Improving Speaking Skills Through Class Presentations

A classroom-tested seminar by Halis Bereket

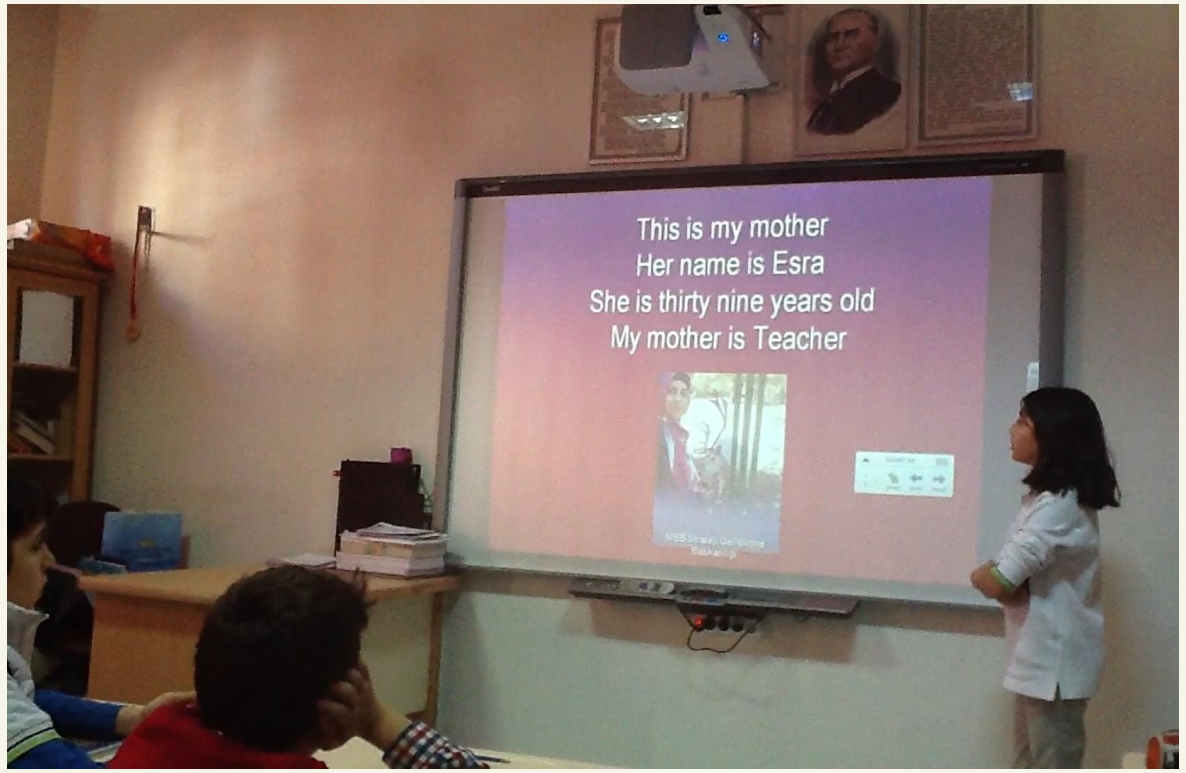
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Why class presentations?

They turn speaking from an occasional answer into a planned classroom practice.

- Prepared speaking gives hesitant learners a safe starting point.
- Presenters practise organizing ideas, using visuals and addressing an audience.
- Listeners practise active listening, questioning and responding.
- The same framework can support individual, pair and group speaking.



The speaking development pathway

- Start with short, controlled tasks.
- Move to prepared talks with notes, not full texts.
- Add audience questions and follow-up.
- Finish with panels, debates, sketches and integrated tasks.



Short speech **Presentation** **Interaction**

A practical map of classroom presentation types

- **Individual**: free speech, informative speech, poem reading, picture description, independent speaking, graduation speech, book review.
- **Pair work**: interview, debate, YES/NO competition.
- **Group work**: panel discussion, drama and sketch.









Good presentations are taught, not expected

- Students need a clear introduction, body and conclusion.
- They need useful language for welcoming, outlining, signposting and closing.
- They should practise speaking with key words and notes - not reading a full text.
- They need a manageable time limit and clear criteria before they present.



Presentation language: a simple classroom frame

- **Introduction:** welcome the audience, introduce the subject, outline the structure, explain when questions will be taken.
- **Body:** keep to the structure, signpost, use visuals, maintain eye contact and voice control.
- **Conclusion:** summarize, give recommendations when appropriate, thank the audience and invite questions.



Starting strongly

Students can practise purpose statements and effective openings before they give a full presentation.

- “Today I am going to talk about…”
- “I will begin by…”
- “Then I will go on to…”
- “Finally, I will…”



Opening = confidence

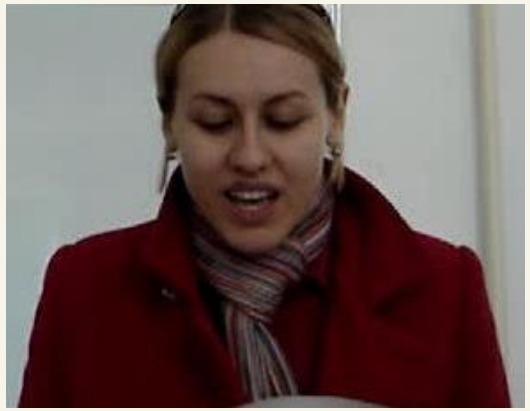
Visuals should support speech

- Use pictures, posters, handouts, maps, samples, charts or classroom technology.
- Give the audience time to look at the visual.
- Do not compete with the visual: speak briefly, point clearly, then continue.



Individual presentations: many entry points









- **Free Speech:** 10-20 sentences
- **Informative Speech:** about 4 minutes
- **Poem Reading / Picture Description:** about 3 minutes
- **Book Review:** about 8 minutes

Timed independent speaking

Preparation time: 15 seconds
Response time: 45 seconds

- This format encourages quick planning, focused examples and concise speaking.
- Students can move from memorized answers to spontaneous response.
- It works well with TOEFL-style prompts and classroom questions.



Pair presentations: interaction becomes the target







- **Interview:** prepared roles and questions.
- **Debate:** reasons, examples and turn-taking.
- **YES/NO competition:** fast response, self-control and listening.

Group presentations: from speaking to discussion







- **Panel Discussion:** chairman, speakers, subtopics/roles, resources, questions.
- **Drama / Sketch:** roles, rehearsal, audience attention and communicative purpose.
- Group work helps students practise cooperation as well as speaking.

Question time is speaking practice too

- Prepare students to ask and answer questions politely.
- Use question forms on evaluation sheets to record participation.
- Encourage the audience to listen for meaning, not just wait for their turn.
- Sometimes let students reformulate or ask the class for comments.



The teacher’s role

- **Guide:** provide models and useful language.
- **Organizer:** arrange topics, dates, timing and groups.
- **Consultant:** help with notes, visuals and sources.
- **Supporter:** build confidence before performance.
- **Evaluator:** give fair, transparent and developmental feedback.



Assessment: make the criteria visible

A simple assessment frame can cover:

- Preparation
- Organization
- Content and originality
- Presentation skills
- Oral skills
- Answering questions









A sample classroom procedure

- 1. Introduce presentation types and show short models.
- 2. Let students choose or assign topics.
- 3. Collect proposal forms and give feedback.
- 4. Teach presentation language and note-making.
- 5. Rehearse in pairs or groups.
- 6. Present, ask questions, evaluate and reflect.



What students gain

- Confidence in speaking before others.
- Practice in organizing spoken ideas.
- Awareness of audience, voice, timing and visual support.
- Better listening through peer presentations.
- More meaningful classroom interaction.



Common problems and practical solutions

- Reading full text -> require keywords and note cards.
- Speaking too fast -> rehearse with a time limit.
- Weak visuals -> teach “visuals support, not replace, speech.”
- Silent audience -> give listeners a question task.
- Uneven groups -> assign roles and visible responsibilities.



From archive materials to a reusable seminar package

- Main seminar PPTX
- Procedure for teachers
- Speaker’s Notes
- Participant Handout
- Proposal and Evaluation Forms

The aim is to preserve the classroom-tested system and make it practical, reusable and shareable.



Keep presentations communicative.

Students do not only present information.
They practise becoming speakers, listeners and responders.

Thank you

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