

## THE TEACHING OF SPEAKING : IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIVITIES

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### Abstrak

Berbicara adalah keterampilan aktif yang dikuasai dalam mempelajari bahasa setelah keterampilan mendengarkan. Keterampilan mendengarkan dan berbicara tidak dapat dipisahkan karena proses tersebut meliputi kemampuan mendengarkan dan berbicara. Mengajar keterampilan berbicara tidaklah mudah. Guru dilengkapi dengan media dan aktifitas untuk menjalankan proses belajar mengajar menjadi lebih hidup dan menarik. Ada banyak aktifitas yang mungkin diterapkan yang fokus kegiatan pembelajaran pada peserta didik. Salah satunya adalah model pembelajaran kooperatif dan kolaboratif. Situasi dan kondisi siswa dan kelas juga sangat memberikan pengaruh yang cukup besar.

Keywords: *speaking, cooperative learning, collaborative learning, student-centered activities.*

### A. INTRODUCTION

The active productive skill after listening is speaking. Listening and speaking cannot be separated since the process will involve the ability to listen and to speak. Richards (2008: 19) states that the mastery of speaking skill in English is a priority for many second-language or foreign-language learners. Consequently, learners often evaluate their success in language learning as well as the effectiveness of their English course on the basis of how much they feel they have improved in their spoken language proficiency. Oral skills have hardly been neglected in EFL/ESL courses (see the huge number of conversation and other speaking course books in the market), though how good to approach the teaching of oral skills has long been the focus on methodological debate. Teachers and textbooks make use of a variety of approaches, ranging from direct approaches focusing on specific features of oral interaction (e.g., turn-taking, topic management, and questioning strategies) to indirect approaches that create conditions for oral interaction through group work, task work, and other strategies.

A language teacher should provide himself with some knowledge about how to teach a language and the techniques applied in the teaching learning process. It is stated by Tomlinson (2008: 6) that a teacher will notify that the material can facilitate and promote the language acquisition and development:

1. Some of them are providing a rich experience of different genres and text types.
2. Some of them are providing an aesthetically positive experience through the use of attractive illustrations, designs and illustrations.
3. Some of them are making use of multimedia resources to provide a rich and varied experience of language learning.
4. Some of them are helping the learners to make some discoveries for themselves.
5. Some of them are helping the learners to become independent learners of the language.
6. Some of them are providing supplementary materials which provide the learners with experience of extensive listening and/or extensive reading.
7. Some of them are helping the learners to personalize and localize their language learning experience.

After looking at the materials which are made in different styles and appearance, Tomlinson (2009: 35) also gives suggestions for the improvements of the material. They should:

1. not only focus on helping learners to become accurate and fluent but also help them to become appropriate and effective communicators as a result of placing productive activities within a clearly defined context and of specifying target outcomes.
2. provide ways of helping the teacher to give outcome related feedback and of helping learners to gain information on the effectiveness of their task performance through, for example, applying evaluation criteria before, during and after production making use of L1s, of visuals, of mental imaging, of inner speech and of learner prior experience to enable linguistically low level learners to participate in activities which match their intellectual and emotional maturity.
3. reduce the number of language items to be taught and learned and focus more on increasing learner exposure to language in use and learner

discovery and exploration of language input meaningful to them to provide more opportunities for extensive reading, listening and viewing.

4. provide greater exposure to non-native speakers of English using it effectively as a lingua franca and include activities requiring learners to seek and explore English input in the environment outside the classroom including activities which require the learners to use English to achieve communicative outcomes outside the classroom.

After a teacher design the material, he, then, thinks deliberately the techniques of how the material are presented in class. The term cooperative learning and collaborative learning will come in mind. The two are under active learning strategies with which it can create interesting classroom activities.

## **B. COOPERATIVE LEARNING VS COLLABORATIVE LEARNING**

Cooperative learning is an approach to organize classroom activities into academic and social learning experiences. It differs from group work, and it has been described as "structuring positive interdependence." Students must work in groups to complete tasks collectively toward academic goals. Unlike individual learning, which can be competitive in nature, students learning cooperatively capitalize on one another's resources and skills (asking one another for information, evaluating one another's ideas, monitoring one another's work, etc.). Furthermore, the teacher's role changes from giving information to facilitating students' learning. Everyone succeeds when the group succeeds. Ross and Smyth (1995) in Wikipedia (2014) describe successful cooperative learning tasks as intellectually demanding, creative, open-ended, and involvin higher order thinking tasks.

Ciuffetelli Parker (2009) and Siltala (2010) in Brown and Ciuffetelli (2009) discuss the 5 basic and essential elements to cooperative learning:

1. Positive interdependence
  - a. Students must fully participate and put forth effort within their group.
  - b. Each group member has a task/role/responsibility therefore must believe that they are responsible for their learning and that of their group
2. Face-to-face promotive interaction

- a. Members promote each other's success.
  - b. Students explain to one another what they have or are learning and assist one another with understanding and completion of assignments.
3. Individual and group accountability
- a. Each student must demonstrate mastery of the content being studied
  - b. Each student is accountable for their learning and work, therefore eliminating “social loafing”
4. Social skills
- a. Social skills must be taught in order for successful cooperative learning to occur
  - b. Skills that include effective communication, interpersonal and group skills
    - a. Leadership
    - b. Decision-making
    - c. Trust-building
    - d. Communication
    - e. Conflict-management skills
5. Group processing
- a. Every so often groups must assess their effectiveness and decide how it can be improved (Brown & Ciuffetelli, 2009).

Collaborative learning is a method of teaching and learning in which students team together to explore a significant question or create a meaningful project. Collaborative learning is also a situation in which two or more people learn or attempt to learn something together. Unlike individual learning, people engaged in collaborative learning capitalize on one another's resources and skills (asking one another for information, evaluating one another's ideas, monitoring one another's work, etc.). More specifically, collaborative learning is based on the model that knowledge can be created within a population where members actively interact by sharing experiences and take on asymmetry roles. Put differently, collaborative learning refers to methodologies and environments in which learners engage in a common task where each individual depends on and

is accountable to each other. (Wikipedia, 2014) Collaborative learning activities can include collaborative writing, group projects, joint problem solving, debates, study teams, and other activities. Collaborative learning also occurs when children and adults engage in play, work, and other activities together. (Harding-Smith, 1998)

### **C. POSSIBLE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES**

There are many possibilities in terms of classroom speaking activities in purpose that the class will actively and lively run. Consequently the students will easily understand the material. Ur (2009) proposes the classroom interaction patterns are as follows:

#### **Groupwork**

Students work in small groups on tasks that entail interaction: conveying information, for example, or group decision-making. The teacher walks around listening, intervenes little if at all.

#### **Closed-ended teacher questioning**

Only one 'right' response gets approved. Sometimes it is cynically called the 'Guess what the teacher wants you to say' game.

#### **Individual work**

The teacher gives a task or set of tasks and the students work on them independently; the teacher walks around monitoring and assisting where necessary.

#### **Choral responses**

The teacher gives a model which is repeated by all the class in chorus, or gives a cue which is responded to in chorus.

#### **Collaboration**

Students do the same sort of tasks as in 'Individual work', but work together, usually in

pairs, to try to achieve the best results they can. The teacher may or may not intervene.

(Note that this is different from ‘Group work’, where the task itself necessitates interaction.)

**Student initiates, teacher answers**

For example, in a guessing game: the students think of questions and the teacher responds; but the teacher decides who asks.

**Full-class interaction**

The students debate upon a topic or do a language task as a class; the teacher may intervene

occasionally, to stimulate participation or to monitor.

**Teacher talk**

This may involve some kind of silent student response, such as writing from dictation;

but there is no initiative on the part of the student

**Self-access**

Students choose their own learning tasks, and work autonomously.

**Open-ended teacher questioning**

There are a number of possible ‘right’ answers, so that more students answer each cue.

There are many activities done in the active learning class. Teachers can make use of one or more than one in their class in order to make the class more attractive and invite students’ participations. The activities are:

a) Ice Breakers

Those things that get people talking quickly and personally about their goals, fears, expectations for the session before them. Ask them, for example, to consider what one thing each hopes to gain from the workshop and what one thing each hopes to offer during the workshop, then have the group get up to rove the room for five minutes gathering a sense of what others have come to gain and to offer. At the end of the workshop, this might become a way for individuals to measure what they've accomplished and gained overall.

b) Think/Pair/Share

Have attendees turn to someone near them to summarize what they're learning, to answer a question posed during the discussion, or to consider how and why and when they might apply a concept to their own situations. Work well with pre-planned questions and with ideas that emerge during a workshop from a larger group discussion. The objectives are to engage participants with the material on an individual level, in pairs, and finally as a large group. The activity can help to organize prior knowledge; brainstorm questions; or summarize, apply, or integrate new information. Approximate time: six to eight minutes. The procedure is as follows: 1) individuals reflect on (and perhaps jot notes) for one minute in response to a question; 2) participants pair up with someone sitting near them and share responses/thoughts verbally for two minutes, or they may choose to work together to create a synthesis of ideas or come to a consensus; 3) the discussion leader randomly chooses a few pairs to give thirty-second summaries of ideas.

c) Write/Pair/Share

The format for this strategy is identical to the think-pair-share, except that students process the question asked of them by writing about it rather than reflecting. After a brief time to note their thoughts, each student turns to a partner to discuss. The activity closes with the instructor calling on random students to summarize their responses. As with the think-pair-share, the instructor may choose to skip the summary portion of the exercise depending on circumstances.

d) Student Summaries

During a class session, the instructor pauses and asks students to explain to a partner the central concepts just presented. The activity can be altered in several ways. The instructor can request that students write or think individually prior to discussing with a partner, making the activity resemble a think/write-pair-share.

e) Question and Answer Pairs

The objective here is to engage individuals with readings and then to pair them to answer particular questions. This helps to deepen the level of analysis of presentations/readings, and helps engage the participants in explaining new concepts, as well as considering how/where to apply the concepts to their own thinking/work setting. Approximate time: five to ten minutes. The procedure: 1) the participants respond to a presentation (video, panel, readings) and compose one or two questions about it; they may do this in class or you may ask students to bring questions with them; 2) the participants pair up; A asks a prepared question and B responds; then B asks a prepared question and A responds; 3) the leader may ask for a sampling of questions and answers in order to bridge to a full group discussion.

f) One Minute Paper/Free Write

Ask the participants to write for 2-3 minutes on a topic or in response to a question that you've developed for the session. Again, this is particularly useful in those moments where facilitators/teachers are asking the participants to move from one level of understanding to another, from presentation of new ideas to application of ideas, from considerations about self to situations involving others. The moments of writing provide a transition for participants by bringing together prior learning, relevant experience and new insights as a means of moving to a new (aspect of the) topic. The writing offers participants a moment to explore ideas before discussion, or to bring closure to a session by recording ideas in their minds at that moment. A minute of writing is also a useful thing when discussion takes a turn you didn't expect – when a particularly good question comes from the group, when discussion keeps circulating around a basic idea rather than inching its way into potential applications or deepening of ideas. Use with other active learning tools.

g) Focused Listing

These listings are great follow ups to short presentations (whether via video or in person speaker) during which the participants are asked to



absorb information that is new and that is vital to the discussion to follow. For example, with an early American Literature session focused listing might start with asking: "What is literature?" Or "Based on your reading of Thomas Jefferson's letter about "the novel," what phrases describe the founders' fears about young women and men reading novels?" Then, as a full group, take five to ten minutes for students to speak and record on a flip chart/white board as many associations as possible for this prompt. The listing works well to introduce a topic, as an exercise joining/synthesizing two sets of information (lecture plus follow up reading, two lectures), and as something to return to as a wrap up so that participants can compare before/after thinking – and, always, it will give you a chance to see if/where participants pick up on topics/ideas as you had anticipated, to gather a sense of interests/insights of the specific group before you, to establish a base from which you can begin to extend concepts of the workshop to participants' particular concerns.

h) Two Column Method

Before solving a problem or applying concepts, a discussion leader can help the participants more fully consider a problem or issue or concept by employing a two-column method of generating and recording responses to a prompt – eg, "A Positive Classroom Looks and Sounds Like/ Doesn't Look Like This." Head two columns on the board/flip chart with "Looks/Sounds Like" and "Doesn't Look/Sound Like" and ask the participants for ideas, observations, recalling of presentation information that will support one side of the board or another. You might ask half the room to be initially responsible for the two minutes of listing "Favorable to A" and the other half to provide "Favorable to B" listing; then you could take a minute to have the participants generally add to this base of information and/or generate a "Creating C from A & B" column. This technique can be quite effective in moving a group discussion from basic ideas toward considerations of how to apply those ideas; the listing can provide a base of ideas from which potential problems as well as benefits/successes/possibilities can be identified so that the participants can begin a next stage of discussion.

i) Scenarios/Case Studies

Provide the participants with a "local" example of a concept/theory/issue/topic being covered in the discussion. The participants discuss and analyze the scenario/case (provided by the facilitator), applying the information covered in a presentation to some situation they may encounter outside the workshop. The participants can briefly present their findings to other small groups or to the whole group or simply record ideas on an overhead/white board so that workshop leader can draw questions and synthesis from the material. The participants can also develop (individually, in pairs, groups) their own work-based case studies and exchange them with others for discussion and analysis.

j) Reciprocal Questioning

The facilitator provides question stems, such as the following:

Comprehension Question Stems	Connector Question Stems
Describe...in your own words.	Explain why...and how...
What does...mean	How are...and...similar?
Why is...important?	How are...and...different?
How could...be used to...?	How does...tie in with...that we learned before?

The participants then develop specific questions from the given stems and provide answers. The students can work individually, with a partner, or in a small group.

k) Numbered Heads Together

Here the participants work in groups (large or small). To begin, a group member asks a question, then others in the group put heads together and make sure everyone knows the answer. To close, the question asker picks one from the group to answer the question. This can also be done with two or even several teams, where Team One asks Team Two a question. Team Two puts heads together and makes sure team members know the

answer. Then Team One selects a Team Two member to answer the question.

l) Round table

A question is posed by a group leader, teacher/facilitator or another participant. Each person writes one answer (or another sort of response, as directed by the group leader) on paper (or flipchart or transparency) that's passed around the group. Each group shares/presents their answer to the entire class.

m) Corners

The leader of the day places some content (or a flipchart with a question) in each corner of the room. Groups of 3-6 people move from corner to corner and discuss the answer(s) to each posed question. The groups develop a consensus and write their answer directly on each flipchart. When the flipchart has an answer already written by a previous group, the next group revises/expands/ illustrates that response with additional information, if possible. Different colored markers can be used for each group to see what each group has written for each question.

n) Problem-Based Learning

Present a problem to the class/group. The problem needs to be based on an authentic situation that the participants could actually encounter. Partners or small groups must apply the presented information to address the problem. They may address the problem deductively (determine what is causing the problem) or inductively (analyze the issues and identify the problem).

o) Ten-Two Strategy

Presenter shares information for ten minutes and then stops for two minutes to encourage listeners to pair and share their ideas, fill in any gaps or misunderstandings, and allow each other to clarify information.

p) Peer Survey

Each participant is given a grid that is to be filled in according to the needs of the group. The students/group members can be instructed to fill in the grids on their own or they can collect statements from peers and then share in small/large groups. Groups can then generate and share conclusions. Grid topics or categories can be tailored/designed as needed/preferred; here's a sample grid:

Example of Idea:		
Useful Information:		
Unresolved Question:		

q) Shared Brainstorming

Presenter disseminates sheets of paper to each small group of 3-5 people. On each sheet there is a different question. Team members generate and jot down the answer to the given question. The presenter then instructs each group to rotate to another sheet containing a different given question to answer. Depending on the time available, this procedure is repeated, giving each group the opportunity to respond to as many questions as possible. At the end of this activity, each group returns to their original question sheet, reviews the given responses, generates a summarization of ideas, and shares their conclusions etc. with the entire group.

r) 3 - 2 - 1 Format

A presenter instructs students to jot down and share with a partner or small group:

3 ideas/issues etc. presented

2 examples or uses of the idea/information covered

1 unresolved/remaining question/area of possible confusion

s) Note Check

Students pair with a partner/small group to briefly (2-5 minutes) share notes. They can clarify key points covered, generate and/or resolve questions, generate a problem to solve, solve a problem posed by the instructor, or write a paragraph synthesizing key ideas as set out in the partner's notes.

t) Background Knowledge Probe

BKPs questionnaires ask for basic, simple responses (short answers, circling/showing of hands in response to multiple choice questions) from the students who are about to begin a course, a unit, or study of a new concept. Such probes are meant to help teachers to determine effective starting points/appropriate levels of instruction for a given subject and/or class. Used to both open and close course activities, a BKP helps the students focus their attention on what will be the important material.

u) Generating Questions

Have the students/participants create five types of questions from a reading assignment, with each question moving to a "higher" level of thinking. Begin with a question asking for an important fact stated directly in a text. Then develop a question that revolves around two relationships, ideas, characters or events addressed in the reading. At the next level ask the students to write questions requiring answers built from inference – an analysis drawn from two pieces of information close together in a text or from relationships among many pieces of information spread throughout the assigned reading(s). The students can create higher level questions based on the patterns they perceive in seemingly unrelated pieces of information – a symbol, a theme that recurs. The last of this question-developing thread might ask the students to create a question based on the reading and everyday life, issues, and

contexts. This can be a great activity for those days when the students have been assigned short but intense readings that they will be expected to discuss in detail in class. Have the students write the five questions (noting page numbers when they refer to textual passages or ideas) on a note card, which can be passed around, used as a guide during the discussion, and/or turned in at the end of the class.

v) Jigsaw Teamwork

A Jigsaw is an active learning exercise in which (1) a general topic is divided into smaller, interrelated pieces (e.g., the puzzle is divided into pieces); (2) each member of a team is assigned to read and become an expert on a different piece of the puzzle (e.g., one person is given a Team Building Issues puzzle piece/article, another the Team Composition & Roles piece/article, and so on); (3) then, after each member has become an expert on their piece of the puzzle, they teach the other team members about that puzzle piece; and, finally, (4) after each member has finished teaching, the puzzle has been reassembled and everyone in the team knows something important about every piece of the puzzle. To function as a successful team requires the integration of many different activities. If any piece of the puzzle is missing, the team is generally a group and not a team.

w) Rotating Chair Discussions

The Rotating Chair group discussion method works well in several situations; groups well versed in the ordinary usefulness of this process of building ideas will comfortably engage rotating chair practices for handling difficult discussions. The ground rules for Rotating Chair are four: (1) When you would like to participate, raise your hand; (2) The person speaking will call on the next speaker (aiming to call on a person who has not/has less frequently contributed); (3) The person called on will first briefly restate/summarize what has been said then develop the idea further; (4) As a speaker, if you wish to raise a new question or redirect the discussion, you will briefly summarize the points made in the

prior discussion, and where possible create a transition from that thread to the one you're introducing.

Participants gain the most from Rotating Chair discussions by not only participating as speakers, but by also being attentive listeners, jotting down notes about ideas so that ideas develop in those spaces between speaking, learning from others' ideas rather than listening for a "right idea" or "right answer" to emerge, and trusting that the opinions and experiences that you offer in speaking will increase the knowledge base and problem-solving capacity in the classroom.

(<http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tutorials/active/strategies/> Tue, 3 march 2015, 13.15)

Ur (2009: 106) also gives some suggestions for group-work organization, i.e.

### **1. Presentation**

The instructions that are given at the beginning are crucial: if the students do not understand exactly what they have to do there will be time-wasting, confusion, lack of effective practice, possible loss of control. Select tasks that are simple enough to describe easily; and in monolingual classes you may find it cost-effective to explain some or all in the students' mother tongue. It is advisable to give the instructions before giving out materials or dividing the class into groups; and a preliminary rehearsal or 'dry run' of a sample of the activity with the full class can help to clarify things. Note, however, that if your students have already done similar activities you will be able to shorten the process, giving only brief guidelines; it is mainly the first time of doing something with a class that such care needs to be invested in instructing. Try to foresee what language will be needed, and have a preliminary quickreview of appropriate grammar or vocabulary. Finally before giving the sign to start tell the class what the arrangements are for stopping: if there is a time limit, or a set signal for stopping, say what it is; if the groups simply stop when they have finished, then tell them what they will have to do next. It is wise to have a 'reserve' task planned to occupy members of groups who finish earlier than expected.

## **2. Process**

Your job during the activity is to go from group to group, monitor, and either contribute or keep out of the way – whichever is likely to be more helpful. If you do decide to intervene, your contribution may take the form of:

- providing general approval and support;
- helping students who are having difficulty;
- keeping the students using the target language (in many cases your mere presence will ensure this!);
- tactfully regulating participation in a discussion where you find some students are over-dominant and the others silent.

## **3. Ending**

If you have set a time limit, then this will help you draw the activity to a close at a certain point. In principle, try to finish the activity while the students are still enjoying it and interested, or only just beginning to flag.

## **4. Feedback**

A feedback session usually takes place in the context of full-class interaction after the end of the group work. Feedback on the task may take many forms: giving the right solution, if there is one; listening to and evaluating suggestions; pooling ideas on the board; displaying materials the groups have produced; and so on. Your main objective here is to express appreciation of the effort that has been invested and its results. Feedback on language may be integrated into this discussion of the task, or provide the focus of a separate class session later.

## **D. USING INTERNET IN STUDENT-CENTERED ACTIVITIES**

Internet is becoming a widespread medium of communication nowadays. People cannot be separated with this in their daily lives. Pritchard (2007: 6-7) says that the role of the computer in general, and the internet in particular may not be immediately clear in the context of socially constructed learning. We will see later that there are times when the internet is used in a way that is not geared towards dialogue or collaboration, but there are times, which will also be



exemplified, when the use of the internet can be clearly identified as a means of promoting this type of learning. For example:

- There are times when a dialogue, though perhaps not an oral dialogue, is encouraged, even required when interacting with particular software. Questions might need answers, or choices might be required. There are good examples of internet activities that encourage a level of interaction with the software, which can amount to the sort of dialogue likely to encourage thought and understanding.
- In a more realistic, though sometimes less immediate way, dialogue can be undertaken by means of electronic communication. We will see that this might be in what is known as “real time” communication (synchronous), often referred to as “chat”, or asynchronous, such as e-mail exchanges which continue over a longer period of time, involving time delays with responses.
- Also, activities mediated by the internet can be a stimulus for a dialogue between those taking part, either at the time, or at a later time away from the computer.

By realizing the existence of the internet and social media, communication can also be set in such a way that even though the participants do not exactly face each other, they can be in need of communicating a topic through those media. Possible activities can be set in and out of the class as long as there is an internet connection.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

It cannot be denied that teachers should have the ability to create interesting class activities. Like in the post model pedagogy, there is no best single technique in class but the best. The activities can be in the model of cooperative or collaborative learning techniques as needed. The situation and condition of the students and the class should be counted into consideration as well. Last but not least, student-centered activities indeed are interesting and attractive from the students' perspectives.

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