

## Effective Speaking Techniques

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**Resumen:** El objetivo de este proyecto es que el aprendiente de una segunda lengua desarrolle habilidades de comunicación oral en su proceso de aprendizaje. Además, se pretende demostrar que los profesores pueden formar comunicadores exitosos a través del uso de técnicas de comunicación oral efectivas basadas en materiales auténticos. De acuerdo con Camp y Satterwhite (n. pag.), la comunicación cumple distintos propósitos, incluyendo informar y persuadir. Para lograr estos objetivos de comunicación en el aula, los profesores y los estudiantes pueden aprovechar materiales auténticos. Por lo tanto, es posible utilizar canciones, películas, videos, artículos de revistas, artículos en internet y periódicos en clases de lenguaje constructivas. También se puede adaptar esta materia prima en el desarrollo de variadas técnicas de conversación, tales como seminarios, mesas redondas, simposios, coloquios, debates o foros abiertos con el fin de mejorar las habilidades de habla del alumno. Este proyecto pretende concientizar a los profesores de su papel como facilitadores y co-participantes del proceso de aprendizaje; ofrecen y organizan los recursos, guían los procedimientos y actividades en el aula, y contribuyen al desarrollo de habilidades por parte de los estudiantes.

**Palabras clave:** habilidades de expresión oral, técnicas de conversación, materiales auténticos, actividades de conversación efectivas.

**Abstract:** The purpose of this project is to promote speaking skills in the language learning process. Besides, it is intended to demonstrate that teachers can achieve successful communicators through the development of effective speaking techniques based on authentic materials. According to Camp & Satterwhite (n. pag.) communication serves different purposes, including to inform and to persuade. In order to fulfill these goals of communication into a classroom, both teachers and learners can take advantage of authentic materials. Therefore, it is possible for teachers to use songs, films, videos, magazine articles, online articles and newspapers in meaningful language classes. Teachers can adjust this firsthand material to different speaking techniques such as seminars, round tables, symposia, colloquia, debates or open forums in order to improve the learner's speaking skills. This project intends to make teachers aware that they are facilitators and co-participants of the learning process, that they provide and organize the resources, guide the classroom procedures and activities, and contribute to the development of students' abilities.

**Keywords:** Speaking skill, speaking techniques, authentic materials, effective speaking activities.

## 1 Introduction

To be proficient and understandable when communicating in any foreign language, the four linguistic skills along with the cultural component need to be developed; they are listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the skill of speaking is more effective when an individual is trying to communicate in naturally occurring language contexts. Brown, G. and G. Yule<sup>1</sup> claimed that speaking is the productive skill in the verbal mode. They declared that the speaker has to:

- use the correct forms of words. This may mean, for example, changes in the tense, case, or gender.
- use vocabulary appropriately.
- pronounce the distinctive sounds of a language clearly enough so that people can distinguish them. This includes making tonal distinctions.
- make the main ideas stand out from supporting ideas or information.
- make the discourse hang together so that people can follow what the speaker is saying. (85)

Most language programs establish oral communication as the ultimate goal for students learning the target language. In order to fulfill these goals of communication into a classroom, both teachers and learners can take advantage not only of diverse speaking techniques but also of authentic materials available to satisfy their needs and interests. Therefore, it is possible to use songs, films, videos, magazine articles, online articles and newspapers to involve learners in meaningful language tasks. It is also recommended to adjust this firsthand material to different speaking techniques such as seminar, round tables, symposiums, colloquiums, debates or open forums in order to improve the foreign language learners speaking skills.

### 1.1 Objectives

1. To provide information on how to develop informative and persuasive techniques to promote the skill of speaking.
2. To give examples of the implementation of informative and persuasive communication techniques based on authentic materials.

### 1.2 Research questions

1. What is the importance of using authentic material in the classroom?
2. What is the importance of promoting the speaking skill in the classroom?
3. What kinds of techniques promote the speaking skill effectively?

## 2 Literature review

From 6,909 live languages around the world, an estimate of 57% is unwritten<sup>2</sup>. Based on this fact, it can be assumed that languages can stand by themselves without a writing

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<sup>1</sup> Brown G. and Yule G. *Teaching the Spoken Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983

<sup>2</sup> Statistical Summaries R [http://www.ethnologue.com/ethno\\_docs/distribution.asp?by=area,](http://www.ethnologue.com/ethno_docs/distribution.asp?by=area,)

system. From a pedagogical perspective, this information and previous research on oral communication place speaking as one of the most important skills in language learning. Certainly, Riggenbach and Lazaraton claimed that “the teaching of the speaking skill has become increasingly important” (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 125). They supported their claims by stating that “the teaching tendencies moved away from accurate form to communicative effectiveness” (qtd. in Celce-Murcia 125). Considering the relevance that speaking has in the language learning process, teachers should develop effective speaking techniques based on authentic materials in order to achieve successful language learners.

It is essential to emphasize and reinforce speaking when teaching a second language. In the teaching/learning process, the learner, the teacher and the material play a significant role. However, the learner has to be the center of the process. Thus, students must be responsible of their own learning if they are to become autonomous and independent learners. Teachers play the role of facilitators and co-participants of the learning process. They provide and organize the resources, guide the classroom procedures and activities, research and contribute to the development of students’ abilities. Materials also play an important role since they support communicative language learning. They promote communication and influence language learning.

A devoted and well-organized teacher looks for materials that speakers of the target language would commonly use in their daily lives; these materials are known as authentic. Odilea Erkaya<sup>3</sup> stated that “Using authentic material over textbooks helps students to communicate in a natural way, classes using only textbooks appear to be question-answer lesson while classes using authentic material seem more natural and real”. (n.pag.) Authentic materials such as songs, films, videos, magazine articles, online articles and newspapers used in meaningful activities influence the success of a language class.

Teachers can combine the usage of authentic materials with the implementation of the different speaking techniques to serve the purposes of communication, either to inform<sup>4</sup> or persuade<sup>5</sup>. In informative presentations such as seminars, round tables, symposia and colloquia the speakers present a particular topic through examples, details and facts to support their thesis. On the other hand, in persuasive deliveries the intention is not only to inform but to defend a controversial issue by means of logic and evidence in order to change someone’s beliefs as it is the case of debates or open forums.

The colloquium is a technique that can be used to inform people. According to the Long Island University<sup>6</sup>, “a colloquium is an assembly for discussion”. The discussion should usually be about a controversial subject. It is important to remark that these kinds of topics are easily developed through authentic materials. Persuasion is an activity in

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3 O. Erkaya. TV commercial as authentic materials to teach communication, culture and critical thinking. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED494938, 2005.

4 Cummings, Martha G. Listen, Speak, Present: A Step-by-step Presenter’s Workbook. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1992.

5 Dickens, Milton and James H. McBath. Guidebook for Speech Communication. New York: Hancourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc, 1985.

6 University, L. I. Long Island University. Retrieved February 23, 2011, from Long Island University: <http://www.liunet.edu/CWPost/Academics/Programs/Special/Honors/Policies/Colloquium.aspx>

which people usually get involved. According to Martha Graves<sup>7</sup>, this type of discourse often takes the form of debates which occur from informal discussions with friends to formal discussions in business meetings or classroom settings. Indeed, she defined it as "...the ultimate test of a speaker's skills. You must not prepare only your side of the argument, but must also analyze and know your opponent's side as well". (p. 131). This implies that learners who argue about a particular topic are forced to bring into the class topics suitable for their level and needs.

### **3 Effective Speaking Techniques**

#### **3.1 Teacher's perceptions**

This study was carried out with teachers who have worked for at least three years with non-beginning EFL college learners. From the results obtained in the data gathered, we can conclude that the integration of linguistic skills is crucial in the learning of the second language. Besides, they mentioned that language should be learned in a natural environment in which the skills complement each other. However, most of the informants expressed that speaking is the most emphasized linguistic skill in their lessons. They argued that this is the most important channel of communication. Finally, based on their experience, teachers considered that the ultimate goal of most of their learners is to become confident in oral communication. For this reason, they emphasize speaking in the classroom in order to satisfy their students' expectations.

#### **3.2 Access to Materials and Sources**

This study demonstrates that teachers are constantly in search of materials and sources to develop their language classes. Among the sources they frequently access include videos, songs, games, magazines, books and textbooks. It is important to mention that most of these materials are obtained from the internet. They also stated that these sources are authentic since they come from naturally occurring language. This implies that classroom activities based on these materials have the tendency to be more effective while promoting a natural and real environment. As a final point, professors claimed that these materials are easy to obtain and use in their foreign language context.

#### **3.3 Speaking Techniques**

The subjects of this study said that direct oral questions, speeches, debates, impromptu talks and role-plays are some of the techniques used to reinforce speaking. The professors also considered that techniques such as seminars, round tables, colloquiums, debates and open forums are effective in developing speaking skills. Actually, they stated that these kinds of activities force students to use the target language in a variety of contexts. Furthermore, these techniques require learners' participation and interaction. They finally said that these types of activities help learners negotiate meaning in a relaxing environment.

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<sup>7</sup> Cummings, Martha G. Listen, Speak, Present: A Step-by-step Presenter's Workbook. Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1992.

Thus, the aim of this proposal is to provide a variety of techniques and materials to be implemented in EFL classes. The novelty of this proposal is to offer teachers a plain explanation of the organization of the speaking techniques and examples on how to execute them by using authentic materials. By implementing authentic materials in their language classes, teachers guarantee more interactive lessons, at the same time that they address current issues and topics. Teachers who know how to organize and put into practice different speaking techniques will have a variety of settings for the students to expand this important skill.

#### 4 Conclusions

To sum up, we can say that this research focuses on the interaction of three main goals. The first purpose of this project is to promote speaking skills within the language classroom. Following, in order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to use proper 'tools'. It means that teachers are in charge of selecting the appropriate materials and activities. However, these materials must be cautiously selected according to the students' level and needs. Most importantly, teachers should be conscious that the compilation of this material is a task that will strongly influence the effectiveness of their class activities. Thus, the interaction of proper materials and suitable techniques can reinforce the skill of speaking within the language classroom.

We can conclude by saying that our premises on certain classroom issues were not as we expected. For instance, we theorized that teachers had a hard time finding materials to be implemented in their language classes. However, the results demonstrated the opposite. Now, it is our task to show how to make the most efficient use of the sources available.

For future research, it would be important to mention other speaking techniques. In this project we focused on informative and persuasive techniques of group work. However, it is also necessary to develop speaking techniques that demand individual performance such as direct oral questions, speeches and impromptu talks.

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Sandra Palacios Palacios holds a Licentiate's degree in Applied Linguistic in English from Universidad Nacional in Costa Rica, and a Master's degree in Linguistics, from Ball State University in USA. She has worked for ten years teaching at high school and six years with university students. She has also participated in national and international conferences for teachers of English and been a trainer of several courses for CONARE-MEP program.

### **Appendices**

## Appendix 1

### Sample Technique #1

#### Debate /dI'beIt/

Debate is an activity in which people get involved every single day. Debates occur from informal discussions with friends to formal discussions in business meetings or classroom settings. Martha Graves<sup>8</sup> defined it as “...the ultimate test of a speaker’s skills. You must not prepare only your side of the argument, but must also analyze and know your opponent’s side as well.” (131)

Research, analysis and organization are key aspects to take part of a debate. To develop a debate in a classroom, there must be two groups of members with totally opposing standpoints of the problem or topic. There is a moderator who will guide the discussion and let the different members from both sides know when to participate and when to stop in order for another member to speak. The moderator has to give everyone the opportunity to participate and stop any two or three members who are holding the floor for so long. The moderator gives equal opportunities to members from both sides to participate.



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<sup>8</sup>Cummings, Martha G. Listen, Speak, Present: A Step-by-step Presenter’s Workbook. Boston, MA: Heinle&Heinle, 1992. P. 131

**Pre-activity:**

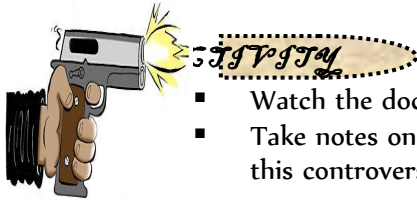
**Whole-class activity:** Read out loud and discuss the following vocabulary.

**Glossary**

1. **Death sentence:** /deθ'sentəns/ life in prison.
2. **Parole:** /pə'rəʊl \$ -'rəʊl/ noun [uncountable]: when someone is allowed to leave prison early, but they will have to return if they do not behave well: on parole \* He was released on parole . /pə'rəʊl.
3. **Assassin** /ə'sæsɪn/ noun [countable] someone who murders an important person: \* Who was Kennedy's assassin?
4. **Burglary** /'bɜ:gləri \$ 'bɜ:r-/ noun [countable, uncountable] plural, burglaries the crime of going into a building in order to steal things.
5. **Remorse** /rɪ'mɔ:s \$ -ɔ:rs/ noun [uncountable] a feeling of being sorry because you have done something bad: remorse for \* Keating showed no remorse for his crime. \* Poor Dorothy was filled with remorse. remorseful adjective.
6. **Testimony** /'testɪməni \$ -məʊni/ noun [countable, uncountable] plural testimonies 1 a formal statement that someone makes in a law court.
7. **Pen pal** noun [countable] someone you become friendly with by writing letters, especially someone who lives in another country and who you have never met
8. **Prosecutor** /'prɒsɪkjutər \$ 'prɔ:sɪkjʊ:tər/ noun [countable] a lawyer who is trying to prove in a court of law that someone is guilty of a crime.
9. **Convict** /kən'vɪkt/ verb [transitive] to officially decide in a court of law that someone is guilty of a crime [≠ acquit].
10. **Deliberation** /dɪ'lɪbə'reɪʃən/ noun [countable, uncountable] careful thought or discussion: \* After much deliberation the prize was awarded to Murray.
11. **Verdict** /'vɜ:dɪkt \$ 'vɜ:r-/ noun [countable] 1 an official decision in a court of law about whether someone is guilty or how someone died: \* Has the jury reached a verdict?
12. **Trial** /'traɪəl/ noun 1 [countable, uncountable] a legal process in which a court of law decides whether or not someone is guilty of a crime [↔ try]: \* a murder trial on trial (for something) (=being judged in a court) \* He is on trial for armed robbery. \* She is due to stand trial (=be judged in a court) on a drugs charge. \* He claimed he would not receive a fair trial.
13. **Jury** /'dʒʊəri \$ 'dʒʊri/ noun [countable] plural juries 1 a group of twelve ordinary people in a court who decide whether someone is guilty: \* the members of the jury.
14. **Juror** /'dʒʊərər \$ 'dʒʊrər/ noun [countable] a member of a jury.
15. **Witness** /'wɪtnəs/ noun [countable] 1 someone who sees an accident, crime etc and can say what happened.

Source: Oxford Advanced Learner Dictionary. Seventh Edition





- Watch the documentary to debate on this family crime.
- Take notes on the testimony and description given by the following people involved in this controversial case.

# MENENDEZ FAMILY



PARENTS	FEATURES
Jose (father)	
Kitty (Mother)	



CHILDREN(SONS)	FEATURES
Joseph Lyle (older son)	
Erick (youngerson)	

WITNESSES	TESTIMONIES
Criminologist	
Psychiatrist	
Craig (Erick's friend)	
Milton (Kitti's brother)	
Bryan (Kitti's brother)	
Norma (Kitti's friend)	
OTHER	



# DEBATE

Write your arguments against or in favor of these brothers.

INNOCENT
• _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

GUILTY
• _____
_____
_____
_____
_____



Final Verdict

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 2

### Pre-activity:

- Whole-class activity: Read out loud and discuss the following vocabulary.

## Glossary

16. death sentence: /deθ 'sentəns/ life in prison.
17. parole /pə'reɪl \$ -'roʊl/ noun [uncountable]: when someone is allowed to leave prison early, but they will have to return if they do not behave well: on parole • He was released on parole . /pə'reɪl.
18. assassin /ə'sæsiɪn/ noun [countable] someone who murders an important person: • Who was Kennedy's assassin?
19. burglary /'bɜ:gləri \$ 'bɜ:r-/ noun [countable, uncountable] plural, burglaries the crime of going into a building in order to steal things.
20. remorse /rɪ'mɔ:s \$ -ɔ:rs/ noun [uncountable] a feeling of being sorry because you have done something bad: remorse for • Keating showed no remorse for his crime. • Poor Dorothy was filled with remorse. remorseful adjective.
21. testimony /'testɪməni \$ -məʊni/ noun [countable, uncountable] plural testimonies 1 a formal statement that someone makes in a law court.
22. pen pal noun [countable] someone you become friendly with by writing letters, especially someone who lives in another country and who you have never met
23. prosecutor /'prɒsɪkjətər \$ 'prɑ:sɪkjʊtər/ noun [countable] a lawyer who is trying to prove in a court of law that someone is guilty of a crime.
24. convict /kən'vɪkt/ verb [transitive] to officially decide in a court of law that someone is guilty of a crime [≠ acquit].
25. deliberation /dɪ,lɪbə'reɪʃən/ noun [countable, uncountable] careful thought or discussion: • After much deliberation the prize was awarded to Murray.
26. verdict /'vɜ:dɪkt \$ 'vɜ:r-/ noun [countable] 1 an official decision in a court of law about whether someone is guilty or how someone died: • Has the jury reached a verdict?
27. trial /'traɪəl/ noun 1 [countable, uncountable] a legal process in which a court of law decides whether or not someone is guilty of a crime [↔ try]: • a murder trial on trial (for something) (=being judged in a court) • He is on trial for armed robbery. • She is due to stand trial (=be judged in a court) on a drugs charge. • He claimed he would not receive a fair trial.
28. jury /'dʒʊəri \$ 'dʒʊri/ noun [countable] plural juries 1 a group of twelve ordinary people in a court who decide whether someone is guilty: • the members of the jury.
29. juror /'dʒʊərə / \$ 'dʒʊrər/ noun [countable] a member of a jury.
30. witness /'wɪtnəs/ noun [countable] 1 someone who sees an accident, crime etc and can say what happened.

**Activity:**

- Watch the documentary to debate on this family crime.
- Take notes on the testimony and description given by the following people involved in this controversial case.

**Menendez Family  
Features**

**Parents**

<b>Jose (father)</b>	
<b>Kitty (mother)</b>	

**Children (sons)****Features**

<b>Joseph Lyle (older son)</b>	
<b>Erick (younger son)</b>	

**Witnesses & Testimonies**

Criminologist	
Psychiatrist	
Craig (Erick's friend)	
Milton (Kitti's brother)	
Bryan (Kitti's brother)	
Karen (Kitti's friend)	
Norma (Kitti's friend)	
Legal expert	
<b>Other</b>	

**Debate. Write your arguments against or in favor of these brothers.**

<b>Innocent</b>	<b>Guilty</b>

**Final verdict:**

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## Appendix 3

UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL  
SEDE REGIONAL BRUNCA

RESEARCH: Effective Speaking Techniques

Scholars: M.A. Yalile Jimenez Olivares, M.A. Sandra Palacios Palacios

This research is intended to be completed by teachers who work with non-beginning students in communicative language classes.

### Instrument

The following set of questions is aimed at gathering data in order to identify the factors that influence the effectiveness of speaking techniques in the teaching of a second language in EFL contexts. This information will be exclusively used for academic purposes.

#### I. INFORMANT'S BACKGROUND

1. Do you work with non-beginning students? \_\_\_\_\_

If yes, continue with the next questions.

2. How many years have you been working with these types of learners? \_\_\_\_\_

#### II. LANGUAGE SKILLS

3. Is the integration of the four language skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) important when teaching a second language to EFL learners? \_\_\_\_\_.

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Which language skill do you emphasize when teaching a second language? \_\_\_\_\_.

Why this choice? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Based on your teaching experience, rank the following language skills in the order you consider learning a second language is more effective for students of a foreign language. (being 1 the most important 4 the least important).

Listening     Speaking     Reading     Writing

#### III. MATERIALS AND SOURCES

What type of materials do you use in your language classes? (videos, magazines, etc).

List them

Where or how do you get them? (Bookstore, internet, etc.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Is it difficult for foreign language teachers to obtain their teaching materials? \_\_\_\_\_.

#### IV. SPEAKING SKILL

What type of activities or techniques do you use in order to reinforce the skill of speaking in your language classes?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

Write a check (✓) if you use these activities in your English speaking classes? If so, how often do you use them, write a check (✓).

	Never	Sometimes	Always
<input type="checkbox"/> Seminar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Round table	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Colloquium	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Debate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Open forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you consider that the use of these types of activities in the language classroom is effective in developing speaking skills? \_\_\_\_\_

Why? \_\_\_\_\_