

TEACHING ORAL SKILLS



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Types of oral practice

- **Structural practice**
Students need to know grammatical structures of English well.
- **Functional practice**
Students need to aware of the functions of language they are practicing.
- **Experiential practice**
Students need to be able to use the language independently.

Presenting an oral lesson

**A common lesson sequence
in many English classes
consists of a sequence of
activities referred to as PPP:**

- **Presentation (New language items are introduced.)**

- **Practice (Students complete guided practice activities using the new language.)**
- **Production (Students take part in more independent or more open-ended activities using the new language.)**

Activities for oral practice

- Drills
- Information gap activities
- Discussions
- Role-play
- Problem solving activities
- Jigsaw activities
- Games
- Songs

Drills...

- **focus on particular language item**
- **involve students repeating or changing language items**
- **Control the situation**



Drills

- **Mechanical drills**
- **Meaningful drills**
- **Communicative drills**



Mechanical drills

- Repetition
- Substitution
- Transformation
- Combination
- Expansion drills



Repetition

Teacher:

Are you doing anything on Friday?

Students:

Are you doing anything on Friday?

Teacher: Would you like to join me?

Students: Would you like to join me?



Substitution

**Teacher: I want to buy some apples.
...bananas. (Students have to
substitute the word 'apples' with the
word 'bananas')**

Students: I want to buy some bananas.

Teacher: coconuts.

Students: I want to buy some coconuts.

Transformation

Students change the sentences in the way the teacher indicates:

Teacher: I read Harry Potter. ...Sam.

Students: Sam reads Harry Potter.

Teacher: Tomorrow.

Students: Sam will read Harry Potter tomorrow.

Teacher: Yesterday.

Students: Sam read Harry Potter.

Combination

(Substitution and Transformation)

Teacher: I buy some bananas. ...grapes.

Students: I buy some grapes.

Teacher: Yesterday.

Students: I bought some grapes yesterday.

Teacher: Eat.

Students: I ate some grapes yesterday.

Expansion drills

Students add pieces to a sentence:

Teacher: You're reading.

Students: You're reading.

Teacher: Harry Potter.

(Add 'Harry Potter' to the sentence).

Students: You're reading Harry Potter.

Teacher: At the moment.

(Add 'at the moment' to the sentence)

**Students: You're reading Harry Potter
at the moment.**

Meaningful drills

Meaningful drills may have a predictable response using a specific language item. The situation is connected to some “reality”.

*** Using pictures**

Look at this picture. Think of what the man is saying to the woman.



**Create sentences by
following this pattern.**

- **Will you + (the base form of verb)+
(complement)?**

For example:

- **Will you marry me?**
- **Will you be my wife?**
- **Will you stay with me forever?**

Communicative drills

If the drill is communicative,
it gives the students a chance
to create an
“unpredictable answer”.

Using Situations

To practice tenses, the teacher may use a real situation for students to practice.

For example: Future tense

“I am looking forward to the vacation.

**On my vacation, I will visit Samui island ,
in the southern part of Thailand.**

I will

Imaginary situations

To practice questions with present perfect, the teacher can set up an imaginary situation:

Imagine your sister is going to leave for Melbourne, Australia tomorrow to continue her study.

What question might you ask the day before she leaves?

Students:

“Have you packed your suitcase, yet?”

“Have you prepared enough clothes?”

...

Using pictures
What is happening in this picture?



- The bride and the groom are dancing beautifully.
- Many guests are taking photos.
- Some guests are eating.
- The waiters and waitresses are serving more food.

Information gap activities

- A type of speaking activity where two speakers have different information making up a whole.



**Information gap activities
make communication
exciting because each
partner has information that
the other one needs.**

**They have to listen carefully
to what their partner says
and respond to what they
hear.**

Example

- **Student A and Student B have to complete the information of a famous person. Each student has different worksheets with some missing information. They have to ask questions from their partner to make up the whole story.**

**Ask these questions and
complete the information.**

- **Where was _____ born?**
- **When was _____ born?**
- **What did _____ do?**
- **Why was _____ famous?**

Worksheet for Student A

Marie Curie

- Place of birth: _____
- Date of birth: November 7, 1867.
- Job: _____
- Why famous: She was the first person to win two Nobel Prizes.

Worksheet for Student B

Marie Curie

- Place of birth: Poland
- Date of birth: _____
- Job: Scientist
- Why famous: _____

Discussion

- Remember that students need a purpose when they are speaking and listening. The teacher has to bring interesting topics into the discussion.

**Discussions do not mean
'simply set up a group and talk'.**

**Discussions have to be
carefully planned
and carried out.**

When you set up the discussion activity, ask these questions first.

- **What is the task? What is the reason for the students' talking?**

- **What is the role of each student in the group discussion?**
- **How should the students report their discussion?**
- **How should the students get feedbacks after the discussion?**

The task for discussion

- **The task should be simple and achievable.**
- **Therefore, the topic to be discussed should be interesting for the students.**
- **Consider the students' age, background experience, and interests.**

Read this message, and discuss.

- **I am a sophomore of the English major, Faculty of Education, in a well-known university. I have found that my study does not fit my interest. Should I change my mind to study somewhere else?**

The group organization

- **Groups work better when students have roles within the group: a chairperson, a timer, a reporter, and a secretary.**

Discussion groups need discussion and social skills.

- **Group members must not interrupt, but be polite to one another and share the opportunity to speak.**

Social skills in group discussion

- **What do you think about this?**
- **Do you agree with _____?**
- **What about you _____?**
- **Let's hear from _____ about this issue.**
- **Excuse me for interrupting.**
- **May I suggest that _____?**

Students need to report their discussion.

- **The group secretary should write down (and sometimes audio-record) the results of the discussion to be ready for the report. This would keep the discussion to be focused on the topic.**

Students should have opportunity to share their discussion results.

- **This feedback session is very important.**
- **Students have chances to show, share and assess what has been done in their group and in the other groups**

Role-play

- A type of speaking activity where students are asked to imagine that they are in different situations and act accordingly.

Role Card for Student A (a woman)

Situation: At a jewelry shop.

- **You are looking for a pearl necklace to wear at a wedding party.**
- **Your budget is 1,000 baht.**
- **You will have a conversation with the salesperson.**
- **You may have to bargain if you cannot afford it**
- **You may decide not to buy if you feel that the price is not reasonable.**

Role Card for Student B

Situation: At a jewelry shop.

- **You are a salesperson.**
- **A woman is looking for something.**
- **Ask her whether she needs help.**
- **Present two options for her.**

Necklace A is longer than Necklace B.

- **You can give NOT more than 10% discount.**

Necklace A

999 baht



Necklace B

799 baht



Problem solving activities

Students are divided into groups and are given a problem to solve. They have to discuss in their group and make the best decision.

Situation

- The sudden flood is coming to hit your house according to the emergency announcement. There are four people in your family. There is only one boat which can carry around 250 kilograms. The total weight of your family members is 230 kilograms.

**Which of the following things
you will take with you
to evacuate from your house?**

- **A box of matches (very light)**
- **First-aid kit (2 kgs)**
- **A mobile phone with the charger (very light)**
- **A sack of rice (5 kgs)**
- **Canned fish (2 kgs)**

- **Gallons of water (5 kgs per gallon)**
- **Clothes (5 kgs)**
- **A map of Thailand (very light)**
- **Photo albums (2 kgs)**
- **Instant noodles (1 kg / 10 packs)**
- **The 10 year-old- pet dog (10 kgs)**
- **A bicycle (20 kgs)**

Jigsaw activities

- **Jigsaw learning is a cooperative learning activity that involves all learners taking parts, taking responsibility in a group work in order to achieve the goal together.**

Let's suppose the teacher has a reading text for the class to read.

- The teacher divides the text into sections before the class begins.
- The number of the sections depends on the number of the group members.

- The ideal number of the group members is four: one superior learner, two average learners, and one weak learner. (It's also fine to have five or six members depending on the class size.)



- These groups are called the **home groups**.
- Let's suppose each student in the home group is called an **'expert'**.
- In a group of 4, each expert is called A, B, C and D respectively.

- Each 'expert' (A,B,C, and D) from every group will form the new groups of the same letter called Group A, Group B, Group C and Group D.
- These new groups are called the 'expert group'.

- In each 'expert group', students read the section of the text that they are responsible for together. They will help each other understand their reading section by asking, answering, and clarifying the meaning of the text together.

- **A, B, C, and D go back to their home groups and retell the selected text that they have already studied to the other members in the group.**

