

## Rookie's Discussion

*Eric, Jay, Mark (with non-rookie Steve)*

**Eric:** What I appreciated most about our talk is that I figured out a lot of things that have really helped me to be more confident in organizing the course material and structuring the class in cycles.

Some things that were mentioned and discussed were language learning histories and surveys. I was glad to hear more about those things as it seems the other new teachers had had some success with them already, and I'm about to start a second learning cycle, so their input was helpful.

We also talked about classroom management strategies and styles. One thing in particular that had troubled me was that I felt I was moving the class along (from partner to partner) according to a pair who finished too quickly. I thought I was doing a disservice to the rest of the class—forcing them to finish their conversation abruptly simply because two less thorough people looked at me and said “finished.” I don't think it's a good idea to say to them, okay, do it again. Rather, I think it's best to encourage them to continue their conversation in English, even if they stray into another topic. I've tried that and it seemed to work. That way I can let the majority of the students determine when it's time to move to a new partner.

We also talked about the role of the teacher in the classroom; I had mentioned that there were times when I felt as if, during class, there wasn't too much “teaching” for me to do. But I think we agreed that we should let the students decide exactly how much input they want from us. I've already had a few students get really shy and quiet when they know I'm listening. I think they're still getting used to the idea that I'm not planning to correct them. As long as I organize the course and the classroom time so that each student can maximize their speaking time and articulate and achieve some simple, concrete goals, I think I'll be ready then to help everyone not only in speaking English but also in choosing and organizing material for discussions and simple presentations.

**Jay:** Number of books – We discussed the number of books that should be read in the *Introduction to Communication Skills* course. As I was talking to other teachers, some seemed to think that 12 books was too many and 8 would be adequate.

Sample work - We also had a discussion about giving models to students. That is, should a sample be given to the learners to copy right away or should they be given the opportunity to try the activity for themselves first and then be given the sample. I believe we decided that both ways can be effective.

The esteemed athletes - We discussed who they were, why they miss so many classes, but are still an important component of the class and the university.