

Literacy and Numeracy for NCEA Level 1 - Speaking and Listening

Managing and monitoring interactions

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:


 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. 	<p>Learners use a range of strategies to manage, monitor and improve interactive communication. (See the glossary for an explanation of <i>register</i>.)</p> <p>Areas of study can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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.
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Fig 1. Step 3/4 of the Interactive Listening and Speaking progression

Intent

This resource is designed to support learners in developing their ability to:

- manage interactions
- negotiate
- check and evaluate meaning
- interrupt and refocus conversations.

These skills will be developed in the context of a group problem-solving session in which the learner takes responsibility for managing the discussion.

This activity is complex, and requires learners to develop and apply sophisticated communication skills. It is appropriately complex to develop the skills reflected in Unit Standard 26625: Actively Participate in Spoken Interactions.

Sequence

There are three parts to this sequence:

1. Setting up the task
2. Monitoring and managing the group discussion
3. Providing feedback.

1. Setting up the task

Step one: Introduce the activity to the learners, including the key outcome of the task and the process. The key outcome is for a learner to manage a group discussion as the group progresses through the stages of a problem-solving session. This will require setting up the group, establishing the process, interrupting and refocusing the group when it moves off-task, and transitioning the group discussion from one stage to another.

Step two: Select a learner for each group who will monitor and manage the discussion. Ensure the learners managing the groups understand the task, the problem to be discussed, and their role. Answer any questions they have before they begin. Tell learners that you will have a debriefing (feedback) session with them after the activity.

Step three: Have learners break into groups of 4 to 6 people.

2. Monitoring and managing the group discussion

In this section the learner takes responsibility for monitoring and managing the group discussion. This section will take approximately 25 - 30 minutes.

The following steps are for the learner who manages the group discussion:

Step one: The learner's first task is to introduce the problem to the group. They need to state the problem and ensure every member of the group understands the problem. They may do this by asking questions or using prompts.

Step two: The learner sets a plan for the group discussion. The learner will inform the group that they will have adhere to the following plan:

1. Identify the issues, and clearly establish what the problem is
2. List possible solutions
3. Evaluate the solutions
4. Select the best solution/s
5. Summarise the solution/s.

It is best if the learner taking responsibility for this sets tight timeframes for each of these stages. For the purpose of this activity less is better. Five minutes per stage is appropriate.

Note that the behaviour of individuals is to rush through each stage, with a single idea being discussed, rather than spend time on each stage and exploring a range of ideas. Therefore, the learner must manage the group discussion by keeping the learners focused on the objectives of each part of the plan.

Step three: Begin the discussion. The learner informs the group that stage one is starting and that they have 5 minutes to identify the issues and the problem. The learner might appoint a note-taker during the discussion.

Step four: Once the time is up, the learner informs the group that the next stage is starting. The learner might summarise the previous discussion and clearly articulate the objective of the next stage: listing possible solutions.

The learner must ensure that group members:

- participate and that their ideas are understood by others
- communicate their own ideas clearly and check for understanding
- ask and answer questions
- clearly identify areas of disagreement/agreement
- paraphrase/summarise discussion points
- try and gain a group consensus and negotiate differences.

Step five: The learner continues to follow this process for each of the 5 stages. During this time the learner will constantly be evaluating the discussion. In cases where a group member strays from the stage objective, the learner needs to bring them back to task. For example, if the group is at stage 2 (listing possible solutions) and a group member begins to evaluate whether a solution will work or not, the managing learner may need to interrupt, state that the conversation has slipped from the objective and that solutions will be evaluated during the next stage.

For example:

Thanks Andrew, but you are evaluating the solution. For now we are simply discussing possible solutions. We will evaluate them very soon; for now let's generate more potential solutions.

Step six: Once all the stages have been worked through, the learner will give a quick summary of the discussion and the final solution to the group and ask whether they have captured all the necessary aspects. The learner could also provide the group with informal feedback on the discussion.

3. Providing feedback

Step one: Ask each of the learners taking responsibility for managing the groups to share their experience. The following prompts may be useful:

1. What were the challenges, and how did you deal with them?
2. Did people go off-task, and how did you bring them back on task?
3. Were they able to summarise the groups' thoughts effectively?
4. What might they do differently next time?

Step two: Ask the group members to give feedback on the performance of the group managers.

1. What did they do well?
2. Were they effective in ensuring each of the group members were heard?
3. Were they able to keep the group on task and bring them back on-task when necessary? How did they do this?

Step three: If time permits have a one-to-one discussion with each of the learners and clarify what they did well, and what they could improve. Ideally, provide them with several action points they can use in a follow-up activity. Provide them with an opportunity to repeat the activity when appropriate

Note: Ensure learners take turns in managing a group discussion.

Summary

Learners require opportunities to develop more sophisticated interactive listening and speaking skills such as those needed for this activity. This activity requires the use and integration of the skills represented in step 3/4 of the Interactive Listening and Speaking progression, and those represented in Unit Standard 26625. However, more importantly, the communication skills developed in this activity are highly valued in the workplace. While this activity is challenging for learners, it will result in improved communication skills.