

Teaching **English** training videos



Introduction

Getting your students speaking

Unit 1 Introduction

Getting your students speaking

1 Before you watch

Think about *your* students. How do you teach them to speak English?
What things make it difficult for them to learn to speak English well?

Make notes in the box. Work in pairs if you can.

Challenges for my students

Now, think about *teaching* your students. What challenges do you face in teaching speaking skills to your students?

Challenges for me

2 Watch

Now watch Programme 1.

Do the Thai teachers mention any of the challenges you talked about?

Were there any you hadn't thought about?

3 Watch again

Watch the programme again. Match the speakers with the opinions they give in the DVD.



Pathumporn



Montakarn



Supote



Sumalee

- A** *'The difficult thing for me is intonation and accent.'*
- B** *'Students are afraid of making mistakes.'*
- C** *'They want to speak exactly like the book.'*
- D** *'The students are too shy.'*
- E** *'They are better at reading aloud than speaking English naturally.'*
- F** *'It's unnatural because we are all non-native speakers.'*
- G** *'I talk too much. I'd like to be patient and wait for their responses.'*
- H** *'Our Thai accents make it difficult to speak like native speakers.'*
- I** *'If students can't say it right, they prefer to keep silent.'*
- J** *'I think the speaking skill is more important than the other skills.'*

4 Analysis and reflection

Here are some of the things the teachers said. Read the advice from John Kay.

A *'If students can't say it right, they prefer to keep silent.'*

Lots of students feel afraid of making mistakes. As teachers, we have to let our students know that it's OK to make mistakes. Making mistakes is part of the process of learning. We must make it clear to students when the focus of an activity is to 'get it right' and when the focus is to 'get the message across' – a balance of **accuracy** and **fluency** in our speaking activities.

B *'It's unnatural because we are all non-native speakers.'*

Of course it feels unnatural sometimes to talk in English instead of your native language but teachers have to motivate and challenge their students and give them the opportunity to speak English.

Speaking English in the classroom sets an example for the students and helps them get used to hearing and speaking English.

Remember that if you speak the same language as your students you have a big advantage because you know what they will find difficult and this can help you find solutions.

C *'I think the speaking skill is more important than the other skills.'*

There are four skills in language learning – listening and reading (**receptive skills**), and writing and speaking (**productive skills**). We use all of these skills to communicate and it's difficult to say which one is most important. As teachers we need to be clear about which skills our activities will help develop.

D *'I talk too much. I'd like to be patient and wait for their responses.'*

Lots of teachers feel that they talk too much. Of course the teacher has to talk sometimes – giving instructions, **modelling** new language, etc. – but if the focus of the lesson is to give speaking practice then the students, not the teacher, need time to talk. As teachers we have to think about when to talk and when to say nothing. We have to be comfortable with silence – when we give students time to think about what they want to say. We also have to be comfortable with a noisy classroom too – a large group of students practising English makes quite a lot of noise.

Which pieces of advice do you find most interesting in your teaching situation? Why?

Think about the challenges for learners and teachers that we've talked about in this programme. Choose *two* of the challenges that *you* face in your teaching. They could be things you've heard in the programme or things you thought about in Section 1. Think of things you can do to meet these challenges. Use the space below to make notes.

Challenge 1

Challenge 2

Two or three weeks from now, come back to this page. Have you tried the things you thought about? Did they work? Why/why not?