RELC Portfolio Series

Teaching Speaking in the Language Classroom

Christine C.M. Goh

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Language learners do a great deal of speaking in pairs and group work activities. In spite of this, they may not always learn new skills or acquire new linguistic knowledge through the activities. Many may become more vocal and fluent, but the language they produce often lacks accuracy. To help students derive as much benefit as possible from our speaking lessons, we need a principled approach to teaching speaking. This book explains how we can provide structured and guided learning experiences for language learners to develop their speaking competence. It explains the construct of speaking and presents different types of speaking task for developing a range of skills. A simple pedagogical model is also introduced. The model consists of a lesson sequence which includes the use of communicative tasks, language-focused activities and further practice tasks that all work together to develop fluency, accuracy and complexity in speaking performance. There is also a special focus on improving group discussion skills.

Dr Christine Goh is Associate Professor with the English Language & Literature Academic Group in the National Institute of Education, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her interests are in language development, in particular, the area of oracy (speaking and listening) and how oracy contributes to thinking and academic learning in both first and second language contexts. She is also the author of Teaching Listening in the Language Classroom (2002), and many international journal articles and book chapters on the subject of speaking and listening.

Table of Contents