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Educational Consultants

# Teaching Speaking Sub-skills

Activities for Improving Speaking

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*Methods and activities for more effective teaching with less preparation*

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## Introduction

Rather than just have students 'speak' in the classroom we should be teaching students specific speaking skills, known as sub-skills or micro skills. Since conversations outside the class are bound to be better learning experiences than those inside the class, rather than trying to duplicate real-world conversations in the classroom, we should be teaching students skills they are not likely to learn outside the classroom. By raising awareness of speaking sub-skills and providing classroom practice with them, we will be providing students with strategies to improve their communication outside the classroom, which is, or should be, the ultimate goal.

### Essentials for Language Learning

**EXPOSURE** to a rich but comprehensible input of real spoken and written language in use

**USE** of the language to do things

**MOTIVATION** to listen to and read the language and to speak and write it

Jane Willis

### Classroom vs. Real-world Speaking

	Classroom Use	Real World Use
<b>Exposure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• T and non-proficient users (mostly other students)</li> <li>• artificial</li> <li>• Teacher chooses content</li> <li>• limited</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• native-like or a range</li> <li>• authentic</li> <li>• Student chooses content</li> <li>• unlimited</li> </ul>
<b>Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• artificial</li> <li>• determined by Teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authentic</li> <li>• determined by Student</li> </ul>
<b>Motivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited rewards</li> <li>• rewarded by Teacher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unlimited rewards</li> <li>• rewarded by inter-personal or transactional success</li> </ul>

### Two Warmers

#### Barry's Activity

A tell B about a holiday in excruciating detail.

B show interest by using devices like:  
 showing eye contact  
 nodding your head  
 saying, "Is that so?"  
 saying, "Really?"  
 saying, "Uh-huh"

#### Last Weekend

Answer these questions about last weekend:

- Did you have a good weekend?
- What was the best thing about your weekend?
- What was the worst thing about your weekend?

Contrary to popular belief, **Last Weekend**, as it is, has little value as a classroom speaking activity as it does not have students practice any sub-skills. It is not even set up to focus on fluency as the questions can be answered with one word. On the other hand, **Barry's Activity** encourages *Fluency, Turn-taking skills and Responding and Initiating*.

## Speaking Sub-skills

Sub-skills	Application
<p><b>Fluency</b>  <i>Students practice speaking with a logical flow without planning or rehearsing.</i></p>	<p>Activities which require students to focus on meaning in communication without immediate concern for accuracy (errors can be corrected afterwards).</p>
<p><b>Accuracy with Words &amp; Pronunciation</b>  <i>Students practice using words, structures and pronunciation accurately.</i></p>	<p>Students need to be able to use and pronounce words and structures correctly in order to be understood. Controlled practice activities are the most common way of working on spoken accuracy.</p>
<p><b>Using Functions</b>  <i>Students use specific phrases for purposes like giving advice, apologizing, etc.</i></p>	<p>Activities which stress that verbal communication is for a reason or function. Role plays and simulations are ideal.</p>
<p><b>Appropriacy</b>  <i>Students practice using language appropriate for a situation and making decisions about formality and choice of grammar or vocabulary.</i></p>	<p>Activities which stress that the purpose of talking determines what language is appropriate. Students are required to make choices about grammar and vocabulary and also other aspects of communication like intonation and length of turn. For example, "What's the damage?" is inappropriate in a four-star restaurant.</p>
<p><b>Turn-taking Skills</b>  <i>Students practice ways of interjecting, eliciting an interjection or preventing one.</i></p>	<p>Turn-taking skills involve knowing how and when to interject, eliciting an interjection or preventing one. Students can practice listening for appropriate gaps in order to take their turn without irritating the speaker. While speaking they can practice techniques such as pausing which purposely allows others to take a turn or they can practice using hesitation devices such as 'ums' and 'errs' to hold on to a turn while they search for the next thing to say.</p>
<p><b>Relevant Length</b>  <i>Students practice speaking at a length appropriate to a situation</i></p>	<p>Activities which demonstrate that the purpose of speaking or the context determines the appropriate length of a turn. For example, a one-word answer is acceptable for a market research survey but would not be sufficient in a job interview. Activities which require students to elaborate or be concise are useful.</p>
<p><b>Responding and Initiating</b>  <i>Students practice managing a conversation by making responses, asking for a response or introducing a new topic or idea.</i></p>	<p>Activities which get students to practice managing a conversation in an appropriate way with specific words and phrases such as, "What do you think about...", "Speaking of...", "Really?", etc. Gestures and other paralinguistic tools are also used in conversation management.</p>
<p><b>Repair and Repetition</b>  <i>Students practice repeating or rephrasing parts of a conversation when they suspect that what was said was not understood.</i></p>	<p>The spontaneous nature of conversation requires that participants constantly have to make sure that what's being said is understood. When misunderstanding is suspected, a participant will 'repair' parts of the conversation. The most common form of repair is repetition and individual words or groups of words can be repeated by either the speaker or listener. Students can practice repairing when they suspect they haven't been understood or as listeners they can repeat to seek clarification or correction from the speaker.</p>
<p><b>Range of Words and Grammar</b>  <i>Students practice using particular grammar and/or vocabulary for speaking on a specific topic or for doing a specific task.</i></p>	<p>Students need to know a range of words and grammar and have the ability to choose from that bank the most appropriate words and structures for a specific task or topic. They are taught or made aware of words or structures appropriate for specific tasks or contexts and then are required to use them appropriately.</p>
<p><b>Discourse Markers</b>  <i>Students practice using words/phrases which organize a talk (e.g. firstly, secondly, on the other hand, to summarize)</i></p>	<p>When speakers are required to take a particularly long turn, for example when giving a presentation, they use specific words and phrases to help the listener recognize how their talk has been organized. Activities can be used which teach discourse makers and then require students to use them appropriately.</p>

# Activities

## Fluency

**In Detail**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

Students often have difficulty producing fluent speech simply because they lack the vocabulary or grammar to express what they want to express. This activity is designed to get them to speak at length about something they are very familiar with. To start, choose a topic that you know students can speak about and then let them know what it is. For example, it could be what they did last night or last weekend/on their last holiday/etc. At lower levels, it could be what they do in a typical day. It could be to describe their home, to talk about their family, their hometown or country. Once you've told them the topic, remind them that the purpose is to speak at length and put students in pairs. Tell them that one person in each pair is to speak at length on the topic for a certain period of time (usually two or three minutes) and give as much detail as possible. Ask listeners to respond using one or all of these:

- showing eye contact
- nodding your head
- saying, "Is that so?"
- saying, "Really?"
- saying, "Uh-huh"

Also, let the listeners know that you will be asking them some questions about what their partner says (this ensures they listen). After the designated time, stop the activity and ask some of the listeners some simple questions about what their partner said. Then have them switch roles and repeat the activity.

**Short Presentations**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a simple activity that gets students to speak for specific amount of time on a topic that should be relatively familiar to them. The fact that the topics are randomly assigned adds an interesting slant to the task and prevents students from pre-scripting their answers. There are two ways it can be set up, you can write a number of different topics on cards and put them in a receptacle or you can list six topics on the board and number them and then students are assigned a topic by rolling a die. Either way, establish how long the students are to talk for (usually one to three minutes) and then get the first student to take a card or roll the die for a topic. It's best to start with a strong student. After that student has finished, give them feedback ONLY on their fluency, e.g., "Well done, you spoke for two minutes and you didn't hesitate much." Then get other students to do the same. Note that after you have done this activity once with a class, you can get them to do it again in small groups. In those groups, each person would take a timed turn by choosing a card (you'll need a set for each group) or by selecting from the board by rolling a die. Prepare cards or strips of paper with different topics on them. Put them in a box or other similar receptacle.

A student comes up and takes one and must speak to the class on that topic for a preset length of time – say, one minute. If you like, you can grade them on their fluency either by an overall assessment or by counting the number of hesitations.

**Selling Objects**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a fun activity that gets students involved in a communicative task, with one student having to elaborate on a particular object in order to “sell” it. To begin, give each student an everyday object (e.g., pen, coin, notebook, paper clip, marker, etc.). Tell students that they will have to sell the object to another student. Establish the same price for all the objects, one that is far more than they are worth, say \$100 or \$1000. Explain that every student in the class has to buy one and only one object. Students will be competing to see whose object is the one that most students want to buy. In order to sell the object students will need to think of some special properties that make the object really valuable (e.g., material it’s made from, a famous person who owned it, magical properties it has, etc.). Give the students some time to think and then pair them up. Tell them how long you want them to speak for (usually one to three minutes) and tell them not to stop until you tell them to. Then have one student in each pair sell the object by elaborating on the special properties it has that make it valuable and stop them when the time is up. The other students needs to listen but can respond, especially with questions. Then have the student who was the potential buyer, sell their object for the same time period. Then, switch pairings and continue. At any time, stop the activity and tell each student to think about which object they would buy and why. Ask each student what they decided. You can point out who was the best salesperson, if you’d like.

**Random Chain Story**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

Put students in small groups and give them a topic that all students can speak about. Chain stories, which are made up as they are told, work well for this. You could give them the starting line. I like to use, “Last night X had the strangest dream. In the dream...” One student starts the story and must continue to speak without significant pauses. Anytime there is a pause or hesitation, another student can jump in and continue the story.

**Cued Chain Stories**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a good activity to point out the importance of speaking without significant hesitation and to challenge students to try to do it. You can start off by trying this activity with the whole class. First you need to establish a topic for your chain story and it’s best if you start it off. Any narrative will work well, e.g., “X went to Niagara Falls last weekend” or “Last night X had the strangest dream”. The dream story is a good one as it allows students to use absolutely anything in the story and ideas only need to be loosely connected. After you start the story, any student can continue it but if you get no takers, point to one. The student then needs to extend the story and try to do it without a significant pause. If there is a pause, another student

jumps in and continues the story (again, if no takers, point to someone). This process continues like this until you decide to stop it. If you want, you can challenge students to see who can hold the floor the longest (you'll have to keep a record of that) or to speak for a minimum of time (e.g., one minute). Make sure you give the student a visual clue (e.g., thumbs up) that they have spoken for the minimum time. After students catch on to how this works, you can have them do this same activity in smaller groups, so that each student ends up with more total speaking time. If you want to introduce a time factor into these group chain stories, appoint a time keeper and a backup in each group. The backup can keep track of the time when the time keeper is speaking.

**Fluency Board Game**

	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Grammar</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a good activity to encourage students to speak at length on various topics and in a fun and non-threatening way. To prepare for the class, you'll need to create a simple board game on a piece of paper and then photocopy it for each group of 3 – 5 students. Write various topics on the squares on the board, e.g., weather, favourite movie, your town/city, your best friend, etc. and a time for which the students must speak about the topic, e.g., 30 seconds, one minutes, etc. When you are assigning times to the various categories, consider what would be a relatively natural length of time for that topic. For example, 10 seconds might be appropriate for weather and 2 minutes for talking about their town/city. Then, before class, photocopy the sheet so there is one "board" for each group of 3 – 5 students. In class, give out the "game boards" and a die for each group and make sure each student has a marker to use to move about the board (they can use coins). Then explain the rules. Students are to put their markers at the start and when they roll the die and land on a square, they have to speak for the predetermined length of time according to the topic on the square. If they do it successfully, they can keep their marker on the square, if not, they go back to where they started that turn from.

**Telling Jokes**

	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Grammar</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity features lots of repetition of jokes or anecdotes and thus is a good way to encourage fluent production. Studies have shown that when learners repeat a speaking task a few times, both fluency and accuracy improve. To prepare for this activity you'll need one relatively short narrative joke or anecdote for each student (there are thousands of jokes on the internet). Then put students in pairs and give each pair a paper with a short joke or anecdote. They read the joke/anecdote and make sure they understand it (they can check with you if they don't). One student in the pair takes the paper and makes sure his/her partner can't see it, and then the student without the paper practices telling the joke. Then they switch. Once they have had enough practice, take their papers and designate each of the students in the pairs as A or B. Put all the A's on one side of the room and the B's on the other. Each student finds a partner and tells them their joke. When they have finished, they find a new partner and retell the joke. When you decide to stop this activity, you can ask some students what joke/anecdote they liked the best and have the student who told it, tell it again to you.

## Accuracy with Words & Pronunciation

### Semi-planned Conversations

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity gives students a chance to think about accuracy before they speak. To start off, give students a general topic (e.g., last weekend). Then put students in pairs and the pairs discuss what grammar, vocabulary and/or expressions they need to talk about the topic. For example, for talking about their weekend, they will need past simple, vocabulary for times of the day, etc. They should make written lists of these items. Monitor while they are doing this to answer questions and make suggestions for what they could add to the list. Once you feel that the students have enough on their lists, ask them to practice a conversation with their partner where they try to use the language they wrote down. Then, when they have had enough practice, they switch partners and have a conversation with their new partner on the topic and they try to use the grammar, words and expressions. You can let them refer to their notes to make sure they use them.

### Short Presentations

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity gives students a chance to think about accuracy before they speak and it gives the teachers a chance to deal with it afterwards. Explain to students that they will be giving short presentations on a particular topic. Give them the topic and let them know the time limit (e.g., one minute) and that they have to speak to the whole class for that time. Before students do their presentations, they should make some brief notes with any key words, expressions or grammatical structures that they think they will use in their talk. Stress that they are not to write their talk out. Monitor to help them with this task. Then, when students have finished preparing for the task, you can call them up to deliver the presentation. Ask them to show you their notes before they start so you can see what language they targeted. While the student is speaking, make note of any significant errors, especially with their target language. After a student has finished talking, you can choose a few key errors (don't overwhelm them) to deal with. Then you can call up the next student.

## Using Functions

### Providing Structures for a Role Play

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity gets students to think about the language functions involved in a particular situation and the structures they can use to for the function. Therefore, it's excellent practice for those tasks in the outside world. What needs to be done in class is that the students need to be given a role play to do and the outcome that they must achieve. For example, the role play might involve a visitor to a city asking for directions and the outcome would be that they get directions to a specific locations. Or, the role play might involve a boss and employee meeting to discuss the employee's performance and the outcome would be that the employee gets a raise.



The outcome will require that students use language for a specific purpose (e.g., getting information, persuading, etc.) Once they've been given the role play and the outcome, they get into pairs or small groups and decide on some structures they will need for their conversation. They can check reference books (e.g., Functions of American English) or they can write down their own structures and you can go around and correct and/or remodel them as needed. You can also give each group a section of the board and they can write the structures directly on the board, which allows you to easily correct them and it also allows the entire class to use them in their role play. Then the students do the role play and try to use the structures. You can have all the pairs/groups do the role plays simultaneously and then you can have them switch roles and do it again. Finally, some groups to do their role play in front of the class. If you'd like, collect some errors while they are doing it and take them up after they have finished.

**Providing a Role Play for a Function**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity is like the previous activity in reverse. This time the students are given a particular function (advising, persuading, etc.) and they have come up with a role play to suit the function. The value in doing this is it gets them thinking about the functions required in real-world situations. In preparation, you can either provide them with a list of structures for the function, or you could ask them to produce their own and correct or remodel them afterwards (see previous activity). Either way, once the students have the function and the list of structures, they work in pairs or groups and think up a situation that suits the function. They may have to do some alterations to the structures once they've done that. You should be monitoring during these stages to answer questions and help them with the task. Then ask them to practice the role play and use the structures. Then get each pair/group to perform their role play for the rest of the class, but first they explain the situation. During this stage, you can collect some errors to deal with afterwards, either after each role play, or after all have been done.

**Selecting Structures for a Role Play**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity exposes students to a variety of structures used for different functions and it gets them to think about which ones should be used in a particular situation. So, it's useful practice for the outside world. To prepare for this activity, you'll need a list of structures for different functions and they'll need to be in random order. In class, put students into pairs or small groups and give them the list of structures. Give them a role play (e.g., apologizing for a work-related mistake, asking for directions, etc.) and they have to select which structures they would use in the role play. After they've had time to do this, elicit the structures groups chose to check their answers. The students then do the role play simultaneously and they use the structures they selected. If you'd like, get some groups to do their role plays for the entire class. You can write down some errors and correct them afterwards.

## Appropriacy

### Changing Roles

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a good activity to get students to practice using different language in different situations. To use it in class, teachers first need to choose a fairly general speaking task or function, one that could be used in different situations with different people. An example of this could be telling someone about your weekend, or about your hometown, your job, etc. Then the teacher needs to figure out some role plays that will introduce different situations and characters so as to encourage the learners to adapt their language to something that is more appropriate. For example, the students could be asked to talk about their weekend as an employee with their boss, as a teenager or adult with their parent or as a friend talking to a friend. Let students know that you will be asking them to start one role play and then to switch to another. The language that they use and the way they use it should change also. It's best to model this first by choosing a strong student to play the role of the boss, parent, friend, etc. Then ask students to notice how the language and the way you deliver it changes. Elicit some ideas and if you think it is necessary, get them on the board. Then start the role plays. Stop at a suitable point and then ask them to keep the topic but switch characters and situations to the second one. Continue for the third and fourth, if there is one. While the class is doing the role play, circulate and listen for any pairs that are particularly adept at doing this task. Afterwards, have them do the role play with the change in roles for the rest of the class. Again, ask the class to listen for how the language changes. You can elicit more ideas and make more notes on the board. Then you can have the students in each pair switch roles and go through the three role plays again.

### At the Party

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a fun and fairly free activity which allows students to choose what they want to talk about but they need to be aware of what the appropriate language is for the person they are talking to. To set it up, choose some type of social gathering which would have people of different types of social positions (e.g., wedding reception, party, office party, etc.). Then give each student a name tag indicating who they are (e.g., journalist, policeman, waiter, CEO, celebrity, child, The Queen, teenager, student, professor, etc.) Tell students to assume the role of the person indicated on their name tag and that they are to mingle as if at the social gathering. When they do, they should try to use the appropriate language with each person they talk to. You might want to model this first by going up to each student and using different language for each one depending on the name tag they are wearing. You can ask students what they noticed about how you changed your language. After the activity has finished, get some feedback from students on how the language changed depending on who was talking. who they are by the way people talk to them.

**Good News  
Bad News**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity requires that students make choices in language depending on the type of information they are going to give to someone and how they think they might react to it. In this way, it's excellent preparation for situations that learners might encounter in the real world. First, let students know that they will be practicing breaking good news, bad news, and if you'd like, neutral news to other students and they should use the appropriate language for each. Let students know exactly what the news is in each category, for example, getting a raise, not getting a job, upcoming events. Then put the students into groups and have each group discuss ways they would deliver each piece of news. Monitor to help. After they've had some time, elicit their ideas and put some of them on the board. Augment that with any important language that they missed, e.g., "Sorry to have to tell you this but..." Then put students in pairs and designate an A and B in each pair. Then you call out one of the news categories, e.g., bad news, and the student you want to deliver it, e.g., B. Keep doing that for as long as you want and then have the students change pairings so that each A is with a new B. Continue until you feel that they have had sufficient practice. Then you can get some feedback from the students on how the language changed in each situation.

## Turn-Taking Skills

**And You?**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a very basic turn-taking skill which has students passing the turn to their partner by adding a question to everything that they say. Despite its simplicity, it's an important skill for students to develop as use of it demonstrates a concern for the other speaker and it's bound to promote better social interactions. It also requires the participants to follow the thread of the conversation and challenges them to think of questions – all valuable practice. To set it up in class, put students in pairs and tell them what they are to talk about. The activity works best with standard social talk starting from greetings and inquiries to how the person is. The whole idea is that one participant asks the other a question and the respondent answers and then asks his/her own question. Often that question can be just a simple, "And you?" For example, a conversation might go something like this:

- A: Hi, how are you?
- B: Okay, and you?
- A: I'm fine. What's new?
- B: Not much. And you?
- A: I've got a new job. How's your job?
- B: It's the same. What's your new job like?

When students understand the task, get them started speaking and let them go for as long as they seem interested. You can stop the activity at any time and get the students to change pairs.

### Escalating Topics

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is an interesting activity that gets students to practice using hesitation devices to hold their turn. It also points out to students that there is a connection between fluency and the knowledge of certain language. Essentially, learners are usually more fluent with topics and tasks that they are familiar with. To prepare for the activity, do a whole class brainstorm of conversation topics and get them on the board. You'll need around ten in total. Then, again as a whole class, you'll need to determine which topics are the easiest to talk about. You can do that by calling out each topic and then asking students to raise their hands if they think it's easy to talk about. Count the number of hands for each topic and put that score beside each one. Then rewrite the list on the board in order from easiest to most difficult.

Get a few examples of hesitation devices on the board and go over them making sure students know how to use them. Here are some commonly used ones:

- er...
- um...
- mm...
- let me see .....
- I mean .....
- you know .....
- you know what I mean .....
- the thing is .....
- sort of .....
- kind of .....
- you see .....
- what was it?

Then put students into pairs. When you give the signal, one student in each pair is to start off and talk about the easiest topic on the list for a predetermined length of time (1- 2 minutes) and the listening students is to notice and count how many hesitation devices their partner uses (they can take notes). Signal when time is up and get each listener to indicate to the speaker how many hesitation devices were used. Then students switch roles and repeat the task. Then tell the students to go on to the next topic on the list. The number of hesitation devices should increase as the topics get more difficult. After the students have finished this task, point out the importance of using hesitation devices to hold a turn and also the importance of acquiring language to be able to speak fluently on different topics.

### Waiting to Interject

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity gives students practice with using a speaker's pause as a cue to interject. To begin, put students in groups of three to five and tell them they are going to have a conversation. Tell them that one person in each group will not participate but will serve as a judge to determine how well the others interject to take a turn to speak about the topic. You can specify the topic you want students to talk about or you can let groups choose their

own topics. When they are ready, one student in each group will start to speak and the others wait to interject. The speaker should decide when they want others to interject and indicate it by using a slight pause. If the listener interjects at the correct time, the speaker nods their head to indicate “Yes”. If it was not at the time the speaker intended, he/she shakes their head to indicate “No”. If the listener interjected successfully, the judge awards him/her a point, and he/she then becomes the speaker. If the interjection was not done properly, the judge can indicate with a gesture (like pointing) for the speaker to continue. After the students have done this for a while, ask for the total scores from each group (all the points for correct interjections totalled together). You can write them up on the board if you want. Then do another round where the judge from the first round gets to speak and another person is the judge in each group. Continue this as long as you want.

Depending on students level of fluency, you may want get them to practice hesitation devices before doing this activity so that they can make sure they don't inadvertently give up their turn. Some common devices are below:

- er...
- um...
- mm...
- let me see .....
- I mean .....
- you know .....
- you know what I mean .....
- the thing is .....
- sort of .....
- kind of .....
- you see .....
- what was it?

### Interrupting

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity is similar to the one above but, in this one, the person waiting to speak actually interrupts the person who is speaking. But you will need to point out that it's still polite to wait for a pause. The difference between this activity and the previous one is that, in the previous one, the speaker invited an interjection by pausing. In this activity, the interruption will not be invited. To prepare for this activity, you will need to teach the students some common expressions used for interrupting. Here is a short list:

- Excuse me for interrupting, but ...
- Sorry to interrupt, but...
- Can I say something here?
- Can I get a word in here?

You should give the students some practice with the expressions for interrupting but keep them up on the board for them to refer to during their conversations. Then put the students into small groups (3 – 6) and explain the procedure to them. One member of the group is to serve as the judge and will not speak. The other members are to have a conversation. You can choose the topic or get students to choose their own. One student in each

group will start speaking and the others can interrupt but they must do it with correct use of one of the expressions. Make sure that they know that they mustn't do it too soon as they need to at least let the speaker get into what they are going to say. The judge will award each student a point for a good interruption, no points for a bad one. The judge should indicate the bad ones by shaking his/her head. Once the students have spent some time practicing interrupting in their groups, stop the activity and find out how many points were recorded in each group. Then get the groups to switch judges and do the activity again. Continue for as long as you want and, if you'd like, keep a running total of the number of interruptions for each group.

**Group Conversation with Cards**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a good activity for raising awareness of common turn-taking strategies and getting students to practice them and recognize them in a conversation. Before beginning, go over the following turn-taking skills with students: Interrupting, holding a turn (with hesitation devices – see Escalating Topics) and yielding a Turn (see Waiting to Interject). Then put students in three groups and give each member of each group a blank card. Assign one of the three turn-taking skills to each group and have all members write the skill on a card. Then tell the groups to have a conversation (choose the topic or let the students choose their own) and the students practice their skills in their group. After they have had enough practice, form new groups of three to five students. The members in each group have a conversation and each person uses the turn-taking skill on their card, at least a few times in the conversation. After some time, stop the conversations and the students try to identify which card each person in their group has. Get students to exchange cards with someone in their group, form new groups and do the conversation again. You can continue like this for as long as you want.

**Relevant Length**

**Keeping to the Limit**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a very simple activity but an effective one in reminding students that certain topics or tasks in spoken English are expected to be of a certain relative length. To use this activity in class, you'll need to prepare sets of cards for each pair of students. The cards should have speaking topics (or tasks) and a time limit appropriate for each one. For example, ordering food in a restaurant (10 seconds), giving directions (30 seconds), relating your work/educational history in a job interview (2 minutes), to name a few. In class, point out the importance of not talking too much or too little in particular situations (speaking in a job interview is a good example to illustrate this). Then put the students into pairs and give each pair a set of cards. One student is to speak and the other serves as the timer. They turn over the first card and the speaker follows the instruction on the card, e.g., "Order food in a restaurant in around 10 seconds." The other student times his or her response and lets them know afterwards if they are significantly over or under. Then the next card is turned over and the procedure is repeated. If you want students to have more practice with this, you can

switch pairings and do it again. After ending the activity, find out which students were able to generally stay within the limits.

### Varying Answers

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity gets students to vary the length of their answers dependent on the situation and who they are talking to. Before the class, you need to choose a set of general questions that people might ask each other in both social and work situations. You'll need to type up lists of them, one list for each pair of students. Here are some ideas:

- Where did you go to school?
- What kind of work do you do?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- What are your plans for the future?
- Who has been influential in your life and why?
- Where have you travelled?
- How was your weekend?

Next you need to select at least three social or work situations which would require answers of different lengths and write them on cards, one set for each pair. Some examples below:

- Job interview
- Mingling at a party
- Market research survey
- First date

In class, put students in pairs. Give one student the list of questions and the other one the situation cards. Tell students that they will be role playing different situations and the person being asked the question should think about how long or short their answer should be before answering. Make sure they understand all the situations before beginning. Then one student in each pair turns over the situation card for both to see and the other chooses some questions to ask from the list. The student should answer with a response relevant to the question and the situation. Students continue like for some time, turning over situation cards and asking questions. Stop them and get them to switch roles. Then stop them and get some feedback on when they used short answers and when they used long ones and why. Once that has been established, get the students to repeat the procedure. You can change pairings, if you want.

## Responding and Initiating

### Segues

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a good activity to give students practice in initiating a new topic while another one is being spoken about. This is done in most cultures but they need to know how to do it in English. Before starting this activity, you'll need to teach students some phrases and expressions for making segues into new or related topics. You can choose some from the list below:

- By the way...
- That reminds me (of )...
- Speaking about /of...
- Before I forget...
- Oh, while I remember...
- I just thought of something.
- Oh, there's something else I wanted to say/ ask you.
- This has got nothing to do with what we're talking about, but ...
- Changing the subject for a minute...
- That's funny, because something similar...
- Incidentally...

You'll need to put the expressions you choose on cards and you'll need a set of cards for pair of students. Then, in class, get students to brainstorm a list of speaking topics and get them on the board. Put students in pairs and give them a set of cards. Then explain the procedure. Each student is to take a card and they start a conversation based on one of the topics on the board. Students must use the expressions on their cards to change the direction of the conversation at an appropriate point. You can specify that they start with one of the topics and segue to a specific other one and so on, or leave it up to them where it goes. Once a student has used the expression, he/she puts it at the bottom of the pile and takes another one to use. If you want to make it competitive, get each pair to keep track of how many segues they make. Then get feedback and find out which pair made the most.

**Responding Correctly**

<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Grammar</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

Give/teach students a list of rejoinders that represent various reactions someone might have to something someone says. Some examples below:

<p><b>Happy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That's great!</li> <li>• Terrific!</li> <li>• Great!</li> <li>• Wonderful!</li> </ul>	<p><b>Sad</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That's too bad.</li> <li>• Sorry to hear that</li> <li>• Oh, no!</li> <li>• That's terrible/awful.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Interested</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Really?</li> <li>• I see.</li> <li>• Oh, yeah?</li> <li>• That's nice.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Surprised</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You're kidding!</li> <li>• I can't believe it!</li> <li>• Really! Really?</li> <li>• That's incredible!</li> </ul>

The first thing you'll need to do is to teach the list of rejoinders and you'll need to model the intonation used for some of the responses. You can drill them with the class. You should have the list up on the board and leave them there for the duration of the activity. Put students in pairs or small groups and get them to brainstorm things that they could say that would provoke each set of rejoinders (e.g., winning the lottery, failing an exam, etc.). After students have had time to brainstorm, elicit some of their ideas and get the better ones up on the board. Then put students in pairs and



have a student in each pair use one of the ideas from the board to start a conversation that will include their happy, sad, interesting or surprising news. The other student in each pair has to respond with the correct rejoinders. The students are then to switch roles in the pairs and so that the other student can break his/her news, chosen from the board. You can then switch pairings and repeat the procedure as long as you want.

## Repair and Repetition

### Repeating What You Said

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

Teach students the use of expressions, gestures and facial expressions to display lack of understanding. Give students a speaking topic. Put them in pairs and in each pair, one student speaks and the other uses one of the above to indicate they don't understand, regardless of whether they actually do understand or not. When the speaker gets this signal, they must repeat what they just said in a way that helps the other student understand. Give them a few minutes then stop the conversations and get them to switch roles.

### In Detail

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity appears under **Fluency** but it's also an excellent way to give students practice with ways of showing interest when someone is taking a particularly long turn. To start, choose a topic that you know students can speak about and then let them know what it is. For example, it could be what they did last weekend/yesterday/on their last holiday/etc. At lower levels, it could be what they do on a typical day. It could be to describe their home, to talk about their family, their hometown or country. Once you've told students the topic, remind them that one person's purpose is to speak at length and the other's is to show interest. Put students in pairs and tell designate the person in each pair who is to speak at length on the topic and the period of time (usually two or three minutes). Ask the listener to respond using one or all of these:

- showing eye contact
- nodding your head
- saying, "Is that so?"
- saying, "Really?"
- saying, "Uh-huh"

Also, let the listeners know that you will be asking them some questions afterward about what their partner said (this ensures that they listen). After the designated time, stop the activity and ask some of the listeners some simple questions about what their partner said. Then have them switch roles and repeat the activity.

**Repeat What You Said**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This skill of indicating to a speaker that what they said was not understood is very important for language learners as they will often be in situations where they will not be able to decipher what is being said to them. However, this is also a native-speaker strategy that is used when a speaker has not stated something clearly enough for the listener to comprehend. This is a basic activity which gets students to practice signalling for repetition. To employ it in class, you first need to teach students the use of phrases, gestures and facial expressions to display lack of understanding. For example, a puzzled look shows lack of understanding as does “Sorry?” Then give the class a speaking topic and put them in pairs. Specify which technique(s) you want listeners to use to indicate they didn’t understand. Then one student in each pair starts speaking and the other uses one or more of the phrases, gestures or facial expressions to indicate they don’t understand something, regardless of whether they actually do understand or not. When the speaker gets this signal, they must repeat what they just said in a way that helps the other student understand. Give them a few minutes then stop the conversations and get them to switch roles.

**Echoing**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

Echoing is another technique that is used by English speakers to make sure that they have understood something that’s just been said. Of course, it’s much more important for those learning the language as they will have the problem much more than proficient speakers. To begin this activity, you should explain to students the technique and its purpose. Then, teach students some ways for repeating what a speaker says in order to make sure they’ve heard or understood it correctly. A good way to do that is to set up a role play with a strong student and use some or all of the phrases below to clarify what he/she says. Then you can try eliciting all or part of the phrases from the class.

- So you’re saying that...
- Did you say that...
- You said that...
- That’s ..., isn’t it?

To set up the activity, put students in pairs and tell them that one will start speaking (you can specify a speaking topic) and the other one will have to listen. When you give a signal they will have to use one of the expressions to reiterate something their partner said just before the signal in order to clarify it with the speaker. You can use a sound (e.g., a bell) or a visual signal (turn the lights on and off). Then get the students to start and, at a few points in their conversation, give the signal for listeners to ask for clarification. Get students to switch roles and repeat. You can switch the pairings and give them more practice.

**Paraphrasing  
Words or  
Expressions**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity accomplishes a few things at the same time. First, it gives speakers practice clarifying words or expressions that the listener may not have understood. Also, it gives the listener practice in signaling that they don't understand and, lastly, it teaches students new words or expressions. To begin, you'll need to provide students with a list of words, phrases (e.g., phrasal verbs) or idiomatic expressions that they are unlikely to know. You'll need one word/phrase/expression for each pair of students in the class. Write them on the board, put students in pairs and assign each pair a different one (a quick way to do this is to have one student from each pair come up and choose one and put a check mark beside it on the board). Get pairs to work together to find out the meaning of their word/expression by checking a dictionary and/or checking with you. Then they should discuss how they would use it in a conversation and how they could say it in a different way which would make the meaning clearer, e.g., "It came out of the blue" could be rephrased as, "It was a complete surprise". You should monitor while they are doing this as they are likely to need help. Then a student in each pair starts a conversation and uses the new vocabulary and when their partner hears the new word/phrase, he/she should indicate that they didn't understand it (see Repeat What You Said). Then the speaker rephrases it. After students have practiced this, get them to switch partners and each of them takes a turn as the speaker with their new vocabulary. You can have them continue in this way for as long as you want. When the activity is over, remind students that both the skills of indicating lack of understanding and rephrasing need to be used in the outside world.

**Range of Words and Grammar**

**Words on a Topic**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a good activity for vocabulary in context. To begin, get students to decide on a speaking topic or choose one yourself. Then do a whole-class brainstorm of vocabulary that would be used in talking about that topic and expand it, whenever appropriate. For example, if the topic was travel and the students said "hotel", you could expand it with "hostel", "bed and breakfast", "motel", etc. Then elicit the grammar that would be used in speaking about the topic, particularly verb tenses. Write them on the board and add to them where appropriate. For example, if the topic was a trip the students took, the grammar would be past tense(s) and time expressions. Then put the students in pairs or small groups and they have a conversation on the topic and try to use the words and the grammar in their conversation. You can ask a student in each group to be the judge and they would count the different grammatical forms that were used (just one of each type is enough) and each different word that was used from the list. Then, you would ask each judge for the total from each group. Then switch the roles in the groups so the judge has a chance to speak and have the students do it again and the pairs can try to increase their score.

**Speaking on Several Topics**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a more advanced and more complex version of the above activity and it is one that puts more responsibility on the students for coming up with the language they need for certain topics. To begin, put students in pairs and have each pair come up with a speaking topic of their choice. Elicit them to make sure there are no repetitions. Then give each pair a paper and they make a list of vocabulary and grammar forms they think should be used in talking about that topic. Monitor to help and correct. Then collect the papers and put them on your desk. Then have each pair come up and take a paper. They should study it first and ask about any vocabulary they don't understand. Then, each pair has a conversation on the topic on the paper they have and try to use the vocabulary and grammar indicated. On a separate sheet of paper, the two students should make a tally mark each time they use vocabulary from the list (not the grammar). Stop the activity and find out how many words each pair used. You can write the scores on the board to keep track and make the task competitive. Then have the pairs change papers and repeat the activity.

**Using Discourse Markers**

**Giving Instructions**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This is a good activity to introduce discourse markers and to give students practice with them with a very basic task. To begin, put students in pairs and have give each pair a simple everyday task that they have to think of step-by-step instructions for, e.g., making a cup of coffee, making toast, brushing your teeth, etc. Alternatively, you could have each pair think of their own task but stress to them that it must have at least five steps. Then you need teach them a list of discourse markers used for sequencing events/instructions. Here are some examples:

- To begin...
- To start...
- First ...
- Second(ly)
- Next...
- Then...
- After that...
- The next thing you need to do is...
- Once you've done that...
- Finally,

Get the discourse markers on the board. Then have the pairs alternate giving instructions for their task using the discourse markers. Monitor while they are doing this to help and check that they are on task. When students are comfortable doing this, you can have them switch pairs and do it again. To make the activity more challenging, you can ask the students to try repeating the steps for their partner's task, again, using the discourse markers.

**Recounting Events**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

This activity is very similar to the previous one but this time students recount a series of things that happened in the past. To begin, ask students to think of something that they did or something that happened in the past that they could describe sequentially, in at least five steps. It could be as simple as what they did when they woke up that morning. When all students have thought of something, give them a list of discourse markers for sequencing past events. You can use a modified list from the previous activity (see below). Get the discourse markers on the board. Do whatever explanation that you need to do and then put students in pairs and have them practice going using the discourse markers with their past actions/events. Monitor while they are doing this to help and check that they are on task. When students are comfortable doing this, you can have them switch pairs and do it again. To make the activity more challenging, you can ask the students to try repeating the steps for their partner's task, again, using the discourse markers.

- First ...
- Second
- Next...
- Then...
- After that...
- The next thing I did was...
- Once I'd done that...
- Finally,

**Debates and Discussions**

	<i>Speaking</i>		<i>Listening</i>		<i>Reading</i>		<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>		<i>Grammar</i>		<i>Pronunciation</i>		<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

Debates and group discussions are a good way to get students to use certain discourse markers, particularly those for adding information and contrasting with what has just been said. If you are going to do a debate, get the students to brainstorm some debating topics and/or provide some yourself, e.g., controversial issues. Then, as a class, you should choose a topic that will work best for the debate. A good way to do that is to read out each topic and ask students to raise their hand if they are on one particular side, e.g., "Do you agree with lowering the drinking age?" You can choose the topic that gets the best split and then divide the class into two sides of the by how they actually feel about it or, if you didn't get a 50/50 split, you should ask some students to support the other side to even it out. If you're using a discussion, then get some topics on the board and use a show of hands to choose the most popular one. Then, before you begin the discussion or debate, teach some discourse markers for adding and contrasting information. Get them up on the board and leave them there for the duration of the activity. Let them know you will be scoring them on using the discourse markers. Then get one student to start the debate/discussion. For the debate, you can give each side a point every time they use a discourse marker. For a discussion, you can award points to individuals. Either way, when you end the speaking task, announce the totals for discourse markers used.

**Adding**

moreover, furthermore, in addition, also, further, additionally, alternatively, besides, what is more, on top of this/that

**Contrast with what came before**

however, in fact, on the one hand, on the other hand, rather, in contrast, still, though, anyway, nevertheless, nonetheless, yet, actually, all the same, as a matter of fact, at the same time

**Presentations**

	<i>Speaking</i>	<i>Listening</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Writing</i>
	<i>Vocabulary</i>	<i>Grammar</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>Warmer/Icebreaker</i>

All good presentations use discourse markers and they are worth doing in class as it's good practice with discourse markers and presentations are often required in the real world. To begin, you'll need to review or teach some discourse markers that would be used in giving a presentation (to begin, in addition, on the other hand, for example, to conclude, etc.). Then put students in pairs and either give them a topic for a presentation or have them come up with their own. Let them know about how long you want their presentation to be, in terms of minutes. In their pairs, they plan their presentation and take brief notes on what they are going to say. They also insert discourse markers in their notes. Make sure they don't write the presentation out as it is supposed to be a speaking task, not a reading one. Monitor while they are preparing to help and check their work. When students have finished planning, have them practice giving the presentations to each other using their notes and the discourse markers. Then, if you'd like, you can have each pair give their presentations to the rest of the class, either by having one student do it or having them split the presentation in two parts. If you'd like, make some notes of any incorrect usage of discourse markers and take them up after the presentations are finished.

## Appendix

### Sample Language Functions

#### Asking for Information

- Could you tell me...?
- Do you know...?
- Do you happen to know...?
- I'd like to know...
- Could you find out...?
- I'm interested in...
- I'm looking for...

#### Agreeing

- I completely/totally agree (with you).
- I couldn't agree more.
- That's a good point.
- Absolutely!

#### Disagreeing

- I'm sorry, but I disagree.
- I don't completely agree.
- I'm afraid I have to disagree with you.
- Don't get me wrong, ...
- Even so, if...
- Don't forget that...
- Very true, but...

#### Making Complaints

- I'm sorry to have to say this but...
- I'd like to make a complaint about...
- I'm sorry to bother you, but...
- I think you might have forgotten to...
- Excuse me if I'm out of line, but...
- There may have been a misunderstanding about...

#### Giving Advice

- I don't think you should tell him.
- You should/shouldn't go there.
- You ought (not) to go there.
- If I were you, I'd tell her.
- If I were in your position/shoes, I'd do something.
- You had better take care of that.
- Whatever you do, don't tell him.

#### Making Suggestions

- Why don't you / we go to the movies tonight?
- You / we could go for a drink.
- Let's go to the zoo.
- What about asking someone?
- How about going out to eat?
- I suggest you / we think it over.

## Sample Jokes

A woman is sitting in a cafe dressed in black mourning clothes. Seeing that she is in a deep state of grief a man walks over to her and says "What's the matter?"

The woman says, "I'm really going to miss him. I'm going to miss him so much."

"Your husband?"

The woman nods and carries on with her story. "I knew that he was fooling around with lots of other women but I'll miss him anyway. I knew he spent every penny he had on those women but I'll still miss him."

The man asked "When did he die?"

The woman answered "Tomorrow morning."

A mother and father were very disappointed with their child. The boy was five-years old and he hadn't said one word. He seemed to be interested in listening but he wouldn't speak. Then when day, just after his sixth birthday, he sat down to breakfast and said, "Excuse me, my toast is cold."

His parents were shocked. "You can speak" said the father. "Why haven't you said anything before now?"

"Well, up until now I've been satisfied with everything."

Bill and Lucy had been married for five years. Every Thursday for the last eight years Bill played poker with his friends. One Thursday, Bill said goodbye to Lucy and went to play cards. He didn't return. Lucy called the police but Bill couldn't be found. Then three years later Bill came home. Lucy was so happy she said, "I'm so glad you're home, Bill. I'm going to make you a wonderful dinner and open up a bottle of champagne."

"I can't tonight. It's Thursday."

A man was walking down the street and he noticed a blind man and his dog standing on a street corner. Suddenly the dog jumped up and bit the blind man's arm. The blind man reached into his pocket and produced a dog biscuit. As the dog took the biscuit in his mouth the other man came up to them. "Excuse me for interfering but I don't think it's a good idea to reward your dog for doing something bad."

"I'm not rewarding him," the blind man answered. "I'm looking for his mouth so I can kick him in the other end."

A middle-aged football fan was at an important match. Every seat in the stadium was taken, except for the one beside him. Just after halftime, the man sitting on the other side of the empty seat asked him about it. "It's my wife's seat" the man replied.

"Where is she?"

"She died."

"I'm sorry about that" the stranger said. "You should have given the seat to a friend or another member of your family."

"They couldn't have come. They're all at the funeral."



A young man went to a hockey game. While he was standing in line to buy his ticket someone screamed, "Hey David!" He quickly turned around and knocked over the woman who had been standing behind him. However, he didn't see anyone there. He sat down in his seat and the game began. Once again someone yelled, "Hey David!" He jumped up and looked around. Everyone behind him yelled, "Sit down!" He didn't see anybody so he sat down. During the last minute of the game, once again someone yelled, "Hey David." Now he was really angry. He stood up and yelled, "My name isn't David!"

Two young women who lived in a small town had been looking for husbands for three years. They went to the disco on a Saturday night. It was midnight and they had been there since nine o'clock and when they noticed a handsome man. After staring at him for a few minutes, one of them went over to him. She said, "Hello, my name is Susan. I've lived in this town since I was a child and I have never seen you before."

"That's because I've been in prison for 15 years."

"What for?" asked the young woman.

"I stabbed my wife with a kitchen knife about 100 times then I cut her body up and threw the pieces in the river."

"I'll only be gone for two minutes." said Susan as she ran back to her friend and said, "Guess what? He's single!"

After her husband went to jail, a woman called the judge. "Why is my husband in jail?" she asked.

"Because he stole a loaf of bread." replied the judge.

"Will he get out of jail soon?"

"Why, do you miss him?"

"No, he drinks, he screams at me, he hits the children, he gambles. He is a terrible husband."

"Then why do you want him back?" questioned the judge.

"We need more bread."

A man was having trouble sleeping at night. He went to his doctor and the doctor gave him some sleeping pills. However, the doctor warned him, "These pills are very strong. You should only take one half a pill before you go to sleep."

That evening, just after midnight, the man wasn't feeling very tired. He decided to ignore the doctor's advice and take a whole pill. He fell asleep immediately and he slept better than he had in years. In the morning he went to work. When he arrived at his office he said good morning to his boss. His boss answered, "Good morning. Where were you yesterday?"

Two American tourists rented a car in Italy. After they had been driving around for several hours, they stopped in a small town for breakfast. They ordered two omelets. When their meals finally arrived they had been waiting nearly an hour. After the meal, when they got the bill, they noticed that they had been charged four times the normal price. The man called the waiter over and asked him, "Why are we being charged so much. Is there a shortage of eggs here?"

"No" the waiter replied. "There is a shortage of Americans here."

A woman whose husband had just died was arranging the funeral. Just before the guests arrived for the funeral she asked if she could see her husband's body. When the mortician opened the casket the woman said, "You've dressed him in a brown suit. He looks horrible in brown. Can you change it, please?"

The mortician wheeled the casket into the back room. In five minutes he returned and showed the woman her husband dressed in a blue suit. The woman was happy and she left. The mortician colleague asked him how he had changed the suits so fast. The mortician answered, "There was another dead man in there with a blue suit."

"Yes, but five minutes is still incredibly fast to change suits."

"I didn't change the suits. I just changed the heads."

A young woman who had just graduated from university got a job as a reporter for a small town newspaper. While she was looking for something to write about she noticed a little old man sitting in front of his house. His skin was so wrinkled and his hair was almost white. She asked him, "What your secret for such a long life?"

The old man answered, "I drink two bottles of whiskey every day. I smoke at least three packages of cigarettes a day and I never sleep more than 4 hours a night"

"That's incredible," the young woman answered. "How old are you?"

"28"

An actor was standing on a bridge. He hadn't worked in three years and he had decided to kill himself. All of a sudden he heard a voice from the river bank, "Don't jump. Why do you want to kill yourself?" The actor looked down and saw a horrible looking woman. Then he told her why he was committing suicide.

The ugly woman said, "I am a witch. I can use my magic to get you a major part in a Hollywood film."

"That would be wonderful" he said.

"There's just one thing," she said. "You have to sleep with me tonight."

The actor thought about it and decided to do it. They went to a hotel. In the morning she asked him, "How old are you?"

"Thirty-two" he answered.

"Aren't you a bit old to believe in witches?"

A company put a sign outside the building that said: "Office worker needed. Must be able to type 100 words a minute, use Microsoft Word and Excel, and speak another language."

Later that day, a dog came in the building with the sign in his mouth. He went to the director's office. The director laughed and said, "Do you want to apply for the job?" The dog jumped on the chair and started typing over 150 words a minute. The director said, "Sure, but can you use Word and Excel?" The dog opened the programs and was doing many things very quickly. The director said, "Well, that's very good, but can you speak another language?"

The dog said, "Meow!"

A woman noticed a new fish shop had opened in her neighbourhood. There was a queue outside and a sign in the window which said. "If you eat fish everyday you will get smarter." The woman bought fish there every day for two weeks. After two weeks she went in and complained to the owner. "I've been eating fish everyday for two weeks and I don't feel any smarter. I think that you're using that slogan to sell more fish. I found another fish store down the street where the fish is cheaper. If I buy my fish from them I will save money."

"You see!" replied the owner. "It does work. You are getting smarter."

A policeman saw a very drunk man try to get into a car. He said to the man. "Are you going to drive?" "No, off...offic...officer. I am not drunk. Th...th..that's my house there. I'm just g..g..going to get something from m..m...my car and w...w...walk inside."

The policeman didn't believe him. He said, "All right, show me inside your house then."

"Sh...sh...sure!" the man said. He and the policeman went into the house. The man said, "You see, th..th..this is my kitchen. Th..th...that is my table. Those are my ch..ch..chairs."

The policeman could see inside the living room. A woman was watching television. The policeman said, "Who is the woman in front of the television?"

"Th..th..that's my wife," the man said.

"And who is the man sleeping on the couch?" asked the policeman.

"Th..th..that's me!"

One day a mailman met a boy and a huge dog. The mailman asked the boy where 124 Main Street was.

"Where is 124 Main Street? Good question. I have no idea," the boy replied.

The mailman then asked the boy if his dog bit.

The boy answered, "No, my dog doesn't bite."

Suddenly, the dog bit the mailman. The mailman yelled, "You said your dog didn't bite!"

"He doesn't," replied the boy, "but that is not my dog!"

## Turn-Taking Strategies

<b>starting</b>	<p><i>hesitantly</i>: “er” “ehm” “well” “you know” “I mean”  <i>cleanly</i>: “Well” + content sentence  <i>attracting attention</i>: “Guess what?” “You’ll never guess what”  “Something interesting happened” “Have I got a surprise for you”</p>
<b>taking over</b>	<p><i>uptakes</i>: “ash” “no” “well” “yes”  <i>links</i>: “and” “but” “cos” “so”</p>
<b>interrupting</b>	<p><i>alerts</i>: “hey” “listen” “look”  <i>metacomments</i>: “can I just tell” “can I say something about this”  “let me just” “excuse me for interrupting”, “can I add here that” “I’d like to comment on that” “can I ask a question” etc.</p>
<b>holding a turn</b>	<p><i>fillers</i>: “er” “ehm” “kind of” “well” “really” “sort of” “just”  <i>repetition of single words</i>: e.g. “that”  <i>partial clause</i>: “it was, it was a”  <i>new start</i>: “but I feel somehow” however the fact that”</p>
<b>yielding a turn</b>	<p><i>prompting acts</i>: an apology, an invitation, an offer, a question, a request  <i>appealers</i>: question tags, “you know?” “you see?”</p>
<b>avoiding taking a turn</b>	<p><i>backchannels</i>: “mm” “yeah” “right” “really” “how nice” “that’s interesting” “how awful” “I see” “did you?”</p>
<b>pre-planning</b>	<p>“there are three things I want to say” “just two things” “one last point”</p>