

Through "acting in a dramatic performance in the target language", accuracy and complexity can be fostered because learners acquire vocabularies in the context. Drama scripts usually have a story plot and conversations among characters. This enables learners to figure out an exact context in which a language item is used, or appropriate collocations of words to express a certain situation, as a learner comments that "*lines are learnt in a whole situation where they are used*." It is beneficial for promoting an accurate use of language, as well as a wider and more complex language use. In terms of accuracy, acting practice can improve learners' pronunciation. Actually, some comments on the questionnaire talk about the advantage regarding phonetic aspects of language learning in dramas. Moreover, learners' fluency can be potentially enhanced during the dramatic performance since learners memorize script. Especially people tend to think languages are learned in relation to physical actions, and it makes them feel their fluency gets better. For a learner, dramatic performance is useful because "*facial expression and physical action help me to memorize language*". Another person shares his personal experience, while saying "*I still remember what I learned in the dramatic performance in my childhood because I learned them together with emotional expressions.*" In these ways, people consider acting to be helpful to memorize language items, which can increase their fluency. Once learners memorize the lines and the memorized knowledge is applied to learners' real life conversation, it can be said that the memorization works to support learner's fluent output.

	Complexity	Accuracy	Fluency
Chatting	✕	✕	✔
Answering questions	✔	✔	✔
Summarizing	✔	✔	✔
Presentation	✔	✔	✔
Debating	✔	✔	✔
Dramatic performance	✔	✔	✔

Table 2 Which aspect of CAF can be promoted by each activity?

Based on the analysis in this section, it could be concluded that the activities have a certain aspect that can contribute to development of at least one of the three aspects of language proficiency. When I examine what part of the six activities helps the 3 dimensions, I find that each of complexity, accuracy, and fluency is developed by distinct phase of the activities.

First of all, complexity can be promoted when learners encounter new language items and need to take them it. For example, in "answering questions", learners are engaged in comprehending the text in order to answer the questions, which may provide learners with an opportunity to get to know vocabulary and sentence structures which are new to them. Then, learners are sometimes expected to integrate the new language items while answering questions. This process can make learners' vocabulary richer, and can develop their complexity of output production. Second, accuracy could be cultivated in two ways. The first one happens during the input phase of activities. When working on dramatic performances, for example, learners memorize a lot of words and expressions. Since those are learnt in specific context, learners can acquire them in a grammatically or semantically correct way. It will result in error-free language use. This is how input promotes accuracy. The other phase that seems to help accuracy is feedback. Feedback often includes error correction, so it can improve accuracy of learners' language production. For instance, during the presentation activity, it is possible for learners to get feedback in several moments such as during the preparation time and after the presentation in public. Lastly, fluency can be enhanced by two phases of the activities: the environment and memorization. Regarding the environment, as I discussed "chatting", in an environment where learners are forced to produce output, their fluency is trained. People point out such an environment can create a kind of pressure on learners, and it promotes fluent output production. The other part which can contribute to fluency is memorization. Performing drama requires learners to memorize a lot of vocabulary and collocations, and once they are internalized and applied to authentic language production, it could mean fluency is promoted by memorization.

In what way does the development of CAF relate to people's perception on the effectiveness of the activities? I studied the reasons and examples which were given by people who answered each activity was "helpful" or "sometimes helpful", and I found there is a

25

tendency. Among the comments explaining the reason why they recognize the activity is (sometimes) helpful, there are more comments which explicitly refer to fluency and complexity than those referring to accuracy. For example, concerning "chatting about everyday topics", 64 people answered this activity "is (sometimes) helpful", and 4 of them clarify that the development of fluency is the reason why they find it helpful, while 3 of them refer to complexity, and nobody refers to accuracy. In addition, among the 64 people who answered "answering question about a text" is "(sometimes) helpful", 3 people explicitly refer to the buildup of fluency and 1 person refers to complexity as a reason, while there are no people who talk about accuracy. This implies that people tend to find an activity effective when they feel the complexity and fluency are fostered by the activity. In case of "making a presentation", there are 64 people who think "it is (sometimes) helpful", and 5 of them specifically mention accuracy as an element that makes the activity useful, while both complexity and fluency are mentioned by 3 people. This tendency looks slightly different from other activities, but it still demonstrates that contribution to complexity and fluency are perceived as factors that make learners feel the activity is helpful.

5.2 Analysis of the questionnaire result: Self-determination Theory

As discussed in the section 2, language learning is closely related to psychological aspect of human beings. In this section, I draw on learners' personal experiences (comments on the questionnaire) to see how classroom activities have motivated learners. In particular, I examine the connection between the six types of activities and the basic psychological human needs: the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

First of all, chatting about everyday topics can satisfy the need for relatedness. In the questionnaire, a teacher says he felt this activity was effective when he saw his students chatting and laughing, while understanding each other. During a small talk, each learner is usually paid close attention by the partner, and the sense of being paid attention gets even stronger when they understand each other in the target language. This helps learners to feel they are given enough mental resource. At the same time, the need for autonomy is also supported because conversation topics are often personalized. The topic of conversation is often chosen by learners themselves, as well as their words and responses are usually different depending on individuals. This characteristic makes it possible to make learners feel they are making their own choice throughout the activity. That is why "chatting about everyday topics" can be useful for the need for autonomy.

In terms of "answering questions about a text", it can support learners' sense of competence, especially for beginners, if the questions are well-constructed, starting from easy ones to advanced ones, so that beginners can have opportunities to successfully answer the questions. Actually, a teacher comments "*I always began from an easy question, which made my students confident to get correct answer*." The level of questions seems to be a key to

satisfy the needs for competence. Furthermore, a lot of people argue answering questions can confirm that learners have understood the content. Because of this function, learners themselves can be aware that they are competent enough to understand the text. This can be another aspect that contributes to the sense of competence.

"Summarizing a text" can promote learners' sense of autonomy because this activity requires learners' own thoughts. For example, on the questionnaire, a teacher points out "*during this activity, students seem engaged and I suppose that's because they are required to express themselves.*" This shows that learners' need for autonomy could be satisfied when their own thoughts matter in the classroom activity. On the other hand, there are some people pointing out that to give an opinion and summarize a text are demanding even in a native language. In fact, according to a teacher, "*students couldn't say anything*" when she asked for students' thoughts about a text. This can bring a result that the demanding activity endangers learners' needs for competence. Thus, a learner suggests that "*students should be given enough time to first comprehend the text*" so that they can summarize the content or think of their own opinion on the content.

In respect of "making a presentation", it can help learners' sense of autonomy because learners are often asked to set the presentation topic themselves. This provides learners with a chance to make a decision, and it motivates learners to engage in their work, as a learner presents his opinion that "*it is the best if the student can give a presentation about something they personally like. Then they are motivated to talk about it and will do their best to find the right words to describe it.*" Because each learner has an individualized topic, learners are likely to pay closer attention to linguistic features or engage in rehearsals in order to make their presentation better. This can result in better language acquisition. Regarding the need for competence, it can be fostered when learners overcome the fear of speaking in front of people. Although a lot of people refer to the nervousness of exposure to public, they also say confidence is built once they overcome it. This confidence can satisfy the need for competence. On the other hand, the need for relatedness can be satisfied during the preparation phase of this activity. For instance, teachers and classmates can give mental resource such as enough attention or physical resource such as correction of the script and joining rehearsals. Through those supports, learners can feel they are related to others, which encourages them to engage in learning.

An outstanding opinion about "debating social topics" is that it is helpful only for advanced learners. This implies that debating could endanger learners' need for competence, especially for beginners. Indeed, a learner shares her own experience, saying "*when I was still insecure about my English, I was just overwhelmed and could not express myself in the discussion with people from various countries*". In order to solve this problem, we can take advantage of the time for preparation beforehand. As discussed in the paragraph regarding presentation, preparation can help students feel more confident in the classroom. In terms of sense of relatedness, it could be promoted if the debate is conducted in groups. During the

debating session, group members are supposed to cooperate to build arguments. This potentially helps learners who are not proficient. Therefore, it would be a good idea that teachers take into account the level of each learner and *"match beginners and advanced learners so that beginners can get support from advanced learners."*, as a learner suggests. If they can successfully collaborate with each other, their need for relatedness can be satisfied. While at the same time, some people argue that debating can contribute to the need for autonomy because learners' own opinion matters in this activity.

In terms of "acting in dramatic performance", a sense of relatedness could be supported because this activity can let learners have fun together with classmates. Interestingly, some of the questionnaire participants who never experienced this activity answered it *"looks fun"*. Sharing a fun moment with others can contribute to the buildup of relatedness, which motivate learners to engage in the activity. Concerning the need for competence, exposure to public can foster it. Acting in a foreign language in front of people is usually fearful for learners. However, similar to making a presentation in public, the nervousness forces learners to practice a lot, and it lets learners learn various things such as vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation and even cultural background. Consequently, participants can act successfully, and it leads to cultivation of learners' sense of competence. This is what people think of the connection between acting and confidence. Finally, the need for autonomy can be potentially satisfied when learners are given a chance to create their own drama scripts. Also, learners often work independently in groups, away from teacher's direct instruction, so they can feel they are given enough autonomy. This can encourage learners to engage in the activity.

In any kind of activity, feedback is considered to contribute to build relatedness, because feedback can provide learners not only with linguistic knowledge but also demonstrate how dedicated teachers are working for the learners. For instance, there are several people who point out that "answering questions about a text" helps language acquisition because it tells both teachers and learners whether the content is understood correctly. Thus, teachers are supposed to give some aid or feedback if learners have not comprehended the content well. When the aid or feedback successfully helps them and they feel comfortable to be supported, their need for relatedness is satisfied. Another point to be discussed is teachers' feedback is not only about learning languages. Teacher's feedback can have a wider range of functions. According to a learner's comment on the questionnaire, when she followed the teacher's advice about learning approaches, she actually realized it helped her to develop her English, which motivated her more than before. This personal experience shows that teachers' feedback functions not only to directly foster language skills but also to support learners from a psychological perspective. As a result, learners can feel they are given resources and are supported. Apart from teachers, classmates can also be the ones to give feedback. A comment from the questionnaire refers to feedback from peers during the presentation activity, saying *"question and answer session after the presentation can work to make the activity more interactive."* Feedback, including questions from audience can help presenters realize they are

paid enough attention, and as a result, learners feel they are related to others through the activity.

In conclusion, each activity mentioned above satisfies different aspects of the basic human psychological needs; the needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, and each one of the needs can make people find an activity useful. In case of the need for relatedness, "chatting" and "dramatic performance" seem to be supportive for the need. As for the "chatting", there are 7 people who explicitly or implicitly refer to the sense of relatedness, among the 64 people who think it is (sometimes) helpful. Their comments imply that learners can feel a connection with others during the chat, and it motivates learners. Also, there are 5 comments that imply the sense of relatedness in "dramatic performance" can encourage learners to engage in the activity. In terms of the need for competence, I assume "making a presentation" can be more helpful than other activities. Among the comments about a presentation, there are 7 comments that specifically mention the sense of competence. They say the exposure to public is usually scary for learners, but it offers an opportunity where they can overcome the fear and gain confidence. Confidence can let them feel they are competent. Finally, regarding the need for autonomy, there are 6 comments explicitly relevant to the sense of autonomy during "summarizing and giving an opinion", and they say that's because the activity requires personal thoughts and opinions. In case of the "presentation", 5 people answered they liked the activity because it allows learners to pick their own topic. When learners are given options to pick themselves, their need for autonomy is satisfied. As a consequence, it appears that there are no specific tendencies concerning the relation between the basic human psychological needs and people's perception on the effectiveness of activities. This is because the kind of the psychological needs which are thought to attribute to people's feeling about an activity was varied in each activity.

5.3 Analysis of the interview result

In this section, I analyze the interview result from the CAF perspective and Self-determination Theory. To begin with, it is notable that the interviewee said she usually takes a "communicative approach" when she implements a classroom activity. By the term "communicative approach", she meant an activity where students needed to use language for communicative purpose. It often involves a real-life situation in which learners are forced to produce oral output, rather than being afraid of making mistakes. The teacher, whose native language is French, said "*I always tell my students that I make mistakes every single day when speaking English*" to encourage the students to produce as much output as possible. Her attitude seems to focus on fluency, rather than complexity or accuracy. This attitude may have something to do with the trend that people feel an activity is more useful when it fosters students' fluency, not complexity or accuracy, as I discussed in section 5.1.

Now, I examine 2 specific activities which were mentioned by the interview participant.

29

Role-play is the first activity which she talked about. It seems that this activity is a combination of "chatting about everyday topics" and "acting in a dramatic performance", because it requires learners to engage in communication in everyday situation, as well as to behave as a different person to make a story. As acting helps learners to use expressions in a correct context, it could promote learners' accurate language use. At the same time, communication in everyday context can encourage learners' spontaneous output because it is important for interaction. In addition, the use of the movie application can provide playful atmosphere, which allows learners to feel safe and enjoy communicating. These aspects could result in promotion of learners' fluency while making them engage in spontaneous communication. When looking at the role-play from the perspective of the Self-determination Theory, the way she implements this activity includes some hints to satisfy the basic psychological human needs. First of all, the role-play is conducted in small groups. This can let the students feel that they are given autonomy. Also, their sense of relatedness can be supported while they are working on the movie together. Furthermore, the need for competence can be satisfied through the role-play because students are usually allowed to take time for rehearsals before they present the role-play. They can take advantage of rehearsals to make the production look better. This could result in satisfaction of the need for competence since they feel they are competent enough to present a role-play of good quality.

Another activity to be discussed is the video project. The teacher has carried out several kinds of video projects, and the latest task she assigned was to make a video to show around a house. This project potentially helps learners' accuracy and fluency. Since a video is usually supposed to be seen by others, the students are likely to pay close attention to the grammar and pronunciation, which promotes their accurate language use. At the same time, the students are thought to practice what they say on the video so that they look fluent. Once certain expressions are acquired through the practice, it helps learners' fluent production. Regarding the basic psychological needs, video-making can support learners' sense of autonomy because their own ideas matter in the creation of the video. The need for competence can also be supported when they see themselves doing well on the video. In this way, the analysis above explains the reason why the teacher thinks role-play and video project have been helpful for her students.

Finally, I examine how the curriculum which a school employs can influence the implementation of classroom activities. The Language Acquisition Guide issued by the International Baccalaureate Organization (2014) shows the assessment criteria for the subject "Language acquisition" in the Middle Years Program. It divides the learning process into 6 phases, and demonstrates goals to be achieved in each phase. The criteria have four parts: 2 of them are related to language comprehension (criteria A and B), and the other 2 are related to language production (criteria C and D). The criterion C is defined as "communicating in response to spoken, written, and visual text", and D is "using language in spoken and written form." It appears that the criteria C and D mainly focus on complexity, rather than accuracy or

fluency. For instance, as for the criterion C, one of the goals to be achieved in the phase 1 is to "*use basic phrases to communicate ideas, feelings and information on a variety of aspects of everyday topics.*" In case of the phase 3, it says "*students should be able to express ideas and feelings, and communicate information in familiar and some unfamiliar situations*", and in the phase 6, they should "*express a wide range of ideas, opinions and feelings, and communicate information in a wide range of social and academic contexts.*" The change of goals from phase 1 to 6 shows that learners are required more complex thought and wider vocabulary to express the thoughts as they go into advanced level. Based on the analysis in this paragraph, it could be concluded that the IB curriculum puts more emphasis on complexity, rather than accuracy or fluency, as a measure of learners' proficiency. This kind of characteristics of a certain curriculum could influence how teachers design classrooms activities and how they assess students' proficiency.

5.4 Input, Input processing, Output, and Strategies

Now I turn to evaluate the activities based on the four steps that I mention in my hypothesis: input, input processing, output, and strategies. Since I hypothesize that an effective activity in the second language classroom includes all of the four phases, I examine whether the 6 activities mentioned on the questionnaire have the four steps. After that, I discuss the usefulness of the activities, while integrating the following points: the questionnaire results, the CAF perspective, the basic human psychological needs perspective, and the four steps which I mentioned above.

There are some pointes to be noted regarding the four steps. First, the term "input" refers to exposure to the target language where learners can take language samples. According to Iwanaka (2012), input can take place only in the target language. Thus, we cannot regard explanations in the learners' native language as input even though the explanations help understanding of meaning. Secondly, the term "input processing" refers to the process that learners select and acquire language items from the samples taken in the input phase. What learners acquire in this step is called "intake". The intake constructs learners' linguistic knowledge, while being integrated with existing knowledge. The intake consists of two smaller steps, which are the understanding of the meaning and the understanding of the connection between language form and meaning, namely "form-meaning mapping". Thirdly, the term "output" refers to the language production to communicate meaning. This step basically includes both drilling practice without communicative purpose and production to communicate a message. Both potentially work for language acquisition, but the latter is more effective for learners. Finally, the term "strategy" refers to the strategic use of language, such as rephrasing, giving examples, and using gestures. Speakers usually use these strategies aiming to successfully communicate what they intend to say. Iwanaka (2012) argues that it is essential in foreign language learning that learners are taught to use strategies. Although

people are actually used to use various kinds of strategies in their native language, they need some training in order to do the same thing in the target language, he says.

Do the 6 activities that I have discussed include input, input processing, output, and strategy? It can be said that "chatting" may have limited input, input processing and output, while it requires strategy. I argue the input and output are limited especially when participants are beginners, because the amount of language items that learners hear and utter during the conversation is not large, and some of them may not be accurate. Also, input processing is not likely to happen very often because the speech cannot be prepared beforehand and they don't have enough time to reflect of the input. As for the strategy, it is always required in communicating speaker's intention, whether they are beginners or advanced learners. In terms of "answering questions", learners are given opportunities for input and input processing because they can get a certain amount of language samples from the given text. Meanwhile, output may not be enough since answering the question sometimes only suffices with a citation from the text, in other words, a language production without strong messages. Also, learners do not have to think of strategy during this activity. Next is "summarizing". Here again, the text makes it possible for learners to have input and input processing because they cannot summarize or form their opinion unless they do not understand the text. In addition, learners need to produce output with meaning to communicate their own message, as well as they need strategy in representing their own ideas or opinions. Concerning "making a presentation", it does not necessarily provide learners with a chance for input because learners sometimes depend on their native language when they organize their thoughts and work on the script. However, if learners collect information regarding the presentation in the target language, they can get enough input. In addition, input processing is likely to happen when they understand their own script, and output with meaning is absolutely required. Strategy is also necessary for a better delivery of speech. What about "debating"? During the preparation phase such as research and making arguments, it is possible that learners use their native language, which does not promote input. As for input processing, this activity has two aspects which possibly contribute to it: the time when learners understand their own argument, and when they comprehend the argument of the other party. Besides, learners need output with meaning, and strategy really matters in order to make arguments sound persuasive. Finally, in respect of "dramatic performance", it can give learners a certain amount of input if the script is ready-made. Input processing can happen when learners memorize and internalize the expressions on the script. Then, output with meaning can happen if they really understand their lines, while it cannot happen if learners just memorize the lines without understanding. In the end, acting usually requires some strategies because paralinguistic elements such as gestures and tone of voice work effectively to deliver the message. It makes learners to think of their own strategies.

	Input	Input processing	Output	Strategy
Chatting	✕	✕	✕	✔
Answering questions	✔	✔	✕	✕
Summarizing	✔	✔	✔	✔
Presentation	✕/✔	✔	✔	✔
Debating	✕/✔	✔	✔	✔
Dramatic performance	✔	✔	✕/✔	✔

Table 3. Do the activities have the four steps?

According to the analysis above, "summarizing or giving opinions about a text" is the activity which includes all of the four steps: input, input processing, output, and strategy. From the CAF perspective, it also seems to be a well-balanced activity to cultivate learners' complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Since leaners can internalize language samples from the text, the range of their vocabulary and sentence structures is enhanced, which fosters their linguistic complexity, and those internalized language samples contribute to accuracy, as well as fluency. Furthermore, learners are asked to present their own thoughts during this activity, and that's what works to promote the internalization. Therefore, summarizing appears to be a very good activity for learners. However, the questionnaire result demonstrates that there are less people who think it is (sometimes) useful, compared to other activities. Also, the number of those who pick "it may not be useful" and "it is not useful" was 9, while those who pick the same options for other activities are less than 5 (except for the dramatic performance). Most of those 9 people point out that summarizing and giving opinions is already demanding even in native languages. From the perspective of basic psychological needs, this is the factor that could harm learners' need of competence, because they might feel they are not skilled enough to give a summary or opinion. As a consequence, I conclude that "summarizing and presenting opinions" would help learners significantly if teachers take measures to allow learners to understand the text, to see what the point is, and to verbalize what they think, step by step.

Regarding "making a presentation" and "debating", they only lack input among the four steps. The questionnaire result shows these are the activities that the largest number of people find helpful among the 6 activities. People's comments say the time for preparation in those activities potentially makes it possible for learners to develop complexity, accuracy, and fluency. Also, from the perspective of basic psychological needs, presentation and debate are able to satisfy the 3 needs. The need for autonomy can be supported because learners are given an opportunity to present their own thought and opinion both in presentation and debate. There are some possibilities that can foster the sense of relatedness, such as the time when feedback is given and when the activities are conducted in groups. In terms of the need for

competence, both activities include exposure to public and a lot of people think it could help learners to feel the competence. Considering all of those aspects above, presentation and debate look quite helpful for learners. What we need to take into account is that there are several opinions that say presentation may not help learners if it is done depending on memorization of the script. Meanwhile, there are a lot of people who argue that debate is applicable only for advanced learners. This could be solved if learners are offered enough input before starting the debate. One of the reasons why beginners are not able to take an active part in the debate is that they do not have enough background knowledge and vocabulary. Thus, if learners get useful input, it would be easier for beginners to join the debate. In this way, there are some ways which could make the 2 activities even more useful, although "making a presentation" and "debating" are already regarded as useful by many people.

What is interesting is that "acting in dramatic performance" seems to have almost all the four steps, but it is the least favored activities on the questionnaire. The total number of people who answer that it is (sometimes) helpful is 52, while all of the other activities are supported by more than 60 people. There are 2 possible reasons for it. The first and biggest reason is the relationship between learners' personality and acting in public. There are at least 9 people who explicitly refer to the concern that dramatic performance may make learners too nervous and anxious. If this is the case, it will cause damage on learners' need for competence. Thus, teachers should understand learners well, and it is safe not to conduct this activity if acting is thought to be unfit for their personality. Another reason is that people feel acting is not very effective to foster fluency. People who think acting is (sometimes) helpful explicitly mention complexity and accuracy as benefits of the activity, but they don't mention fluency. As I discussed in the section 5.2, the enhancement of accuracy does not seem to make people find an activity helpful. Therefore, it might be possible that teachers arrange a follow-up activity that can allow learners to make use of expressions from the drama so that they can feel they become better in fluency. Actually those kinds of activities would work to let learners internalize the expressions. However, again, teachers always have to consider learner's personality and take measures to remove their nervousness if necessary.

Contrary to the dramatic performance, "chatting" is recognized as a useful activity although it does not look perfect in regard to input, input processing and output. Although the highest number (53) of people answer it is helpful for learners, their comments show that many of them presuppose chatting not in the classroom but in an environment that provides a large amount of input, such as homestay with a family who speaks the target language. This confirms that enough input is absolutely necessary to enhance proficiency through the activity of chatting. From the CAF perspective, chatting can support fluency, not accuracy nor complexity. This is probably another reason why people think chatting is useful because people tend to feel an activity is useful when they feel fluency is fostered. Concerning the basic psychological needs, the needs for relatedness and autonomy can be satisfied, rather

than the need for competence. Considering all of these points, I suggest that teachers ask learners to review and retell the content of their conversation. This can help them look back the language items used in the conversation, which would work as additional input or make them aware of their own errors to promote accuracy. Ideally, learners should be surrounded abundant input, but we only have limited resource in the classroom. That is why we need some approaches to make "chatting" more helpful for learners, and it could be something that complements what usually the classrooms chat is lacking: support for learners' accuracy or complexity, or the needs for competence.

6. Conclusion

Considering the outcome of the analysis, it can be concluded that an activity containing the four steps is not necessarily perceived to be helpful for learners. At the same time, an activity which does not have all of the four steps can be regarded useful. In other words, although the inclusion of all four steps/the exclusion of some could be one of the criteria to evaluate a classroom activity, it does not ensure the usefulness of it. So, how could we determine an "effective" activity in the classroom? I suggest that we focus on learners' feedback. Learner's feedback allows us to analyze merits and demerits of the activity from a learners' point of view. For an analysis, the perspectives which were employed to discuss the activities in this paper could be helpful. The analysis will make it possible for teachers to clarify what exactly is missing in the activity, and think of approaches to improve them. This will result in making an activity more beneficial for learners. Thus, although no activity is absolutely effective for all learners, it is possible for us to produce a good activity by analyzing the learners' opinion.

One of the essential points that teachers need to take into account is mental support of learners. In the questionnaire, there are quite a few comments that refer to psychological aspects during learning, such as safe environment, fun atmosphere, and sense of achievement. Those comments specifically mention psychological aspects as a reason to explain why they felt an activity was useful. This shows that learners' psychological state has a large influence on their feeling about classroom activities. So, how can teachers provide mental support? One of the helpful perspectives is the Self-determination Theory, namely the support for learners' motivation. This theory argues that people are motivated when their basic psychological needs are satisfied. Therefore, if it turns out that learners find an activity not very helpful, it might be because the activity is lacking support for the psychological needs. For example, "to summarize a text or to give your opinion on a text" seems to include all the steps of input, input processing, output, and strategy, which could make it a very helpful activity. However, there are some people who do not consider it to be useful. According to the questionnaire comments, those people think that summarizing and giving opinions are sometimes too challenging for learners and that is why they judge it does not help learners. This judgment

35

probably comes from their own experiences of being demotivated because of the difficulty of the task. In this case, as their comments argue that the task is too challenging to give learners an opportunity for learning, we can interpret that they imply the activity potentially endangers learners' sense of competence. Once teachers are aware of the need for psychological satisfaction, they can take specific measures to improve the activity. In this way, an encouraging and motivating learning environment can be secured, and as a result, the activity can be perceived even more beneficial for leaners.

Another perspective that helps to analyze learners' voice is the CAF theory. When we examine whether "chatting" includes the four steps that I mentioned in the hypothesis, we see this activity only requires output strategy, and does not necessarily include enough input, input processing, and output. If my hypothesis were correct, "chatting" would be regarded ineffective as a classroom activity. However, according to the questionnaire result, the number of people who answered "it is helpful" was larger than for any other activity mentioned in the questionnaire. Here again, learners' opinions give us a clue to know the reason why people think "chatting" is helpful. Analyzing the questionnaire results from the CAF perspective, we can see that people who are in favor of "chatting" tend to explicitly refer to the development of fluency. Indeed, as discussed in section 5.1, there is a tendency that people feel an activity is helpful when their fluency is fostered, rather than their accuracy. Thus, even if an activity does not seem imperfect in terms of the framework of "input, input processing, output, and strategy", it could be perceived as beneficial by focusing on learners' fluency. Consequently, I suggest that teachers design a classroom activity so that it provides an opportunity where learners can explicitly feel their fluency is developed. If learners are aware of the development of their fluency, it will result in satisfaction of their needs for competence, and will encourage them to engage more in learning.

In conclusion, my hypothesis "an output activity is effective when it includes input, input processing, output, and strategies" has been rejected. However, the four steps still work to evaluate activities. Once we evaluate an activity, it is important for us to see the same activity from different perspectives, and analysis of the learners' opinion. This will enable us to understand the characteristics of the activity and to think of means to make it even more effective for learners. There is no perfect activity. However, it is possible for us to keep making a positive change with classroom activities through analyzing them from various perspectives.

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