

Literacy and Numeracy for NCEA Level 1 - Speaking and Listening

Developing an awareness of good practice

Content

Developing strong personal communication skills is an essential skill for both work and community environments. This resource supports the teaching and learning of interaction skills and can be used in conjunction with Unit Standard 26625: Actively participate in spoken interactions. The resources are designed to support tutors to embed strategies that improve communication skills. They are appropriate for ESOL and English speaking learners.

Alignment

The content aligns with step 3/4 of the Interactive Listening and Speaking progression.

AS THEY DEVELOP THEIR EXPERTISE, MOST ADULTS WILL:

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- respond to and use more sophisticated skills and appropriate language to monitor and improve the effectiveness of interactions
 - respond to and use variations in tone of voice, intonation and stress (for example, the stress placed on specific words or sentences)
 - recognise and use the vocabulary and other language features that mark the register appropriate to the topic, audience and context.

Learners use a range of strategies to manage, monitor and improve interactive communication. (See the glossary for an explanation of *register*.)

Areas of study can include:

- extending knowledge of social and cultural communication rules, such as expectations of politeness, marae protocol, or appropriate topics for informal and formal dialogue
- attending to verbal or non-verbal signals (for example, those used to indicate turn-taking, agreement or discomfort), interpreting signals such as “mmm”, “yeah”, “ae” and discriminating between registers of speech and tones of voice
- seeking, giving and receiving feedback in order to negotiate meaning, using strategies such as checking, making evaluative comments, using repetition, interrupting and refocusing the conversation.

Fig 1. Step 3/4 of the Interactive Listening and Speaking progression

Intent

The intention of this teaching and learning resource is to support learners to become aware of the features of a good interaction. Aspects that might impact on the quality of an interaction include:

- appropriate use of aspects of speech, such as tone, pitch, volume and speed
- appropriate body language, such as body position, eye contact, direction of speaking
- an awareness of local and cultural conventions, such as interrupting or acknowledging the statements of others.

Ultimately, the learners' awareness of negative behaviours will enable them to consciously identify and improve weaker aspects of their own interactions.

Sequence

There are three parts to this sequence:

1. Develop awareness of behaviours that influence interactions
2. Discuss the features of good and poor communication
3. Evaluate interactions.

1. Develop awareness of behaviours that influence interactions

This activity is designed to support learners to share their own ideas about what makes a good or bad interaction.

Step one: Discuss with learners *the types* of interactions they have when they are talking directly with people. This might include talking in class, at parties, at work, to company spokespersons, on the telephone, with sales people, with family and with friends.

Step two: Group learners into two or three and have them discuss what habits or behaviours they think help or support those conversations. Then ask them to discuss the habits or behaviours they think are rude, bad form, or annoying when interacting with others. This should only take four to five minutes.

Step three: Once learners have discussed this, ask them to share their thoughts with the whole class. While the learners share, write their comments on the whiteboard. Eventually, you should have a wide range of behaviours written on the board. These might include: *actually listening, not being distracted by other people, butting in, cutting people off, not listening, or talking too fast.*

Step four: Ask learners whether the behaviours on the board can be grouped into common themes. Begin to group the various behaviours. Grouping might include:

- the way people talk, such as speed, clarity, volume
- rude behaviours, such as cutting people off, talking over them
- being unaware of the other person's feelings, such as talking too long, talking about boring topics or talking only about themselves.

The idea here is to encourage learners to recognise that there is a range of different behaviours that support, disrupt, or inhibit positive interaction between people.

Note: Your discussion can also focus on the positive aspects of interactions. For example:

Think about a time you enjoyed talking with someone. What made it so enjoyable?

2. Discuss the features of good and poor communication

Step one: Provide learners with a set of listening and speaking behaviour cards per group, see [Literacy and Numeracy for NCEA Level 1 - Speaking and Listening: Discussion cards](#). Have learners discuss whether there were any behaviours which they had not identified in the previous activity.

Step two: Have learners organise the cards into groups, in a similar way to the previous activity.

Step three: Have a whole-class discussion on how the cards were grouped. There is no right or wrong grouping, and groups will have different opinions.

Note: You can ask learners to reflect on which area they would most benefit from improving.

3. Evaluate interactions

This activity is designed to be used with the activity cards in [Literacy and Numeracy for NCEA Level 1 - Speaking and Listening: Scenario cards](#). The cards provide scenarios and specific objectives for the main speaker.

Step one: Organise the class into groups of two or three people. Each group takes a turn to enact a scenario. The observing groups select the cards from the discussion cards they think best match some of the behaviours during the interaction.

Step two: Once a group has completed a scenario, move around the groups asking each which cards they selected and why. Generate a discussion regarding what could be improved.

Step three: Ideally, when the learners come to enact their own scenario, they will attempt to avoid the negative behaviours and emphasise the positive. This should be encouraged.

This activity is highly effective if all members of the class contribute. Make sure all groups (and individuals within groups) are given time to speak.

Note 1: Alternatively, the tutor or tutors could enact a scenario while the learners select the appropriate discussion cards, followed by a group discussion.

Note 2:

This activity can be also done without the scenarios, although this may not be as effective.

Options include:

1. using video of an interaction
2. observing a naturally occurring activity (in situations where this is possible).

Summary

This resource is designed to support learners to identify specific behaviours that enhance or inhibit interactions. Learners are asked to reflect on their own thoughts about the features of effective communication within interactions. Then, with the help of the cards, they begin to organise the features into groups, which will allow them to target and improve specific areas. Finally, they evaluate interactions and reflect on how these could be improved. Ultimately, learners' awareness of negative behaviours will enable them to consciously improve these aspects of their own interactions.