**Using Emotions to Stimulate Conversation**

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## Why Emotions?

* Emotions have an impact on the classroom atmosphere making it conducive to learning
* Emotions are strongly linked to memory. Feeling passionate about something is the key.
* Talking about our emotions makes learning personal
* Learning how to express emotions makes learning meaningful and practical
* For teachers, using emotions helps us understand our students and their needs

**Reluctant Speakers in ESL/ EFL:**

* Students feel anxious about speaking in front of others
* Task might be above their capabilities
* Insufficient preparation time
* May worry about being judged
* Might be unwilling to share personal information with classmates

**Some suggestions for dealing with this:**

* Bring the Tasks Within Students’ Experience
* Allow Students to Collaboratively Solve Communicative Tasks
* Give Students More Time to do Tasks
* Attend to Individual Students’ Needs and Ability (Hue, 2010)

## The action-oriented approach

Language use, embracing language learning .comprises the actions performed by persons who as individuals and as social agents develop a range of competences, both general and in particular communicative language competences. They draw on the competences at their disposal in various contexts under various conditions and under various constraints to engage in language activities involving language processes to produce and/or receive texts in relation to themes in specific domains, activating those strategies which seem most appropriate for carrying out the tasks to be accomplished. The monitoring of these actions by the participants leads to the reinforcement or modification of their competences. (CEFR 2001 a:9)

**Strategies:**

Use visual aids to introduce a story. Short videos, such as ads are ideal, as are photographs with groups of people. If you search online for Best Ads, you’ll quickly find plenty of options.

**Task 1:** **Identifying emotions and the reasons behind them.**

The focus is on the characters in the story. How do these people feel? *List 4 - 6 emotions. Discuss with your partner, explain your choices.*

CEFR: Informal discussion with friends

**Task 2: Expressing and responding to emotions.**

*With your partner, choose 3 of the emotions you both listed. Write a short dialogue for each where the first speaker expresses how he feels. The second speaker responds appropriately. Act out dialogues. B2: Continue the conversation.*

How much support you give depends on the group you have. You could set them the task and see what they come up with. Then discuss and correct together, before allowing them to rewrite their dialogues.

Alternatively, go through it step by step. Elicit the emotions, write on board and then let them brainstorm ways of expressing these emotions. ie What do we say to show we are angry?

I’m annoyed / angry / not happy. This is really unacceptable. I’ve had enough!

Then brainstorm appropriate responses: I don’t understand why you are angry / I’m sorry / I don’t want to fight / I’m angry too! Finally, use the expressions to form mini-dialogues.

CEFR: Conversation

**Task 3: Exploring emotions through role play**:

*Who are you going to interview? Which character from the video/ picture/ story? With your partner, create a list of questions to ask and then discuss how the character would respond. When you are ready, choose which role you will each play, interviewer and character. Role play the interview. B1: Can use prepared questions. B2: Should improvise.*

CEFR: Interviewing and being interviewed

**Task 4: Presenting your argument.**

*Argue for or against this statement. Plan your arguments with reasons to support your opinions. You will speak for 90 seconds. Example: Big romantic gestures are important in a relationship.*

CEFR: Arguing a case

**Task 5: Tell the story.**

What could have changed the outcome of this story? Using the same characters, tell the story again, this time with a different ending.

CEFR: Thematic Development

# References:

# Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment <http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/source/framework_en.pdf>

# Hue, Nguyen Minh. (2010) Encouraging Reluctant ESL/EFL Learners to Speak in the Classroom. The Internet TESL Journal, Volume XVI (3). Retrieved from <http://iteslj.org/Techniques/Hue-ReluctantSpeakers.html>

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