

English for
Academic Study

New edition

Speaking

Course Book

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Book map

	Topic	Skills focus	Language focus
1	Communicating in academic situations <i>Being a successful student</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Delivering a presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reporting back on a discussion ■ Agreeing and disagreeing ■ Using signpost expressions
2	Seminars and discussions <i>Learning online</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Recognizing different perspectives ■ Reaching a balanced conclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Comparing perspectives ■ Summarizing the outcome of a discussion ■ Chairing a discussion
3	Examining underlying assumptions <i>Changing roles in the family</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presenting information from a text ■ Anticipating arguments before a discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Referring to a text ■ Exchanging opinions
4	Reading into speaking <i>A healthy lifestyle</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using a text to support your ideas ■ Listening actively ■ Exchanging information (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clarifying and confirming understanding
5	Building up a discussion <i>The influence of the media</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Building on what others have said ■ Presenting information from charts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Referring to what previous speakers have said ■ Referring to data
6	Consolidation: Seminar skills practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Leading a seminar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review and consolidation (1)
7	Supporting your point of view <i>The world of work</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Preparing for a discussion by thinking the issues through ■ Finding a focus for a presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Taking turns in a discussion
8	Collecting and presenting data <i>Protecting the environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Designing a questionnaire ■ Participating in a debate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expressing quantity
9	Thinking rationally <i>Science and the paranormal</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Presenting a research proposal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expressing doubt/belief
10	The importance of reflection <i>Studying in a new environment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Exchanging information (2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review and consolidation (2)

Aims of the course

The purpose of this book is to help you develop the speaking skills you need to participate effectively in academic seminars and discussions, as well as to help you develop effective presentation skills.

Structure of the course

- **Unit structure:** There are ten units in the book. Each of the units focuses on skills and/or speaking functions that learners need to use in an academic context, e.g., collecting and presenting data, supporting your point of view. The content of each unit is also linked to a topic, e.g., a healthy lifestyle, protecting the environment. The discussions and the presentations you make are related to the topic of each unit. The written or listening texts are designed to give you different perspectives on a topic, and also to help you provide evidence to support your ideas, thus giving you practice in one of the essential requirements of academic work.
Units 1–5 are the core units. Each of these units covers aspects of both seminar skills and presentation skills.
Unit 6 is a consolidation unit where you have the opportunity to put all these skills into practice by organizing your own seminars and discussions, and choosing your own topics (depending on the course you are taking, your teacher may decide that you begin these seminars earlier).
Units 7–10 give you further practice in all these skills.
- **Useful language:** Each unit has at least one boxed section on *Useful language* – language related to the task you need to perform in that unit. You should try to use this language in the appropriate situations.
- **Learner diary:** Students are encouraged to create a learner diary, and each unit ends with this section. The purpose of this is to get you to think about the process of learning, and the particular strategies you are developing. Having this awareness will help you to take more control of developing your language skills.
- **Study tips:** These are included for ease of reference when you are revising what you have studied. They either summarize the outcome of a series of activities or are a summary of other information contained in the unit.
- **Unit summaries:** Each unit is followed by a unit summary, giving you the opportunity to reflect on what you have learnt.

Additional materials

- **Glossary:** Words or phrases in **bold** (or **bold** and underlined in the task instructions) in the text are explained in the glossary on page 69.
- **Reading source material:** These are authentic texts that are referred to throughout the course to provide you with the kind of material you will work with in your faculty study.
- **Transcripts:** At the end of the book you will find transcripts of the audio material. Your teacher will sometimes give you the opportunity to listen to the recordings and follow the transcript at the same time, once you have completed the main listening tasks.

Listening material

This is available on CD and is indicated by the play icon ►. The full transcripts for the audio material are available at the back of the book, starting on page 98. Your teacher might ask you to follow these transcripts while listening to the CD, but this will only be when you have finished the original task.

Working with the course

When you are speaking in another language, you need to think of ideas and the language you need to express those ideas. This can be challenging. This book helps you with this in two ways.

- In many discussion activities in this book you are asked to think about and prepare what you are going to say. This can improve your performance. As you become more confident and competent in speaking in English, the need for preparation time should decrease.
- As it can be difficult to concentrate on both ideas and language, you are sometimes asked to focus on the ideas you want to express on a topic, and to discuss these. After the discussion, you are asked to look at, and sometimes practise, relevant *Useful language* phrases. Following this, you are required to return to the original topic, or a similar one, and discuss it with different students, this time using the *Useful language*.

Note: Some material is to be written in your student notebook.

What you put into the course will determine how much you get out of it. If you want to improve your speaking, it is essential that you practise this skill. You should prepare well for the sessions in class, as well as participate actively in them.

Examining underlying assumptions

Changing roles in the family

In this unit you will:

- develop awareness of how to help your audience follow a presentation
- present an article to the class, using the language of presentations
- consider the importance of anticipating arguments before a discussion
- practise presenting opinions and **counter-arguments** in a discussion

You may find that other students from different backgrounds have completely different assumptions from you about the world, society, or what is natural. Your assumptions may be **challenged**. This is an opportunity to encounter different world views and perhaps to question your own underlying assumptions about society. The process of questioning and self-questioning is an important aspect of academic study and development.

Task 1

Assumptions: The meaning of *family*

1.1 Consider one word that may mean different things to different people: *family*.



What are your responses to the following questions?

1. What is a typical family for you?
2. In a family, what should the mother provide?
3. In a family, what should the father provide?
4. The ideal age to start a family is ...
5. What does the word *family* mean to you (e.g., security, conflict)?

1.2 In groups, discuss your answers from Ex 1.1.

Task 2

Assumptions: Different family situations

- 2.1 In your country, are the following situations common? Complete the grid, where 1 = 'rarely or never' and 5 = 'very often or always'.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Men and women live together before they are married.					
2. Men and women share the housework.					
3. Couples have more than one child.					
4. Grandparents live with the rest of the family.					
5. Couples enter into pre-nuptial agreements.					
6. Couples of the same sex live together.					
7. Pre-school children go to nurseries or are left with childminders.					
8. Children take the family names of their fathers.					
9. Parents receive welfare benefits from the government for each child.					
10. Children stay with their mothers after a divorce.					
11. Women are entitled to paid maternity leave.					
12. Men are entitled to paid paternity leave.					

- 2.2 In groups, discuss the following points with reference to your completed grids from Ex 2.1.

1. Are behaviour and attitudes changing with regard to any of these issues?
2. Which of the situations above are controversial issues in your country?
3. What trends do you predict for the future?

Task 3

Assumptions: Aspects of family life

- 3.1 Answer the following questions about your country.

1. What is the average age for people to get married?
2. Is divorce common?
3. Is it common for people to live alone?
4. What is the average age for a woman to have her first child?
5. What is the average size of a nuclear family?
6. Are many children born outside marriage?
7. Are one-parent families common?
8. Do many people adopt children?
9. How do parents discipline their children?



Task 4 Presentations (1): Helping your audience

When you give a presentation, you need to remember your audience and make it easy for them to follow your talk. Tasks 4 and 5 help you to help your audience by developing different presentation microskills. You will practise these skills later by presenting key ideas from an article.

- 4.1 **Read the text on page 77 entitled *Helping fathers stay at home is key to equality*.**

- 4.2 **Look at the two slides in Appendix 3 (page 118) which the presenter uses to support a presentation of the contents of the article.**

Slide 1 gives an overview of the contents of the article, and is used to introduce the presentation.

Slide 2 provides further information on each main point, and is used in the main body of the presentation.

What are the characteristics of a good visual aid to support an oral presentation?

- 4.3 **▶ 8 Listen to a student presenting key points from the same article. As you listen, look at the two slides used by the student in Appendix 3. Notice how the presenter rewords or expands on the points on the slides.**

- 4.4 **Look at the transcript for Ex 4.3 on pages 102–103. Find and underline eight phrases the presenter uses to refer directly to the text. Write the phrases in the *Useful language* box below. The first example has been done for you.**

Example:

As the title suggests, this article deals with the issue of gender equality in relation to the roles of mothers and fathers.

Study tip

When referring to a text, it is important to separate your own views from the writer's and to indicate clearly to the audience when you give your own views.



Useful language: Referring to an article

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|
| 1. <u>this article deals with ...</u> | 5. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 8. _____ |

4.5 ► **9 Think about how presenters vary the way they speak in order to clarify information when giving a presentation.**

- a. Listen to three extracts and underline where the speaker:
 - pauses
 - stresses particular words or phrases
- b. Discuss why you think the speaker does this.

Task 5

Presentations (2): Summarizing, delivering, reflecting

In a presentation, summarizing the main points can be quite challenging. Sometimes it is hard to know what to omit. Imagine you are telling your friend about a film you saw. You do not tell all the details, only the main points. Similarly, when summarizing an article, the most important thing is to identify the key information.

5.1 **Read the text your teacher recommends from among those on pages 78–90. Make a list of four or five main points which you think are important to understanding the text.**

Make sure that you fully understand the text. If you do not understand it after checking the words or using a dictionary, check with one of your classmates – sharing ideas can often lead to a better understanding. You should not try to summarize a text if you do not understand it.

5.2 **In small groups, prepare a summary of the main points of the text to present to the class.**

You can either choose one person to give the presentation or divide up the presentation within your group. You have five minutes to present, with two minutes for questions. Read the list of presentation skills below before preparing your presentation.

Presentation skills: Presenting information from a text

There are some key points to remember when presenting information from a text.

- Read the text and identify the main ideas and/or key statistics (if your text has a lot of facts and statistics, you need to select the ones you think are significant).
 - Identify your topic clearly in your opening and give an overview of the text.
 - Carefully select what to put on your visual aid (do not write out sections of the text).
 - Try to express the ideas and information in your own words (do not read out or memorize and repeat sections of the text).
 - Distinguish between the information and ideas given in the text and your own views.
 - Check the pronunciation of key words, especially those you use most frequently.
 - Explain the meaning of any difficult or technical words.
- Note:** if you have to check the meaning of a word, then your audience probably will not know it either.
- Pause and give the audience time to understand complex information.



5.3 In groups, practise your presentations. Remember the key points from Ex 5.2.

After each presentation, you should give some feedback to the presenter(s), e.g., *You need to slow down and pause at that point. The information is complex. You should explain the meaning of that word.*

5.4 Present your summary of the text to the class.

- a. As you listen to each presentation, one person in each group completes the presentation assessment form in Appendix 9c (page 131). The comments you write are very important as they will help the speaker the next time he/she does a presentation.
- b. In your groups, discuss the following points after each presentation:
 - Have you all understood the main points?
 - Are there any points you were unsure of?
 - Are there any questions or comments you have for the presenter(s)?
 Be prepared to ask the presenters to clarify or repeat anything you did not understand.

Study tip

Reflecting on your own presentation and giving feedback to other presenters can help you develop your presentation skills.

5.5 After you have listened to all the presentations, decide which was the most interesting text. Give each presenter his/her completed assessment form.

Task 6

Arguments and counter-arguments

6.1 Look at the following statement.

Women are naturally more suited to childcare than men.

You will discuss this statement in groups of four. Two of you will support this view. The other two will oppose this view.

With your partner, prepare your arguments.

1. What will your main points be?
2. What do you think the other pair's main points will be?
3. How will you counter their arguments?



Seminar skills: Considering different sides of an argument

When preparing for a seminar or discussion, it is important to consider issues from opposing sides. This will help you to clarify your thinking and formulate your opinions on a topic. Considering an opposing position to your own can help you to strengthen your own position. On the other hand, you may find that you start to modify or even radically change your own position.

- 6.2 **Debate the statement in Ex 6.1 in your groups of four.**
 a. The pair who support the statement should begin by presenting their main points.
 b. The opposing pair should then counter these points and present their own points.
- 6.3 **Reflect on your participation in the discussion.**
 1. Did you state your opinion clearly?
 2. Did you **anticipate** the arguments of the other pair and counter them?
- 6.4 **▶ 10 Listen to some students exchanging opinions on different topics. Look at the expressions below which the speakers use to exchange opinions. Tick (✓) the expressions you hear.**

Useful language: Exchanging opinions

Asking for opinions

☐ *What are your views on this issue?* ☐ *Do you agree?*

Presenting your own opinion

☐ *Well, I think ...* ☐ *It seems to me that ...*
☐ *In my view, ...*

Countering the other person's opinion

☐ *I take your point, but ...* ☐ *I understand what you're saying, but ...*
☐ *Well, I'm not sure if that's quite true ...* ☐ *But surely ...*

- 6.5 **Still in your group of four from Ex 6.1, change partners and once again prepare to discuss one of the following statements. Decide which pair will support the view given and which pair will oppose it. Use some of the *Useful language* expressions in Ex 6.4.**

It is better to wait until you are older to start a family.

Living on your own has more advantages than disadvantages.

Wealth will not bring you happiness.

Learner diary

Make another entry in your learner diary using these questions.

Do you feel more confident presenting in front of an audience?

- How did this unit help you?
- What do you feel you still need to do to improve your presentation skills?

Do you feel more confident participating in discussions?

- How did this unit help you?
- What do you feel you still need to do to be a better participant in seminar discussions?

Read the guidelines on developing your presentation skills in Appendix 4 (pages 119–120).

Unit summary

In this unit you have looked at how to present articles and practised clarifying opinions and expressing counter-arguments in academic situations.

1

Think about the question below. Then complete the two visual aids below using the words and phrases in the box. There is one word which you will not need to use.

How can you make sure important information is clear in a presentation?

stress headings information slide key words bullet points highlight

Pronunciation

- Slow down when saying the _____
- _____ particular words or phrases

Visual aids

- Ensure key words are on your _____
- Use _____ and _____ to ensure it is easy to read key points
- Do not include too much _____ on each slide

2

Write your own bullet points to complete the visual aid below. Choose three more key points. Then compare your ideas with the ones in Ex 1 above.

Referring to ideas from a published text

- Don't simply read out or memorize sections of the text
- _____
- _____
- _____

For web resources relevant to this book, see:

www.englishforacademicstudy.com

These weblinks will provide you with further advice on giving a presentation and more information about attitudes towards family roles.