Teacher Training Course

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Teaching Speaking

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about teaching speaking

1. What exactly is speaking?

2. What types of spoken performance can you think of?

3. Do you think a child speaking to himself or herself is performing a kind of speaking activity?

4. How would you describe a language class in which speaking is well-promoted?

5. Which types of spoken language do we have?

# Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) about teaching speaking

6. Which factors render speaking a daunting adventure?

7. Is there any framework for teaching speaking?

8. What does an inefficient class look like?

9. Is there any way to make sure that the speaking activity we have devised is appropriate for our learners?

10. How can we score the learners' speaking performance?

Types of spoken language

While some of us may think of tiring, monotonous lectures as instances of spoken performance, there are definitely more types to consider. Nunan (1991) divides a typical speaking event into:

Types of spoken language
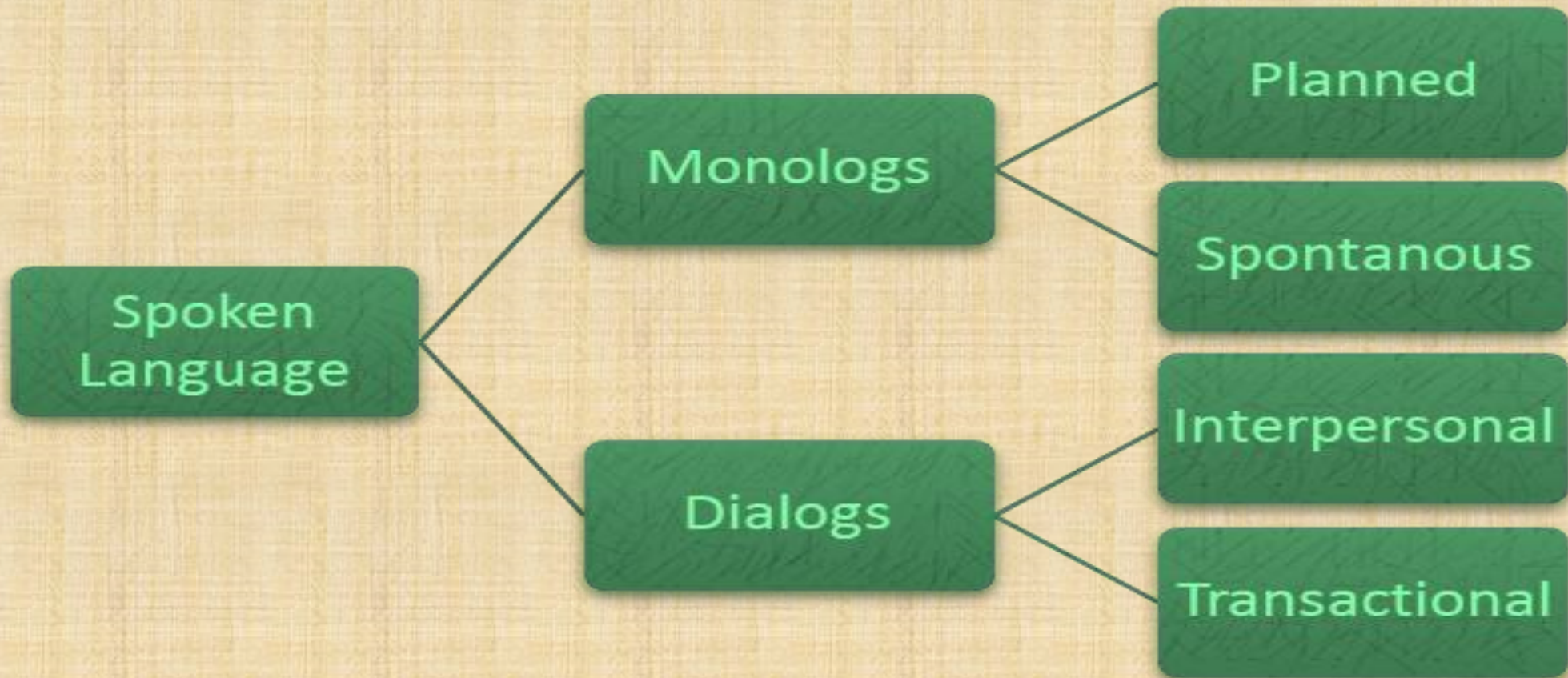
Challenges to speaking

Douglas and Lee (2015) shed light on the following points as challenges to speaking:

3. Reduced forms

Spoken language has a good number of reduced forms and sentence fragments. This type of reduced language can happen at different levels:

- Phonological; "Djeetyet?" for "Did you eat yet?"

- Morphological; "I'll" for " I will".

- Syntactic; "When will you be back?" "Tomorrow, maybe."

- Pragmatic; "Mom! Phone"

Learners, especially those beginner level learners, experience more difficulty with reduced forms because they have been typically exposed to full forms.

Teaching Speaking Framework

3. The role of metacognition:

It emphasizes how teachers can raise the learners' awareness of metacognitive strategies by helping them use their thinking in order to regulate their speaking. Explicit teaching of metacognitive strategies will enrich learners' planning, monitoring, and evaluation of their spoken English.

Teaching Speaking Framework

The figure below summarizes Burns' (2012) model of teaching speaking.
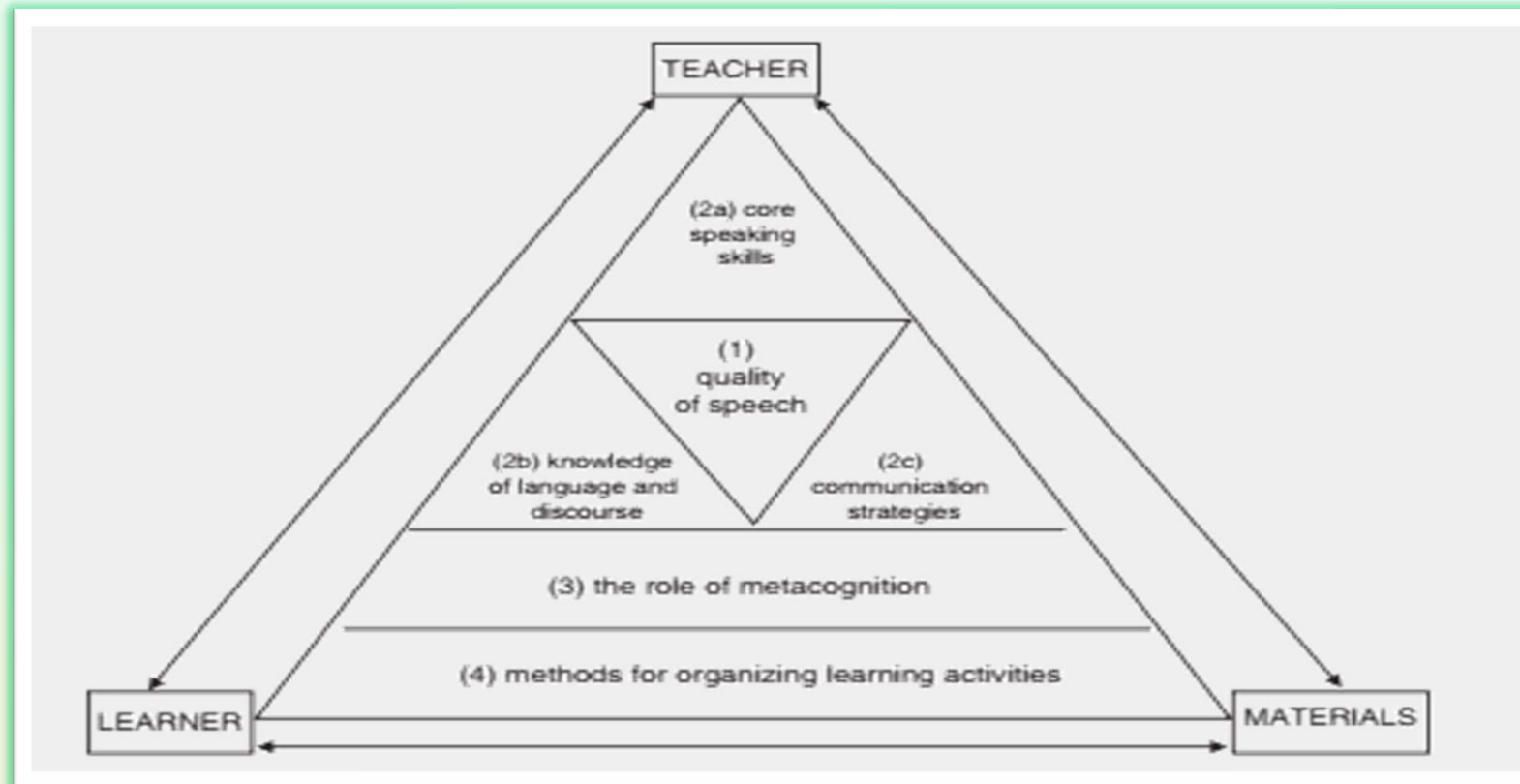
Tips on teaching speaking

Lee Sabnani (2020) presents a number of suggestions which can help teachers develop their learners' spoken performance:

Tips on teaching speaking

1. Teachers' explicit guidance can help the students manage their anxiety and improve their speaking quality. Learners will manage to regulate their progress by being actively engaged in monitoring and evaluating their speaking. In addition, they need to be made aware of the reason why they are attempting a particular task.

Tips on teaching speaking

2. Although practicing for fluency is helpful, learners do need to receive explicit instruction on language, skills, and strategies which can further support their speaking. Pre-planning tasks such as providing learners with the content they need to talk about will reduce learners' cognitive load and anxiety. In addition, scaffolding language through the use of language chunks such as formulaic structures, phrases, and collocations can enhance learners' spoken performance. Modeling correct pronunciations on the part of the teacher, too, can be helpful.

Indications of an impoverished speaking class

How will you describe a class wherein speaking is not done effectively?

Lennon (2021) lists the following features.

Have you ever experienced any of these situations?

What have you done to overcome the challenge?

Scoring speaking: The rubric

○ Having planned a speaking activity and getting the students to speak, teachers need to have a consistent rubric to evaluate the oral output, provide the learners with feedback and modify the lesson plan accordingly. The following rubric presented by Brown (2001) can be helpful in this regard:

Scoring speaking: The rubric

○ **1. Score 1/5**

- Grammar: Errors are frequent, but such a speaker can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language.

- Vocabulary: Speaking vocabulary inadequate to express anything but to express the most elementary needs.

- Comprehension: Within the scope of his very limited language experience, she/he can understand simple questions and statements if delivered with slowed speech, repetition, or paraphrase.

Scoring speaking: The rubric

○ **1. Score 1/5**

- Fluency: No specific fluency descriptor.

- Pronunciation: Errors in pronunciation are frequent but can be understood by a native speaker used to dealing with foreigners attempting to speak his language.

- Task: Can ask and answer questions on topics very familiar to him. Able to satisfy routine travel needs and minimum courtesy requirements. Should be able to order a simple meal, ask for shelter, ask and give simple directions, make purchases and tell time.

Essential stages of teaching speaking skills

According to Drummond, 2016 and Withers, 2014, the essential

stages of teaching speaking skills can be divided into:

Essential stages of teaching speaking skills

Pre-speaking stage (Engagement)

1. **Warm-up/ lead in:** Introduce the text to set lesson context and engage students by eliciting information from students and generate interest in the topic.

2. **Pre-teach the gaps:** Enrich the students' language knowledge by presenting the needed structures or vocabulary.

3. **Explain the roles:** Give clear and specific instructions as students realize what to do.

Essential stages of teaching speaking skills

While-speaking stage (Study)

1. **Model the task:**
   - Give students sufficient time to prepare the dialogs and practice them if necessary.
   - Analyze text structure and discuss the cultural aspects of the interaction.
   - Conduct controlled speaking practice, such as chorus repetition of dialogs, pronunciation focus and practice in pairs.
2. **Joint construction**

Transfer the genre to a new situation, that is, elicit new topic through students sharing their own renovation stories. In pairs, construct a new conversation similar to the one in controlled speaking practice part. Then, have a role play in pairs, and finally in front of the class.

Essential stages of teaching speaking skills

Activation (Post-speaking stage)

1. **Free practice activity/ individual construction**
   - o Ask the students to choose a new situation or assign a new situation for them and role-play the conversation.
   - o Takes notes of frequent mistakes.
2. **Reflection**
- o Ask the students to review and reflect on what they have learned and difficulties they have encountered.

Correct mistakes and focus on the features of spoken language such as intonation, stress, and rhythm etc.,
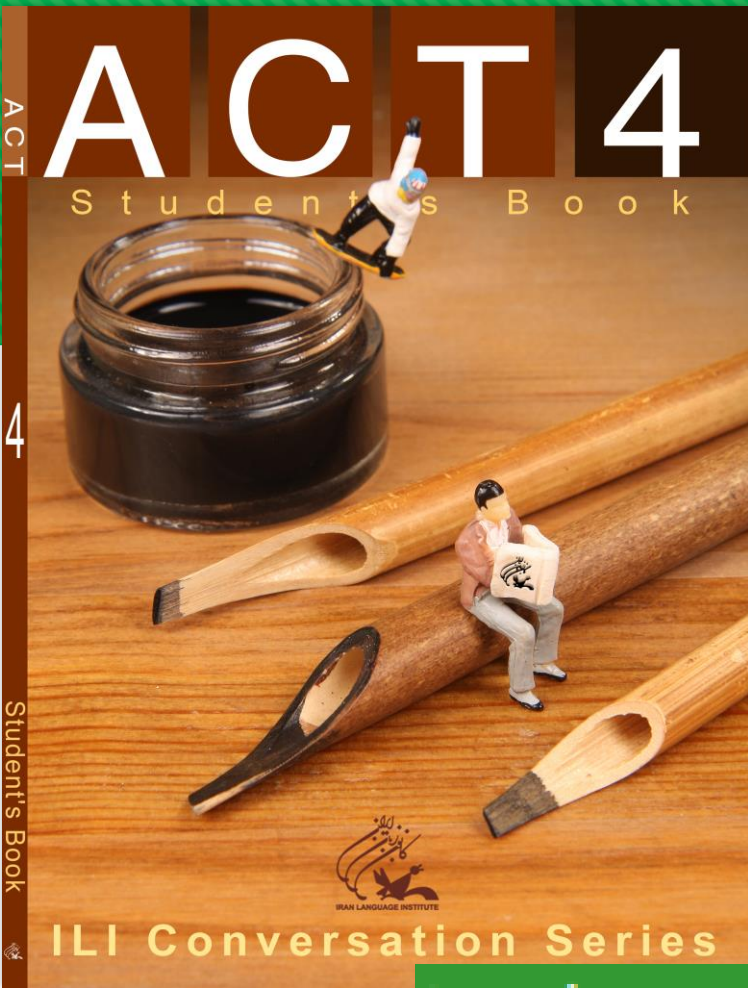
Sample Speaking Lesson Plan

ACT
Student's Book

ACT4
Student's Book

4

ILI Conversation Series

Learning outcome:	Students WBAT describe/speak about their family/friends' personalities
Students' level:	Pre-intermediate
Material:	ACT 4. p. 42

A Put the lines in order to make a conversation.

_____ I see they both like to draw.

_____ And what about her sister?

_____ Matilda is very sociable and talkative.

__1__ Mary, your twin girls look so much alike. How do you tell them apart?

_____ Yes, they're both very creative. They love to make things.

_____ Alice is more serious. And she can be very impatient sometimes.

_____ Oh? In what way?

_____ Actually, they have very different personalities.

B Pair work Practice the conversation in A.

C Pair work Replace the appropriate sentences in A with the corresponding ones below, and practice the conversation again.

- Are they very similar?
- Matilda is playful.
- What's her sister like?
- She's shy.

Useful Expressions: Asking about personalities

What is he/she like?
How would you describe him/her?

Unit 4 Personalities

Speaking activities for EFL classroom

Every language practice activity will focus on controlled and free responses, in which they generally correspond with the two goals of accuracy and fluency respectively. The ESL teacher is also concerned with developing both accuracy and fluency and must give time for each to happen.

Activities to promote learners' speaking skill

o **Simulations**

○ Simulation is more elaborated than role play. That is, it means that in simulation props and documents provide realistic for language practice, but in role play students are given particular roles in the target language. For example, in role play, one student takes the role of a restaurant customer, and the other takes the role of restaurant's waiter/waitress. So, for instance in simulation, the teacher might bring the grocery store products for the students to buy (coffee, tea, jam, milk) and even pay money for making their purchases.

Activities to promote learners' speaking skill

o **o   Information gaps**

o   Information gap is a useful activity in the classroom in which one person has information that the other lacks. Then, they must use the target language to share the information to each other. Information gap activities serve many purposes such as, solving a problem or collecting information.

Dos and Don'ts

○ Here are statements from experienced teachers. Think about them and identify which of these can be categorized as either "Dos or Don'ts"

Teaching Speaking Online

• Managing the conversation equitably is one of the most difficult challenges. It is important to have clear protocols for turn-taking (maybe using the chat box or the hands-up icon) and to keep track of who has or hasn't spoken. Plan tasks where everyone has a chance to say something and ensure they're not all repeating the same thing. Tasks with a personal element are really useful where there are no right and wrong answers, but everyone brings something new to the activity.

The End

○ Thank you for your contributions!