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INTRODUCTION, WITH A USER’S GUIDE TO ACTIVITIES

Welcome to New Ways in Teaching Speaking Second Edition!

The purpose of the New Ways series remains the same as when it began, “... to publish ideas written by teachers for teachers.” This is the first line of the introduction from the first edition of New Ways in Teaching Speaking (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1994, p. viii), which was coedited by Dr. Kathleen M. Bailey and Lance Savage. Also remaining the same in this specific volume is the focus on teaching speaking, an essential skill for many language learners.

Both editions contain more than 100 activities, submitted by English language teaching professionals from around the world. They volunteered to share their expertise from their perspectives as instructors in English as a second language and English as a foreign language contexts and as native and nonnative English speakers themselves. Their submissions constitute a wide array of engaging activities that have succeeded when taught in their own classrooms. Their contributions represent different approaches and techniques in language teaching in a multitude of situations. Successful instruction can occur in diverse ways (Cook, 2016), and these activities illustrate that. For ease of use, the book is organized into major categories. The sections, however, were not planned in advance for either the first edition (Bailey & Savage, 1994) or this one. Instead, the contributions from the teachers were used to determine the major categories and smaller subsections.

More than 100 brand new activities are in this new edition. They are divided into five major categories: Developing Fluency (Part I), Developing Accuracy (Part II), Developing Pronunciation (Part III), Speaking in Specific Contexts (Part IV), and Speaking and Technology (Part V).

The widespread use of technology in teaching is evident by the addition of the extensive new category Speaking and Technology, in which teachers incorporate a variety of technological tools, such as tablets, internet-connected projectors, and smartphones. These tools allow students to create podcasts, film movies, record other video or audio clips, time themselves, and more—all to improve their speaking skills while utilizing their digital literacy skills. This experience supports students’ development as “effective and independent learners who can take advantage of the tools and resources for language learning in authentic contexts” (Son, Park, & Park, 2017, p. 95). In this new Speaking and Technology category, more than 20 activities are divided into three subsections. The first and largest is Developing Fluency and Accuracy Using Technology. These activities vary in their aims. Some activities concentrate on improving fluency, some on accuracy, some on both, and some can be adapted to shift the concentration. The second subsection is Developing Pronunciation Using Technology and the third is Spoken English for Academic and Professional Purposes Using Technology.

This new edition includes an expanded subsection with career-focused content. Speaking in Specific Contexts contains a subsection titled Spoken English for Academic and Professional Purposes. The new career-focused activities connect to work in business, law, and more, illustrating the value of additional instruction in
speaking even when learners’ English skills reach an advanced proficiency level. In a survey completed by 229 international students, 343 domestic students, and 125 professors at a Canadian university, MacGregor and Folinazzo (2018) asked about challenges encountered by international students in higher education; “communication, language” (p. 313) was the top response from the international students’ professors and native-English-speaking classmates and the third most-cited response from the international students themselves. This subsection offers activities to support these students learning and working in English.

In this new edition, there are also four entirely new subsections. Game-Based Learning and a Miscellaneous section (for teaching repeatable techniques and activities for student practice) have been added to Developing Pronunciation. In Speaking in Specific Contexts, Oral Presentation Skills includes activities to improve students’ nonverbal communication, transitions, sentence-level errors, and conclusions, and a teacher assessment method. Also in Speaking in Specific Contexts, Young Speakers consists of a diverse grouping of activities intended for learners from kindergarten through Grade 12. However, some of these activities may also work well with adults. Conversely, many of the activities in other sections of the book could work well with younger learners, especially with students in middle school and high school. When read in its entirety, this book includes activities that represent students at all proficiency levels and of all ages.

USER’S GUIDE TO ACTIVITIES

Each activity is organized according to its major category and subsection and then arranged alphabetically by title. All activities state the proficiency level that is suggested for the students, the aims of the activity, the estimated time needed in class, the estimated time needed by the teacher for preparation, and the resources needed. Note that estimated times for preparation do not include how long it may take to become familiar with the activity and organize materials.

Next, each activity provides an introduction with some background information, followed by step-by-step instructions to lead students in the activity. That procedure is followed by Caveats and Options, such as any tips, suggestions, or alternate ideas about teaching or extending the activity. Some activities end with a list of references that are cited or suggested for further reading. An appendix, if included, is the final section.

This “R” stands for “Resources.” This “R” icon is a sign to go to: www.tesol.org/teachingspeaking to access valuable resources. There, the appendices are available, including handouts, PowerPoint presentations, and more. You can also find an annotated list of Online Resources: websites that are useful for classroom teachers who want more information or materials about teaching speaking.
Following are some additional points to consider.

- Teachers know their students, context, and environment better than anyone. Please carefully preview each activity and make any necessary changes. Note that some activities may be developed for students at a certain proficiency level, but they can be adapted. As stated by van Lier, “Successful teaching is a blend of planning and improvisation . . .” (1996, p. 9). If they might work better for your students, use the suggestions found in the Caveats and Options section and use your own ideas.

- The materials and resources available to each educator vary; however, for the sake of simplicity, the activities in this book assume that all teachers have access to a blackboard or whiteboard, paper, and writing utensils. Thus, those materials are not listed as resources. Activities that list smartphones, tablets, and other digital devices as necessary resources are found in Speaking and Technology.

Although these activities are designed for English language classrooms in an English as a second language or English as a foreign language context, some can be used to teach speaking to native English speakers and many, with a few modifications, can be used to teach speaking in other languages.

To my readers, I hope that using these diverse activities developed by language teachers worldwide encourages us to continue collaborating and supporting each other as we teach speaking in new ways.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Without the contributors, a volume like this could not be created. I am grateful to the many English language teaching professionals from around the world who submitted their activities. The response to the call for contributions was tremendous, with more than 200 activities received. Even though not every submission could be published, I greatly appreciate your enthusiasm and support. Your response shows how meaningful this book is to our field.

I would like to express my thanks to those who assisted me during the editing process. Delia Russo-Savage assisted with word processing and organizing the submissions into categories. Lara Ravitch created detailed activities to increase diversity and inclusion in a submission. Valuable feedback on drafts of the Table of Contents came from Dr. Renee Jourdenais and Hisako Yamashita as well as Robyn Brinks Lockwood, who also provided steadfast support from the start. Finally I would like to thank TESOL Press for giving me this opportunity and for providing editorial support.

Julie Vorholt, Editor
REFERENCES


