Topic  Speaking and listening practice

Level:  SfL E2-L2 / SQA Access 3 - Higher / CEFR A2-C2

Time:  60 minutes

Aims

- To revise the meaning, form and pronunciation of vocabulary based on a relevant topic chosen by the students or teacher (Warmer).
- To practise speaking skills involved in telling stories (narrating, involving the listener); debates (negotiating, giving opinions) (Tasks 2 and 3)
- To practise listening for comprehension, develop study-skills (note-taking), and writing skills (Task 4)

Introduction

This lesson is about any topic you can think of. It provides students with the opportunity to tell you what they know about a topic and then lets them work with this language through a variety of tasks (storytelling, debating, working on a dictogloss activity). The lesson is based on the principles of dogme (see links below) in deriving the content for the lesson from the students and then working with their emergent language.

There are minimal materials to prepare. (Story telling and cooler require a supply of slips of paper. Dictogloss requires a short topical text.)

To familiarise yourself with the idea of dogme teaching look at the following resources:

http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/seminars/20-steps-teaching-unplugged
http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/seminars/live-lesson-dogme

The Warmer and Task 1 are based on ideas from a book called Teaching Unplugged by Scott Thornbury and Luke Meddings available at:

http://www.deltapublishing.co.uk/titles/methodology/teaching-unplugged

Speaking and listening practice from student-generated content

Procedure

Warmer (10 minutes)
- Give the students a topic and ask them to brainstorm the words and phrases they know about it. Students should write these words down.
- Some possible topics – transport, shopping, free-time activities, television.
- Allow about 5 minutes for this, and encourage different groups of students to compare their ideas with each other.
- Ask students in turn to tell you what they have written and write this on the board.
- Check pronunciation and mark word stress on the words.

Task 1 – Analysing student input (10 minutes)
- Put the students in pairs and ask them to categorise the language they can see on the board into small groups. This could be vocabulary from the same semantic field (e.g. transport – bus, car, train) or words that are related in meaning or form (e.g. bus, busses; antonyms, synonyms) or according to part of speech (nouns, adjectives, verbs, etc.)
- Ask different pairs to share their categories and explain their choices.

Tasks 2, 3, 4 (each individual task takes about 30 minutes)
- Depending on the content and ideas that are generated by the students in the Warmer and Task 1, and on how challenging a task you want to set for the main part of the lesson, below are three possible follow-on tasks.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task 2: E2 and above</th>
<th>Task 3: E3 and above</th>
<th>Task 4: E2 and above</th>
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<tr>
<td>Task 2 – Story telling</td>
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- Divide the students into pairs or small groups.
- Give each group a supply of slips of paper.
- Ask the students to copy one word or phrase from the warmer/task 1 onto each slip of paper. NB – ideally words and phrases should not be duplicated.
- Make sure that each group has a supply of between 15 and 20 words/phrases.
- Tell the students that they are each going to tell a story using the words and phrases on the slips of paper.
- Elicit what makes a story ‘good’, e.g. having a
| Task 3 – Group Debate |
- From the vocabulary that the students have provided, devise some sort of polemic statement.
- For example, if you have looked at transport you might choose something like All air travel should be banned.
- Divide the class into two groups, for and against the statement.
- Give each group 10 minutes to decide on their argument which they present for 5 minutes. At this point, work with weaker/quieter students so they feel confident about contributing.
- Each group presents their
| Task 4 – Dictogloss |
- Find a short text related to the topic that you set up for the students.
- Set them a comprehension question about the text and the read it out loud at slightly slower than normal pace (NB students should have their pens down).
- Ask students to discuss the answer to the question and check with the whole class.
- Dictate again but this time ask the students to write down the key words of the text.
- After you have read the text aloud, let students compare their work.
- Read the text again and ask
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<td><strong>beginning, middle, and end; use of words like, First, then, next, finally and adjectives.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Elicit how stories usually begin, e.g. One day / There once was...</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Demonstrate the activity by starting to tell a story related to the main topic.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Pick up one of the slips of paper at random at some point during your story and work it in to the narrative, e.g. One day there was a man who was really unhappy about pollution. He really wished that more people would recycle more things...</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Ask the students to pick 5-8 slips of paper at random and tell each other a story.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Monitor as the students do this, taking notes of successful or unsuccessful language use and feeding in vocabulary as necessary.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Hold a brief plenary on the most interesting stories the students told.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>case, while the other group listens with no interruptions. Make notes on their use of language and common errors.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>After each group has finished speaking, hold an open discussion where the groups can ask questions in turn.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Encourage them to justify their opinions.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Continue with this open discussion for 5-10 more minutes.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>At the end hold a vote to see which group had the most convincing argument.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>the students to add to their notes.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>After this third reading ask the students to work in groups to rewrite the text.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Note – this does not have to match the original exactly, but they should try and convey the same meaning.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Hand out a copy of the original text to each student. Allow them time to read it and compare with their own version.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Discuss any differences they have noted, misheard words or interesting features.</strong></td>
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### Giving feedback of common errors

- Feed back any common errors that came up during the speaking, listening and writing activities above. Remember to keep error correction positive and remind students that all errors they make are valuable learning opportunities.
- One way to give feedback on errors is to use instant gap fills from students’ individual phrases to help them notice errors:
  - Example: a student says (on the topic of the environment) *We can to recycle many things like cans.*
  - Write this on the board: **We can _________ many things like cans.**
  - Elicit possible words that can go in the gap and ask students to notice the form and ask questions like, *Is it correct to say, “I can to do something.”?*
  - Keep whoever made the errors anonymous unless your students start to enjoy claiming them as their own.
Cooler – (5-10 minutes) Student generated vocabulary game

- Hand out small pieces of paper and tell the students to write a word on each one that they have learned in class. They must be able to define any word that they write. If you did Task 2, use the slips of paper you used then.
- Now put the students into small groups and give each group an equal amount of the pieces of paper.
- Tell each student to take it in turns to pick up a word and define it for the other students in their group to guess.
- If a student knows the word, they must knock on the table to be allowed to answer – no shouting out aloud! If they guess correctly, they keep the piece of paper; the student collecting the most being the winner.

Extension activities

- If you have done Task 2, students could write up their stories for homework and share them in a subsequent lesson.
- If you have done Task 3, students could write a brief report about the debate.
- If you have done Task 4, students could write new texts based on the dictogloss model. This will be particularly appropriate if the model dictogloss text is based on a personal experience, e.g. a wonderful/disastrous holiday, an embarrassing moment.
- Students could do revision activities based on the vocabulary and grammar that was covered in the lesson, e.g. exercises from http://learnenglish.britishcouncil.org/en/