

**PRACTICAL WAYS OF DEVELOPING LISTENING AND SPEAKING SKILLS  
THROUGH INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES**

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20080137>

**Abstract:** This article examines practical ways of developing listening and speaking skills through interactive activities in English language teaching. Listening and speaking are essential components of communicative competence, and their effective development requires active participation in meaningful language use. The study emphasizes the importance of student-centered, communicative, and activity-based approaches that engage learners in authentic interaction. Practical strategies such as pair and group work, role-plays, information-gap tasks, discussions, debates, storytelling, language games, presentations, and technology-assisted exercises are highlighted as effective tools for improving oral skills. These activities enhance learners' fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, pronunciation, confidence, and motivation while fostering collaboration and critical thinking. The article demonstrates that systematic implementation of interactive activities contributes significantly to learners' communicative competence and overall performance in the English classroom.

**Keywords:** interactive activities, listening skills, speaking skills, practical strategies, communicative competence, English language teaching, learner motivation, oral communication

**INTRODUCTION**

In modern English language education, the development of listening and speaking skills is considered one of the most important objectives, as these skills form the foundation of effective oral communication. Listening enables learners to understand spoken language in various contexts, while speaking allows them to express ideas, participate in conversations, and interact confidently. Traditional teacher-centered methods often limit opportunities for authentic communication, leaving students with underdeveloped oral skills and low confidence. In response to these challenges, contemporary methodology emphasizes interactive, learner-centered approaches that actively engage students in meaningful language use. Practical interactive activities such as pair work, group discussions, role-plays, information-gap tasks, storytelling, debates, language games, and presentations provide learners with ample opportunities to listen attentively, speak spontaneously, and use language in real communicative situations. These activities encourage collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking, while also increasing motivation and reducing anxiety associated with speaking in a foreign language. Furthermore, technology-enhanced activities, including online discussions, multimedia tasks, and virtual simulations, have expanded the possibilities for interactive practice, making lessons more engaging, dynamic, and effective. The relevance of this topic is determined by the growing need to equip learners with practical oral skills that are applicable in academic, professional, and social contexts. The purpose of the study is to explore practical ways of developing listening and speaking skills through interactive activities and to identify strategies that enhance learner engagement, motivation, and performance. The object of the research is the process of teaching listening and speaking in English classrooms, while the subject is the use of practical interactive methods as a means of improving oral competence. Thus, practical interactive activities are essential for creating a student-centered, communicative, and motivating learning environment.

### **Designing interactive activities for listening and speaking development**

Designing interactive activities is a key component in developing listening and speaking skills in the English classroom. Effective design begins with clearly defining learning objectives, such as improving comprehension of spoken English, developing fluency, enhancing pronunciation and intonation, expanding vocabulary, and increasing learners' confidence and motivation. The choice of activity type should align with these objectives and take into account learners' language level, interests, and classroom context. Common interactive activities include pair work for dialogues, question-and-answer exercises, and peer interviews; group work for discussions, brainstorming, problem-solving, and project-based tasks; role-plays and simulations to practice real-life situations; information-gap tasks where learners exchange missing information; storytelling and collaborative narration; language games; debates and discussions; and technology-assisted activities such as online chats, video-based exercises, and virtual role-plays. Teachers should provide clear, concise instructions and model examples before beginning any activity. Demonstrating the task helps learners understand the objectives, roles, and expected outcomes, and reduces confusion or hesitation during participation. Activities should maximize student interaction by requiring active engagement, peer-to-peer communication, and collaboration. Each student should have opportunities to listen carefully, respond appropriately, and contribute meaningfully to the task. Designing activities around authentic materials and real-life contexts, such as audio recordings, videos, dialogues, advertisements, and situational prompts, enhances relevance, exposes learners to natural language patterns, and motivates engagement. Another important element in designing interactive activities is feedback and reflection. Teachers should provide corrective feedback on pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, while peer feedback encourages collaboration, self-monitoring, and mutual support. Reflection sessions allow learners to evaluate their performance, identify strengths, and set goals for improvement. Activities should also be adaptable to learners' needs, with adjustments in difficulty, time, topics, and resources to maintain engagement and ensure success. When well-designed, interactive activities support the integrated development of listening and speaking skills, improve fluency and comprehension, increase learner motivation and confidence, and foster collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking. They provide learners with authentic opportunities to use English in meaningful situations, prepare them for real-life communication, and contribute to the overall development of communicative competence.

### **Practical examples of interactive activities for listening and speaking development**

1. Pair work: Question-and-answer exercises. Objective: Develop speaking fluency and listening comprehension. Procedure:

1. Divide students into pairs.

2. Give each pair a set of questions on a specific topic (e.g., hobbies, daily routines, or personal experiences).

3. Students take turns asking and answering questions.

4. Encourage follow-up questions to promote longer responses.

Expected outcome: Students practice active listening, respond naturally, expand vocabulary, and gain confidence in speaking.

2. Role-play: real-life situations. Objective: Practice spontaneous communication and appropriate language use. Procedure:

1. Assign roles to students (e.g., customer and waiter, interviewer and applicant).

2. Provide a scenario and relevant vocabulary or phrases.

3. Students act out the situation in pairs or small groups.

4. After the activity, peers and teacher give feedback on language use and pronunciation.

Expected Outcome: Students improve fluency, pronunciation, and social language skills, and reduce speaking anxiety.

3. Group discussion and debate. Objective: Enhance critical thinking, listening comprehension, and persuasive speaking. Procedure:

1. Divide students into small groups.
2. Assign a topic for discussion (e.g., “Should students have homework?”).
3. One group argues in favor, and the other opposes (for debates).
4. Students share opinions, respond to counterarguments, and justify their ideas.
5. Teacher monitors, provides feedback, and encourages participation from all students.

Expected Outcome: Learners practice expressing opinions, negotiating meaning, and responding appropriately while improving listening and speaking skills.

4. Information-Gap Task. Objective: Develop precise listening, questioning, and speaking skills. Procedure:

1. Prepare two sets of incomplete information (e.g., schedules, maps, or story parts).
2. Pair students and give each a different set.
3. Students ask and answer questions to complete the missing information.
4. Encourage full sentences and clarification requests.

Expected Outcome: Students improve comprehension, question formation, and interactive communication skills.

5. Storytelling and collaborative narration. Objective: Improve narrative skills, vocabulary, and listening comprehension. Procedure:

1. Teacher provides a short story, picture sequence, or topic.
2. Students retell the story individually or collaboratively add to it.
3. Classmates listen and provide feedback on clarity, coherence, and pronunciation.

Expected Outcome: Students practice fluency, sentence structure, and active listening, while learning to construct coherent narratives.

6. Language games. Objective: Increase motivation and practice spontaneous speaking. Procedure:

1. Prepare games such as charades, word association, “find someone who,” or guessing games.
2. Students participate in pairs or groups, following the rules of the game.
3. Encourage use of full sentences and clear pronunciation.

Expected Outcome: Learners develop listening and speaking skills in a fun, engaging, and low-pressure environment.

7. Technology-assisted interactive tasks. Objective: Enhance listening and speaking using digital tools. Procedure:

1. Use online platforms, video clips, podcasts, or virtual role-plays.
2. Students complete tasks such as answering comprehension questions, recording oral responses, or participating in online discussions.
3. Encourage peer review and feedback.

Expected Outcome: Students gain exposure to authentic language, develop listening comprehension, and practice oral production in dynamic and interactive ways.

These interactive activities provide students with meaningful opportunities to practice listening and speaking, improve fluency and comprehension, enhance vocabulary and pronunciation, and increase confidence and motivation. When implemented systematically, these practical methods promote active learning, collaboration, and the development of communicative competence in English classrooms.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the development of listening and speaking skills through interactive activities is a highly effective approach in modern English language teaching. Interactive methods, including pair work, group discussions, role-plays, information-gap tasks, storytelling, debates, language games, presentations, and technology-assisted exercises, provide learners with meaningful opportunities to practice oral communication in realistic and engaging contexts. These activities not only improve fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary, and comprehension but also increase motivation, confidence, and active participation. Careful design and implementation of interactive activities are essential for achieving the desired learning outcomes. Teachers must set clear objectives, select appropriate activity types, provide instructions and modeling, encourage collaboration, and offer feedback and reflection opportunities. By adapting activities to learners' language level, interests, and classroom context, educators can create dynamic, student-centered learning environments that foster communicative competence. Overall, interactive activities serve as a practical and essential tool for enhancing both listening and speaking skills and for preparing learners for authentic communication in academic, professional, and social settings.

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