

Teacher-talking time

As a teacher, you're always aware of how much time you spend speaking during the lesson. This is especially important in speaking lessons, where the key purpose is to encourage students to speak. That's not to say your speech isn't invaluable in providing models for pronunciation, functional language and appropriate discourse. But sometimes a large amount of teacher-talking time can slow the pace of a lesson and students can lose concentration and become bored or disinterested.

SOME USEFUL STRATEGIES TO AVOID THIS ARE:

- Wait for an answer when you ask a question. Students need 'thinking' time.
- Ask open-ended questions (e.g. *Wh-* questions) to encourage students to give longer answers, e.g. *What did you do last weekend?* instead of *Did you have a good weekend?*
- Vary the way students get feedback: they can check activities in pairs, for example.
- Encourage students to give explanations instead of giving them yourself.
- Present students with clear examples and guided questions so that they do not need to be 'told'. Guided discovery is a better and more rewarding way for students to learn.
- A useful guideline is to limit your talking to 30% of class time and no more than ten minutes at a time.