

Speaking skills: Formal formats

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What to expect?

During this session you will learn about:

- types of communication in academic context
- common formal speaking formats
- practice

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Two types of speaking skills

When it comes to speaking skills, we differentiate between:

- **spoken production**
- **spoken interaction**

Two types of speaking skills

Level B2 - Upper-intermediate (CEFR):

- **spoken production** - I can present clear, detailed descriptions on a wide range of subjects related to my field of interest. I can explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
- **spoken interaction** - I can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible. I can take an active part in discussion in familiar contexts, accounting for and sustaining my views.

Speaking - your context

Task 1

Individually - write a list of all spoken communication you normally have at work in a week (with students, colleagues and other staff). Is there more production or interaction?

How much of this communication happens in English? How much of it happens in your mother tongue (or other languages)? Is there a difference between communication in your mother tongue and English?

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Giving presentations

Task 2

In pairs - think back to the last talk/presentation you gave in English. What was the topic? Where was it? How did you prepare for it? How did it go - were you nervous? Why (not)?

Share your experience.

Giving presentations

In the academic context, there's a variety of occasions on which you may be asked to deliver a talk/presentation (lectures, tutorials, conferences). Good preparation and rehearsing are essential.

Task 3

In pairs - What makes a good presentation? What tips would you give to someone who's preparing to present in English? Discuss with a partner.

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Good presentation

A good presentation excels in all these categories:

- A. organization** - ideas and visual aids are **clearly structured** (signposting), information is mixed with **interesting examples and stories/anecdotes** (depends on the audience)
- B. delivery** - **rapport** with the audience, **body language**, **pace/volume/tone of voice**
- C. overall impression** - the presenter is **confident & relaxed**, **enthusiastic** about the topic, **interested in the audience** and getting them involved

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Language of presentation

When planning a talk, it is good to consider the following language aspects:

- vocabulary (think about the content, use a wide range of specific language)
- grammar (check accuracy)
- register (level of formality)
- signposts (the language used for signalling what's going on in the presentation; also helps to organize ideas)

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Practice

Task 4

Work with the handout.

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Practice

Task 5

Work in groups of 4.

You're going to prepare a short (5') presentation for your group. Pick any topic you want (preferably one that is work-related). Prepare your presentation, work with the handout and try to incorporate the signposting phrases into your talk. Think about your audience. Take it turns, deliver your presentation. Listen to the feedback from your group members.

References

McCarthy, M., O'Dell, F. 2008. Academic Vocabulary in Use. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wallace, M. J. 2004. Study skills in English. Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

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Exit ticket?

Thank you for your attention!