

DEVELOPING SPEAKING SKILL WITH THE HELP OF INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES

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To enhance speaking skills students actually need intensive practice. As an [ESL teacher](#), I absolutely think that the students achieve the speaking skill by interacting on topics of real-life situations. With the help of various interacting activities they can easily promote their speaking skill.

To teach speaking is to teach students to organize their thoughts. How? In a meaningful and logical sequence instead of leading them to pure memorization of patterns.

Now many linguistics and ESL teachers agree on that students learn to speak in the second language by "interacting". Communicative language teaching and collaborative learning serve best for this aim. Communicative language teaching is based on real-life situations that require communication. By using this method in ESL classes, students will have the opportunity of communicating with each other in the target language. In brief, ESL teachers should create a classroom environment where students have real-life communication, authentic activities, and meaningful tasks that promote oral language. *With the help of creating classroom environment, students take part in authentic activities that promote speaking in the classroom.* This can occur when students collaborate in groups to achieve a goal or to complete a task.

Interactive activities that can help to promote speaking.

Discussion

Discussion can be held for various reasons. The students may aim to arrive at a conclusion, share ideas about an event, or find solutions in their discussion groups. Before the discussion, it is essential that the purpose of the discussion activity is set by the teacher. In this way, the discussion points are relevant to this purpose, so that students do not spend their time chatting with each other about irrelevant things. For example, students can become involved in agree/disagree discussions. In this type of discussions, the teacher can form groups of students, preferably 4 or 5 in each group, and provide controversial sentences like “people learn best when they read vs. people learn best when they travel”. Then each group works on their topic for a given time period, and presents their opinions to the class. It is essential that the speaking should be equally divided among group members. At the end, the class decides on the winning group who defended the idea in the best way. This activity fosters critical thinking and quick decision making, and students learn how to express and justify themselves in polite ways while disagreeing with the others.

Role play

One other way of getting students to speak is role-playing. Students pretend they are in various social contexts and have a variety of social roles. In role-play activities, the teacher gives information to the learners

such as who they are and what they think or feel. Thus, the teacher can tell the student that "You are David, you go to the doctor and tell him what happened last night, and..." (Harmer, 1984)

Simulations

Simulations are very similar to role-plays but what makes simulations different than role plays is that they are more elaborate. In simulations, students can bring items to the class to create a realistic environment. For instance, if a student is acting as a singer, she brings a microphone to sing and so on. Role plays and simulations have many advantages. First, since they are entertaining, they motivate the students. Second, as Harmer (1984) suggests, they increase the self-confidence of hesitant students, because in role play and simulation activities, they will have a different role and do not have to speak for themselves, which means they do not have to take the same responsibility.

Storytelling

Students can briefly summarize a tale or story they heard from somebody beforehand, or they may create their own stories to tell their classmates. Story telling fosters creative thinking. It also helps students express ideas in the format of beginning, development, and ending, including the characters and setting a story has to have. Students also can tell riddles or jokes. For instance, at the very beginning of each class session, the teacher may call a few students to tell short riddles or jokes as an opening. In this way, not only will the teacher address students' speaking ability, but also get the attention of the class

Guess Who

This beloved game splits students into pairs and gives each person a card with a character on it. Using the think-pair-share strategy, each student describes their person and their partner must then guess who they may be. Once all the students guess correctly the pairs will share with the class.

Describe and draw

In pairs, one student will be given a picture that they must hide from their partner. As they look at the image, they will try to describe the image as accurately as possible while their partner draws.

How it got its name

This is for all the creative students who want to think critically and brainstorm together. Split the class into pairs and assign each a common item (toilet, balcony, sneakers) for which they must analyze its name origins. Each pair will provide answers to the question and also provide alternative name possibilities which are either serious or humorous!

Broadly speaking, there are two main reasons for getting students to speak during a lesson:

- to give students practice of language items (vocabulary, grammar functions etc.) – a language practice aim
- to develop students’ ability to speak fluently and interactively – a speaking fluency aim

If the speaking activity is preceded by activities that present and give controlled written practice of grammar or vocabulary items, the speaking activity will have a language practice aim. If the speaking activity comes before a text (reading or listening) or just involves speaking for speaking’s sake, then the activity will have a speaking fluency aim.

With speaking fluency activities, it often doesn’t matter what vocabulary and grammar students use and whether it’s accurate nor not. The learning outcome is for students to gain confidence in speaking English. However, you often need to give students time to prepare and think about what they’re going to say before they speak

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