The ability to speak with others (peers, experts, adults, "strangers", etc.) via video conferencing tools, requires a new set of skills for students in the modern classroom. Students need to develop and exhibit communication skills for collaborative purposes, exchange of specific content information or to simply be able to articulate and communicate thoughts and ideas.

**TAXONOMY OF A conversation**

**FREE FLOWING CONVERSATION**

Transitions between listening & speaking occur naturally & smoothly. A thread/connection between conversation partner can be observed. Conversation demonstrates a depth of understanding and knowledge being shared. There is an exchange of open ended questions/answers. Previously mentioned comments during the conversation are referred to in flowing conversation. Collaborative knowledge brings new perspectives to the conversation. Humor can be used and understood.

**CONTENT CONVERSATION**

Participants show content knowledge through making connections to and sharing personal experiences or prior research. Participants use vocabulary demonstrating their content knowledge. They elaborate on points being made, offering advice, further resources or anecdotes.

**FOLLOW ALONG CONVERSATION**

Participants are able to follow along the conversation easily. They actively listen and contribute to a variety of conversation turns/tangents. Participants are able to answer unanticipated questions and respond in a natural manner.

**BODY LANGUAGE CONVERSATION**

Body language of speaker and listener is attentive, maintains composure, shows confidence and conveys politeness, friendliness and interest. Participants maintain eye contact. Non verbal clues are given to show understanding, clarification, questioning, agreement or disagreement. Few sentences are exchanged.

**PING PONG CONVERSATION**

Questions and answers are closed ended and alternating in a rehearsed manner, memorized parts or reading off note cards. The conversation feels stiff. Answers are short sentences or one word only. There are often pauses in the conversation, periods of silence. Participants feel insecure how to proceed.

Silvia Rosenthal Tolisano - Langwitches Blog