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ČLÁNKY A NOVINKY INTERVIEW STEVE OAKES

Pripravili sme pre Vás rozhovor s jedným so spoluautorov učebnice Speakout Stevom Oakesom.

Čítajte viac na ďalšej strane...



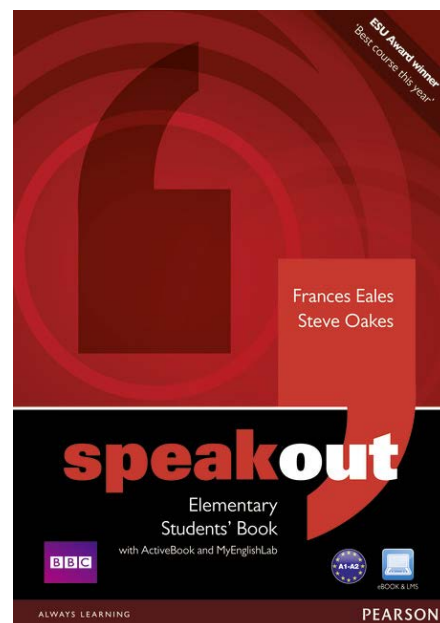
Máj s učebnicou Speakout

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Tento titul sa tiež predáva s komponentom MyEnglishLab. Jedná sa o elektronickú náhradu pracovného zošita. Študent si tak kúpi SB s kódom, ktorý mu umožní robiť si cvičenia, testy a gramatiku online. Učiteľ má v tejto aplikácii manažment systém umožňujúci zadávanie cvičení, testy, sledovanie aktivít študentov a ich hodnotenie.

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Interview with Steve Oakes (coauthor Speakout)

Michaela Růňová: Steve, why did you decide to write Speakout? Who for?

Steve: After almost 25 years of teaching and 20 years in teacher training, I was attracted by the challenge of writing a coursebook that would stand out as offering something extra, something that reflects the needs of adult and young adult learners today. I wanted to bring some of my own understanding of the language learning process to the material, and at the same time create a course that could work 'off the page', one where lessons really do work even if a teacher doesn't have a lot of experience or time to adapt a lesson to her specific group. So when the opportunity to work on Speakout came along, it was clear to me that I could only say yes.

What makes Speakout unique from the student's perspective? And teacher's?

Well, based on what students have told us, what strikes them most is the experience of connecting with the real world and with authentic language, most obviously through the BBC video material and the podcasts, but also through the real-life situations they explore in the third lesson of every unit, and through the sort of contexts and tasks they undertake in the grammar/vocabulary/skills lessons. For students, using the book brings an authentic experience, one where they don't feel trapped in the self-consciousness of pedagogic tasks, but deeply involved in using the language to express themselves, and learning how to do this better.

For the teacher, what we've heard most is first of all how well the lessons work, that they are very effective 'off the page'; and secondly that the material is effective at helping learners overcome their low ambiguity tolerance (i.e. a learner's tendency to 'freak out' when they don't understand something they hear or read). Teachers have expressed surprise at how in a short time their students become more comfortable with authentic language, and accepting that understanding doesn't require 'getting every word'.

What competencies can the students develop while using Speakout?

Speakout does a good job of developing the four skills, but what users have commented most on is the effectiveness with which it develops the speaking skill—That many of their students seem to have a breakthrough with this material, and gain a surprising level of confidence through the course. By design, the lessons provide an unusually high number of opportunities for speaking practice, and because students find the topics and tasks so motivating, this practice is not just a pedagogical task, but it gets students using English to express what they want to say.

The other competency that gets particular attention in Speakout is something called sociopragmatic competence—in brief the ability to say the right thing in the right way, taking into account the relationships between people, the situation, and cultural factors. In the real world, errors in this area are judged much more harshly than, say, grammar errors, so it's important that an English course develops both. This is where the third lesson in each unit comes in; among other things, it specifically works on pragmatic as well as strategic competence.

Do you have any methodological tip for Speakout teachers?

The most important methodological tip I would offer Speakout teachers is to maintain an openness towards your learners and their attempts to use English. The material in Speakout asks learners to react to many different stimuli—situations, questions, problems, ideas—and it's vital that learners feel that they can respond without feeling stressed about 'getting it right' in terms of grammar. There's a healthy balance of accuracy work in Speakout, along with real communication, and learners can often benefit from a more balanced atmosphere.

The other tip I'd offer is to encourage students to use the ActiveTeach disc in the back of the book, in particular to watch the BBC video clips and the podcasts at home. The video and audio links on the disc have a drop-down transcript feature, and students find this incredibly motivating. You don't really need to tell them to do it for homework; you only need to show them that the feature is there, and they'll find it so motivating that they'll work with the material on their own initiative.

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