

A Little Less Talk and a Lot More Action

Susan Russo, M.S.Ed TESOL
 Director, Southside Baptist Church ESL & Citizenship Ministry
 Jacksonville, FL
susan@ssbc.org / (904) 536-4430

I. What is TTT? Teacher Talking Time

1. Is all TTT bad?
2. Privately brainstorm a couple of examples of what you think would be “good” TTT, “bad” TTT, and “ugly” TTT. Share an example or two with your group.

The Good	The Bad	The Ugly
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modeling target language • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving 5 min directions for a 2 min activity • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soapboxing • _____ • _____ • _____ • _____

3. As a group, complete the sentences below in a way that could be used to determine whether TTT may be “good”, “bad” or “ugly”:

Good TTT is <u>necessary.</u>	Bad TTT is <u>unnecessary.</u>	Ugly TTT is <u>offensive/hurtful.</u>
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II. What God’s word says about speech, silence, & action!

1. **Proverbs 15:23** – “A person finds joy in giving an apt reply – and how good is a timely word!”
2. **Ecclesiastes 3:7** – “A time to tear apart and a time to sew together. A time to be silent and a time to speak.”
3. **Proverbs 25:11** – “Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in the right circumstances.”
4. **1 John 3:18** – “Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.”

III. What Makes Some TTT Bad?

1. All time is zero sum.
2. In game theory and economic theory, a zero-sum game is a mathematical representation of a situation in which each participant's gain or loss is exactly balanced by the losses or gains of the other participants.
3. **The more time I spend talking, the less time my students have to talk.**
(Or... the less time I spend talking, the more time my students have to practice using English.)

IV. Passive vs. Active Listening

1. Passive listening has no assessment component
2. **Assessment lets the speaker know how much the listeners have understood.**
3. In active listening, the learners must do something with the message they hear.
4. Check the examples below that are examples of active listening:

✓ point to/circle/check words	✓ write a summarizing sentence
✓ gap fill/fill in the blank	✓ take dictation
✓ answer a question	✓ think of a follow up question
✓ follow a direction	✓ share a related thought

V. Why Does Bad TTT Happen to Good Teachers?

1. Unawareness
2. Uncertainty
3. Underpreparedness
4. Emulating our personal learning experience
5. Students allow, expect, or even encourage it

VI. Reducing Bad TTT Requires a Change in Mindset & Habits

Current Mindset	Goal Mindset	Method	Procedure
1. Unawareness	<u>Awareness</u>	Stopwatch Challenge	Have another volunteer time you with a stopwatch or smartphone during your class. Every time you start talking, they start the stopwatch, and stop when you stop.
2. Uncertainty	<u>Confidence</u>	Observe a skilled teacher	Specifically, focus on observing how the teacher passes the action (back) to the students with wait time, elicitation, and clear passing cues.
3. Underpreparedness	<u>Preparedness</u>	Lesson planning	Focus on directions & transitions. Write out exactly what you usually say. Revise it, reduce it, practice it.
4. Emulating our personal learning experience	Understand that acquiring another language is an <u>active skill</u>.	Reflect on how you learned an active skill as an adult.	Pair work and group work give all students time to actively practice communication.

5. Students allow, expect, or even encourage it	Build positive, <u>effective</u> classroom strategies & <u>relationships</u>.	Gradually transition from what “feels like” learning to effective, active learning.	What does Grandma say when you take her to dinner at the Melting Pot?
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VII. Compare & Contrast The Two Images Below (A & B)

With your table, discuss the following:

1. Briefly describe the action you think is taking place in each image.
2. Do both of these images contain teachers and learners?
3. Are the topics of study similar? Why or why not?
4. How similar are each of the topics to acquiring a second language as an adult?
5. How might the amount of TTT differ between these scenes?
6. How might learner action (e.g. active listening) differ between these scenes?
7. Which image more closely resembles your ESL class? Why?

A



B



VIII. Finding Your Class’s Ideal Amount of TTT

- What factors may cause a class’s ideal amount of TTT to vary?
 - Length
 - Level
 - Goals
 - Target Language
- <10-25% of class = ideal range
- Focus on quality, not quantity

IX. Scenarios

- A. Teacher “Talkative Trudy” spends most of her class time telling stories about her past personal & religious experiences to her advanced students. She hasn’t progressed very far through the planned curriculum, but her stories are usually related to the lesson topic in some way, and the students haven’t complained about it.
1. Why do you think Trudy may be doing this? (Review the 5 reasons why bad TTT happens to good teachers in section V.)
 2. Why do you think the students haven’t let Trudy know that her stories take up a lot of the class time?
 3. Describe at least two ways in which Trudy could turn this bad TTT into better TTT. (Review changes in mindsets & habits in section VI.)
- B. Teacher “Verbose Vern” spends most of his beginner class talking because he doesn’t think his students know enough English to talk yet. He used to spend more time on student activities in the past, but his students seemed reluctant and/or confused about the activities.
1. Why do you think Vern may be doing this? (Review the 5 reasons why bad TTT happens to good teachers in section V.)
 2. Why do you think his beginning students may have been confused by the activities he used in the past?
 3. Describe two ways in which Vern could turn this bad TTT into better TTT. (Review changes in mindsets & habits in section VI.)
- C. Teacher “Wordy Wendy” spends most of her intermediate class talking because her students told her they would really like to improve their listening skills. She lets the students choose the topics, and she tries to ask them questions as well, but they usually don’t respond.
1. Why do you think Wendy may be doing this? (Review the 5 reasons why bad TTT happens to good teachers in section V.)
 2. Describe two ways in which Wendy could turn this bad TTT into better TTT.

X. Questions