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TEACHING SPEAKING: EXAMPLES OF ORAL COMMUNICATIVE ACTIVITIES

ПРЕПОДАВАНИЕ ГОВОРЯЩИМИ: ОБРАЗЕЦ В УСТНОЙ КОММУНИКАТИВНОЙ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТИ

Summary. In this article, it informed about examples of oral communicative activities and their efficiency in teaching English.

Key phrases: to provoke spoken communication; reach a consensus; discussion; communication games; stage; role plays; simulation.

Аннотация. В этой статье сообщается о примерах устных коммуникативных мероприятий и их эффективность в преподавании английского языка.

Ключевые фразы: Спровоцировать разговорную коммуникацию; достичь консенсуса; обсуждение; игры связи; сцена; ролевые игры; моделирование.

In these examples, students have to agree with each other after a certain amount of discussion. The task is not completed until they do. Consensus activities have been very successful in promoting free and spontaneous language use and we can now look at three examples.

1. Going to Tashkent

In this activity students are told that they are going on holiday to Tashkent and have to decide what ten objects to take with them. They will have to reach a consensus on these objects.

Stage 1. All the students are asked to write down the ten items they would choose to have in their luggage if they were going to stay in Tashkent for two weeks.

Stage 2. When all the students have completed their lists, they are put into pairs. Each pair has to negotiate a new list of ten items. This will involve each member of the pair changing their original list to some extent.

Stage 3. When the pairs have completed their lists, two pairs are joined together to negotiate a new list that all four students can agree to.

Stage 4. Groups can now be joined together and the lists re-negotiated.

Stage 5. When the teacher thinks the activity has gone on for long enough a feedback session is conducted with the whole class in which each group explains and justifies

its choices. This activity can be used from the elementary level upwards. It is great fun and produces a lot of English. Of course, there is no particular reason for selecting Tashkent as the destination. Other places can be used.

2. Moral dilemmas Students are given a situation and alternative suggestions for acting in such a situation. The following is an example.

Stage 1. Students are told that they are watching over an important university exam. They see a student cheating with notes he or she has illegally brought into the exam room. They have four possible courses of action.

- Ignore the incident.
- Warn the student that if she or he cheats again she or he will be reported to the authorities.
- Ask the student to leave the exam, tear up his or her paper and mark him or her as absent.
- Report the student to the authorities, in which case he or she will have to leave the university.

Stage 2. Students are put in small groups to reach a consensus on this issue.

Stage 3. Pairs of groups are combined and have to reach a consensus on which alternative to adopt.

3. Learning decisions: There are many other occasions when we will ask students in groups to come to a consensus on things they are learning. Reading tasks might

involve this kind of agreement (students decide which is the correct answer together). Some vocabulary study involves reaching a consensus on which meaning is correct or which words to select for comprehension work.

Discussion many teachers can be heard complaining that their students 'have nothing to say'. They complain, for example, that they have no opinions and are not prepared to discuss anything. Part of the problem here is the way which some teachers approach discussion as an activity. If students are asked to express themselves fluently on a difficult topic in front of their peers in a foreign language (often with no warning), they may find themselves reluctant to do so!

Of course, some discussions develop spontaneously during the course of a lesson. A student reacts to something that is said, another student joins in, and soon the whole class is bubbling with life. Such discussions are often the most successful sessions that the teacher and the class ever have together, but they can't be planned. But there are techniques that can be used to get students talking. Before looking at three examples, however, we can give some hints about organizing discussions.

1. Put students in groups first. Before asking students to discuss as a whole class, put them in groups to try out the topic. This will allow them to give opinions in a less threatening environment than in front of the whole class. It will also give the teacher a chance to see if the topic is interesting for the students. If it is not, the teacher can decide to end the discussion.

2. Give students a chance to prepare. Students need a chance to prepare their opinions. If they are to discuss the role of the family or the relative merits of radio and television, they need time to organize their thoughts and come up with arguments to support their case.

We can now look at two types of discussion activity.

1. The buzz group: One way of encouraging short discussion is through the use of "buzz groups". This is where students are put into loose groups of three or four (the number is unimportant) and asked to think of the topic.

Frequently the teacher may ask them to think of "as man... as possible" (e.g. as many seaside activities as possible). Buzz groups can form the prelude to a larger discussion session.

2. Controversial statements are good discussion provokers. Here is an example.

The students are given the following statements about smoking and told that they have to circle the number which best reflects their agreement or disagreement with the statement (0 = totally disagree, 5 = totally agree).

1. Smoking should be banned in all public places.
0 1 2 3 4 5

Smokers should be forced to give up the habit. 0 1 2 3 4 5
2. People who smoke in no-smoking areas should be put in prison. 0 1 2 3 4 5

When they have done this, they proceed as if for a consensus activity (they compare their answers in pairs and then groups and they have to agree a score).

This technique is a good example of using a small task to provoke discussion.

Discussion activities are an important part of many lessons. The main thing to remember is that proper organization can ensure their success. Lack of it can provoke their failure.

Talking about Yourself Activities: The students themselves are often an underused resource. We can use their lives and feelings for any number of interpersonal exchanges. Such activities fall into the "Humanistic" category and are often useful at the beginning of classes to warm things up (warmers) or to create a good and positive atmosphere in new groups. We will look at two simple activities. They are quick and easy to organize.

a) Your name

The teacher puts the students in pairs and asks them to tell each other how they feel about their first name, and what name they would choose for themselves if they had to choose one that was different from the one they have (and why).

This activity is very simple, but it demonstrates the advantages of "talking about oneself." Many people have strong opinions about their names and from such simple questions an interesting personal discussion can develop.

b) Musical association

In this activity, the teacher encourages the students to use the title of a song to provoke discussion of feelings and memories, etc.

Most students enjoy this activity since it is positive in tone and allows them to talk about themselves. Any activities which invite students to share themselves with others should be done in a calm and supportive atmosphere. Teachers must decide whether students want to do activities like this and how far they should be encouraged to reveal their feelings.

It is important for the teacher to conduct feedback about the content of an activity such as simulation as well as discussing the use of English. If only the latter is focused on, the students will perceive the object of the exercise as being concerned only with linguistic accuracy rather than the ability to communicate efficiently – which is the main motive for this kind of activity.

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