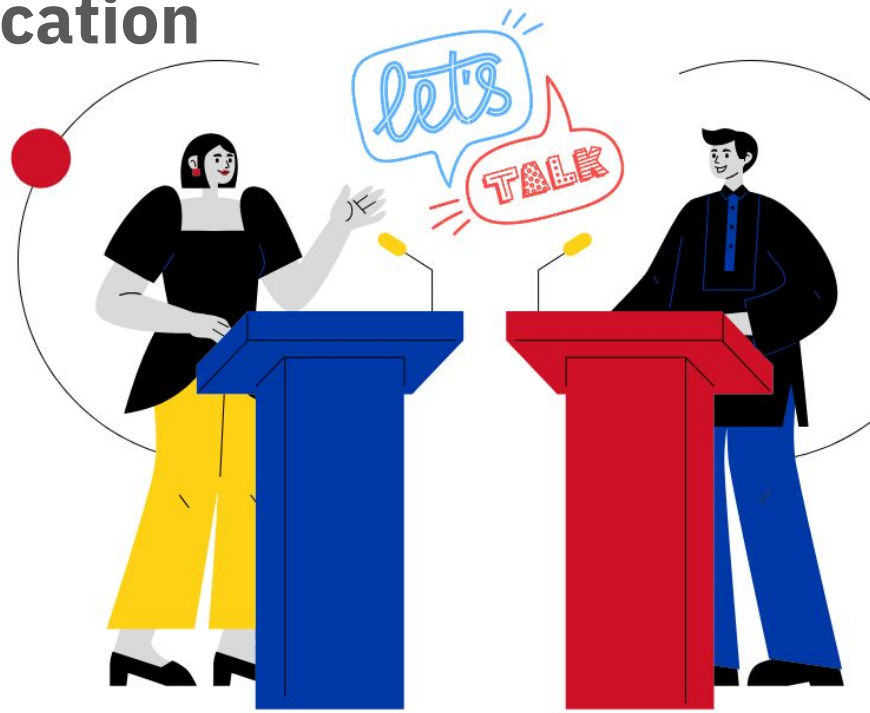


Oracy in Action

Transforming Grammar Lessons
for Engaging Communication

Sarah M. Howell



Our agenda, today

Oracy

Oracy
in Grammar
Lessons:
ideas and activities

Oracy skills
Q&A

Exploratory Talk

Presentational Talk

Question

Are oracy and speaking the same thing?

1.

Yes, they are

2.

No, these are
different concepts

3.

I really am not
sure

What is Oracy?

“[Oracy] is what the school does to support the development of students’ capacity to use speech to express their thoughts and communicate with others, in education and in life.”

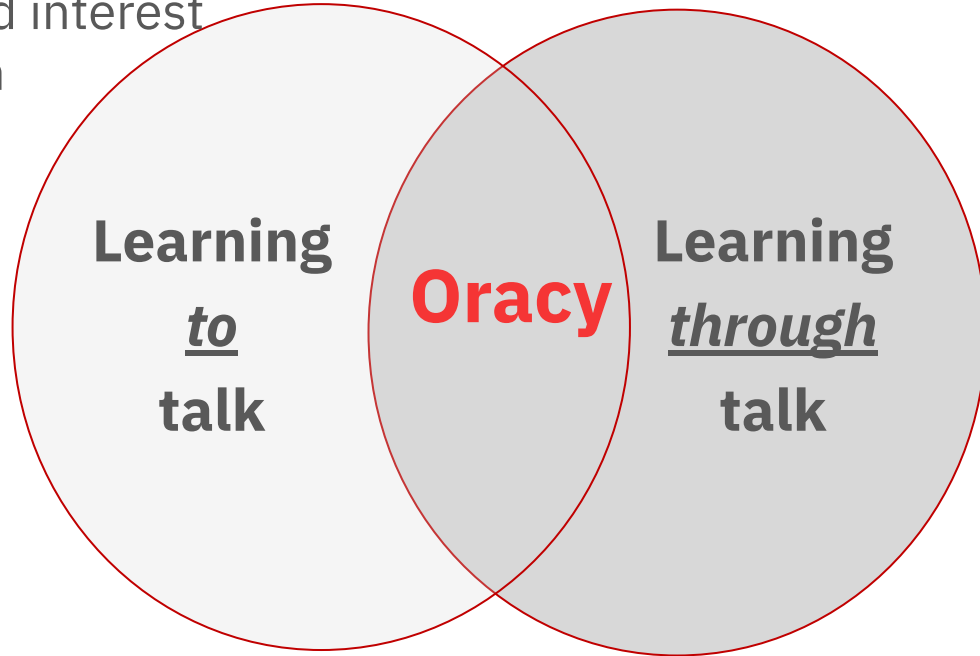
Alexander

“[Oracy] really represents the set of talk skills [...] that people, should develop, in the same way that we would expect people to develop reading and writing skills.”

Mercer

Learning *to* / *through* talk

How to be a better speaker and interest people with ***how*** you're talking



How **talking and thinking together** gives you better writing, & better understanding of key concepts

Venn diagram in *Transforming Teaching and Learning Through Talk*, Gaunt, Stott (2019)

Why is Oracy Fundamental in the Classroom?

- Speaking skills must be taught
- Interthinking: Learning through collaborative dialogue
- Enhances understanding and retention
- Prepares for collaborative future

“You are the only **second chance** for some students to have a rich language experience. If these students **are not getting it at school, they are not getting it.**”



Neil Mercer - Professor of Education at the University of Cambridge, Director of Oracy Cambridge



Never mind the gap?

92% of teachers think school closures (due to Covid-19) have contributed to a widening of the word gap.

Oxford Language Report (2020)

International evidence from Belgium, Holland and the USA is consistent in showing overall **progress gaps** and attainment gaps **for disadvantaged pupils.**

EEF Best evidence on impact of Covid-19 on pupil attainment (2021)

“Two years of the covid-19 pandemic have caused a substantial learning deficit, equal to about 40% of what a student learns in a school year, which appeared immediately, at the beginning of the pandemic and still persists today.”

A systematic review and meta-analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on learning

Bastian A. Betthäuser, Anders M. Bach-Mortensen, Per Engzel Disuguaglianze di Salute (2022)

“Half of the teachers reported a general loss of learning in the class (55.3%), 1 out of 4 noticed the emergence of psychological disorders in at least one case among their students.”

Save the Children (2022)

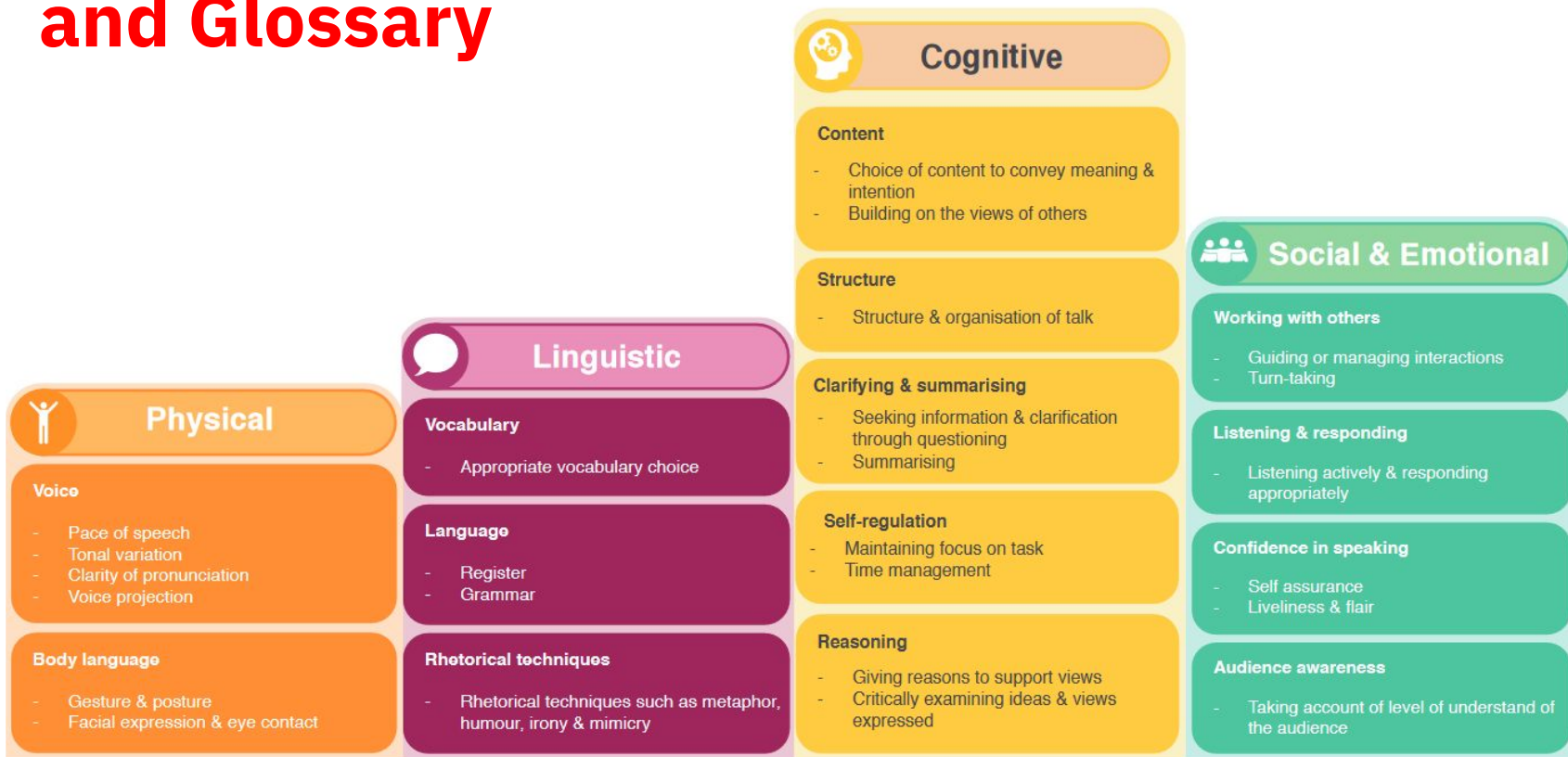
What communication skills does a democratic society require of its citizens?

- Confidence and clarity in self-expression
- The ability to listen and take account of other perspectives
- Ways of working with others to solve problems

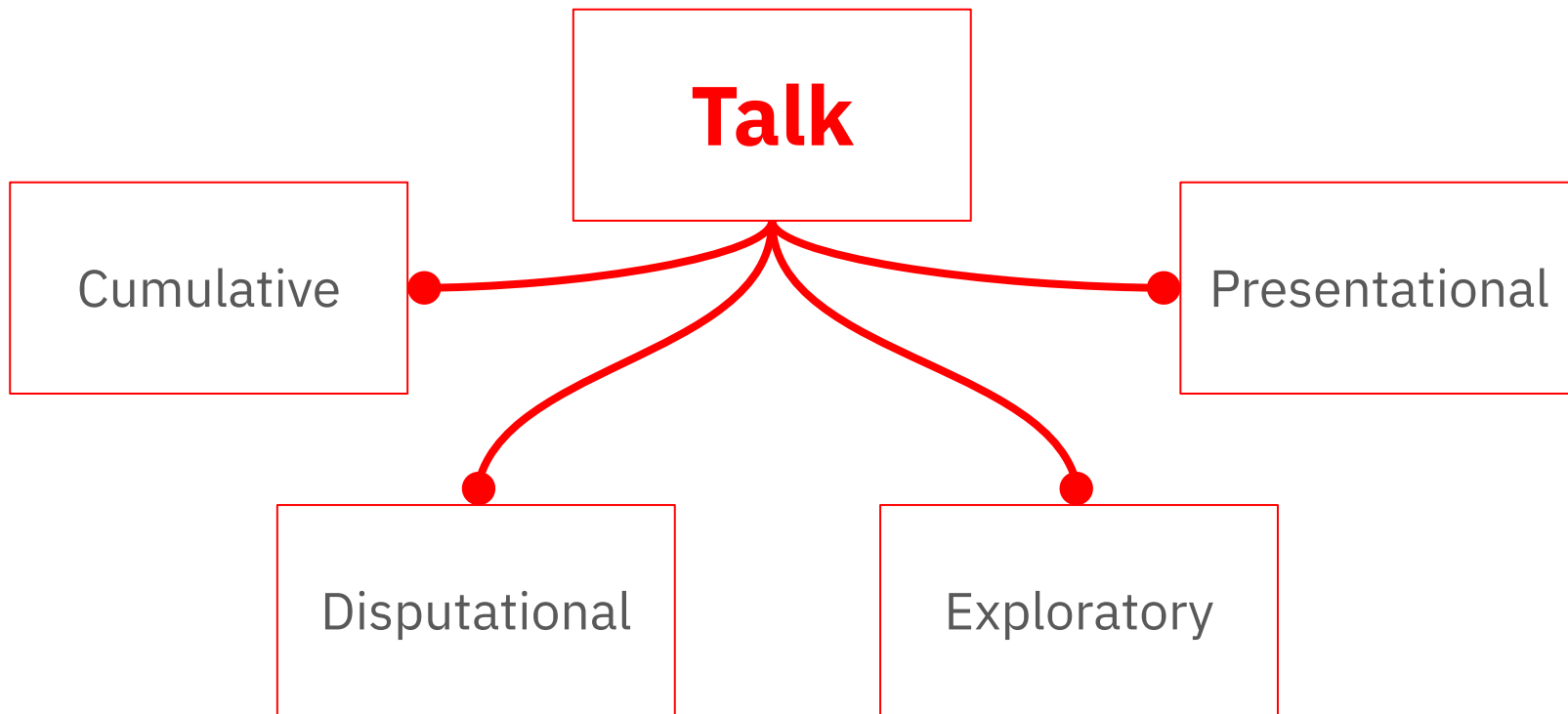


Picture created with AI

The Oracy Skills Framework and Glossary



Different Types of Classroom Talk



Exploratory talk

- students listen critically but constructively to each other's ideas
- students explore the different possible answers
- students share ideas and information in order to solve problems and reach agreement

Presentational talk

- students adjust language and content to the audience's needs
- students have refined their understanding
- presentational talk comes towards the end of a sequence of learning

Poll

1. Match the activity to the discourse

	Exploratory	Presentational
Group work	☐	☐
A presentation	☐	☐
Oral tests	☐	☐
Pair work	☐	☐
Debates	☐	☐
School events such as open days or fairs	☐	☐
Role-plays	☐	☐
When a student answers a teacher's question	☐	☐
Hot seating	☐	☐
Whole class discussion	☐	☐

Answers

1. Match the activity to the discourse (Graduatoria)

	Exploratory	Presentational
Group work	☒	☐
A presentation	☐	☒
Oral tests	☐	☒
Pair work	☒	☐
Debates	☐	☒
School events such as open days or fairs	☐	☒
Role-plays	☒	☒
When a student answers a teacher's question	☒	☒
Hot seating	☐	☒
Whole class discussion	☒	☐

Group work that works!

- Sharing relevant information
- Engaging critically but constructively with each other's ideas
- Giving reasons for ideas / support ideas with reasons
- All actively participating
- Checking understanding by asking questions
- Building on each other's responses
- Striving to reach an agreement



Picture created with AI

Basic tools for structuring talk



Discussion Guidelines

Talk Tactics



Talk tokens

Student Talk Tactics



Instigate

Present an idea or open up a new line of inquiry



- " I would like to start by saying ____
- " I think ____
- " We haven't yet talked about ____

Instigate

Probe

Dig deeper, ask for evidence or justification of ideas



- " Why do you think ____?
- " What evidence do you have to support X idea?
- " Could you provide an example?

Probe

Challenge

Disagree or present an alternative argument



- " I disagree because ____
- " To challenge you X, I think ____
- " I understand your point of view, but have you thought about ____?

Challenge

Clarify

Asking questions to make things clearer and check your understanding



- " So are you saying ____?
- " Does that mean ____?
- " Can you clarify what you mean by ____?

Clarify

Summarise

Identify and recap the main ideas



- " So far we have talked about ____
- " The main points raised today were ____
- " Our discussion focused on ____

Summarise

Build

Develop, add to or elaborate on an idea



- " Building on X's idea ____
- " I agree and would like to add ____
- " X's idea made me think ____

Build

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Groupings - Trios

I agree /
disagree
because ...



Linking to that ...



Options:

- Silent Summariser
- Questioner
- Fed in facts

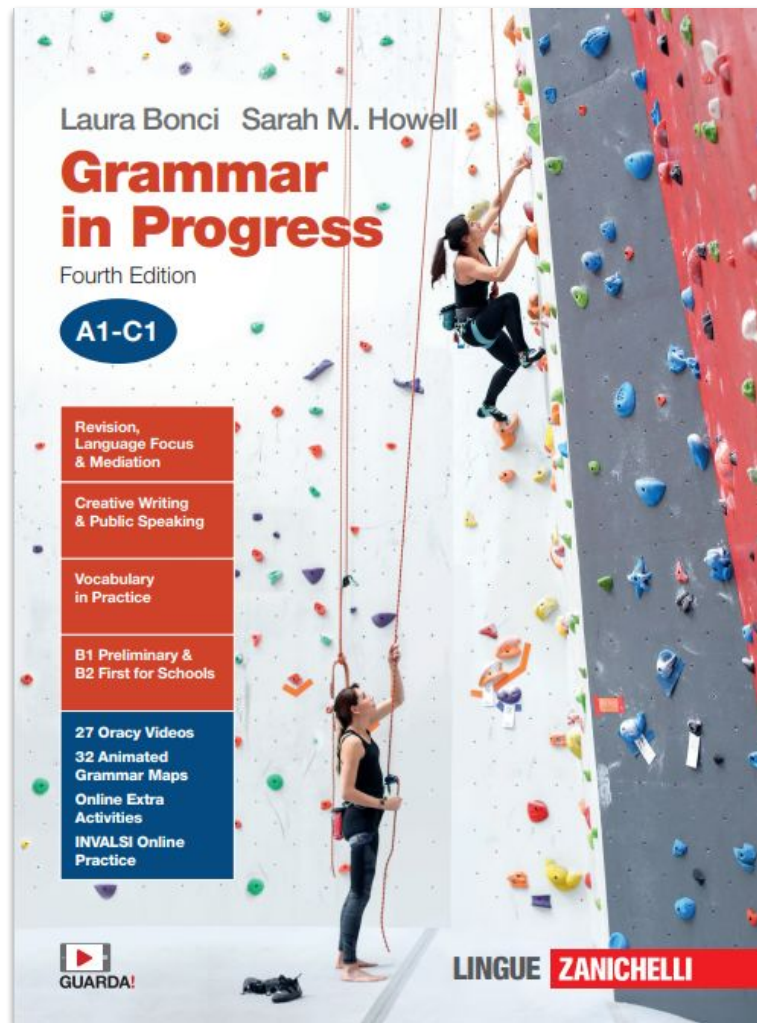


Summariser:
It sounds like you both
agree on ...

Oracy in Grammar Lessons

Exploratory Talk

Presentational Talk



Exploratory Talk: #1 Creative Thinking

22

Nel 2007 Bill Gates, il fondatore della Microsoft, pronunciò un famoso discorso all'Università di Harvard. Leggi questo passo e riscrivilo utilizzando il discorso indiretto.



I left campus knowing little about the millions of young people cheated out of educational opportunities here in this country. And I knew nothing about the millions of people living in unspeakable poverty and disease in developing countries. It took me decades to find out. You graduates came to Harvard at a different time. You know more about the world's inequities than the classes that came before. In your years here, I hope you've had a chance to think about how – in this age of accelerating technology – we can finally take on these inequities, and we can solve them.

23

MEDIATION La tua amica Marta, appassionata di informatica, non sa bene l'inglese e vorrebbe capire il passo del discorso di Bill Gates presentato nell'esercizio 22. Traducilo per lei.

24

CREATIVE THINKING Rileggi il brano dell'esercizio 22. Può la tecnologia diminuire le disuguaglianze nel mondo o invece contribuisce ad aumentarle? Scrivi un testo di circa 100 parole al riguardo.

1. **Structure** practice: individual / in pairs
2. **Mediation:** think pair share
3. **Creative Thinking:** Group discussion - share ideas, opinions and reach a consensus

4. **Tracker/s** report back
5. **Reflections**

Use: tactics, tokens or tracker

Exploratory Talk: #1 Creative Thinking

Tactics (how to talk)



Starter

I would like to start by saying ____

I think ____

Probe

Why do you think ____?

Can you give me an example?

Build

I agree and would like to add ____

X's idea made me think ____

Clarify

So are you saying ____?

Does that mean ____?

Challenging

I disagree because ____

Isn't it possible that...?

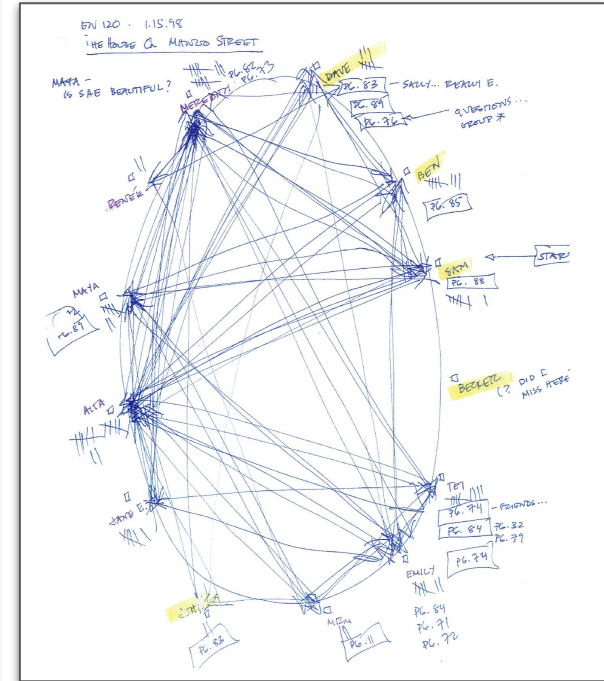
Summarise/report

One point we discussed today was ____

Our discussion focused on ____?

Our group said / thought that ____

The Table



Exploratory Talk: #2 Mediation

- 18 Completa il testo di un annuncio per prendere parte a una maratona di beneficenza individuando l'alternativa corretta.



Have you ever considered [0] running / run / that you run to support a charity association? Have you ever [1] adored / imagined / avoided taking part in the London Marathon? Well, if you [2] risk / mind / fancy running for charity, we suggest [3] visiting / to visit / visit the

Rainbow Trust Children's Charity website and joining their team in the next London Marathon! Rainbow Trust Children's Charity [4] is busy / is worth / spends supporting families who have a child aged 0-18 with a life-threatening or terminal illness, by [5] give / giving / given them practical and emotional support, whenever they need it. By running in the London Marathon, you can both raise funds and let the association be known. It [6] denies / involves / mentions training a little, but it [7] is no use / has trouble in / is worthwhile doing it and you'll hear all the crowd [8] support / supporting / to support you all the way! If you like the idea, don't [9] postpone / resist / forgive applying for the London Marathon! And remember that the time you [10] finish / miss / spend helping others is never wasted!

- 19 **MEDIATION** Il brano dell'esercizio 18 ti è piaciuto così tanto che vuoi parlarne ai tuoi amici. Rileggilo e trova gli elementi fondamentali per convincere i tuoi amici a partecipare a una maratona di beneficenza o, magari, alla prossima maratona di Londra.

Hey guys! I've read about the Rainbow Trust Children's Charity and...

ex 19 page 451, L. Bonci, S.M. Howell,
Grammar in Progress, 4th edition,
Zanichelli 2024.

1 **Form mixed groups:** Include both supporters and skeptics.

2 **Discussion:** Skeptics express their concerns.
Supporters Share own and use points from text to address skeptics' doubts.

4 **Explore Views:** Consider multiple perspectives to inform and persuade.

5 **Reflections:** Respecting views.

Use: tactics, talk tokens, tracker



Exploratory Talk: #3 Listening



48

Nancy vuole frequentare un anno di scuola in Spagna e chiede consiglio a Mrs Nicos, la sua insegnante di spagnolo. Ascolta e completa il dialogo.

NANCY

Good morning, Mrs Nicos. Can I have some information about the school projects abroad? I've read a lot about them, but, [0] ...to tell the truth..., I'm a bit confused.

MRS NICOS

[1] the international projects are concerned, our school offers a lot of options.

NANCY

Yes, and it's a problem for me.

[2], there are so many great options that I don't know what to choose!

MRS NICOS

First, you must choose the country and the period.

[3], the options are fewer if you already know where you want to go and how long you want to spend there.

NANCY

Well, I'd like to go to a Spanish speaking country, [4], I wish I could go to Spain!

MRS NICOS

[5], we've only got three options. A year in Seville, a year in Madrid and six months in Barcelona. Which one would you like the most?

NANCY

I definitely want to spend a year abroad. [6], do you think the level of my Spanish is good enough to face this experience?

MRS NICOS

Sure, your level is really good. You won't have any problems in Spain! [7] the city, I suggest Seville. It's a wonderful city! [8], it's a perfect mix of art, culture, music, and passion! And the college in Seville is one of the best in Spain!

NANCY

Great! You've convinced me! I'll go and get the application forms immediately!



1 Read for **gist**

2 In trios, **discuss content and anticipate** answers (on paper)

3 **Listen and complete** (in book)

4 In groups, **compare and discuss, adjust** answers only if necessary

5 **Reflections**

Use: tracker, talk tokens

Our Year Abroad Plan

As regards choosing a city for our year abroad, we decided on Barcelona, Spain. It appeals to us because of its culture, beautiful architecture, and wonderful student life.

Regarding our study goals, we would like to improve our Spanish language. We also want to take part in courses about to Spanish art and culture to help us with our final exam when we return to Italy.

As far as the challenges **are concerned**, to live away from home can be hard. We know we will be homesick and have difficulties with the language at first. However, we plan to speak with our families through video calls and meet new friends to practise our Spanish.

With reference to our plan, Barcelona is not just a place to study, it's an opportunity to grow personally and learn many things.

Marco B, Lorenzo, Cate, Giuli 3C

Exploratory Talk: #5 Vocabulary

VOCABULARY IN PRACTICE

In questa sezione sono stati raccolti, suddivisi per aree lessicali, molti termini di uso comune della lingua inglese che sono costantemente utilizzati sia negli esempi della teoria che negli esercizi presenti nel testo. Per consolidarne conoscenza e uso, ogni area lessicale è corredata da una serie di esercizi che consentono, progressivamente, di ampliare la conoscenza lessicale e aumentare ricchezza ed efficacia comunicativa.

THREE STEPS per tradurre in italiano i termini delle liste lessicali:

- 1** Come primo step, leggi la lista lessicale e traduci in italiano i termini che già conosci.
- 2** Svolgi poi gli esercizi e ogni volta aggiorna la lista lessicale con la traduzione italiana dei termini che sono stati utilizzati nell'esercizio in relazione all'area lessicale affrontata.
- 3** Come ultimo step, prima di svolgere l'esercizio **WORDS IN PRACTICE**, ricontrolla tutta la lista dell'area lessicale e completala con la traduzione dei termini mancanti, cercando sul vocabolario i termini che non conosci.



4

Kim e Mia confrontano la vita in città e in campagna. Completa le frasi con i seguenti termini.

fresh air ~ high cost ~ healthy ~ nightlife ~ slow pace ~ traffic congestion ~ facilities ~ skyscrapers ~ rush hour ~ dynamism ~ quiet ~ farmhouses



Kim

• “I love the city [0] nightlife. In the countryside you can’t have fun!” • “I can’t stand the [1] of life you have in the countryside. I need [2] and action!” • “There are so many shops and [3] in a city that I never get bored.” • “Some people think that in the [4] you can’t move in a big city, but the [5] isn’t that bad and public transport is efficient.”



Mia

• “I prefer the [00] quiet life in a rural area.” • “I couldn’t live among these ugly [6] ! I think small cottages or pretty [7] are nicer.” • “The [8] of living in the city is appalling.” • “You can’t have a [9] life in a city with that polluted air! It’s better to have a walk through the woods and breathe some [10] !”

5

Abbina i seguenti termini alla loro definizione.

overcrowded ~ crime rate ~ hectic life ~ grass ~ landscape ~ safe ~ field

0. the number of crimes that are committed during a period of time (crime rate); 1. an area of open land, especially one with crops (.....); 2. a daily routine with a lot of hurried activity (.....); 3. containing too many people or things (.....); 4. thin and green leaves that cover the surface of the ground (.....); 5. protected and not exposed to danger or risk (.....); 6. a section of rural / urban territory that can be seen from a viewpoint (.....).

6

WORDS IN PRACTICE You must prepare a debate about city life vs country life. You’re in the group in favour of city life. Prepare a list with 6 positive aspects of living in a city and a second list with 6 negative aspects of living in the countryside. Get ready to discuss your points.

Presentation Talk:

#1 The relationship between grammar and oracy in public speaking



The Linguistic Strand: Grammar at the Core

- Grammar and Vocabulary
- Articulation

Interconnection with Other Strands

- **Physical:** intonation, pace, and emphasis.
- **Cognitive:** organizing thoughts and structuring coherent arguments.
- **Social & Emotional:** interpersonal skills by facilitating clear and respectful communication.

Presentational talk: What's the big deal?

control
fluency
& pace

convey
meaning

manage time

appropriate
grammar &
vocabulary

project voice
&
vary tone

liveliness
& flair

display
self-assurance

gesture,
posture,
eye contact

organise
content

use rhetorical
devices

FICTION

← GLOSSOPHOBIA →

FACT

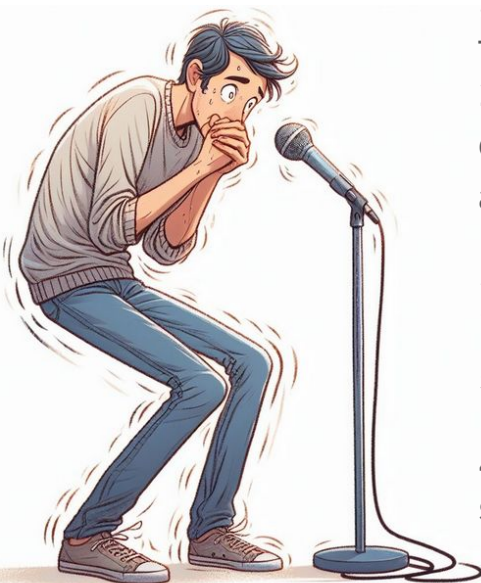
1. It affects just you because you are **inadequate & not sociable**.

2. Only affects people who **give speeches to large audiences**.

3. It is not a common problem. **Not a serious phobia** at all.

4. "Glossophobia **doesn't impact my life negatively**. I don't need to present at a conference!"

5. **Articulation and oratory are natural gifts; can't be taught or learned.**



1. No. It's one of the **most common phobias**. Many fear embarrassment, judgement etc

2. Nervousness & anxiety can occur in **oral tests, group work, presentations and even job interviews**

3. **75% of people experience anxiety in public speaking**. Only death and snakes are scarier, for some people

4. It **affects everything**: school, work, social relationships

5. Oracy can **CERTAINLY** be taught and learned by everyone at any age!

Presentation Talk:

#3 Importance of *physical strand*

Developing oracy skills

Giving a personal presentation



Who I am

42

VOCABULARY Revise the Vocabulary lists of *Hobbies and leisure* on page A49 and *Personal feelings, opinions and experiences* on page A54 and read the video glossary at the bottom of the page. *

43

VIDEO The first year students at Greenwood Secondary are presenting themselves to the rest of their year group. Watch Lily's presentation and make some notes.

44

Watch the video again and answer the questions.

1. What's her full name?
2. Where is her family from?
3. What nationality is she?
4. How many languages can she speak? What are they?
5. What are her hobbies and interests?



Presentational Talk:

#3 Importance of *physical strand*



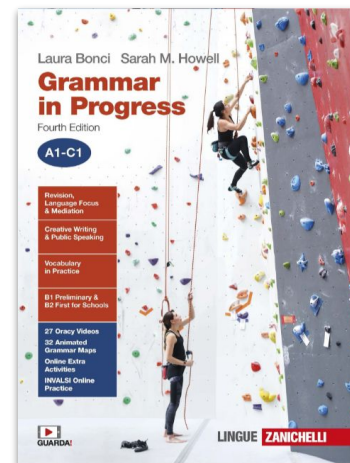
Physical

Voico

- Pace of speech
- Tonal variation
- Clarity of pronunciation
- Voice projection

Body language

- Gesture & posture
- Facial expression & eye contact



→ [Watch the video](#)

45 GROUP DISCUSSION In groups of three (a trio), talk about your hobbies and interests.
NB Two people talk in pairs, the third person takes notes and summarises.

46 GROUP PRESENTATION With your group of three, prepare your presentations. Each member of the group should present themselves using the To Do checklist and the useful expressions in the box.

TO DO

1. Research

- ☐ Discuss your personal information with your group (name, nationality, family, hobbies).
- ☐ Find the words you need in the Vocabulary lists on pages A49 and A54 and in the video glossary.
- ☐ Make notes.

2. Draft and practise

- ☐ Write the first draft of your talk.
- ☐ Share it with your group for feedback.
- ☐ Write the final draft.
- ☐ Practise giving your talk with your group.

3. Deliver

- ☐ Write your key points on a card if you find it difficult to remember.
- ☐ Give your presentation to your class.
- ☐ Thank your classmates for listening and answer any questions.

GLOSSARY

need = hai bisogno
 first draft = prima bozza
 talk = presentazione orale
 feedback = parere e suggerimenti
 deliver = presentare (il lavoro svolto)
 classmates = compagni/e

USEFUL EXPRESSIONS

- Good morning, I'm... and I'm in class...
- Today I'm going to talk about myself / introduce myself.
- I'm from... I was born in...
 My parents are from... I'm a dual national... and...
- I can speak...
- I'm interested in... My hobbies are...
- Thank you for listening to me.
- I'm happy to answer any questions.

Presentation Talk:

#3 Demonstrating the active use of grammatical structures

Good morning, everybody, my name's Lily Tang and **I'm in Class 1A.**

Today I'm going to talk about myself. I'm a little nervous.

Thank you. Well, I live in Lewes, a small town in East Sussex in the southeast of England.

I was born in London, but **my parents are from** Hong Kong. So, **I'm a dual national.** I'm Chinese and British.

I'm interested in languages. My parents speak Chinese at home, so I am bilingual English Chinese, and I am learning Italian and German. I love learning about other cultures.

My hobbies are reading books and comics and I like music, mainly pop music but I also like a bit of trap and rap music and I spend way too much time on social media.

Thank you for listening to me. I'm happy to answer any questions.

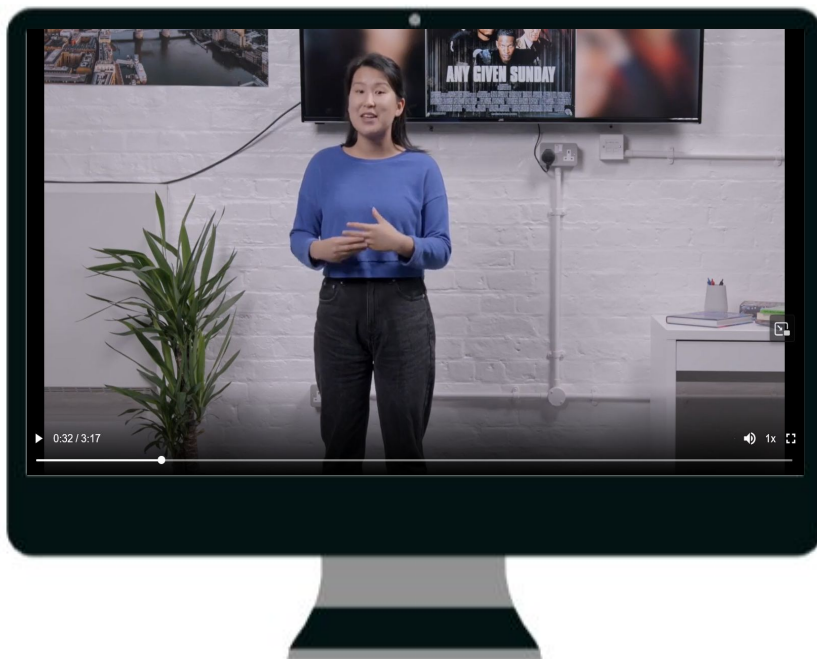
You can't talk about nothing...

L. Bonci, S.M. Howell, *Grammar in Progress*,
4th edition, Zanichelli 2024.

Personal Presentation Skills	Sharing personal stories, aspirations, or experiences e.g., Who I am, A Vision Board...
Informative Presentations	Offering factual information on various topics e.g., weather conditions, cyberbullying, the importance of rescue pets.
Persuasive Speeches	Attempting to convince the audience about certain viewpoints e.g., the significance of student representation, phone policies in schools, the consequences of teenage drinking.
Recommendations	Suggesting films, TV series, or video games based on personal or general appreciation e.g., Spider Man, The Queen's Gambit.
Storytelling	Narrating stories or biographies to convey lessons or celebrate figures e.g., Aesop's fables, The life of Alan Turing.
Educational and Inspirational Talks	Presenting on educational themes, motivational speeches, or sharing learning journeys and memorable experiences.
Specific Themes Presentations	Discussing specific themes or projects e.g., class projects, school trips, career choices, or volunteering experiences.

57

VIDEO Lily's English class have been working on writing motivational speeches. Their teacher has asked them to find a film clip with a short motivational speech and use it to motivate their classmates. Watch Lily's presentation and make some notes.



→ [Watch the video](#)

“We need to work together as a team and believe in each other, to overcome any obstacle and achieve great things. The key to success is not just about winning, but about the journey to get there.”



L. Bonci, S.M. Howell, *Grammar in Progress*,
4th edition, Zanichelli 2024.



FORMAZIONE
ZANICHELLI

Thanks
Q&A