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Module 5 : Speaking and Listening

Speaking

5.1 Sounding out words

5.2 Reading out loud

5.3 Responding to questions

5.4 Presenting new ideas

Although we have already discussed sounds in the module on reading, here we will focus more on how to help your students actually sound out words. We will start with a more specific overview of phonetics.

5.1.1 Phonetic symbols

As you know from our earlier module on reading, phonetics is the study of sounds and human speech. What we did not discuss earlier, however, is that phonetics has its own language made up of all of the most common phonemes in the English language. While your students do not need to know these phonetic symbols to be able to read or speak, it can be helpful when you are trying to teach them how to pronounce English words. Here is the basic rundown of phonetic symbols:

5.1.3 Articulatory phonetics

When your students understand the important phonetic symbols of the English language, determining how to sound out new words will be much easier. What will also help them learn how to sound out words is understanding how to make those sounds. Articulatory phonetics is the study of how sounds are created, and a working understanding of the ideas outlined in articulatory phonetics can really help your students understand the English language.

Understanding the anatomy of speech

So many different parts of your mouth and throat are involved in the production of speech that it can be overwhelming to try to trace sound. Let's make it a little less overwhelming by looking at each body part that contributes to speech.



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- Alveolar ridge: The gums just behind the upper teeth.
- Palate: The hard palate, or the roof of the mouth within the sphere of your teeth.
- Velum: The soft palate, or the roof of your mouth as it extends past the teeth, ending at the uvula.
- Uvula: The appendage that dangles in the back of your mouth before your mouth turns into your throat.
- Pharynx: The back of your throat, behind the uvula.
- Epiglottis: A flap of flesh that rests below your pharynx, at the top of your throat.
- Trachea: The windpipe, which is covered by the epiglottis.

All of these parts of your mouth and throat, including your tongue, lips, and teeth, work together to modulate the sound waves that emanate from your throat. Without these parts, we would only be able to make a one-toned indistinguishable noise rather than complex and recognizable speech.

How do we make sounds?

Essentially, the sounds that we make are just puffs of air traveling through our throats and out of our mouths. The sounds that these puffs of air make depend upon all the parts listed above and how they block or change the air as it passes through. To illustrate this process, think about the sound that would be made if you blew air through a tube. Now think of the sounds you can make if you blow air through a flute, which blocks and moves the air in specific ways. This is pretty much how your voice works.

Making consonant sounds

The difference between consonants and vowels is that consonants are made when there is much more obstruction to the air as it is passing through your mouth, whereas your mouth generally remains open when pronouncing vowels. Consonant pronunciation can generally be broken down into the following categories:

- Stops: This is when you completely block the flow of air from your throat by closing your mouth at some point during the pronunciation of the sound (p, t, k, b, d, and g).
- Nasals: In a nasal sound, you close your mouth just as you would with a stop, but the back of your velum lowers, which allows air to flow up through your nose and out of your nostrils (m, n, ŋ).
- Fricatives: In this sound, you only close your mouth part way so air is forced through a narrow passage and makes a hissing sound (f, θ, v, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h).
- Affricates: A combination of stop and fricative sounds that are made in a similar way (tʃ, dʒ).
- Approximants: This sound is like a fricative except that it involves less obstruction. Sometimes, you will make these sounds by touching the tip of your tongue to the alveolar ridge, lowering it as you release the air (l, r, j, w).

There are also voiced consonants, which refer to consonant sounds that are accompanied by



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vibrations in your throat as the air passes through.

Place of articulation

Consonant sounds can also be classified based on where in the vocal tract air gets obstructed, which is known as the place of articulation. Here are the different terms for where consonant sounds are articulated:

- Bilabials: When you close or constrict your lips.
- Labiodentals: When your upper teeth and lower lip meet as you speak.
- Dentals: When you press the tip of your tongue to your upper teeth as you speak.
- Alveolars: When you press the tip of your tongue to the roof of your mouth as you speak.
- Post-alveolars: postalveolar consonants are produced by touching the tip of your tongue to the back of your alveolar ridge. $tʃ$ and $dʒ$ are postalveolar.
- Palatals: When the body of your tongue touches your palate as you speak.
- Velars: When the body of your tongue touches your velum as you speak.
- Glottals: When you constrict your glottis as you speak.

Making vowel sounds

While vowel sounds still rely on opening and closing the mouth, we block the airflow from our throat significantly less when pronouncing them. Many people have difficulty explaining the difference between a vowel and a consonant, so learning how each of them differs in pronunciation can be helpful. Generally, different vowel sounds are made by different mouth shapes and positions of the tongue.

5.2 Reading out loud

Reading out loud is not just a great way for your students to improve their spoken fluency; it is also a great way to improve their overall comprehension. Let's start off by looking at the benefits of reading out loud.

5.2.1 Why read aloud?

Increased retention: Anytime that you can access more than one sense, you are more likely to retain the information you are consuming. This is why the most memorable lessons from school were the ones where you did an activity that required you to get out of your seat and move around. Adding that extra wrinkle made it more memorable. When we read out loud, we are not only reading, but we are also listening to what we read.

Increased focus: When you read to yourself, it is easy for your mind to wander and get distracted by external forces. Reading out loud creates an atmosphere of reading and requires you to focus on



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every word. That does not mean that your mind cannot wander, so you still need to keep yourself honest, but it definitely cuts down on being distracted.

Self-correction: It is much easier to hear yourself pronouncing a word wrong when you say it out loud. When you read a word silently, you don't need to be able to pronounce it to identify it. Reading out loud definitely helps you improve your speaking fluency because it ensures that you know how to pronounce the words you are reading (or that you learn). Self-correction is also important. If you are aware enough of the rules of English pronunciation to realize when you have made a mistake and fix it, you are operating at a high level of understanding.

Learn and practice intonation: As you read out loud, you can begin practicing intonation, stressing the right syllables and delivering the lines the way they were meant to be delivered. This is another indication of a deep understanding of the intricacies of the language, since intonation is only implied and not explicitly detailed in a piece of writing.

5.2.2 Strategies for reading out loud in the classroom

There are a number of different ways that you can have your students read aloud to practice their proficiency with the language. Some of these strategies ask students to read in front of the class, some ask the student to read in front of a partner, and others ask the student to read out loud only for himself or herself. Each strategy has its merits and drawbacks, but reading out loud in any form will help your students improve their overall fluency in English.

Round robin reading: With this strategy, you make a game out of reading out loud, and students take turns reading a certain amount of text. This is a great way to get your students comfortable with reading out loud, but it can be difficult to motivate struggling students to read because of the stigma of reading in front of a group. This is also a great strategy for getting everyone involved in reading together, but it can hinder students who are stronger readers and have to wait for struggling readers to catch up.

Popcorn reading: Each student reads a certain amount of text out loud and then yells "popcorn" and picks a new student to read. This can be a good way to make sure everyone reads because the students are going to be better at keeping track of who has read and who hasn't than you would be, and it frees you up to monitor and/or provide individual attention to struggling students.

Combat reading: This is similar to popcorn reading except the goal of the students is to catch someone who is not paying attention. This can add a layer of fun to the activity, but be careful presenting reading as a punishment. That is not the best way to nurture lifelong readers.

Pick a name reading: This is the same as popcorn except instead of giving the students the power to select the next reader you leave it to chance by using some variation of a hat filled with everyone's name.



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Touch and go reading: The teacher is in control and touches a student on the shoulder when they want the student to read.

Choral reading: The entire class, along with the teacher, read out loud together. This strategy serves a number of different purposes. First, it helps take the stigma away from struggling readers. Second, it gives you the opportunity to model correct pronunciations for the students that is not combative or anxiety inducing. Third, all students are engaged at the same time, which is a lofty goal for any teacher.

Partner up: Have your students pair up and share the reading, each taking turns reading a certain amount of text out loud. This is a little more difficult for you to manage and monitor than the whole class reading, but it can help students get a chance to read out loud in a less stressful situation.

Heterogeneous pairing: This is the same as the previous strategy except that you intentionally partner struggling readers with readers who are excelling. The idea is that the excelling student can help the struggling reader bridge the gap. Critics note that this strategy does not really help the strong student very much, as slowing down to adjust for their partners might work against them.

Teacher modeling: The teacher reads aloud to the class to model pronunciation and fluency. This can be an effective strategy because it helps the students see how the piece should be read as they follow along, but make sure you are closely monitoring for engagement, as it is a type of lesson where it is easy for students to be inattentive.

Echoing: This is similar to the previous strategy except the students echo back whatever the teacher reads, trying to match the pronunciation, inflection, and emotion. This can be a great way to model for students while still holding them accountable in the classroom.

Reading buddy: Students prepare individually, each with a unique text, and then read their piece to a buddy, trying their best to read it with no mistakes. Peers can offer critiques and suggestions, and you can monitor many students at once.

Tape recorder: Students read into a tape recorder and play it back to themselves as they follow along with the text. There are many different things you can do with this, such as having the students try to get the perfect recording and then turn it in or have the students swap recordings with a partner. This is a great way for your students to get an idea of what they sound like, where they are struggling, and where they are excelling. This is also a great way to help students get used to self-correcting.

5.3 Responding to questions

As with a lot of topics within this course, responding to questions is not compartmentalized to speaking, meaning it is something that can help students gain fluency in a number of different ways, not just one. There are different ways we can look at this topic, and each one works on a different skill that will build your students' English fluency.



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5.3.1 Question and response

Here are the different ways in which you can question your students and expect them to respond:

Read question and write a response: This is one of the typical ways teachers assess a student's reading because it is easy to assess after the fact, and requires each student to do his or her own work. This strategy helps your student work on reading and writing skills, but does very little to build his or her speaking skills.

Listen to question and write a response: This strategy is rare because it requires every student to work at the exact same pace, which is not always feasible in a classroom. We will talk about strategies like these in the next module when we discuss listening in more detail. Just like the previous strategy, this strategy does not do much to help students learn to speak English more fluently.

Read question and answer verbally: This strategy helps students improve both their reading and speaking ability. It is a great strategy to use when students are starting to speak English on their own because the question is written in front of them, and available at all times for reference. This is a great first step toward speaking English without any visual cues.

Listen to a question and answer verbally: This is the ultimate test of a student's fluency. Not only do they have to comprehend the question as they hear it (something we will discuss in the next module on listening), but they have to formulate a cogent response in English. If your students are able to accomplish this task, then they are well on their way to English fluency.

5.3.2 Question-answer relationship

One of the best ways you can help your students respond to questions verbally is by helping them understand how to find the answers they need. This is a great skill to have no matter what language you speak, but is definitely something that can help a student who is struggling with a new language. According to the question-answer relationship model, there are 4 levels of questions, each with different expectations for students to draw their responses.

1. Understanding: The answer to the question being asked is in the text for the student to find. These types of questions represent a lower level of thinking, but are great for getting practice in answering orally in English. The question requires the student to look at the text for an answer, but the answer is fairly easy, and the student can focus on how he or she is going to provide an answer in English.

2. Think, search, and find: These questions require a higher level of thinking because they require the student to make inferences and understand the subtext of the piece they are reading. This is a great next step for the student who is starting to get the hang of understanding questions, and is ready for a greater challenge. With these types of questions, the student needs to balance the



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higher-level comprehension skills he or she has been developing with his or her ability to verbalize a response in English.

3. Connection: These types of questions require the student to think beyond what is in the text, and make a connection with the piece. This can be difficult for English language learners because they cannot rely on repeating what they see in the text. Rather, they have to synthesize what they read and create an answer relevant to the piece, but use their own words. Students are showing high comprehension and critical thinking skills, while making sure to verbalize their response in a language with which they are not yet comfortable.

4. Creating new knowledge: These types of questions require the student to go completely beyond the text and synthesize something else. These questions are related to the text, but can be answered without having read it. This is a great way to get students creating new meaning and making use of everything they have learned so far.

5.4 Presenting new ideas

The ultimate showcase of a student's improvement in spoken English is to present new ideas of his or her own in this new language. As the student builds toward fluency, using texts and responding to teacher questions are all great ways to develop his or her skills, but the true test comes when he or she steps away from the source material and uses what he or she has learned to present new ideas. While presenting these new ideas is ultimately up to the student, there are ways you can encourage him or her, and support the student along the way toward his or her success.

Continue building vocabulary: There will never be a time when a student is done learning words, and the best way to help your students present their own unique ideas is by giving them the vocabulary toolbox they need to express those new ideas.

Provide a low-anxiety environment: Your student will be taking a risk by sharing new ideas in a language they are not completely fluent in, so take as much anxiety out of the situation as you can. Give them space to work through what they are going to say, and be encouraging when they are ready to go.

Give them time to practice: It might be helpful to bring back the reading strategy that we discussed earlier and give them a recorder to check their own progress. Once the student has progressed and is improving, it is important to give him or her some control over the process, and let the student take responsibility for his or her performance.

Provide honest, encouraging feedback: Even outside of TESOL, simply saying "good job" is no longer enough to encourage a student. Be specific, be honest, and be encouraging. If the student is struggling with something, let him or her know, but also let him or her know how it can be fixed and what needs to be done to get better. Students appreciate honesty, as long as it is presented to them in such a way that does not immediately make them shut down and not want to try.



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Listen to the student: The worst thing you can do after your student has done all that work is to not listen when they present their ideas. Of course, you would never visibly ignore students as they present, but it can be easy to lose focus on what the students are exactly saying. When the presentation is over, be specific with what you liked about the student's idea. Show the student you care and are proud of him and her. Even if the student struggled, getting up and taking the risk was a big leap, so leave the critique until some time has passed.

Listening

5.1 Repeating what you hear or transcribing

5.2 Paraphrase what you hear

5.3 Conversational English

5.4 Using what you hear to present new ideas

Asking your students to transcribe speech is a great way to get them understanding what people are saying. It is also a way for you to monitor how much the students actually understand speech as opposed to how much the students tell you they understand. It is one thing to get a general idea of what someone is saying; it is another thing entirely to transcribe the speech word-for-word. In this section, we will focus on two different types of transcription, both of which will help your students better understand the language.

5.1.1 Phonetic transcription

Phonetic transcription is a technique whereby an individual breaks speech down into sounds and phonemes, and transcribes the speech in phonetic symbols, using the symbols we discussed in the previous module. We will not repeat the symbols again, so feel free to go back and review them. Instead, we are going to focus on what phonetic transcription looks like and how it will benefit your students.

What does phonetic transcription look like?

Phonetic transcription can be a great way to decode sounds from speech, but is not a practical activity for them to carry on once they have reached a mastery of the language. It is extremely helpful, but can be time consuming. Take a look at the following excerpt, and what it would look like in phonetic transcription:



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Original text: Sometimes, phonetic transcription can be complicated, but once you get the hang of it, it is actually quite easy. It will also help students get the hang of recognizing sounds, which will make conversational English much easier.

5.1.2 Phonetic transcription

Now you have seen what phonetic transcription can look like, let's take a look at the different types of phonetic transcription that exist, some of which will be helpful to your students, and some will not.

Systematic vs. impressionistic transcription

If you, as an expert in phonetic symbols, were to listen to speech in another language, you would generally be able to chart it based on English phonetic symbols. Obviously, this is not the best way to handle this since phonetic symbols are going to be different in every language, but you are going to use the knowledge you have. Now, a phonetics expert would instead use a more universal group of phonetic symbols to transcribe the speech. This is called impressionistic transcription because, although this is still not perfect, the transcriber is charting sounds as best as he or she can without knowing the language. Later, experts can take this impressionistic transcription and revise and modify it to more accurately represent the speech. It would be more difficult if the speech was charted using more specific English phonetic symbols.

Once experts are able to analyze the speech and get a sense for the sounds of the particular language they are listening to, they are able to revise the transcription into a much more accurate transcription. This is called a systematic transcription, or a transcription that more accurately reflects the phonetic structure of the language it is breaking down.

As you may have already figured out, a systematic transcription is more helpful for your students, although it could be helpful to have your students use their native language to analyze the sounds in an English recording. However, you are typically going to ask them to create phonetic transcriptions that more accurately reflect the phonetic structure of the English language to ensure they are learning.

Simple vs. comparative transcription

Phonetic symbols, though explicitly stated, can be left up to interpretation. Experts will sometimes do what is called a simple transcription, which makes the phonetic translation as easy to read as possible without worrying too much about everything being perfect. This kind of shorthand is appreciated by experts, since they often have to go through massive amounts of text. While this may not be the best type to start your students off with because they may not be ready for such shorthand, it can be helpful once your students start to get good at transcribing. You should only allow them to take shortcuts once they are doing it to save time, not to make the text easier to transcribe.



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Comparative transcription is relevant when the sounds for different languages match up, and you are able to use a more vague phoneme to refer to the different versions of the phoneme in different languages. This type of transcription is not very helpful to your students.

Phonemic vs. allophonic transcription

Everything we have been discussing so far in this section has referred to phonemic transcription, which refers to any transcription where you break sounds into phonemes. The other option you have with transcription is to do an allophonic transcription, which means breaking the speech down into allophones. If you remember from previous modules, allophones are a phonic, rather than phonemic way of breaking down words.

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5.1.4 Word-for-word transcription

When you would like to give your students practice with words rather than sounds, you should work with them on word transcriptions, which are exactly what they sound like. Students listen to a person speaking (or a recording), and transcribe the speech as it is spoken. Let's go through the steps you have your students take in order to transcribe speech.



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1. Select or provide a text that already has a transcription. There is no way to assess your students unless you have an answer key. You can either hold onto the correct transcription yourself to assess your students, or give it to them so they can check their work and self-correct. When they are working toward mastery, it is probably better to give them the transcription, and when you are ready to assess their mastery, it is better to assess them yourself.

1. Have the students listen to the speech once. If you are delivering the speech, read it through once, instructing the students not to write anything yet, but only to listen. If the students have a recording, instruct them to listen to it on their own once through before they do anything.

2. Have your students transcribe the speech line-by-line. It would be helpful if they have a recording of the speech so they are able to go back and re-listen when they need to. However, you may want to simply speak the text when your students have progressed to the point where they are strong enough to handle it. Here are some tips that might help your students:

- If you have the opportunity, use a digital recording so it is easier for students to go back and forth and keep track of their progress.
- Have the students write their transcriptions by hand to have a closer connection to the words they are writing. Also, handwriting the transcriptions means they will not have access to grammar and spelling software that will help them along the way, but will ultimately hurt their learning.
- Do not limit the amount of times your students can rewind or listen to parts of the recording. Even native English speakers would have trouble transcribing a piece word-for-word without listening more than once.
- Encourage your students to transcribe the piece word-for-word, then look through their transcription to fix errors in grammar and usage, even when those errors were made by the original speaker. This will give the students practice transcribing the piece, but will also give them the opportunity to practice their revision skills and access their knowledge of grammar.

5.2 Paraphrase what you hear

People tend to think that paraphrasing someone is easier than quoting directly, but that isn't true. To effectively paraphrase, you need to understand what the person said to put their words into your own words. That is why this is a great skill for your students to practice; it will test their ability to listen, process the words, then rewrite them into their own. In many ways, this task is more difficult than transcription. Since paraphrasing is a difficult skill for students to master, let's take a closer look at how you can help them.

5.2.1 Teaching students to paraphrase

There are different ways you can teach your students to paraphrase more effectively, and it is an important skill to practice with them.

1. Start out slow and informally. Have your students pair up (or get into small groups), and have them practice paraphrasing. You can even have them start in their native language. Give the students



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a simple question, like, “what did you do this weekend?” Have the students interview each other, and then paraphrase what their partner tells them. This helps them work on both speaking and listening skills.

2. Do it with them. When you are starting to teach the skill of paraphrasing, model the activity by participating in it with them. Start by asking a student a question, then paraphrasing his or her answer for the class. Then, do the same thing, but ask the class to help you paraphrase. By initiating the process together, you will make your students feel more comfortable, and you will show them how it should be done.

3. As you are modeling the process with the students, help them understand how to paraphrase better by introducing four strategies they can use:

- Reword: The student replaces words with synonyms whenever he or she can.
- Rearrange: The student rearranges a sentence so that it sounds different but conveys the same message. You will have to model this for the students directly.
- Accept: Let the students know they will not be able to change every word (nor should they), so they need to learn to make decisions on what needs to be changed and what should stay the same.
- Recheck: Have the students read over the paraphrased version they have written and evaluate it based on how accurate it is to the original message. If you have the students working together, have the student who delivered the speech check the student who paraphrased for accuracy. You can also use this as an assessment tool and evaluate it yourself.

5.2.2 Teaching students to paraphrase

1. Now that students are getting more comfortable with paraphrasing, give them text to work with. You can still have them in pairs, but this time have one student read the text to the other (once again, also practicing reading and speaking skills), and have the other student paraphrase. Keep the texts simple enough so the focus of the activity is on paraphrasing skills.

2. As the students get the hang of paraphrasing, ask them to do it in front of the class. Bring a pair to the front to showcase the activity the class has been working on. Let the students in the audience critique the performances. Remember, this step will only work once the students are comfortable with the process.

3. If you really want to extend the assignment and challenge your students, take the next step by giving them complex texts. Even once they start to master the language, this is a good skill to practice.

Paraphrasing is a great skill to practice even if there is no listening component. Students can also learn by reading a text silently and paraphrasing it. Remember, anything that helps students gain fluency in the English language is worth doing.

5.2.3 How paraphrasing helps students

We have already hinted at the ways paraphrasing can help your students master the English language, but we should take some time to explicitly review the benefits of this activity.



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- When you use oral text for this activity, it helps your students improve their ability to listen and comprehend English. As we stated before, they need to recognize the sounds they are hearing, identify the meaning of what they are hearing, then turn that information into something new. Students need to identify not only how to translate the language, but more importantly, what is being said in order to recreate it.
- This activity also works on other skills even if they are not the focus. When you have your students read a text to each other, you also practice all the skills involved in reading out loud, including decoding, pronunciation, and reading comprehension.
- Learning how to paraphrase will help your students when they begin developing their conversational English. As they get more comfortable with the language, they will need to take in what people are saying, process it, and respond appropriately. While this activity does not require the students to respond appropriately, it definitely helps the students with the rest of the parts of conversation.
- If you choose to have your students paraphrase with written text, it does not help them practice their listening skills; but it helps improve their reading skills.
- Paraphrasing text helps students make connections with their own knowledge. This happens in a few different ways:
 - The student makes connections to their native language or cognates that help them understand and relay information that is given to them.
 - The student connects to what is being said on a personal level, and is able to paraphrase the speech because they feel personally invested in it.
 - The activity takes on a much more interesting and less monotonous feel because you are no longer asking the students to simply echo back what they have heard; you are asking them to comprehend and create something of their own with it.

5.3 Conversational English

The next step from having your students listen to someone speak and paraphrase their words is to have students respond to the speech with an appropriate reaction. Whereas paraphrasing required students to take someone else's speech and put it into their own words, conversational English requires students to comprehend what someone says quickly, figure out how to respond, then figure out how to respond in English. The immediacy of a conversation makes this one of the true tests of your students' fluency and what they have learned thus far. In order to ensure your students are prepared for conversational English, make sure they understand each of the following concepts (some we have already discussed):

- **Verb conjugation:** In order to effectively communicate during a conversation, your students need to know the basics of verb conjugation, especially when it refers to tense. The difference between, "I ran to the store" and "I run to the store" is only a difference of one letter, but it significantly changes the sentence. Students do not have to be experts at this yet, but they should understand the basics so they can participate in a conversation without confusion.



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- Using pronouns properly: Pronoun use is important in conversational usage, as it is a typical (and grammatically correct) way to take shortcuts to meaning. It is important that you help your students by stressing the importance of clear antecedents, as well as proper pronoun usage.
- How conversational English varies from formal English: Your students may be fluent in formal English, but if you haven't discussed words like "gonna" with them, they might find themselves confused in a conversation. Few people speak with perfect English or even scrutinize spoken English, the same way they scrutinize written English. While you don't need to teach your students all the slang they might hear, it would be helpful to give them information on slang words that have been generally accepted into the English vocabulary.
- Understanding English idioms: While these cultural sayings will not pop up in every conversation, you should try to give them some instruction in some of the idioms that are most commonly used. Since idioms are cultural, we will leave it to you to decide which are the most relevant in your region or country.
- How English differs from their language: This will require individualized instruction, but will be worth it. Try to provide extra practice and instruction to help them understand some of the specific differences in grammar and structure between English and their native language. Students who speak Spanish, for example, will have to get used to the fact that the adjective typically comes before the noun in English. With specialized instructions in these nuances, you can help your students be prepared for the things that are most likely to trip them up during a conversation.

5.4 Using what you hear to present new ideas

The next step to take with your students is to help them learn and/or practice how to take what they are hearing, and use it to present new ideas. While conversational English is great because it requires your students to reply to speakers with appropriate and cogent responses, it is time for them to present ideas of their own. In this section, we will discuss when this will come in handy, as well as helping your students practice this skill.

- In a school or business setting, it will be very helpful for students to synthesize what they hear in English, and generate new knowledge from it. This is extremely relevant since the majority of your students are likely learning English so they can attend an English-speaking school or get/maintain a job where speaking English will help them advance. In a classroom, students will have to be prepared to listen to English lectures, then synthesize the knowledge they have learned. In business, workers will have to be prepared to listen to what their boss is telling them, then create something that fits the requirements. You can help them practice this skill by giving them assignments and projects that mimic ones they would see in an English-speaking classroom or workplace.
- This skill will improve their conversational English. Keeping this skill in mind, students will be able to carry a conversation that is give and take, rather than simply answer and respond. You can help your students practice by extending your lessons in conversational English to account for this need.
- If a student is creating something completely new, like an invention, an innovation, or an idea, then it would be very difficult for them to express their ideas if they only have the ability to respond to



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questions in English. Students need the tools to speak about things they have not heard anyone say. This takes a great understanding of the basic framework of the language, which you have hopefully provided for them.

- Students need to be prepared to speak “off-the-cuff,” without a language safety net. To truly demonstrate fluency and mastery of the English language, they need to improvise with the language and understand it in the same way they understand their native language. With the right amount of commitment from both you and your students, you will get them to this point. It will take patience, preparation, and follow-through.

[Link to Exam](#)