

## Skill sheet 8 *Maximize learners' speaking time!*

**The way students learn to speak English is by speaking English.  
The more they speak, the more they learn.**

**Learners should be speaking >75% of class time.**

**These are six easy things that you can do.  
They will increase your learners' English use and success.**

### 1 Simple instructions



1. Demonstrate instructions.
2. Use short sentences. (Goal: < 7 words per sentence.)
3. Pause. Give learners time to think and understand.

**KISS: Keep It Short & Simple**

### 2 Maximize pairwork & groupwork



1. Most of the time, learners should be talking to each other, not to the teacher.
2. Most speaking is for practice, not to "test their knowledge." Every learner needs *a lot* of practice.

### 3 Give them Think time



1. Demonstrate the task.
2. Then give 1-2 minutes of silence. They think: *What do I want to say? How will I say it?*
3. **Think Time** increases fluency, accuracy and vocabulary variety.

### 4 Warm-up



1. Use a quick warm-up *activity*.
2. *Activate* (remind) them of vocabulary they already know. You usually don't need to explain much.
3. Have learners speaking in pairs/groups within the first 5 minutes of class.

### 5 Focus on the target language



1. Help them notice the English they need for tasks.
2. Try **Pronunciation** practice to focus on target sentences before a task:
  - ① Listen once.
  - ② Listen & repeat *silently*. (They make a mental target).
  - ③ Listen & repeat aloud.

### 6 Personalize speaking



1. Have the students change the book. Include their ideas, experiences, opinions, lives.
2. This builds motivation and makes learning memorable.

## Skill sheet 9 *How to ... Maximize learners' speaking time!*

**Learners should be speaking >75% of class time.**

**Before class, check (✓) what you will do. After class, circle (○) what you did**

### 1 Simple instructions

*Demonstrate by ...*

- directing 2 or 3 students through the task. OR  modeling the task yourself.

*Give instructions by ...*

- reading the instructions directly from the book. OR  
 reading the "teacher's script" from the Teacher's Manual.  
 Pause after each instruction so students can think and understand.

### 2 Maximize pairwork & groupwork

- More than half of the class is spent on pair or group activities.  
 Do warm-up tasks in pairs or groups.  
 Students practice the dialog in pairs.  
 Students spend time on pairwork and groupwork.  
 As students work, circulate. Help and note areas for more work.

### 3 Give them Think Time

- Give learners 1 or 2 minutes of silent time  
(a) after you demonstrate a task, but  
(b) before they start.  
 Have students read instructions, examples, questions, etc. silently before they start.  
 play soft background music during (Think Time (audio CD, last 3 tracks).

### 4 A Warm-up

*Do a warm-up ...*

- from the first page of the unit. OR  from the Teacher's Manual. OR  
 by "recycling" a task from the last class.  
 The students do most of the talking.  
 Students are in pairs or small groups

### 5 Focus on the target language

- Focus students' attention on the "target sentences," "language map," etc.  
 Do pronunciation work to focus them on the target forms.  
 Add a silent step to pronunciation practice. They form "mental targets."  
 Use an OHP or PowerPoint to combine visual and auditory input.

### 6 Personalize speaking

- Students change "conversations." to their own ideas and experiences.  
 Students add their ideas to pairwork and groupwork.  
 Recycle speaking tasks by having students work with new partners.

### 7 Other classroom management ideas

- Students change partners regularly. It builds in natural repetition and keeps things fresh.  
 Notice and point out positive behaviors.  
 Get learners' attention before you start speaking.

