

5

This unit looks at

how you can help children to speak more fluently in English by

- supporting and encouraging them while they are speaking
- showing them how to ask questions and elicit simple responses
- playing games that encourage them to interact
- using the topic vocabulary they are familiar with when you talk to the class
- starting with teacher-led activities, then moving on to pair and group work.

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Introduction

In Unit 4 you saw how you can

- encourage learners to use **set expressions** for classroom routines
- introduce useful phrases in the **context** of games and activities
- stay within a familiar topic framework
- develop a topic to extend children's vocabulary
- **rephrase** and extend what children say
- accept and respect children's efforts at communicating meaning, even if they don't produce perfect words or phrases
- create a positive environment so that children do not feel embarrassed.

In this unit we are going to look at how you can help children to continue speaking for a longer time.

5.1 Cognitive development and language learning

Children as learners

When teaching language, we also need to think of the whole child, and encourage general **cognitive** and educational development.

This is one reason why choice of topics is important. Topics may be familiar ones, but should be built on or extended so that learners can learn something new. For example,

- when talking about animals, tell children one or two things they may not already know.
 - when talking about families, tell children something about your family – children are naturally curious about their teachers!
- You may have to use one or two words of mother tongue to help children understand, but you can then say it again, all in English.

To encourage children's **cognitive** development, you can select a range of types of language activity.

There are seven activity types given in Activity Box A on the next page. These

- will help develop children's thinking skills
- help the child work from the most basic use of language to more complex uses
- can encourage sharing and co-operation
- could form a graded sequence of speaking activities for pupils working in groups.

The examples in Box B show some things that small groups of children can do in order to develop cognitive thinking and fluency in speaking – in any language.

You can combine different types of activity. For example, you might ask the class to compare the story endings proposed by each group.

Activity Box A*Seven activity types*

- 1 Listing
- 2 Ordering and sorting
- 3 Matching
- 4 Comparing
- 5 Predicting and problem-solving
- 6 Sharing personal experiences
- 7 Creative work

Examples Box B*Pupils can*

- 1 think of the names of things they can see or remember in a picture
- 2 classify items according to category (e.g. big animals, small animals) or put actions in a sequence
- 3 find pairs of similar things, or match pictures to words or numbers
- 4 Find what is similar and what is different in two pictures or stories
- 5 say what will happen in a story or decide what to do if you lose your purse or find something valuable that is not yours
- 6 speak about themselves and say what they like and dislike
- 7 do projects on chosen topics, or retell stories and make up endings.

So far in this book the activities and games have generally been of types one, two, and three. In this unit we show some slightly more challenging activities and progress to types four and six. Five and seven will come in later units.

Children as language learners**Learners need**

- to hear clear pronunciation and intonation
- to feel successful when using English
- plenty of opportunities to communicate
- to enjoy their efforts at speaking in English
- to know they have achieved something worthwhile.

You as the teacher can

- speak a lot of English and repeat children's words or phrases when you are answering them
- react to the meaning of what they are trying to say
- encourage them by showing that what they are saying is more important than your correction
- wait until they finish speaking before you repeat and rephrase
- show your approval for all your pupils' speaking – however short it may be
- provide activities that are fun and that have a purpose or a goal, and that have an end-product that they can feel proud of.

Set up activities so that children can do them in pairs and groups.

Then they will get opportunities to use English not just to respond to questions, but also to ask questions. They will also have the satisfaction of completing a task on their own. You can help children by

- showing them what to do first
- practising an activity first with the whole class
- arranging children into groups so that you can easily get around to listen and talk to them all.

In sections 5.2 and 5.3 we will look at activities where the teacher guides and supports the children as they speak – these are teacher-led activities. When children feel confident and happy using English, you can move to group activities so that they can speak more (see section 5.4). As children learn to read and write they will naturally do more individual and group work – this will be covered in later units.

5A

Talking about brothers and sisters

TEACHER: Now everyone listen to my question. Giada, have you got any brothers or sisters?

GIADA: Sister.

TEACHER: How many sisters have you got?

GIADA: Em, one.

TEACHER: One. Very good. So you've got one sister. OK, Federica, have you got any brothers or sisters?

FEDERICA: Brother ... one.

TEACHER: One brother. Good. And Francesca have you got any brothers or sisters?

FRANCESCA: Three brothers.

TEACHER: You've got three brothers! Very good.

CHILDREN: Teacher ... teacher ...

TEACHER: And, eh ... Lorenzo, have you got any brothers or sisters?

LORENZO: Three brothers.

TEACHER: Ah, you've got three brothers and have you got any sisters?

LORENZO: No.

TEACHER: No? no sisters?

OTHER CHILDREN: Yes ... yes ... yes.

TEACHER: Do you have a sister Lorenzo? How many sisters?

LORENZO: One.

TEACHER: One sister. You've got one sister. Sara. Isn't that right? Sara is your sister. OK, good Lorenzo. You've got three brothers and one sister ...

Flaviana with eight to nine year olds.

5.2 Starting to speak freely – eliciting personal talk

Children generally like to talk about themselves, and to hear their classmates doing the same. They enjoy talking about their favourite things, their hobbies, sports, families, and so on.



Listen to the teacher in 5A asking her pupils to speak about their families.

Notice that

- the children's responses are very short
- the teacher rephrases and adds to what the children say
- she praises her pupils' efforts
- the context is real and meaningful.



The context in this interaction is very clear and simple. The pupils need two types of word sets to answer:

- brother/s and sister/s
- numbers.

The context is real and the children are thinking of the meaning, not just repeating words to practise pronunciation. The communication is

- controlled because of the limitations of the language used
- more than a language exercise.

With older children you can use this teacher-led question and answer activity to do a survey of some kind, for example,

- find the average number of brothers and sisters in the class, or
- find out whether there are more boys than girls in all their families put together.

(This is more fun if you first ask them to guess whether there will be more girls than boys!) To turn this activity into a survey, draw two columns on the board, one for girls and one for boys. As children answer, write the number they say in the correct column. At the end, you can get the class to add it all up in English, and see who guessed correctly.

Extension ideas

You can follow on from this activity by asking children to

- ask questions and give short answers about each other, for example, *How many brothers has Francesca/Federica/Giada got?*
- focus on the use of *he/she*
- join the information together to prepare for more **sustained** speaking.

Personal presentation is an example of more sustained talk with older children (see 5E).

LANGUAGE FOCUS 5.2**Initiations and follow-up moves**

In 5A Flaviana uses a typical classroom **interaction** pattern in her activity.

This pattern is:

- initiation (usually a question from the teacher)
- response (an answer from the child)
- follow-up (feedback from the teacher).

- ↔ **a** Here are two things the teacher said and a child's response, but they are mixed up. Which is an initiation, which a response, and which a follow-up? Write in I or R or F. Then say them in the correct order.

- 1 _____ One, very good, so you've got one sister.
- 2 _____ How many sisters have you got?
- 3 _____ One.

- 🔄 Now read transcript 5A. Put a dotted line under the teacher's initiations and a solid line under her follow-ups.

- ↔ **b** In how many follow-ups does she rephrase and extend what the child has said?

- 🎧 Listen to the recording again, notice the intonation the teacher uses and repeat the teacher's Initiations and follow-ups.

RECORD Choose four follow-ups to record. Can you make them sound really encouraging?

TEACHING TIPS

- ✓ Support children's early efforts by
 - waiting for their responses (don't be afraid of silence)
 - repeating what they say in your response
 - frequently summarizing what different pupils say.
- ✓ Give children lots of opportunities to speak. **BUT**
- ✓ Don't put pressure on children to speak if they are not ready.
- ✓ Remember – silent children are still likely to be listening and learning.

TOPIC TALK**Families**

- 1 Think of two families you know that are quite different from each other. Prepare to describe each family and compare them.

RECORD Record what you could say about them.

- 2 If you were going to talk about your own family to a class of young learners around nine or ten years old, what would you tell them? What might you write or draw on the board?

- 3 If you were going to do the same lesson with a group of five year olds, how would you change it? Plan what you would do and say.

RECORD 4 Finally record yourself telling both classes about your family.

- 5 Find a story book that the children know with a story about a family. It doesn't have to be in English, but it should have pictures. Prepare questions to ask the children in English about the characters, and suggest possible answers they might make. Plan some possible follow-ups, too, e.g.

— *Who is this person? Who knows?*

— *Grandmother*

— *Yes, it's Red Riding Hood's grandmother isn't it... she's smiling and has lots of grey hair ...*

RECORD Practise these and then record three short conversations.

5.3 Speaking games

You can encourage children to use English by playing a game at the same time.

The games can be teacher-led.

Here are extracts from two classes. The children in the first class are playing 'Pass the ball' and in the second one they are playing 'Guess the mime'.

Pass the ball

5 B**Pass the ball**

TEACHER: Ready. Here's the music.

Pass the ball.

(*Music stops.*)

TEACHER: OK, Lara tell me three things you can see in this kitchen.

LARA: A table ... a chair and ... a window.

TEACHER: Good, a table, a chair, and a window.

(*The music is on again and the pupils pass the ball. The music stops.*)

TEACHER: OK, Anna, can you name three things in this picture?

Lucy with eight to nine year olds.

To play 'Pass the ball' you need a tape recorder, a music cassette, and a ball. This is how you play it:

- Put on the music.
- The children keep passing the ball to the child next to them.
- When the music stops, the child with the ball has to answer a question or talk about a picture.
- If a child does not want to answer, he or she can say *Pass*.
- When the music starts again, the ball continues around the room.
- You can say *change* at any time and the ball will go in the opposite direction.



The teacher in 5B is showing her pupils pictures of different rooms. When the music stops the children have to name three things in the room they are looking at.

In this class the teacher is using pictures of rooms to remind the children of particular things. In this way the language is controlled by the topic. The children

- can stand in a circle or at their desks
- are listening to the music and passing the ball
- are not thinking all the time about answering in English.

Extension ideas

After playing this game you could play a memory game. The children could

- try to remember who said which things for each room
- look at the pictures again in pairs, then turn them over and name as many things as they can
- without seeing the pictures again:
 - list five things in each room
 - say what colours those things in that room were
 - say where they were.

TEACHING TIPS

- ✓ Use any set of words or phrases from a topic the children are familiar with.
- ✓ Use a story the children know well, and
 - ask questions about characters
 - ask what happens next.

LANGUAGE FOCUS 5.3a**Instructions for 'Pass the ball'**

- ⇒ a Read how to play 'Pass the ball'. As you read, think what you would actually say to your class when setting the game up and giving instructions for playing it. Can you continue the teacher's instructions below, using the directions above to help you?

Now, we are going to use these pictures of rooms to play a game called 'Pass the ball'. OK? So we need the ball, who can fetch the ball? OK, Kevin – wait – pass it gently, thanks. Now – we need some music Ah, here's a cassette. I'll just put it in. There we are. So now, everybody stand up and ...

Extra phrases for ball games

- b Try to think of seven verbs that are often used with the word *ball*, e.g. *roll*, *bounce*.
- c Read all these phrases out loud. Which one is the least likely to be used about a ball?



Guess the mime

Miming is another activity that involves movement. It is also good fun. In Unit 2 we looked at how children can mime activities when listening.

- 4 In 5C miming is part of a speaking activity.

To play 'Guess the mime' you need some pictures of people doing different things.

Put the pictures on the board. The children can

- work in pairs
- choose any picture they like
- become the person in the picture and behave like this person
- perform the mime together.

The rest of the class watch and try to guess which activity they are miming.

They can ask the question *Are you swimming?* or just call out the names of the actions, for example, *swimming*.

5C

Guess the mime

TEACHER: OK, now you remember what these people in the pictures are doing.

OK, you're ready. Now, you two ... you're going to mime. OK, everyone else – are you watching? OK, good, now off you go and guess what they're doing.

(Two children mime together.)

TEACHER: OK, can you guess what they're doing? Hands up anybody ...

CHILDREN: Cooking ...

TEACHER: Cooking. So they're cooking like this man here? Is that it? Do you want to see it again? No? Is that right?

TWO CHILDREN WHO DID THE MIME:

Yes, yes cooking.

TEACHER: Yes. You're right. OK. Very good. OK, thank you very much. Next?

Brian with eight to nine year olds.



TEACHING TIP

Mimes

- ✓ After mimes ask children to remember what different pupils were doing, e.g. *What were Kevin and David doing? Were they swimming or playing football?*

LANGUAGE FOCUS 5.3b

Asking children to guess or remember

RECORD Practise some questions from this table, then record four.

Who can guess what	
Can you say/ask them what	they are doing?
Hands up if you can guess what	they are going to do next?
Can you remember what	Amanda and Marta were doing?

TOPIC TALK

Rooms

- 1 Find two or three pictures of typical rooms that your children would be familiar with, e.g. two bedrooms, two sitting rooms, or two kitchens. Look at them carefully for a minute then turn them over.

From memory describe one of them to someone else. Can she/he tell which picture you described? Afterwards, find out what made him/her sure that it was that picture.

RECORD Without looking, talk for one minute about each picture and record your description. Play it back, looking at the picture, and check how accurate you were.

RECORD 2 Record yourself describing one of the rooms. Adjust your language to suit the age and level of your learners. Make two or three deliberate errors, for example, say *there are two tables in this room and one chair instead of one table and two chairs*.

Play this recording in class and let the children look at the pictures. Ask them to spot the things that are not true. Give them time to correct what you said. This is good speaking practice.

Later your pupils could prepare a similar game to play on their own in groups of three or four. They could bring in pictures or draw them.

5.4 Children speaking in groups

The activities in sections 5.2 and 5.3 show how the teacher supports the children's speaking with lots of rephrasing and additional language.

You will find that some children

- speak more and others speak less
- are embarrassed speaking in front of the whole class
- feel more confident speaking in pairs or small groups.

When your pupils work in pairs and groups they

- get more opportunities to speak
- ask and answer questions
- learn a lot from each other
- gain confidence because they are speaking in private rather than to the whole class.

5 D

Find four differences

TEACHER: Then I want you to do pairwork. I prepared two pictures A and B. OK, so please don't show your pictures to your partner. OK? sh... sh...

(The teacher gives out the pictures to each pair.)

TEACHER: OK, everybody, everybody... there are four differences. There are four differences in the pictures. So please talk about the picture and find out what the four differences are. OK?

SAORI: A boy is riding a bicycle.
 HIRO: No. A boy is playing soccer.
 SAORI: Yes. A boy is flying a kite.
 HIRO: No. A boy is playing golf.
 SAORI: Pardon? Pardon?
 HIRO: A boy is playing golf.
 SAORI: Yes. A girl is drawing a picture.

Fumiko with ten year olds.

5 E

Personal presentation

TEACHER: OK, now start with your name and where you live.

HARUKA: My name is Haruka.
 I live in Ena.

TEACHER: Good. And brothers and sisters?

HARUKA: I have two brothers.

TEACHER: Good. And what do you like?

HARUKA: I like comics and cartoons.

TEACHER: OK, now tell us again. Put it all together... name, where you live, brothers, what you like, OK...

HARUKA: My name is Haruka. I live in Ena. I have two brothers.

TEACHER: And you like?

HARUKA: I like comics and cartoons.

TEACHER: Very good. Now...

Bob with eleven to twelve year olds.



Listen to the class in 5D. The teacher has practised several 'Spot the difference' activities with her pupils in earlier lessons.

Here the children are

- working in pairs
- looking for four differences
- unable to see their partner's picture
- describing people in their own picture to see if their partner has the same
- using rising intonation as a short cut.



The intonation here is like the question *Is what I am describing the same as yours?*

This was done in a class of 22 pupils. All the pairs did the activity together. It was quite noisy – but think of the amount of practice children get when they do this.

Notice that the teacher does not interfere when the children are doing the activity.

Personal presentations

As we saw in 5A, many teachers start by asking children about themselves: their name – where they live – their telephone number – what they like.

Pupils can extend this later to personal presentations.

- 👂 Listen to this pupil in 5E speaking about herself. Notice how the teacher helps her to build up her presentation. This kind of presentation can be used in many different ways.
- 👂 Listen to the pupils in 5F. They are playing a guessing game, pretending to be a particular animal. They prepared their presentation in pairs before doing it in front of the class.



5F

Guess what animal I am

TEACHER: Now are you ready? You are going to do this all together. OK, so off you go. Who's going to start?

CHILD: Me ... I am a big animal. I live out in the country. I have lots of friends. I have four feet.

TEACHER: OK.

CHILD: And I have two big ears, a small tail. I am grey. I am very big and I have a big nose. Who am I?

TEACHER: OK. Does anyone know who he is?

CHILDREN: An elephant.

Brian with eleven to twelve year olds.

In 5F the pupils planned how to describe the animal they were going to be. This kind of self-description is like activity number 7 in Activity Box A.

To prepare for this guessing game, children could do one of these:

- 1 name and describe animals while looking at pictures
- 2 group pictures into big/small animals – wild/farm animals
- 3 find similarities and differences, e.g. pictures of an elephant and a mouse
- 4 play different guessing games. Let the children describe pictures on the walls. Ask the other groups to pick the right picture from the description
- 5 play 'odd one out'
 - the children add one different category to their list
 - the others have to pick it out and say why it is the odd one out, for example, *cat, hamster, tiger, dog*.

Then the children will be familiar with phrases they can use to describe their animal for the guessing game.

TEACHING TIPS

Children speaking in pairs and groups

- ✓ Make your instructions very clear.
- ✓ Show the children first what you want them to do.
- ✓ Help them to acquire phrases to use when talking to each other
- ✓ Give children planning time to think of what to say.
- ✓ Let them rehearse if they are going to speak to all the class.

LANGUAGE FOCUS 5.4

Setting up pairs and groups

- a Read through the transcripts in this unit and take a note of all the language where instructions are given.
- RECORD ➤ b Practise some instructions from these tables. Then record yourself giving three different sets of instructions.

Are you ready? OK, everyone, So now everybody, Quiet please! Listen carefully.	You're going to do this You're going to work You will be playing this	in pairs, in twos, in threes. in groups of three or four.
Here are two pictures, but don't look at them yet. Keep them face down!	You must not show them to anyone else. Keep them like this! You can look at them both/all together.	So, you two together. You two and you three. Go and sit with Laura please and make a pair.

Children in pairs or groups

Which of these phrases might be useful for your learners? Can you think of any more? Adapt them to suit activities your pupils could do.

Child 1	Child 2
Who wants to start? Whose turn is it? Who's next? You're next/I'm next!	Me!/Not me! Mine! Yours! Ana's! Me! Ana! OK.
I'll draw and you colour, OK? I'll ask and you answer, OK? You first and then me, OK? Have we/you finished?	Yes. All right. Yes!/No, you first! Yes!/Not yet!/Just a minute!
Can you pass me a blue pencil/a yellow crayon please? Can I have the rubber/the eraser please? Oh, I need the ruler/the scissors. Who's got the red marker?	Here you are. Here it is! Here you are/Oh! wait a minute. Me! Here you are/Here it is.

Pronunciation point

Connected speech. Sounds /ɒ/ and /ʌ/

1 Say these five phrases:

Have you got any (5A)? ... Hands up anybody (5C).

Tell us again ... Put it all ... Would you like ... (5E)

Do you say each word separately?

What do you notice about the sounds at the end and beginning of the words?

2 Sort these words into two groups according to the sounds of the **stressed** vowel:

soccer months comic brother want mother

Further ideas

- 1** Prepare a guessing game. Think of two different children (a girl and a boy) in one of your classes. Write down four or five things you could say about each of them (their families, what they like, etc.).

RECORD Record yourself talking about them. Take your recordings into class and play them to all the children. Can anyone guess which of them you are talking about? Do not give them the answers straight away. You might need to play the recording two or three times. If they say a name, ask them why they think it is that child.

- 2** Write down what you have learnt from doing this unit. What do you feel you want more help with?
- 3** Read the Introduction and Chapter 6, 'Role plays and improvisation', in Philips, Sarah. 1999. *Drama with Children*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, OR
Chapter 6 in Moon, Jayne. 2000. *Children Learning English*. Oxford: Macmillan Heinemann.