

# HOW TO USE WARM UP ACTIVITIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' SPEAKING COMPETENCIES IN ENGLISH LESSONS

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***Abstract:** This article deals with how to use different types of warm up activities in the development of students' speaking competences in the English lessons and compared ideas.*

***Key words:** Warm-up activity, techniques, interactive games, work in groups, partnership, mystery object, captivate students*

## **Introduction**

What is warm up activity? As we know, warm up activity is the most important part of English lessons to command students' attention. To make our English lessons more interesting, and to attract the students' attention, we must try to find unusual ways to engage students' interest at the beginning of our lesson.

## **Main part**

Professor Rose Senior states that, a key captivation technique is to create a spirit of anticipation by bringing to class an unusual, unexpected or mystery object that relates in some way to the theme of the lesson and having the students identify it and guess what it might relate to. She gives several examples about how to captivate students' attention in an unusual and unexpected way. She highlighted that a further technique for captivating students at the start of lessons is that of brainstorming: having students work together in pairs or small groups to pool linguistic, cultural or general knowledge relevant to the lesson.

According to Dornyei, teachers need to try and actively generate positive students' attitudes toward learning. He also claims that the key issue in generating interest is to widen the student's appetitethat is to arouse the students' curiosity and attention and to create an attractive image for the class so that they will get more involved with it and a better learning process will take place.

Allwright considers that warm up activities are designed to attract students' attention, to help them put aside distracting thoughts, and to get them ready to focus individually and as groups on whatever activities that follow. They will cause people to stop whatever they are doing or thinking and refocus their attention. We could say a warming up activity is a motivating starting point that will lead students to become animated to work efficiently in the language class. For the purpose of our study, it was the activity used to encourage students' involvement and permeate the development of the whole lesson, so we avoided looking at them as isolated activities. These kinds of activities might also be called zealous, enthusiastic or suggestive activities. How we can include these activities in the process of a class will be the next focus in our discussion. When preparing lesson plans for our EFL classes, we must include at least the following parts so that warming up activities can play a clear and a meaningful role in our teaching.

Kay describes the stage of a lesson plan in the following way: warm up, presentation, practice and assessment. And says that, warm up: "it is an effective way to help the students begin to think in English and to review previously introduced material. Different types of warm ups help provide variety and interest in the lesson". A warm up to prepare students for a period of concentration may involve physical movement with activities that keep them active by standing up, walking, jumping, matching pictures with sentences or vocabulary, drawing or writing personal experiences or short stories, and singing or listening to familiar songs and chants. These are, among others, enjoyable and motivating warm ups.

Ross P. Purdy considers that the warm up is one of the most important elements of any English lesson. Warm-up activities relax your students, get them into "English mode", and perhaps most importantly set them up for success in your class. For this latter reason, your first activity in any ESL class should not be more challenging than the rest of the lesson.

Warm up activities are very important as we have to involve them from the start, because they are communicative, and I think I can use these ideas in my class as well and also make several activities. Warm up activities make students think and

give them personal opinions. We can discover more interesting things about their thoughts. In my opinion these kinds of activities (interactive games) can be fruitful and helpful to grasp students' attention. During the classes students will stay focused on the topic and will do the exercises with great enthusiasm. Warm up activities not only help students but also might be a good resource for EFL teachers. Teachers with this educational baggage will be able to avoid obstacles that may arise during the classes using the activities below:

1. Matching activity. Teacher gives four various passages. In each of the passage there are adjectives and verbs that are used in the exercise below of each passage. Students should match the adjectives and verbs with the given ones in the column.
2. Double letter activity. If you want to organize this activity, you will tell two letters, for example, SS. Students should find out the words which begins and ends with SS like STRESS, SUCCESS, SHOES....
3. Definition activity. The form of this activity is, the teacher writes any kind of word on the blackboard, and the students need to give the definition of the written word. For example, TWINS was written, the definition of it is "two children who were born in the same time, siblings who are two sisters or two brothers".
4. Last letter activity. This activity is interesting and we can attract our students quickly. Why? Because you will tell any word, and the participants will immediately tell a new word for the last letter of the word which you told before. Sample, BENEFICIAL – L is last, that's why participants should tell any word with it. Like LESSON, LOW, LETTER...
5. Yes and No activity. You will divide the class into two parts, A part and B part. So first A part will ask only alternative questions related to the theme, and B part should answer without saying YES or NO. This activity will help to improve their speed. For example, "Is it English lesson now? Sure, Do you like me? May be, Are you my sibling? Of course... "

6. Fish bone diagram (ISHIKAWA) activity. Cause and effect diagram that helps learners to track down the reasons for imperfections, variations, defects or failures. The teacher gives a problem and the students should find cause and effects, and they all discuss together.
7. Match the differences activity. Participants are given two pictures and they should look both of them, the teacher set the time for three or four minutes. And when the alarm rang, everyone should tell the differences of the pictures.
8. T schema activity. We can only work diagrams or the schemas in this activity. It depends on the topic of the theme, especially it helps to improve speaking skills. The form of this activity is the topic will be given by the teacher, and others should give their own opinion. Advantages and disadvantages of the topic will be discussed.
9. Jigsaw reading activity. Teacher prepares passages and cut each paragraph of the passage. Students will distribute various passages to four groups. Students should read paragraphs of each passage and put them in order. This activity might be a bit challenging for intermediate level students but it can be helpful for their critical and creative thinking skills. Besides, it enlarges their vocabulary and introduce with the sentence structure.
10. Getting to know each other. The form of this activity, teacher announces any two volunteers from the group and they come to the board, and stand back to back, and one by one they will describe their appearance without looking each other. Other rest of the group will applaud them if they are describing in a right way and using the word phrases as well.

## **Conclusion**

The abovementioned activities in the article will be helpful for EFL teachers in their classes to improve students' speaking and reading skills. They are full of various range vocabulary and phrasal verbs that can be used as an interactive tool while speaking and reading for learners of intermediate level. Students with the

help of these activities will be able to break the language barrier which might be difficult for B1 level students while transferring to another level.

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