

IMPROVING ENGLISH IN THE CLASSROOM THROUGH TOASTMASTERS TECHNIQUES

Toastmasters International Club began as a series of speaking clubs created by Ralph C. Smedley in the United States. Smedley saw a necessity for people to learn about public speaking, meeting conducting, and community work. According to *Toastmasters International* official website, there are more than 332,000 members attending one of the 15,400 clubs located in 135 countries. Furthermore, part of what Toastmasters does is training people on public speaking by means of weekly meetings in which members participate on table topics, prepared speeches and speeches' evaluation. The present workshop is developed based on Toastmasters' techniques for public speaking. These techniques have proven to be highly helpful in the presenters' classes, providing valuable skills to overcome their fear to speak in public, improve fluency, offer organized speeches and evaluations, among other benefits.

The workshop consists on the reproduction of a regular Toastmasters club session, but everything will be oriented to the improvement of public speaking, fluency, grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of a foreign language. Participants will partake on table topics which are general questions about specific topics which must be answered right after they are asked in no less than a minute but no more than two. After that, some participants will be given the chance to prepare a short ice breaking speech about themselves to be presented in front of the audience, while doing so, each participant will be evaluated by other person from the audience who at the end will provide him or her with feedback on his or her performance as speaker. Another important aspect of the workshop is that there will be a timer (person in charge of taking the time to make sure participants manage time appropriately), a Grammarian (person in charge of taking notes on the use of English to provide feedback at the end of the session on this area), an Ah-counter (a person in charge of taking notes on the use of sentences fillers and other expressions that affect language fluency), a Table Topic Master (person in charge of table topics) and a Toastmaster (person in charge of the meeting).

Preliminary References

Toastmasters international. Retrieved from <https://www.toastmasters.org>

The corporate Toastmasters club. *Table topic ideas*. Retrieved from http://corporatetoastmasters.toastmastersclubs.org/table_topics_ideas.html

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