Conference on Education
Partners in Excellence
Speaking on its last legs

Mourned by

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Objectives:

By the end of this talk, you will be able to:

- Develop better insight into speaking skill and know about the critical situation of this important skill.

- Plan and stage a range of effective speaking activities, enabling students to engage fully to improve their speaking abilities.

Excellent!
Speaking Scene:

1) Teachers

Skipping

Bad preparation

"Do or do not, there is no try." - Yoda
What do these teachers have in common?

«I am an EFL teacher and I wish I could know how I should teach speaking more effectively»

«My business students are good at giving presentations, but they can’t have even the simplest conversations. How can I help them improve?»

«Please help me! I'm going to teach speaking for a group of beginners. This course will last 16 hours within a month. I find it hard to choose an appropriate course book or materials for these learners»

«How can I make my students more fluent? What is fluency? Is it good pronunciation?»
2) Contextual appropriacy (natural disasters)
Imagine you are the mayor of Tydestowe and that you have to make an announcement to the news reporters about the hurricane. Explain what happened using the Passive Voice.
Speaking Scene

3) Students

Students' fright
Students' fright

HOW I SPEAK ENGLISH IN MY HEAD

Let me introduce myself. I am Sir Derp Derpington. It is a pleasure to meet you.

HOW I REALLY SPEAK ENGLISH

Me name is Potato
SO, WHERE TO BEGIN?
Speak up

After understanding learners’ problems in learning and also keeping in view the learners’ socio-linguistic backgrounds, appropriate and useful activities can be used in order to facilitate and improve learners’ speaking abilities.
Speaking purposes

- There are **THREE** main reasons for speaking:
  - Interaction
  - Transaction
  - Performance

Richards (2008)
DESIGNING & ASSESSING SPEAKING TASKS

PRACTICAL
PURPOSEFUL
PRODUCTIVE
PREDICTIVE
(P) ADAPTIVE

Scott Thornbury
Suggestions for teaching speaking

- provide a rich environment that contains collaborative work, authentic materials and tasks.

- try to involve each student in every speaking activity.

- not correct students' pronunciation mistakes very often.
Suggestions for teaching speaking

- reduce your own speaking time while increasing student speaking time.

- Stage and grade speaking activities from controlled classroom activities then free speaking activities and at the end get them to public speech.
Staging Speaking Activities

There are **FOUR** stages to a speaking activity:

1. **Preparation** *(Pre-speaking)*
2. **Practice**
3. **Production**
4. **Feedback**

Richards (2008)
Staging Speaking Activities

Before the lesson

• Decide on your aims: what you want to do and why.

• Try to predict any problems the students might have.

• Work out how long the activity will take and tailor to the time available.

• Prepare any necessary materials.

• Work out your instructions.
Staging Speaking Activities

During the activity

- Arouse the students' interest.

- Leave structure or vocabulary students need on the board.

- Make sure that students know the aim of the activity.

- Make sure students have enough time to prepare.

- Make the activity more a 'process' rather than a 'product'.

- Monitor the activity with no interruption.

- Evaluate the students' performance to give feedback.
Staging Speaking Activities

After the activity

• Provide feedback

• Include how well the class communicated.

• Sometimes you can record the activity for discussion.
  Focus more on the possible improvements rather than the mistakes.

• Note down repeated mistakes and group correct them.
Characteristics of a good speaking task

- Learners talk a lot.
- Participation is even.
- Motivation is high.
- Language is of an acceptable level.

Ur(1996)
The speaking program

“The speaker of the school.”
Classroom speaking Activities

Controlled activities

- accuracy based activities.
- Language is controlled by the teacher.
Controlled Practice Activities

Stations

Chain question and answer

Whisper drill
Controlled Practice Activities

Look and Say

Hangman

Picture dictation

Substitution drill
Controlled Practice Activities

Speed

Team spell

Team Mime

Back To Back
Controlled Practice Activities

Shout

Slow reveal

Transformation
Classroom Speaking Activities

Creative communication (freer practice)

- Fluency based activities.
- The scenario is usually created by the teacher but the content of the language isn't.
Freer Practice Activities

Mystery Picture

Odd One Out

What-am-I?

Find someone who....
Remember…

- Match the activity to the objectives, function and context.
- Introduce the function (instructions, reporting...) and pre-teach the fixed expressions, target structure, vocabulary, language of interaction. Include modeling and drilling.
- Monitor, correct, prompt and praise!
- Focus on task achievement.
- Allow time. Ask students to repeat, if necessary.
- Ask students to share their activity with the class to show a ‘model of achievement’.
Conclusion

- Rather than leading students to pure memorization, providing a rich environment where meaningful communication takes place is desired.

- Learners should be more active in the learning process by means of interactive speaking activities.
Take home message:

- Speaking English is the main goal of many ESL learners and a crucial tool to improve their English language.
Useful Websites

- busyteacher.org/classroom_activities-speaking
- onestopenglish.com/skills/speaking/teaching-ideas/
- eslgold.com/speaking.html
- eslflow.com/speakingandcommunicativeicebreakeractivities.html
- bogglesworldesl.com/directionsESL.htm
- developingteachers.com/tips/drills.htm
- esl-galaxy.com/speaking.html
- Let’sdoit.upol.cz
- www.eslcafe.com/idea/index.cgi?Speaking