

Teaching **English** training videos



Techniques

Group work, warmers and controlled practice

1 Before you watch

Think about a successful speaking activity – one where your students spoke a lot of English and enjoyed the activity. Why did it work well?

Make some notes under the headings. Work in pairs if you can.

What the teacher did

How did you set up the activity?

Did you give them any useful language before the task?

When did you stop the activity?

Why was it useful for your students?

What would you do differently next time?

What the students did

What did they talk about?

How did they know what to do?

Why did they enjoy it?

Did they work in pairs/groups/whole class?

How did they know when they had finished the activity?

Work in pairs if you can.

In general, in your experience, which of these would you choose to help a speaking activity be successful:

Making groups

Would you choose . . . Pairs/small groups **OR** Whole class/big groups

Giving instructions

Would you choose . . . Instructions in English **OR** Instructions in your language

Demonstration

Would you choose . . . Demonstrate the activity **OR** not

Useful language

Would you choose . . . Give useful or target language before the activity **OR** Focusing on useful or target language after the activity

If your answer is 'it depends on the activity', make notes or explain what activities you would choose one or another option for.

2 Watch

Watch Programme 5. Match the teachers to what they say about speaking.



Pathumporn



Montakarn



Supote



Sumalee

- A** *'I always give instructions in English because the language that I use is language that you can hear in real life.'*
- B** *'When I give instructions, I give them in English first and then in Thai because when I use English, maybe they don't understand.'*
- C** *'In giving instructions in a large class, I would say it and then I would ask students to repeat what I said.'*

Which comments do you agree with?

When is it better to give instructions in your own language?

3 Watch again

Watch again; make notes on the ideas and suggestions in the programme under the headings.

Groupings

Instructions

Target language

Useful language

Work with a partner if you can and compare your notes. Look at the transcript on pages 98–100 and check your ideas.

4 Analysis and reflection

John Kay says that a warmer can be a good way to make different groups. Here is the warmer for forming groups you saw in the DVD.

Hand out a picture card to each student in the class. Ask all the 'lions' to make a group, and all the 'elephants' to make another group, the 'giraffes' to make another, etc. They can't show their picture. They can make groups by walking round the class saying 'Which animal have you got? I've got a horse. No, you're not in my group.'

John Kay talks about different reasons for using warmers. Here are some of the reasons. Which of these aims will this warmer be good for? Which isn't it good for?

- A** Making new groups
- B** Relaxing the students
- C** Creating a good atmosphere
- D** Reviewing recent language
- E** Allowing latecomers to arrive
- F** To get everyone focusing on English

Now look at John's suggestions for giving instructions.

'Say and repeat instructions.'

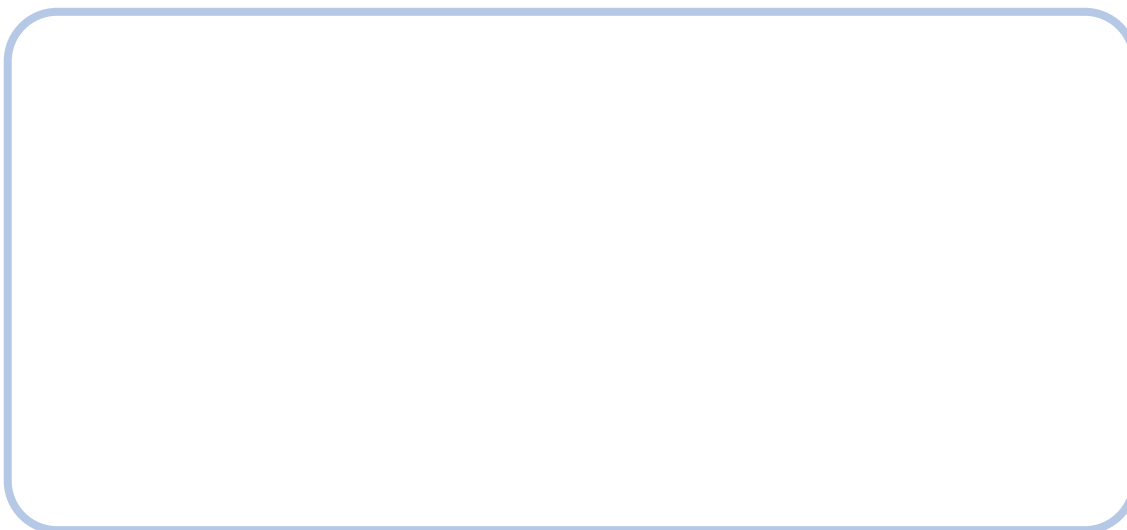
'Watch the students' response to see if they understand, tell them in English first, then in Thai.'

'Use simple language.'

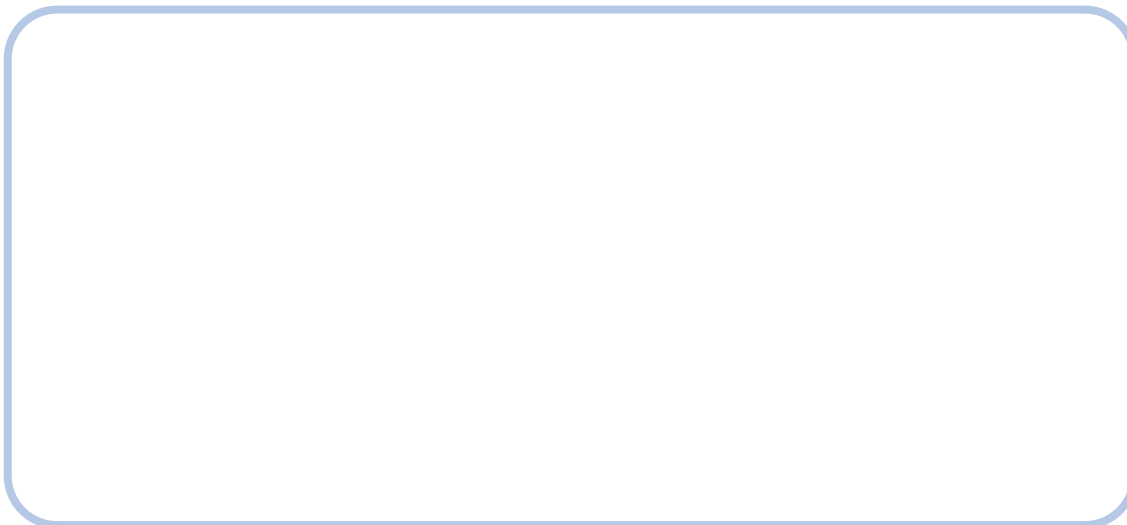
'Tell them the instructions one at a time.'

'Give an example first before asking them to do the controlled practice.'

Write *exactly* what you would say to give instructions for the animal grouping warmer. Use John's suggestions to help you.



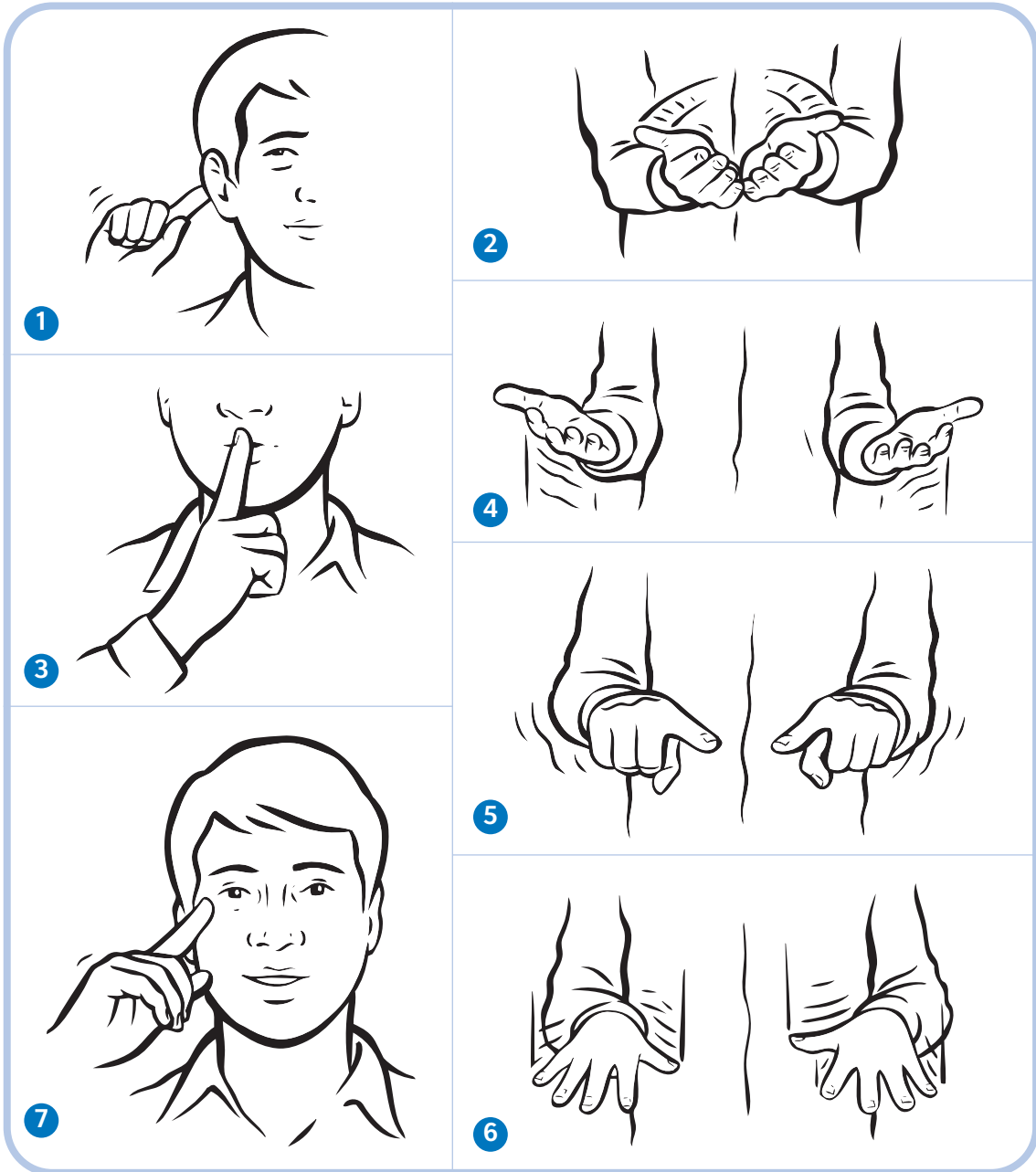
If you can, use this warmer in class. After you have done the activity, reflect. Are there any changes you would make? Write down how you would set it up differently the next time.



5 Additional activity

One simple technique to help your students understand instructions is to use gestures to show them what you want them to do.

Look at the gestures in these pictures and match them with the classroom instructions.



A open your books **B** quietly **C** in pairs **D** look **E** sit down **F** listen **G** stand up

Supporting your instructions with gestures will help your students remember key classroom language.

6 Suggested classroom activity

Here are two very simple speaking activities. You can use them to prepare and practise giving clear instructions and controlled practice of the target language before the students start. These activities come from: www.teachingenglish.org.uk

Guess the object

Secretly put an object in a paper bag (or hide it behind you, or write the word, or draw a picture). Then get the students to guess what's in the bag. The students ask questions (e.g. 'Is it a . . . ?', 'Has it got . . . ?') until someone guesses what the object is. The student who guesses correctly can take over from the teacher. After a few turns, let the students take over. This can be done with group against group or in pairs.

Find your partner

Information is written on slips of paper, which can be matched in some way. Each student receives a paper, then they all mingle and exchange information in order to find their partner.

For example, for a group of ten students, to practise colours:

Colour in five slips of paper in five different colours and write the words for these colours on the other five slips. Students ask each other 'What colour have you got?' in order to find their partner. More difficult versions can be a job and a definition ('What do you do?'), or a sport and its equipment (e.g. 'surfing' and 'surfboard').