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Facilitating oral skills development: a guide for practitioners in higher education

L Palmour and J Doubleday

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a guide for practitioners in higher education

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About the authors

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Abbreviations

EAP: English for Academic Purposes

ESP: English for Specific Purposes

EMI: English medium instruction

HE: Higher education

Use of terms

Oral skills and oracy skills

For the purposes of this guide, we use both 'oral skills' and 'oracy skills' to mean skills required in listening and speaking. Mercer et al's (2017) framework is used to represent skills involved in oral tasks (see section 3 for the framework). The use of the term 'oral skills' features more prominently in this publication because it seems, at present, to be a more accessible term for higher education (HE) practitioners.

Contents

1

Introduction

This guide focuses on oral skills development in higher education (HE) and is useful for anyone who teaches diverse student groups in tertiary education. The recommendations within this guide have resulted from the qualitative findings of a British Council ELTRA research project. The project is entitled: 'Oral skills development in pre-sessional EAP classes and student transition to academic disciplines: an investigation in Anglophone and non-Anglophone EMI settings'. In this guide, EMI describes courses in which English is used for content-learning and teaching, whether in Anglophone or non-Anglophone tertiary contexts (in line with Murata and Iino, 2018). The ELTRA research project spanned four institutions. It developed a closer understanding of oral skills development from a range of stakeholder perspectives: former EAP students enrolled on degree courses, EAP practitioners and disciplinary tutors. Information on the project and the findings are available in the project report. In addition to the research project, a workshop dedicated to oral skills development was organised. The workshop sparked fruitful discussion and collaboration between a range of HE practitioners, which has resulted in many of the ideas and resources presented in this guide.

This opening section has provided information on how the content has been generated in this guide. The second section clarifies who this guide is for. The importance of devoting attention to oral skills in HE is also highlighted in section 2. An Oracy Skills Framework and examples of how this framework has been implemented in HE are shared in section 3. Then, in section 4, further practical ways to encourage oral participation and facilitate oral skills development are discussed. In section 4, first a number of barriers to oral participation and skills development are introduced. Then, tips which seek to address these barriers are provided along with linked resources and examples of practice (sections 4.1–4.4). Each section also contains a 'Reflection point' to encourage you to reflect on your own experience. A number of examples of practice involve the use of software such as Padlet and Vevox. We close the guide by highlighting areas which require further consideration, including possible constraints on practice (section 5). There is also a list of selected further reading and resources, followed by appendices relating to the examples introduced in 4.1–4.4.

2

Why focus on oral skills in higher education?

A move towards active learning approaches in HE means students and staff encounter tasks which require complex oral skills. In HE, students often complete assessments which involve an oral component in the course of their disciplinary studies (Joughin, 2007; Doherty et al, 2011; Doubleday, 2018). It is vital that the oral skill demands placed on students and staff be acknowledged, made explicit and developed to ensure equitable and inclusive practice. Oracy (listening and speaking skills) has been marginalised in research, especially when compared to the work conducted on literacy (reading and writing skills) in HE.

Who is this guide for?

The aim of this guide is to provide suggestions, examples of practice and associated resources for HE practitioners to consider incorporating into their practice. Both the project and the workshop highlighted the wide range of HE practitioners who design and deliver activities for students which involve oral skills. This guide is therefore for anyone who teaches students in HE institutions. This may include disciplinary tutors (e.g. lecturers, teaching fellows), EAP practitioners, educational developers, postgraduate demonstrators, and library staff among others.

3

The Oracy Skills Framework

In this guide, Mercer et al.'s (2017) Oracy Skills Framework is used to represent the diverse range of skills (linguistic and non-linguistic) which may be involved in oral tasks in academic settings. The framework reflects oral skills required in a range of different contexts. It includes four skills domains with a series of sub-categories:

Figure 1: Oracy Skills Framework (Mercer et al, 2017)

Physical	
1. Voice	1. a) fluency and pace of speech; b) tonal variation; c) clarity of pronunciation; d) voice projection
2. Body language	2. a) gesture and posture; b) facial expression and eye contact

Linguistic	
3. Vocabulary	3. appropriate vocabulary choice
4. Language variety	4. a) register; b) grammar
5. Structure	5. structure and organisation of talk
6. Rhetorical techniques	6. rhetorical techniques, such as metaphor, humour, irony and mimicry

Cognitive	
7. Content	7. a) choice of content to convey meaning and intention; b) building on the views of others
8. Clarifying and summarising	8. a) seeking information and clarification through questions; b) summarising
9. Self-regulation	9. a) maintaining focus on task; b) time management
10. Reasoning	10. a) giving reasons to support views; b) critially examining ideas/views expressed
11. Audience awareness	11. taking account of level of understanding of the audience

Social and emotional	
12. Working with others	12. a) guiding or managing the interactions; b) turn-taking
13. Listening and responding	13. listening actively and responding appropriately
14. Confidence in speaking	14. a) self-assurance; b) liveliness and flair

Examples of practice

Implementation of the oracy framework in HE

These examples have been provided by Dr Marion Heron and Dr Doris Dippold (University of Surrey). In the following sections Marion and Doris describe how they have implemented the dimensions of the oracy framework (Mercer et al, 2017) in the curriculum and other aspects of curricular support.

1. Inclusion of oracy skills in grade descriptors and criteria

At the beginning of the 2019–20 academic year, the university introduced new grade descriptors for both undergraduate and post-graduate level. We noticed that these descriptors did not include any reference to oral skills, even though they are a crucial part of many assessed tasks. Therefore, we presented the case for including oracy skills in grade descriptors and criteria to senior management at our institution. Whilst revised grade descriptors, with references to oral skills, may be validated in the future we have, in the meantime, developed a set of oral skills criteria which teachers can use as an extension to the 'transferable skills' university grade descriptor (see appendix 2). This addition provides specific language to talk about oral skills, which is crucial for students and staff to communicate effectively about oral skills expectations. We are delighted that a colleague in the Business School has already used the criteria to develop her own group work oral assessment rubric for a module this year with positive feedback from students. Colleagues in other departments are also planning to make oracy demands visible through changes to grade descriptors and criteria.

2. Workshops for students

We delivered a workshop to the Learning Development Coordinators in the Library on how we can support students' development of oracy skills. As a result of this, we were asked to give a one-hour practical workshop to students on presentation skills. This particular group of students had requested further help on public speaking. We used the Oracy Skills Framework as the basis for introducing the dimensions of oracy skills and as a self/peer evaluation instrument. Feedback from the students was very positive. In response to the question 'What have you learned?' they commented:

- Becoming more self-aware
- How to structure what I am saying and be more confident in delivering it
- Sharing ideas as a group
- Importance of signposting
- Understanding the different elements – allows me to identify my strengths and weaknesses so I know what to focus on
- Reflecting on others' presenting styles

For more information about Marion and Doris' work, which raises the profile of oracy in HE, please refer to their blog in Oracy in Cambridge.

4

How to encourage oral participation and skills development

During the research project, HE practitioners spoke about instances when students may not participate orally inside and outside class. While there are multiple pathways to success in academia and some students participate in less visible ways, talk can be a powerful means by which to develop ideas and understanding. How can we make our practices increasingly inclusive in ways which promote oral participation and oral skills development? Raising awareness of the potential challenges and diversifying participation opportunities is crucial. A number of barriers to participation (see Figure 2) were discussed at a workshop with HE practitioners. These challenges relate to both staff and students. The seven barriers listed are linked to the following sections (4.1–4.4), which provide practical suggestions on possible ways to approach these challenges in oral tasks. The sections are grouped into four areas for ease of presentation; there is overlap between the themed sections.

Figure 2: Barriers to participation in task with oral dimension

1. Unclear communication (see 4.1)
2. Face-threatening nature of oral participation (see 4.1)
3. Unacknowledged oral skills in tasks (see 4.2)
4. Unclear expectations in oral communication (see 4.3)
5. Lack of awareness of support on offer to develop oral skills (see 4.4)
6. Limited sharing of expertise among staff (see 4.4)

Reflection point:
Which of these barriers have you faced in your practice? Are there others you would add to this list? How do you tackle such challenges?

4.1 Communicate with clarity and compassion

It is important for staff and students to develop inclusive, compassionate communication skills in order to minimise the potential for misunderstanding.

- Be aware that some students may need extra time to process information and/or formulate responses. Incorporate pauses to allow for this.

- Provide lecture slides in advance to allow students to prepare for listening.

- Make recordings of lectures available.

- Rephrase colloquial or idiomatic expressions, e.g. 'We've got bigger fish to fry, we have more important problems.'

- Reflect on the accessibility of culturally specific examples in your content. Don't assume that everyone is familiar with, for example, TED talks.

- Lead by example. By modelling accessible ways of communicating, you're showing students how to do it.

- Offer students guidance on how to communicate 1:1 with tutors, such as which forms of address to use.

- Be understanding if students are unfamiliar with conventions, such as being polite and showing respect.

- The website Compassion in HE has useful guidance and resources for facilitating student-student communication. See the Resources and Bibliography section for further information.

Reflection point:
Which of the above points do you already incorporate in your practice? Is there anything else you could do to further promote clear and compassionate communication in your context?

Featured resource:
Promoting communication skills

Appendix 1 outlines how you can help students to develop confidence in using functional language to enhance communication.

4.2 Make oral skills explicit

It is essential to reflect on the oracy demands of your activities and assessment, so that you can then make these clear to students.

- Reflect on the interaction types you use in your teaching, such as pair or group discussions.

- Explain your expectations through an activity (e.g. Prepare for Success includes activities to make clear what is expected in a seminar). See the Resources and Bibliography section for further information.

- Engage students by outlining the benefits of participating orally.

- Critically examine your assessment for any hidden oral demands, e.g. group discussions leading to a written group assignment.

- Make sure that students understand when oral skills are assessed, such as during a presentation.

- Make oral assessment criteria transparent, e.g. In an oral presentation, is grammatical accuracy assessed? The Oracy Skills Framework can be used as a reference point (see section 3 for the framework).

Reflection point:
Do you use oral assessment tasks? How do/could you support students with the skills required to deliver these tasks?

Featured resource:
Oral skills assessment descriptors

Appendix 2 links to the Implementation of the oracy framework on page 12. It shows oral skills criteria being used as an extension to university grade descriptors which currently make no reference to oral skills. The oral skills criteria were developed using the Oracy Skills Framework.

4.3 Scaffold oral tasks

Scaffolding tasks means that you provide support initially, withdrawing this as students develop confidence and independence.

- Provide models or exemplars for tasks or activities, e.g. watch a presentation given by a former student.

- Facilitate understanding of criteria by having students evaluate an exemplar.

- In assessed oral tasks, incorporate formative practice tasks, giving feedback using the criteria.

- For group projects, provide guidance on how to manage group work. The Advance HE *Group Work* guide is useful here. See Resources and Bibliography for further information.

- Allow students time to think before responding to questions.

- Afford students a degree of ownership over content and delivery. See Featured Resource 'Talking about writing' below.

- Provide opportunities to prepare ahead of an oral activity, for example by using an online platform such as Padlet which allows students to share ideas before an activity. See Featured Resource 'Using Padlet as preparation for speaking' below for an example.

Reflection point:
Which of these ideas seem most useful in your context?

**Featured resource:
Talking about writing (writing circles)**

Appendix 3a provides guidance and worksheets for this activity, the aim of which is for students to give oral peer-feedback on writing.

Featured resource: Using Padlet as preparation for speaking

Appendix 3b provides an example of how Padlet has been used as a way of enabling students to share ideas and images before they discuss them.

4.4 Share expertise

Aim for communication and collaboration between teaching staff with different roles (e.g. EAP tutors, disciplinary tutors, library staff and educational developers) and between staff in different institutions. This can also improve student engagement with support on offer.

- Use workshops to share examples of best practice among staff.

- Sit in on colleagues' classes to gain understanding of activities.

- EAP departments can run showcase events to raise awareness among disciplinary colleagues of their work.

- Arrange team-taught sessions with both an EAP and a disciplinary tutor contributing.

- Encourage students to take advantage of support available, such as workshops, classes and online resources.

- Explore collaboration opportunities with students. See Featured Resource 'Student collaboration example' below.

Reflection point:
What collaboration opportunities could you take advantage of in your context related to oral skills development?

**Featured resource:
Student collaboration example**

Appendix 4a outlines how undergraduate students at Southampton collaborated with their tutor to develop an activity for enhancing group work communication. Appendix 4b shows the student-response online activity using Vevox that was developed from this collaboration.

5

Areas for further consideration

This project has demonstrated that HE practitioners require and are using diverse knowledge bases, strategies and resources to facilitate oral participation and oracy skills development. The critical appraisal of practices at classroom and institutional level has been shown to be crucial to creating and seizing opportunities to foster good practice in regards to the oral dimension of teaching and learning in tertiary contexts. It is important, however, to recognise the constraints facing practitioners. Some of the interviewees in the research project discussed views on commodification and marketisation of HE, particularly in the UK with regard to international student recruitment. This led, some felt, to an unhelpful view of language being an issue only for non-native English speakers, and something to be dealt with in isolation on a pre-sessional EAP course. Oracy skill development is relevant to all students, and there was a consensus at the workshop that separating students into 'home' and 'international' groupings may not be helpful. It was felt that a more appropriate way to view students is as belonging to particular disciplines.

While oracy in HE has received renewed attention in recent years, there is a need for more research into the oral demands placed on staff and students and how these are navigated in universities. Sharing good practice across the disciplines is crucial to ensure all students are supported in the development of their oracy skills.

Resources and bibliography

Resources

- **Compassion in Education.** Available at: https://compassioninhe.wordpress.com/ *This website offers 'evidence-based, practical support to any teaching practitioner – with bite-sized films and other resources – on how to embed the micro skills of compassion into university group work up to and including assessing it, that is, making compassion credit-bearing, on the modern degree programme'.*

- **Higher Education Academy (2014)** *Group Work.* Available at: https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/group-work *A short, accessible guide aimed at tutors which outlines some of the challenges to groupwork, and suggests solutions.*

- **LearnHigher.** *Making Groupwork Work.* Available at: http://www.learnhigher.ac.uk/working-with-others/group-work-working-with-others/ *A guide written for students that provides activities to enable them to get the most out of groupwork.*

- **Oracy Skills Framework.** (University of Cambridge) Available at: https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/oracytoolkit/oracyskillsframework/ *A website that outlines the development of the framework and provides a toolkit for its use.*

- **Prepare for Success.** Available at: https://www.prepareforsuccess.org.uk/ *An interactive site full of learning activities designed to familiarise students with UK higher education.*

- **Scudamore, R. (2013) Engaging Home & International Students: A guide for new lecturers.** Available at: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/RachelScu damoreFeb2013 *A short and accessible guide that provides a theoretical and empirical background to the topic, followed by useful guidance and practical tips.*

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Appendix 1: Promoting communication skills

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Functional language development

Effective communication requires skills such as checking understanding, asking for clarification, and rephrasing.

Some students have limited ability to use such functional language, meaning communication breakdowns may result in silence. You can help students by:

- discouraging use of phone dictionaries
- explicitly introducing useful phrases and strategies (see below)
- reinforcing the use of such language by using it yourself and eliciting it from students.

I present the following example phrases in two stages, on a PowerPoint slide:

When you don't understand someone	When someone doesn't understand you
I'm not quite with you	Change the word stress
Can you put it another way?	Rephrase using a synonym, antonym or explanation:
I don't know what you mean by (e.g. 'draft')	It's the same as a work in progress
We need to do a what?	It's an essay that isn't finished
What's the difference between …. and ….?	Give more detail:
Do you mean?	It's a kind of …
	You use it for/in ….
	It's when you ….

After going through the previous slide, follow up with an activity based on vocabulary students need to know. I use one that involves matching referencing/citation terms to their definitions (taken from Cite Them Right).

By ensuring that students speak and listen to each other to carry out the activity, the need to repeat/rephrase/define is likely to arise naturally, giving students the opportunity to practice repairing or pre-empting communication breakdowns.

Appendix 2: Oral skills assessment descriptors

Dr Marion Heron and Dr Doris Dippold have developed a set of oral skills criteria which teachers can use as an extension to the 'transferable skills' university grade descriptor at their institution. This is the summary they have shared with colleagues.

Assessing speaking skills (oracy)

Effective speaking skills underpin many assessed pieces of work at university, either explicitly (e.g. in assessed presentations, poster presentations, discussions) or implicitly, such as a group project in which the final product is assessed, but the group work itself is not.

The university grade descriptors, as they stand, do not currently include a rubric for speaking skills.

However, speaking skills can be assessed as part of the category of 'transferable skills'. In this case, it is important to spell out to students what good speaking skills mean in the context of the assessed piece of work, e.g. a presentation, etc.

We base the following dimensions of speaking skills on Mercer et al's (2017) Oracy Skills Framework which describes different skills required for effective spoken communication in a range of communicative events. The full framework is available here.

The table below includes a breakdown of the four dimensions of speaking skills which can be made available to students. You may want to adapt this list depending on the specific properties of the assessed piece of work.

Delivery	• voice projection • appropriateness of pace • clarity of pronunciation (not accuracy in terms of BE norms) • body language (confident stance, eye contact, etc.) • fluency
Language	• choice of register (formal / informal) • use of vocabulary appropriate to the audience (disciplinary vocabulary, vocabulary understandable to a general audience) • organisation of ideas • focus and line of argumentation • use of strategies to ensure and improve comprehensibility (e.g. rephrasing, clarification, simplification)
Content	• relevance of content • skills of summarising, justification and questioning (where appropriate) • awareness of audience (prior knowledge, understanding of technical terms etc.) • adherence to time limit • use and effectiveness of visual aids
Audience engagement	• confidence (as portrayed through body language, voice, etc.) • authoritative communication of complex ideas • engagement with the audience (e.g. asking effective questions for discussion or through comprehensive and relevant responses to questions) • listening skills (e.g. appropriate backchanneling, take up of requests for clarification)

Material created by Marion Heron and Doris Dippold, 19 September 2019

Appendix 3a: Talking about writing (writing circles)

The following materials in Appendix 3a have been developed by Cathy Malone, Jo Webster, Dr Charlotte Coleman, Dr Elizabeth Freeman and Dr Sue Jamison-Powell from Sheffield Hallam University, and David Busby from Bath University.

Talking about writing: procedure information

Aim: This group activity aims to collaboratively develop editing skills through reading and providing oral feedback on drafts.

Rationale: Writing circles are an effective way to engage students and develop academic literacy and oracy skills. As an activity, we have delivered it in taught sessions and outside the curriculum in adjunct classes. It is adaptable to a range of classes and disciplines as the students establish the level. The goal of the activity is to provide feedback that will improve a piece of writing which results in students discussing in detail the micro and macro features of text, with a tendency to focus on structure and argument development as well as discussions around managing the writing process. It is also open-ended in that students can master the process and lead and facilitate their own sessions (with training and support). Students spend half the session talking about texts and all participants are required to contribute. Their contributions are carefully scaffolded: roles are clearly defined, students have time to prepare their contribution and turn taking is clearly managed.

Requirements: Students need to provide 4 copies of draft text or assignment (up to 2 sides of A4) that is still in a formative stage and there is time to develop and improve it before submission. This activity with students is disciplinary focused and includes EAP students (i.e. ESP students). Groups of students are separated into multiples of 4.

Level: Undergraduate and Postgraduate home/native speaker students. TESOL student level B2+/ IELTS 6+.

Resources: See pages 21 and 22.

The session focuses on the features of writing valued by their discipline and requires students to pay close attention to these features and express them in their own words.

This activity benefits from a facilitator to introduce a way to talk about text (very often we talk about what the text is doing, namely simple functional analysis) and model productive feedback. The structure and format of the activity itself is simple, it's also generative and scalable.

If you have any questions on the activity or use this activity and could take the time to give feedback on how it was used, please email Jo Webster at j.webster@shu.ac.uk.
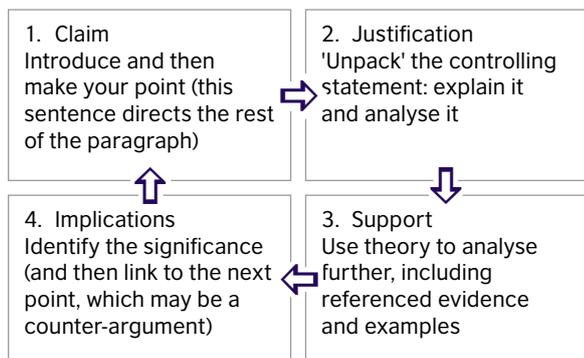
Talking about writing: worksheet

Respond as a reader... Say
- what you understood
- what you didn't
- what you enjoyed
- what you found difficult to follow.

Questions to consider on an early draft

What is the problem that the paper will tackle?
Is it a problem, a question, a claim or a hypothesis?
Are you going to take a position or try to fill a gap in the field of knowledge?
Is the problem too big or too small for the size of the paper and the time given?
How can you define the problem/ issue to address in this paper?
Who writes about this topic?
How did they try to defend this claim/answer this question/solve this problem/test this hypothesis?
What did they find? Is there a consensus?

Using theory and structuring paragraphs

1. Claim Introduce and then make your point (this sentence directs the rest of the paragraph)	2. Justification 'Unpack' the controlling statement: explain it and analyse it
4. Implications Identify the significance (and then link to the next point, which may be a counter-argument)	3. Support Use theory to analyse further, including referenced evidence and examples

Developing drafts (adapted from Mitchell & Riddle, 2000)*

Evidence based writing begins with 2 +3
What's the point of this evidence?
What does it mean? Why is it important?
Can you explain it to me now?
What are the practical/ theoretical implications of these findings?

How does it connect to the larger thesis/ argument?
Theory & ideas driven writing begins from 1 +4
Do you have evidence to support your point?
How has research in this field developed?
Is there a consensus in research in this field?
Why/ why not?
What changes would you recommend before the author submits?

Questions to consider on a later draft
Progression of argument: overall text

What is the problem/issue the paper tackles?
How is it structured? [*How is the problem treated— defend the claim, answer the question, offer a solution or solutions for the problem?*]
Is the argument balanced? Does the paper stick to the topic?
Can you follow the thread of the argument through the paper? Does it return to the topic at the end? Is the arrangement logical?
Is it a compelling argument for you? Are you convinced?
If no, where do you see weakness in the argument?
How credible is the evidence used?
What changes would you recommend before submission?

Questions to consider on a later draft
Progression of argument: paragraph level

Is it **clear what each paragraph is about?**
Can any paragraphs be split into two or more paragraphs? **Is it clear how each paragraph contributes to the overall argument?**
Are the sentences grammatical?
Could some of the sentences be more concise?
Are there any confusing paragraphs or ambiguous sentences?
What changes would you recommend before the author submits?

*Mitchell, S & Riddle, M (2000) *Improving the quality of argument in higher education.* Middlesex: University of Middlesex.
Questions developed with support from Lawrence Cleary, University of Limerick www.ul.ie/rwc

Materials created by Cathy Malone, Jo Webster, Dr Charlotte Coleman, Dr Elizabeth Freeman and Dr Sue Jamison-Powell from Sheffield Hallam University, and David Busby from Bath University.

Talking about writing task: protocol

These notes are intended to provide guidance to colleagues who wish to set up and run their own writing circles with students.

Writing circles: rules

- *What is shared in the writing circle stays in the writing circle.*

- *Participation is always civil.*
  In successful writing circles everyone contributes and no one dominates.

- *Critical comments need to be both positive and helpful.*
  Frame feedback positively. The aim is for everyone to act as a critical friend.

- *The cues for change need to be limited.*
  Too many critical comments can be demotivating. Focusing on one key area is more helpful than trying to tackle everything. Match these to the stage of the writing (writer focused and still developing ideas, or reader focused and need for polish and accuracy).

- *The writer is in charge.*
  While a writer needs to listen to the comments made about his or her writing, afterwards they decide whether to make the changes suggested, or make some and not others, or none at all.

Writing circles: format

Discussion Objective setting	**5 minutes**
Everyone arrives with 2 pages of text they are ready to share and would like feedback on. Share work	**5 minutes**
Read – Mark work 2 ★s & a wish	**20 minutes**
In turn address one person's work at a time The writer remains quiet at this time! Return hard copy of drafts at the end.	**20 minutes**
Recap – what are you going to work on next? Arrange time of next meeting	**10 minutes**

For the facilitator

- Separate writing from writer.
- State facts about the work itself.
- Discuss technical details of writing.
- Avoid 'you' statements.
- Use concrete writing strategies (e.g. theme and rheme).
- Maintain positive focus – two stars and a wish.

Pasternak et al (2009) Pasternak, D.L., Longwell-Grice, H., Shea,K.A., Hanson L., (2009) *Alien Environments or Supportive Writing Communities?: Pursuing writing groups in academe* https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022209339958

Appendix 3b: Using Padlet as preparation for speaking

Dr Doris Dippold shares how Padlet tasks prepare students for discussions in her module on Globalisation.

Description:

At the University of Surrey, the module leader in a module on Globalisation uses Padlet to encourage engagement with class materials and peer interaction / feedback. The majority of the students on this course are international students, representing a variety of international perspectives on the subject. The module topics focus on different aspects of globalisation, e.g. economic globalisation, globalisation and language, globalisation and education, political globalisation. For each thematic block, students are asked to post a link, before their seminar, which illustrates 'globalisation'. The students are encouraged to provide examples from their home countries or other environments they are familiar with. Students then talk about their example in class, using scaffolded questions such as:

- What is the source of this text / image?
- What does it show / represent / talk about?
- In what way does the text / image represent globalisation?
- In what way does the text / image illustrate concepts previously discussed in class?

Using Padlet in this way links to most dimensions of the oracy framework: linguistic (vocabulary choice, structure and organisation of talk), cognitive (choice of content, reasoning, audience awareness), social and emotional (working with others, listening and responding). In addition, it fosters a widening of perspective on the subject and internationalises curriculum content.

A screenshot of one group's posts is below:
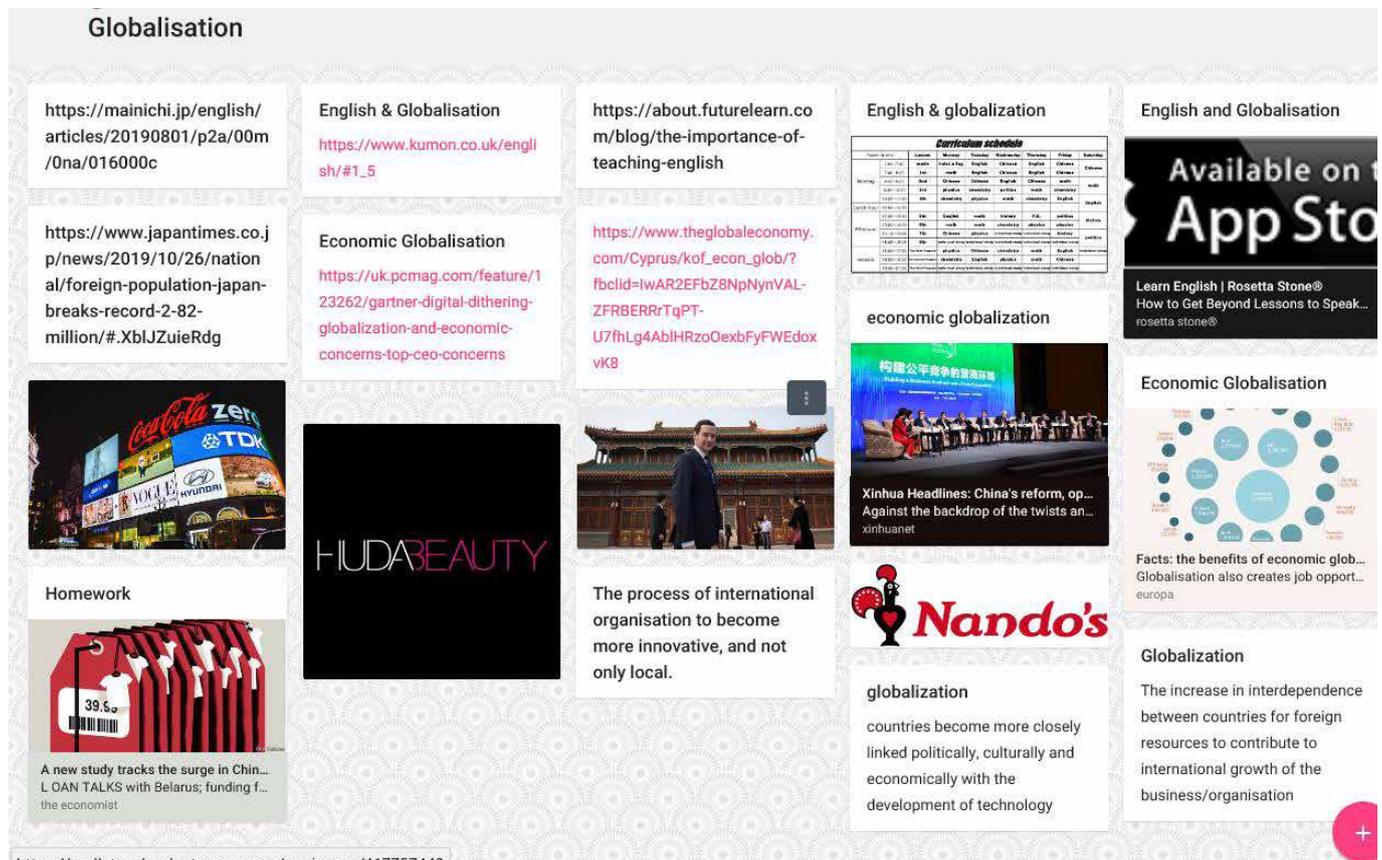
Appendix 4a: Student collaboration example

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On the undergraduate module *Intercultural Communication in a Global World*, one of the seminars focuses on intercultural group work. In 2019, we used the seminars to collaborate with students on a tool for tutors to use with their own students. The seminars were set up with the following information for students.

UOSM2017/2039 Seminar Preparation: Week 8 Intercultural Group work

Our focus is on how to improve intercultural group work, particularly for study. We'd like you to read through the list of 'people problems' below and do the following:

- Reflect on these and apply them to your own experience.

- Think about how other people might react, and why they might be different to your own reactions.

People Problems (from Learn Higher's *Making Groupwork Work*)

1. There is no attempt to get to know each other as people.

2. One or two people try to dominate the others.

3. Some group members try to monopolise the discussion.

4. Some group members do not speak at all – they just sit in silence.

5. Most of the group wants to talk – and not listen.

6. Individual members' ideas are dismissed by other group members.

7. Group members are reluctant to start a discussion.

8. Some group members make racist or sexist remarks that are not challenged.

9. Group members are unpunctual or miss meetings.

10. Two or three group members argue and create a bad atmosphere.

In your seminar, the task will be as follows:

- In groups, choose one problem to focus on.

- Consider how linguistic or cultural factors might be connected to the problem.

- Agree on a practical intervention to prevent such a problem in the future.

- Say who (e.g. tutors/lecturers, students, etc) will intervene, and how (i.e. what they will do).

Keep in mind the following guidance:

- Don't assume others know your context.

- Be open minded to different views.

- Make sure everyone has a chance to speak.

- Take the time to understand everyone's point of view, explore the aspect and discuss thoroughly, considering the practicality of your proposed action.

We suggest that, when you read through the list, you choose two or three problems that you are interested in, and that you can think of possible solutions for. This should speed things up in the seminar, so that you can get started on the task right away.

Ideas that were generated by students in seminars were incorporated into an awareness-raising activity. This has been designed as a student-response online activity using Vevox (see Appendix 4b).

# Appendix 4b: Student-response online activity using Vevox

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This appendix outlines the student-response online polling activity that was developed following the collaboration described in Appendix 4a. The aim of the activity is to promote intercultural communication in group work.

Background: There are varied reasons why students may not talk to each other to carry out group work tasks. My research highlighted issues relating to confidence and attitudes towards others' English as well as ability. I'm working on a three As model of intercultural communication, as shown here:

Managing challenges

Help all students to develop intercultural communication skills:
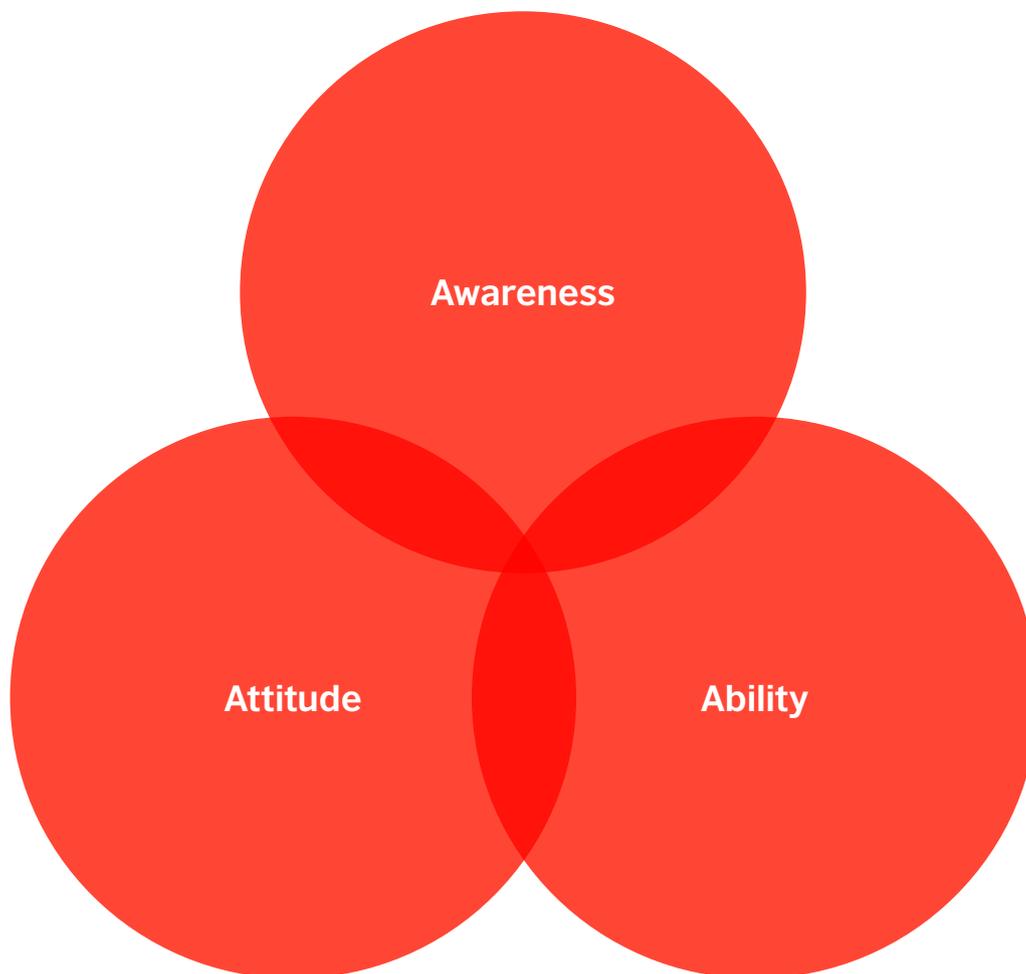
The three As model above reflects the skills needed:

Awareness of how language and culture can affect communication and different approaches, experiences and expectations

Attitude of value and respect for diversity; and to empathise with others

Ability to adjust language to improve communication

The following information shows how the activity was presented
to teaching staff at a professional development workshop:

Student activity: working in groups

- To raise awareness of different approaches & begin to change attitudes.
- Currently 10 questions – but can be adapted to suit your students and context.
- Vevox polling = whole class can see the range of responses, but individuals' responses are not revealed.
- Could be followed by lecturer-led review of the responses, reinforcing the idea of awareness raising (self and others) of difference and encouraging respect for difference. There are no 'right' answers!

Instructions for students

- These questions are about group work (carrying out tasks in small groups of up to 6 or 7 people).
- If you haven't done any group work at university, think about school, a job or a sports team.
- For each question, please choose your typical answer, or what you think you would do (hypothetically), if you have no experience to think about.
- Responses are anonymous.
- Go to next slide for joining instructions.

Here are some example questions:

If you have to work in a group with people you don't know, do you prefer to:

a. spend 5–10 minutes getting to know each other before starting on the task

b. find out people's names, then start work

c. just start work?

In a small group, do you usually:

a. ask the other people what they think

b. keep talking until someone interrupts

c. listen, but don't talk much?

If you don't understand what someone else is trying to say, do you usually:

a. ask them to explain

b. stay quiet, pretending you understand

c. ignore them and say what you want to say?

If someone says they don't understand you, what do you do?

a. Explain what you said, using different words.

b. Repeat what you said, using the same words.

c. Write down the main points.