

Target Language for Speaking Lessons

Target language is the specific language (vocabulary, grammar, and expressions) that is the focus of a lesson. Target language should be useful and suitable for the language level. It should include a few variations, for example Q+A, affirmative/negative, or options to change some of the words. But, it shouldn't be so broad that students are expected to learn too many new words and expressions. For younger and lower-level learners, 6~8 new words with a few sentences that use those words is a good amount. For older/advanced learners, the teacher can introduce more expressions or a dialogue including examples of the vocabulary or grammar point.

The teacher should have a clear idea of what the target language is, and organize the stages/activities of the lesson around scaffolding the elements of the target language. The target language can be 'chunked' and introduced step-by-step. This could mean teaching the vocabulary first, or it could mean introducing the affirmative expressions first and practicing the negative expressions later.

Here are some examples of target language:

Beginner : Keep it simple with lots of vocabulary practice.

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| This is a cow. That's a bird. (horse, chicken, sheep...) | What's this? It's a tree. What's that? It's a river. (mountain, lake, cloud...) | Is it a pen? Yes, it is. Is it an eraser? No, it isn't. (pencil, book, bag...) |
| How many chairs? There is one/ are two ... (tables, windows, doors...) | Are you happy? Yes, I am. / No, I'm not. (sad, angry, sleepy, tired...) | What time is it? It's one/two/three o'clock. (four, five, six, seven...) |
| Do you like salad? Yes, I like... /No, I don't like... (pizza, spaghetti, rice, fish...) | I can climb a tree. I can't ride a bike. (play piano, speak English...) | I'm drawing. / I'm not writing. He's eating. / She's talking. (playing, running, studying...) |

Intermediate : Information gaps and surveys are good for intermediate interaction activities.

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| He has a fever. She has a runny nose. (headache, broken leg...) | Where is the post office? It's next to/behind the bank. (in front of... / hotel, bank...) | How much soup did she have? She had one bowl of soup. (slice of cake, cup of coffee...) |
| I did the laundry by myself. She took the bus by herself. (bought groceries, ate cake...) | Do you ever...? I always, usually, sometimes, never.... | How often do you...? I ... once a week / twice a month / three times a year. |
| If I get a good grade, I'll be happy. If I skip lunch, I'll be hungry. | I've lived here for two years. I've been a teacher since January. | They like fishing, don't they? We are studying, aren't we? |

Advanced : This can include travel English, business English, and dialogues.

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| Giving Advice: if I were you, my suggestion is... | Making Requests: can I, may I ask, I'd like to request... | Apologizing: it was my fault, please forgive me... |
| Giving Bad News I'm sorry to say, I tried my best but... | Agreeing: you're right, I feel the same way... | Disagreeing: I don't really agree, but what about... |
| Disagreeing Strongly: absolutely not, rubbish! I can't accept it.. | Offering: shall I, can I give you a hand... | Asking for Opinions: in your opinion, what's your view on... |

Find more expressions here: <https://www.englishclub.com/vocabulary/functional-language.htm>