

Literacy and Numeracy for NCEA Level 1 - Speaking and Listening

Making and using speaking frames

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:

- 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

For many learners in-the-moment interactions are so intense that they lose the ability to reflect and respond in new ways. Nerves, shyness and unfamiliarity with the speakers often cloud learners' ability to implement new behaviours. This resource is designed to help learners reflect on routine interactions in order to plan and practise new and more effective responses.

Learners will develop speaking frames that allow them to:

- analyse the parts of an interaction when they are not *in* the situation
- decide on appropriate and effective responses
- practise and then adapt their responses to the situation.

Sequence

There are two parts to this sequence:

1. Showing learners that many interactions are formulaic
2. Developing a speaking frame.

1. Showing learners that many interactions are formulaic

The objective of this activity is to make learners aware of the fact that many interactions follow routine conventions. These routines can be identified and used to scaffold learner interactions. Such practices have been shown to improve learner confidence and support them to engage in new ways.

Step one: Discuss with learners the fact that many interactions are reasonably formulaic. For example, when two people greet each other they typically do so in routine ways. There is often very little variance in these greetings. These interactions can be written down as a script and used to support learners to broaden their responses. This approach can range from simple to complex.

Typically, learners of a new language will master routine interactions faster than other interactions. For example, the interaction between a shopper and a checkout operator is more formulaic than the interaction between a patient and a doctor. This is because the interactions have very different purposes and involve considerably more information being transferred.

Step two: Ask learners to think about a regular interaction they have, for example *greeting new people*, or *buying an item from a shop*, and which type of interactions follow a similar pattern. Discuss how similar these interactions are and whether they are somewhat predictable.

For example, an ESOL learner from Somalia noted that, when buying groceries, her interactions with the checkout operator were almost the same every time.

She said that the interaction followed this pattern:

1. *Checkout operator*: Hi, how are you today?
2. *Learner*: Good.
3. *Checkout operator* (after a minute): And how's your day going today?
4. *Learner*: I am good, thank you.

For the learner, this interaction became a good opportunity to broaden her English responses. The script was written, so that the learner could formulate a better response to the second question, and practise it in advance. On a following shopping trip, she responded to the second question: *My day has been good, thank you.*

This approach can also be used in complex interactions. For example, a job interview, when the interviewer typically begins the interaction with some form of the following question:

So, tell us a little bit about yourself and why you responded to the advertisement?

Because the question can be predicted, a response can be planned and practised.

2. Developing a speaking frame


Speaking frames are best when developed with the input of the learners themselves.

Step one: Ask learners to describe a routine interaction such as *meeting someone, being introduced to a new person or answering the phone*. Workplace interactions can be used, such as *taking an order over the phone or in person*.

Step two: With the learners' input begin to map out a typical interaction. Write the script on the board with the initial comments and responses. The example below is taken from a learner who had just begun a new job delivering pizzas.

Learner	Customer
Hello sir. Did you order some pizzas?	Yes, we did.
Can you confirm for me what you ordered?	Two Hawaiian pizzas and a Meat Lovers.
Would you like your receipt?	Yes, thanks.
Thank you	Bye

Step three: Once the initial interaction is written on the board, discuss whether it reflects the reality of the interaction. Build on to the script, see the example below:

Learner	Customer
Hello sir. Did you order some pizzas?	Yes, we did.
Can you confirm for me what you ordered?	Two Hawaiian pizzas and a Meat Lovers. I can't remember exactly. Three pizzas.
Would you like your receipt? Was it two Hawaiian and one Meat Lovers pizza?	 Yes, thanks.
Thank you	Bye

In this way, a potential script can be built. In some training environments (e.g., customer service courses) these are written in the form of a flowchart. However, for the purposes of this resource a simple script is equally useful.

Step four: Ask learners to discuss the best statements they could make in the *learner* column. For example:

Learner	Customer
Hello sir. I am delivering pizzas for Frank's Pizza. Did you place an order for pizzas?	Yes, we did.
Can you please confirm for me what you ordered?	Two Hawaiian pizzas and a Meat Lovers.
That's great. Would you like your receipt?	Yes, thanks.
Thank you. Enjoy your pizza this evening.	Bye

Step five: Have learners practise the script with a partner. The goal is for the learner to be able to repeat the script without referring to it. Once the learners have memorised it, they can begin to adapt it to make it more natural.

Summary

Speaking frames are highly effective in supporting learners to engage in routine interactions, particularly when developed by the users themselves. By making learners aware that many interactions are routine, that these can be mapped into a script, and that the script can be improved and practised, learners have tools to overcome shyness and confusion, which often occur during interactions.