

高等学校学术英语（EAP）系列教材



**Speaking in**  
Academic Scenarios  
**学术英语情境口语**

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教师用书

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# BACKGROUND NOTES

## DISCUSSION SKILLS

### Objectives

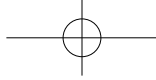
The aim of the Discussion skills work is to give students practice in the type of interaction that they will meet in small-group discussions at college or university, such as tutorials or seminars.

The intention is that these materials should be used flexibly. You can select, resequence or adapt the tasks to suit your students' interests and skill level, and the available lesson time in your programme.

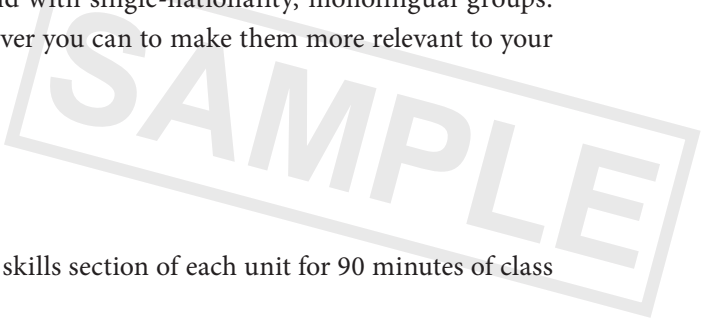
When you plan lessons around these Discussion skills materials, our advice is to maximise the lesson time students spend discussing, and to make sure there is enough time for feedback on their performance.

In each unit, we focus on a common language function, or speech act, which students are likely to need to express in group discussions; for example, explaining, disagreeing or asking for clarification. There is a brief presentation of Useful language items which could be appropriately used to express that function. We have also designed the Discussion points so that students are occasionally prompted to express the unit's highlighted function (such as *"explain..."*, *"give your opinion about..."*).

However, our overriding aim is to provide opportunities for natural interaction—focusing on the effective communication of ideas—rather than to practise particular items of language. In designing the discussion tasks, we have not attempted in any way to restrict the language that students use to those functions highlighted in the unit, or covered earlier. Students are likely to express any number of the communicative functions we have selected, as well as others we do not deal with, in every discussion task. The list of functions, together with the selection of Useful language items, is intended not as an underlying syllabus of “bits” of English to be accumulated, but as a regular opportunity for students to focus their attention on particular sets of linguistic forms that we assume they may find it useful to deploy.



We have tried to select topics and frame questions so that they will work equally well with mixed nationality, multilingual groups and with single-nationality, monolingual groups. But we encourage you to adapt tasks wherever you can to make them more relevant to your students' situation and interests.



## Unit contents

There is enough material in the Discussion skills section of each unit for 90 minutes of class time. Each unit contains:

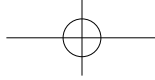
- a list of “Useful language” associated with the functional focus of the unit, and one or two Practice exercises
- two Discussion points, comprising Preparation and Discussion activities, which focus on issues related to the unit topic.

In most units, one of the Discussion points is based on one, or several, short reading texts, which students should be asked to read in advance of the session. The Teaching notes that follow these Background notes offer brief guidance on each unit and an Additional discussion point, which can be used as supplementary material, if required.

## Timing

Below are suggested timings for a 90-minute Discussion skills lesson. Groups will vary in the amount of time they will need or want to spend on each activity, so we have estimated minimum timings for each phase. (Note: In our experience, groups with more advanced language skills often take more time to complete discussion tasks than lower-level groups, because they are better able to sustain the discussion.)

	Activity timing (minutes)	Running total (minutes)
Useful language & Practice	10-15	10-15
Set up groups for Discussion	5	15-20 point, check instructions are clear
Discussion point 1	15-20	30-40
Feedback	5-10	35-50
Discussion point 2	15-20	50-70
Feedback	10	60-90



A faster group following the minimum timings suggested would have time for the Additional discussion point in the Teaching notes.

## Suggested procedure

### ► Before the lesson

Set the input text, or other material—see the unit's Teaching notes—to be read as preparation for the Discussion skills session. Reading the texts in class would take up time that should be spent in discussion.

### ► In the lesson

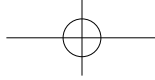
- 1 Useful language.
- 2 Practice.
- 3 Divide the class into groups, for Discussion.
- 4 If the Discussion is based on a text they have read in advance, check whether the students have had any problems understanding the material.
- 5 Check the instructions are clear, and tell the students to begin. (There may be an individual Preparation task before the Discussion.)
- 6 Monitor the Discussion.
- 7 Make sure there is enough time—at least 10 minutes—to provide feedback (stop the discussion if necessary).
- 8 Give feedback.
- 9 Repeat 4-8.

### ► Grouping

The size of the groups for Discussion points can vary; but with less-fluent English speakers we suggest starting with groups of three or four, as less-confident students are likely to find it difficult to contribute in larger groups. Group size could be increased to six or eight later in the course, as confidence grows, to reflect more accurately what will happen in tutorials and seminars in many universities and colleges. If you think there is a risk that a minority of confident individuals will dominate the discussion, you could group those students together.

### ► Monitoring

It is important to monitor the groups' interaction, not just so as to be able to comment on



faults or weaknesses, but also to make a note of examples of effective language use. Spend a few minutes at a time listening in to each group and making notes of language or interaction points for feedback. Respond to any requests for language help (How do you say...?), but avoid intervening to sort out communication problems, unless they seriously hold up the discussion.

It is important to allow and encourage students to develop effective strategies for dealing with communication breakdowns themselves, as those strategies will be necessary when they use English beyond the classroom. Make a note of what went wrong, and whether or not it was successfully repaired and how, for feedback.

### ► Feedback

Try to stop the Discussion soon enough to allow time for feedback; we would suggest 10 minutes as a minimum. Comment on both interaction and language issues.

### ► Interaction

One useful area to highlight is any communication breakdowns: what caused them, and how successfully (or otherwise) they were repaired. In addition to any you observed in monitoring, ask the students to recall any cases where there were communication difficulties. Common interaction faults include the following:

Speaker:

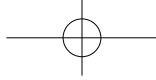
- repeating over and over again a word that has not been understood
- not checking whether the listener has understood

Listener:

- not making clear that they haven't understood
- not making clear what they haven't understood (for example, by simply repeating the problem phrase with rising intonation)
- not making clear that a question is a question
- not checking that what they have understood is correct
- not being assertive enough—that is, not persisting with a question

### ► Language

Going through a miscellaneous assortment of language points may seem arbitrary and confusing to students. Focusing only, or mainly, on how well the students expressed the language function highlighted in the unit provides a coherent basis for selecting points.



In commenting on vocabulary and grammar, it is important to consider not only correctness but also appropriacy of expression and collocation. Pronunciation may cause problems, of course. Here we would advise focusing mainly on stress. Although students should be aware of which specific phonemes cause their listeners most comprehension problems—and some remedial practice may be appropriate with monolingual groups—the source of real-life misunderstandings of non-native learners’ English is often incorrect stress placement, either within a single word or on part of a sentence.

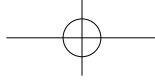
### Alternative procedure

Working through a set of Discussion skills material in the printed sequence, beginning with the Useful language work, provides class-work of the conventional PPP type (Presentation, Practice, Production). An alternative approach, more in keeping with the principles of task-based learning, is to start with one or both of the Discussion points, without pre-teaching any specific language. Then, when monitoring the groups’ performance in discussion, you identify areas of their language use which could be improved, and select material for follow-up form-focused work, perhaps in a later session. The Useful language section in the unit would then be one possible source of appropriate material.

#### ► Speaking logs

If you have facilities that allow students to record themselves on their own computers during Discussion tasks, then you may also be able to get them to “notice” and ask about aspects of their spoken English using what we call a Speaking Log. The Log is intended to encourage learners’ selective attention in the process of noticing as they listen to recordings of their spoken English. Below is a schematic version of the Log, showing the three column headings that appear at the top of an A4 sheet of paper (in landscape mode).

Slips (mistakes and your corrections)	Queries (points you are not sure about when you listen again)	Responses (for the teacher to complete)



The students listen to themselves and focus on points they want to correct (which they each note in their Slips column) and words or expressions they are now unsure about (which they note under Queries). They then hand their Log in to the teacher, who takes it away and completes the third column by answering the student's queries. The teacher brings back the completed Logs for the owners to read and discuss.

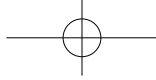
If your facilities don't allow students to make individual recordings, the Log can also be used by pairs or groups working collaboratively on a group recording.

### ► Debates and role-plays

One way in which the Discussions differ from the Scenario performances is that in the Discussions the students express their own real opinions, speaking as themselves, rather than views and attitudes that are largely determined by the roles assigned to them. Having to make up their own minds about the issues in question, and articulate, defend and perhaps modify those views in discussion, simulates more closely the experience that students will encounter in university tutorials and seminars. This should be particularly valuable preparation for students who have not previously been required—or perhaps allowed—to give their own opinions on the content of their studies. Such students often have particular difficulty adjusting to an academic environment in which they are expected to participate in critical debate.

However, we recognise that some, often more confident, students enjoy the element of theatricality in more artificial discussion formats—such as role-plays and formal debates—which require individual participants to adopt standpoints that do not necessarily reflect their real attitudes and opinions. While such activities have disadvantages as EAP tasks—they are less authentic than free discussion in their relationship to what most students will need to do in their university studies, and formal debates, in particular, distribute participation very unequally—debates and role-plays do have the benefit that they oblige students to look critically at issues from perspectives they may not otherwise consider.

In the Teaching notes, we have therefore identified some Discussion points that lend themselves to alternative treatment either as debates (in Units 2, 6 and 8) or a role-play (Unit 5). The Teaching notes for Unit 2 contain some comments on organising formal debates. Suggested role specifications are given in the Teaching notes for Unit 5.



# PRESENTATION SKILLS

## Objectives

The aim of activities in the Presentation skills is to build up students' competence and confidence by giving guided practice in different aspects of presentation skills. These skills are then integrated in the more “real-life” seminar presentations that are the core of the work in Appendix 1.

## Design

The first four units provide a general basis on structuring, signalling, style, delivery and visual aids, and in these units students practise very short presentations (maximum 3 minutes) before presenting them. Units 5–7 provide a more detailed examination of the different phases of a presentation and Unit 8 is an overview. In Units 4–8, students prepare and present longer presentations (5–10 minutes).

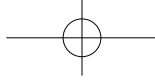
The basic pattern of work in each unit of the Presentation skills materials is:

Introduction—Analysis—Presentation practice.

Of these unit sections, the Introduction is the most flexible. Below, we suggest various different ways it can be used according to the time available and your preferred teaching-learning approach. The other two sections (Analysis and Presentation practice) have set procedures built into the materials. You will find these are more detailed than the student materials for Scenarios and Discussion skills. Our intention is to make the procedures for these tasks clear to students as well as to teachers.

Each unit has short Teaching notes, including suggestions for Supplementary activities. These provide more practice in the skill area that forms the main focus of the unit. If you have time, you can use the supplementary activities as extra practice in the Analysis section, before going on to the Presentation practice. Or you can use the supplementary activities for further practice, if the students' performance in Presentation practice indicates that more work is needed.





## Topics

The topics for the presentation tasks in each unit have been chosen to suit a class of students from different countries, though not necessarily from different academic fields, which reflects the classroom mix on many pre-session courses. However, we realise that you may be teaching a group who share the same language/culture. When the topic in the students' materials is not suitable for a group who share the same language/culture, we suggest an alternative topic in the Teaching notes.

## Procedure

### ► Introduction

We recommend that, before the students read the Introduction, you elicit from your students as much as possible of the content. How much that will be possible will depend to some extent on the time you have available, and on how much experience your students already have in making presentations.

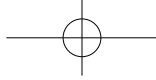
Students could be divided into groups of about four, to discuss points you take from the introduction; then spokespersons could report, for plenary discussion. If the content has been well covered at this stage, you could proceed immediately to the Analysis section, with students encouraged to read the Introduction outside class.

If coverage of the content has not been sufficient, then the Introduction should be read in class before going on to the Analysis section.

An alternative would be to ask students to read the Introduction before class, and then elicit the content from them, for informal discussion as well as checking understanding.

### ► Analysis

In all units except Unit 4, the Analysis section makes use of recorded presentations, or extracts from presentations. These are on the CD, and transcripts are provided on Pages 205–211. The transcripts are intended to be used as a Key, after the Analysis task. However, if your students have difficulties in listening, it may be necessary to work from the transcript from the start.



## ► Presentation practice

### **Preparation**

This allows time for individual thought and planning. You may be asked for help with vocabulary or grammar. On the whole, try to restrict your advice to language points, leaving it to the listeners (at the Practice and Presentation stages) to react to and comment on the content and structure of their talk. This gives more meaning and purpose to the Practice, Presentation and Evaluation stages. Obviously, though, this is a matter of teacher judgement, and you may sometimes have to help or advise on content.

## ► Practice (in Units 1–4)

For this stage, the students work simultaneously in parallel pairs. Move around the class, noting points for later comment. Encourage the students to take the initiative in requesting assistance. If it is possible for you to spread the students out into additional rooms or spaces, that reduces problems of noise interference between neighbouring pairs.

### **Presentation**

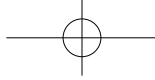
For this stage, the students should form new groups (trios), since it is essential that each speaker presents their talk to a new audience. As before, the groups work in parallel.

### **Evaluation / Feedback**

Most units contain Evaluation questions specific to the skill being practised. Give students plenty of time to think about their responses before you ask them to compare answers. After group discussion, ask for comments from the class as a whole. Finally, provide feedback on points you have noted at the Practice and Presentation stages which you think are worth bringing to the class's attention—positive as well as negative. Give priority to points relevant to the specific ground covered in that unit.

### **Summary**

Each unit concludes with a Summary, to remind students of the core of the work covered in the unit. It is especially useful to review if you have had to spread the work over two separate lessons. You can, of course, use the summary as the basis for a fuller round-up discussion with the students.



## Timing

We have designed the Presentation skills activities to take up 90 minutes (or two 45-minute lessons), but you may need to adjust the timing to match your students and your timetable. Below we indicate how, ideally, the distribution of time might work out, assuming two separate lessons of 45 minutes each.

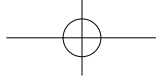
For Units 1–4 (that is, those *with* a Practice stage):

Lesson 1	Introduction	20–25 min
	Preparation	5–10 min
	Practice	10–15 min
Lesson 2	Presentation	25–30 min
	Evaluation	15–20 min

For Units 5–8 (that is, those *without* a Practice stage):

Lesson 1	Introduction	15–20 min
	Preparation	10–15 min
	Presentation 1	15 min
Lesson 2	Presentations 2 and 3	30 min
	Evaluation	15 min

If your course schedule allows less than 24 hours, or if your lessons last, say, 60 minutes instead of 45 minutes, you could ask the students to work through the Introduction and Preparation sections at home. It is in any case an advantage for them to have had the chance to mull over the ideas in advance. Begin the lesson by dealing with their questions about what they have read; then get them to talk over any Discussion points. Using homework in this way may enable you to complete the Presentation skills material in one lesson rather than two.



# SCENARIOS

## Objectives

The scenarios of the course are based on the work of Robert Di Pietro (1987), who developed a particular type of role-play in which language learners are presented with a situation where they have to resolve or cope with a potential conflict. For example, in the scenario in Unit 5 a student has to ask a tutor to extend the deadline for her essay—a situation which is probably familiar to most of us (from one side or the other!) but which is much more difficult to manage in a foreign language. The key to a successful performance in a scenario is a combination of skills of persuasion and compromise, plus flexibility under pressure. All the scenarios featured in the book are based on actual experiences of our past EAP students.

## Structure

Each scenario involves three main stages. In the first, **rehearsal**, the learners are assigned to one of two role groups (Role A or B), which separately discuss possible routes to their goal. In the second, **performance**, pairs of students from each role-group play out the scenario, keeping as closely as possible to the overall strategy that their group has planned. The final stage, **debriefing**, gives the class the chance to assess how well they have done, to suggest possible improvements or alternatives, and to focus on language form.

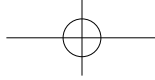
After describing that procedure, we briefly summarise some of the alternatives.

## Procedure

### ► Rehearsal

Divide the class in half; one group reads the text for Role A (always the “student” role) and the other reads the text for Role B (the office-holder or member of staff). Ask the students to study their text carefully, and to discuss any questions about the information or the language in their role text.

The practical maximum number in these groups is about eight students. If you have more



than 16 people in the class, it is better to divide them into four groups, so that two A groups and two B groups can run in parallel. Rehearsal works best when the students in a group sit close together. This contributes to a feeling of unity and cooperation; it also has the practical advantage that their discussion can be kept secret from their “opponents” in the other role-group.

The main aim of the rehearsal is for the groups to take in the background information for their scenario role, to establish their goal and to plan their strategy. Rehearsal also enables the group members to pool ideas and suggestions, reduces anxiety about the coming performance and allows them to learn new language from each other.

The A and B role instructions are quite detailed in some cases, and you need to allow plenty of time for the students to study their texts. If you find the instructions too restrictive—or inappropriate to your local teaching context—then you can of course adapt them by replacing or deleting specific parts of the role instructions. When a group asks for assistance at the planning stage, we suggest you provide the help they want, but try to avoid either imposing your own ideas on them or giving mini-lectures. The students should get used to relying on each other for ideas about strategy, which will help them to make effective use of the planning time in later scenarios.

You will find some suggestions for useful vocabulary in the Teaching notes. However, you don't have to teach the vocabulary in advance, unless a group makes a specific request to which it would be an appropriate response. We think it is better to allow learners to identify a language need for themselves, rather than the teacher assuming that they have gaps in their knowledge.

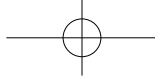
### ► Performance

It's important not to think of this as a theatrical “performance”. The two students in each pair are players, rather than actors; they are trying to achieve the goals established by their group, not enacting a script written in advance. Flexibility in coping with the unexpected from the opponent is a key element.

## **Suggested procedure**

The way we now use the scenarios in class is as follows:

- 1 When the A and B groups have completed their preparation, get them to form up in

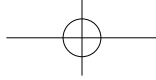


- A+B pairs with someone from the other group. The pairs should sit as far away from other pairs as is practical.
- All the pairs then play the scenario “privately”, simultaneously, so that everyone in the class is working in parallel. If you have an odd number of students, you should partner the one remaining student. If you have an even number, you can monitor and take notes on different pairs’ performance.
  - When all the pairs have finished, ask them to return to their original places. Call for two volunteers (A and B) to play the scenario again, for the rest of the class. We prefer to ask two players who have not just been working together, because that increases the element of surprise; but it may help less confident students to perform again with their opponent from the previous stage.
  - The two players need to be in a position where they can be seen and heard easily. We sit them facing each other across a table. You need to record the performance in some way: pen-and-paper notes, on audiocassette or—ideally—on videocassette. Logistically, the simplest method is to take notes; it has the advantage of giving you an “edited” selective version, which is ready for immediate use. Audio- or video-recording gives you a more objective version of the players’ performance, but makes it more difficult to locate and replay the sequences you wish to comment on.
  - The next step—a second public performance—depends on the size of your class. If you divided a large class into four groups, then you should now ask two players from the other A and B groups to perform. If your class consists of only two groups, ask two new A and B players to do the scenario. Try to ensure that there is enough time for a second performance, but sometimes you may find there simply isn’t. If so, go straight on to the debriefing.

### ► Debriefing

Robert Di Pietro emphasised the need for the language learners to take an active part in the evaluation of the performances, and the importance of getting the learners to analyse both the content (strategy) and form (language) of the performance. So his term debriefing is not just another way of saying “correction by the teacher”; it should be a genuinely collaborative discussion of what was done and said in a performance.

After the public performance, begin by asking the students for their general reaction to what they have seen. We suggest you work from content (strategy) and information through to language, so that the debriefing leads to the airing of general points about the best way



to persuade someone to take your view, and not just the correction of individual language errors.

STRATEGY	<i>Did they manage to get what they wanted?</i>
	<i>Did one player come away the loser?</i>
INFORMATION	<i>Did they use relevant role information provided?</i>
	<i>Did they forget or change any details?</i>
COMMUNICATION	<i>Were there any breakdowns in communication?</i>
	<i>How (and how well) did they resolve them?</i>
LANGUAGE	<i>Did their performance reveal any significant gaps in grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation?</i>

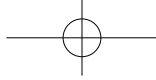
The first two issues are about the *content* of the performances. First, what about the strategies adopted by the two players? Was the outcome what they had planned when they were preparing for the scenario? Do they feel that there was a “winner” or was the result a compromise between players A and B? Secondly, how well did they use the information they were given in their role instructions?

The third and fourth issues are about *form*, the language used by the players. Were there parts of the performance where communication between the players got stuck or even broke down? If so, can they identify the source of the difficulty? Did they notice any items of vocabulary or grammar that they would like to comment on themselves, or to have your comments on? For example, we once recorded the scenario in Unit 4 in class, in which the Student and the Accommodation Officer talked at cross-purposes for 10 minutes or so: the Student had asked whether she could live in a particular flat while it was being renovated, but the Accommodation Officer understood he was being asked whether she could leave her things in the flat during the renovation.

As far as possible, encourage the students to raise queries and points themselves rather than take the lead yourself in listing the errors you noted during the performance. We find that students’ questions are often on the lines of “Our player said (X). Is there a better way of saying that?”. At this point, you may find it useful to refer to expressions provided in the Teaching notes (Pages 146–150).

### **Alternative procedures**

As we mentioned earlier, we have tried out variations on the Performance and Debriefing stages, which we will summarise here. You may be able to adopt or adapt them to suit your teaching situation.



## ► Performance

### **Omitting the parallel pair work**

If you are working in a context where for some reason it is not possible to have all the students working simultaneously in “parallel pairs”, then skip the suggested Performance sequence. Ask a pair of volunteers to do a public performance as soon as the A and B groups have completed their preparation.

### **Bringing in an assistant (or second teacher)**

On our pre-session course at Edinburgh we have a non-teacher course assistant who participates in speaking classes. The assistant works with one of the groups at the Preparation stage, while the teacher works with the other. This means that the students are able to check points with a native speaker informant throughout the Preparation stage. The assistant is then available as a partner during the parallel pair work when we have an odd number of students. Sometimes we also ask the assistant to play one of the roles in a public performance, if the students are reluctant to volunteer—which tends to happen at the start of a course, before they know each other well. (For further details of the role and value of the course assistant, see Lynch and Anderson 2003.)

### **Rotating pairs**

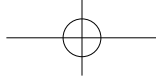
This activity can be used when you have pairs working simultaneously on the scenario, whether or not you are recording them. It works well either at the Performance stage, or after Debriefing—or transcribing. When the student A+B pairs have completed a scenario, you ask all the A players to move clockwise to the next B player, so that the new pairs can repeat the scenario. (In fact, “repeat” is not quite the right term, because the arrival of a new partner means that the second scenario is never a word-for-word duplication of the first.)

## **Debriefing using recorded performances**

### **Using a single pair’s performance: Proof-listening**

A recording of a pair’s scenario performance is potentially valuable material for peer feedback as well as teacher feedback. However, some teachers are worried that getting students to comment on others’ performances will lead to confrontation rather than collaboration. To reduce that risk, we have developed a form of debriefing that we call proof-listening, by analogy with proof-reading. It consists of three cycles, each of which gives different students the primary right to speak.





### *Cycle 1*

During Cycle 1, only the players featured in the recording have the right to speak. As their performance is replayed, they tell you to stop the recording at any point where they realise they made a mistake, or where what they said was not quite what they wanted to say. In this way, they can “edit” the slips in their performance, and get advice from the teacher (and other students) on a better way of expressing their meaning.

### *Cycle 2*

In the second cycle, you replay the recording and this time you ask the other students to tell you to stop it when they want to ask the players for repetition or clarification, or to query a point of grammar, word-choice or pronunciation. You may find they also ask about possible differences between a word that a speaker has used and one they themselves used when they did the task.

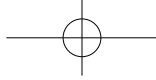
### *Cycle 3*

This is where the teacher takes the lead. If you have taken notes on additional points for comment, you may not need to replay the recording a third time. Draw the students’ attention to anything you think they should have noticed during the first two cycles. This cycle is particularly important if you are teaching students with the same first language, because they tend to make the same mistakes and so may not identify them in others’ performances. For this reason, you may find that Cycle 2 is relatively short, and Cycle 3 rather longer. Conversely, with multilingual classes, Cycle 2 tends to take longer—because the listeners detect more points to ask about in the two players’ English—and the third cycle is shorter.

The main point of proof-listening is to encourage noticing, and in a way that gives the two players—the students most at risk of losing face—the opportunity to edit and improve their performance before their peers comment in the second cycle.

### **Using multiple recordings of parallel pair work**

If you have been able to set up the parallel pair work, then it is worth considering ways of recording and using all the pairs’ performances. On our pre-session programme at Edinburgh we hold the Performance stage of the scenario in a large study room, equipped with recorders set up in pairs at strategic intervals around the edge of the room. The pairs of recorders are far enough from the neighbouring pairs to allow students to record their conversation without interference from other pairs.



The fact that every student in a class can record themselves on their own computers allows us to exploit the recordings for individual post-task “noticing”. The activity we have found most useful involves getting the students to transcribe and edit their original recording—a more detailed form of “noticing” than is practised in proof-listening.

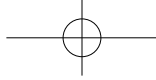
### **Transcribing**

In transcribing, the following rules apply.

- 1 Each pair chooses a section of their recording lasting about two minutes. It should be a section where the two partners spoke a roughly equal amount of English.
- 2 They listen to their own recording through headphones, on separate computers, transcribing their conversation verbatim (exactly), including repetitions and changes of mind.
- 3 They compare their two handwritten transcripts and sort out any differences in what was said. In cases of dispute, assume the speaker is right!
- 4 They use a word processor and save their agreed transcript, then print out three copies (one for each of them and one for the teacher). This is Transcript 1.
- 5 They copy Transcript 1 to a new file, and then together make corrections and improvements on screen. They save the corrected and edited version as Transcript 2. Again they print three copies.
- 6 They give the teacher a paper copy of the two transcripts, and also Transcript 2 on a memory stick.
- 7 The teacher takes away the materials, corrects and reformulates Transcript 2 into Transcript 3, and then prints it out.
- 8 In a later lesson, the teacher returns Transcript 3, which the students then compare with Transcript 2. They analyse the changes and discuss them with the teacher if they are in any doubt as to why a change has been made.
- 9 The pair of students go back to the study room and re-record their scenario twice—once using Transcript 3, and once without.

If you have doubts about how your students would take to the transcribing task, or how much trouble they would take over the very detailed work it requires, you might like to read a report on our Edinburgh students’ self-transcribing (Lynch 2001a). Not only did they notice a large number of slips and errors, they enjoyed the task so much that they asked to do it again in the next course—good evidence that they perceived the task to be valuable.

When self-transcribing works well, it can develop the scenario into an extended activity over several lessons. We timetable it as two or three 90-minute sessions, depending on whether



the students do the transcribing in their own time or in class. The breakdown of tasks is:

Lesson 1: Preparation and Performance (in parallel pairs)

Lesson 2: (or a home assignment): Pairs to complete Transcripts 1 and 2

Lesson 3: (or the second lesson): The teacher to discuss each pair's Transcript 3 with them; the pairs to re-record the scenario, then give a final Performance before the Debriefing.

# TEACHING NOTES

## UNIT 1 WORK

### Discussion Skills: Giving your opinion

#### TO BE READ IN ADVANCE

The text for Discussion point 2 (Preparation 1) is intended to prompt reflection on the topic. If possible, ask the students to read it in advance of the lesson. However, if this material is to be used as the first lesson in a course, and it is not possible to set homework in advance, you can omit the reading and go straight to Preparation 2.

#### ► Additional discussion points

Below are two suggestions for further discussion topics on the theme of work.

1 Do you know this word?

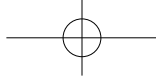
teleworking *[/'telɪ,wɜːkɪŋ/* UK (US telecommuting)] noun [U] working at home, while communicating with your office by computer and telephone.

*Cambridge Learner's Dictionary*

In some countries, teleworking is becoming very common. Is it common in China? Would you prefer to work in this way? Discuss the reasons for your answers. Has anyone in your group had experience of this?

2 In many countries the population is ageing rapidly. The world median age is expected to rise from 26.5 years in 2000 to 36.2 in 2050. How is this likely to affect work?<sup>1</sup>

- 1 UN Population Division. *World Population Prospects: The 2000 Revision*. New York: United Nations, 2000.



## **Presentation Skills:** Structuring your presentation

See Page 184 of the Background notes for our suggestions for handling the introductory sections.

### **Being clear about your objective**

If appropriate, ask the students about the objectives of presentations they have recently made or are likely to make (even if not in English).

### **Organising the information**

Ask the students if they can think of any other ways of structuring a presentation, such as geographically.

### **Language signals**

If you have time, you can ask students if they can think of any other language signals, and then look at Checklist 3 on Page 134.

#### ➤ Analysis

The transcript is on Pages 205–206, with the signposts and language signals highlighted. We suggest that if possible you refer the students to it only after they have completed the second listening task. But if necessary they can use the transcript from the start.

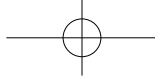
#### ➤ Presentation practice

For general guidance see the Background notes. Make clear to the students the value of doing the presentation twice—the first time being a practice run that should help them to do it better the second time.

#### ➤ Supplementary activities

If you have time, take longer on the Planning stage. Have students plan their talk individually, then show it to a partner and discuss. They can practise with a different partner, and then present to another pair.

You could also spend more time on planning talks. You could ask the students to suggest topics, which you compile on the board. Have them discuss in pairs how they would organise talks on these topics (introduction, three main points, and conclusion). Then collect ideas, or trouble-shoot, in plenary.



## Scenarios: language centre

See the Background notes section (pages 139–146) for the alternative options for Scenarios. The basic procedure occupies 90 minutes, or two 45-minute lessons as shown below.

Preparation: 15 min

Performance: 30 min (parallel pairs 10 min; public performance by one or two pairs 5–10 min each)

Debriefing: 20–25 min (for example, proof-listening)

Follow-up performance: 20 min (in rotating pairs)

If you have recording facilities and more time at your disposal, you can get the students to transcribe their performances, as set out on Pages 145–146.

For each scenario we list some expressions that our students have found they needed. We normally provide them at the Debriefing stage, but with weaker groups it may be necessary to give them during Preparation.

### Student

*I'm sorry to bother you, but I wanted to ask about...*

*I'm a bit worried about...*

*Everyone else on my course is a native speaker, so...*

*I really don't feel that my... is good enough.*

*After all I only got just over 60.*

*Why can't I have a place?*

### Language course director

*The problem is that...*

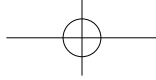
*Have you any reason to think you have serious language problems?*

*Instead of coming to classes, why not...?*

*I think you should...*

*We have to give priority to...*

SAMPLE



## UNIT 2 Food

### Discussion Skills: agreeing and disagreeing

#### TO BE READ IN ADVANCE

We suggest that you allocate the reading texts for Discussion point 2 (Preparation 2) in advance, to be prepared before the Discussion session. (See below for details.)

An alternative way of introducing the materials would be to ask the students to discuss (in groups or plenary) the following question.

Do you agree with the statement: It is easier to agree than disagree in discussions?  
Explain your answer.

#### ► Useful language

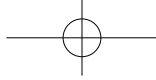
The point to stress here is that expressing disagreement does not require elaborately polite formulae. Depending on the background and experience of your class, it may be helpful to point out that disagreeing is expected in discussion at all levels of anglophone academic culture, and is unlikely to cause offence unless it is angry or personal.

#### ► Discussion point 2

##### Preparation 2

It will save lesson time if you set these texts to be read in advance. There are six texts altogether; their lengths vary, though none are very long. Texts 1, 3 and 4 are pro-GM; 2, 5 and 6 highlight anti-GM arguments. You could ask each student in a group of six to read and prepare to summarise one text, allocating the shorter texts, 2 and 6, to weaker students. With smaller groups you could set stronger students two texts.

With weaker groups, we suggest setting one text per student. As less confident students may tend to say little in larger groups, we suggest limiting the group size to a maximum of four, and selecting just four of the texts for use in this task, for example 2, 3, 4 and 6 (This



provides a balance of pro- and anti- arguments, and focuses on two aspects: the safety of GM food, and its capacity to feed the world's growing population.).

► **Additional discussion point**

If you need more group discussion material, you could use the questions below. The topic would also be suitable for Unit 4 (Health).

- Do you consider your personal eating habits to be “healthy”? Explain your answer.
- Do you avoid eating any types of food for reasons of health or for any other reason apart from your personal tastes?
- Is the typical diet in your country (or region) healthy, or do people tend to eat too little or too much of certain types of food? Are any common illnesses or other problems in your country related to dietary factors?
- Have the eating habits of people in your country changed in recent years? If so, in what ways? Why have these changes occurred? What effects—if any—do you think these changes are having, or will have in the future, on the nation's health? Are there likely to be any other consequences—for example, cultural, economic or political?

**This topic would be suitable for a Debate** (see note below). Traditionally, debating motions are expressed as statements rather than questions—a suitable wording might be “GM technology is necessary and beneficial”.

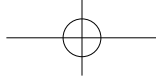
**Notes on debates**

Debating societies thrive in schools and universities in many parts of the world, and many students will be familiar with the idea of formal debating. Debates are chaired discussions which follow a conventional format involving a sequence of short prepared or extemporised speeches arguing for and against a controversial proposition (“the motion”), an opportunity for contributions from the audience (“the floor”), and then a vote.

The usual format is for a number of speakers—usually two or three for each side—to take turns to propose or oppose the motion. Comments are invited “from the floor”, and then a speaker from each side sums up, restating their side's arguments and rebutting those of the other side. Finally, the audience vote on the motion, which is either carried or defeated. Strict rules govern the length and type of contribution at each stage of the debate.

Once the students are confident about the rules you are using, ask a student to take on the role of chairperson (rehearse some formal chairing language with them, such as “I now call on sb. to oppose the motion”).





If time, numbers, your students' confidence or interests do not favour a full-blown formal debate, you could simplify the format. For example, one or two students could be chosen to prepare short—say, 2-minute—speeches for each side (if two, they need to work as a team and agree on the arguments each will use). Then there could be time for questions to the speakers and open, informal discussion by the whole group. Optionally, one speaker for each side sums up (and rebuts), and a vote is taken. If you have a very large class, you could divide it into smaller groups of, say, eight to ten, and have several simultaneous debates, to give more people the opportunity to give speeches and to create a less daunting audience.

### **Presentation Skills:** Speaking in an appropriate style

See the Background notes (Page 184) for ways of handling the introductory sections. If you have time, you can do more on formal and informal language features such as those shown in the table below.

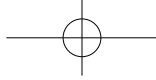
Formal	Informal
passive voice	abbreviated auxiliary verbs
complex sentences with subordinate clauses	simple sentences or coordinate clauses
abstract nouns and nominalisations	lexis with general meaning ( <i>e.g. thing, nice, get</i> )
words of Latin origin ( <i>e.g. sufficient</i> )	words of Anglo-Saxon origin ( <i>e.g. enough</i> )

#### ► Analysis

- 1 a) is more informal than b). b) is used in the recording.
- 2 a) is more informal than b). a) is used in the recording.
- 3 a) is more formal than b). a) is used in the recording.
- 4 a) is more informal than b). b) is used in the recording.

The transcript is on Page 206. The speaker's style is quite formal.

Again, if necessary, the students can work with the transcript while they listen. The important point to make here is that they need to be aware of formality and informality, and to achieve a balance that is appropriate for the context.



### ► Presentation practice

This topic can be used even if your students come from the same country. They should listen for the ways in which similar content can be presented. They can imagine they are preparing the talk to present to other listeners.

A possible alternative topic: Healthy Eating.

Again, make sure the students recognise the value of doing the presentation twice, the first time being a practice run that should help them to do it better the second time.

### Supplementary activities

If you have time, you could ask students to convert a short text in the active voice to the passive voice. For example:

*We boiled the liquid for ten minutes and then we filtered it. We then froze the solids at -5 degrees Centigrade.*

They could then compare the two versions for style, and discuss which would be more appropriate for each of the following:

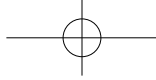
- a) a lab report
- b) a conversation with a colleague in the lab
- c) an academic presentation.

Opinions may vary! But it makes a useful talking point.

### Scenarios: Finding Accommodation

The blank rent “boxes” in the role materials should be completed with whatever you and the class think is a realistic rent in the appropriate currency.

For the task dynamics to work best, the figure in the Student’s information should be roughly midway between the two rents in the Accommodation Officer’s information. For example, current figures suitable for Edinburgh would be £500 for the Student’s budget, and £480 and £530 respectively for the two blank boxes in the Accommodation Officer’s information. This means that the Students have to weigh up the advantages of the two flats—one available now with the higher but inclusive rent, against the cheaper one that will mean several weeks’ wait.



► Useful language

**Student**

*I hope I'm not being a nuisance...*

*I really do need to find a flat nearer to...*

*How soon would I be able to move in?*

*That's more than I can afford.*

**Accommodation officer**

*Well, you have to realise that...*

*I'm afraid there's not really very much more I can do for you.*

*I could give you a list of agencies.*

SAMPLE