

Teaching speaking skills

Many language learners regard speaking ability as the measure of knowing a language. These learners define fluent speech as the ability to communicate with each other, much more than the ability to read, write, or comprehend oral language. They consider speaking as the most important skill they can acquire, and they assess their progress in terms of their fulfillments in spoken communication. In the communicative model of language teaching, teachers help their students develop this knowledge by providing authentic practice that prepares students for real-life communication situations. They help their students develop the ability to produce grammatically correct, logically connected sentences. The goal of teaching speaking skills is to communicate efficiently. To help students develop communicative efficiency in speaking, teachers can use balanced activities. In order to learn a language students need as much as possible to hear and read the language as native speakers use it. Teachers can make this happen in the following ways. *Teachers talk:* always try to use the language as naturally as possible when you are talking to students. To slow down speech may help to make the message more understandable. *Materials:* give students authentic reading material from newspapers, magazines, and other print sources, advertisements, travel brochures, packaging, and street signs containing short statements that students at lower levels can use. Reading authentic materials motivates students at all levels because it gives them the sense that they are really able to use the language. Communication has a purpose to convey information. In these classroom activities, students use the language to fill in an information gap by getting answers or expanding a partial understanding. For example, students work in pairs and each is given a task. The use of similar task-based activities in the classroom is an excellent way to encourage students to use the language. The most common types of communicative activity are *role plays*. In role plays, students are assigned roles and put into real life situations that they may meet outside the classroom and role plays also imitate life.