



Conversation Strategies: Pair and Group Activities for Developing Communicative Competence

By David Kehe, Peggy Dustin Kehe

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What are Conversation Strategies? They are techniques that help the speaker and listener keep a conversation going to its natural and desired conclusion. They are skills that supplement the linguistic and sociolinguistic skills most texts focus on: grammar, vocabulary, and usage. To develop strategic competence, students must learn the words, phrases, and conventions used as two speakers engage in the active give-and-take of conversation. These are the strategies we use to get more information, make comparisons, correct someone politely, agree and disagree, summarize, share information, and make decisions in a business meeting. Students also practice polite forms, rejoinders, clarifications, follow-up questions, getting a response, expressing probability, interrupting, and avoiding conversation killers. Each activity has three parts: a teacher's introduction, a written introductory exercise to be done by students individually, and pair/group practice that makes use of information gap and other interactive formats. Each fun, student-centered activity begins with controlled language and moves to open, imaginative exchanges. The work is enjoyable for students and teacher. Easy to use in any intermediate level class.

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