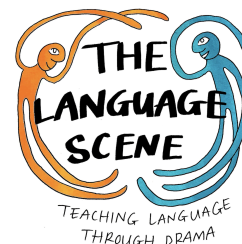


ATESOL ACT- Teaching EAL/D through Drama (2)

Summary of workshop activities (24/2/24)

Workshop facilitator: Jodie Whitehurst



Activities

1. **Pass the clap:** standing in a circle, a clap gets passed around in a chosen direction. The person who starts, turns to the person next to them, makes eye contact and both people must try to clap at the same time without verbal communication. The recipient of the clap then turns to the next person and does the same and so it continues around the circle. The aim should be to create a strong sense of focus amongst the group and to develop a steady rhythm.
2. **Introductions with scarf transformation:** Going around the circle (or number order if online), each person says: "I'm (name) and I enjoy, (mime out the enjoyed activity, transforming a scarf into a prop for the mime, e.g. the scarf becomes a tennis racquet handle to mime playing tennis). Other students will guess and finish the sentence. The next person in the circle then gestures to the previous person and introduces them to the group based on the mime that person just performed, using the **gerund (ing) form**, e.g. "This is Hannah and she enjoys playing tennis" The student then gives a self introduction using mime, e.g. "I'm Herman and I enjoy (mime a different activity with transformed scarf as prop)". Continue around the circle.

Variations: work with **other target structures**, e.g. *He likes/ loves to dance/ She likes/ loves dancing. She would love to ride a horse. He has never been bungee jumping.* For beginners, scarf transformation around the circle can also be done as a simple mime activity followed by the question, *What is Saifon doing?* Students respond, practising the **present continuous**, e.g. *She's brushing her hair.*

3. **Gift giving (an exercise in improvisation):**
After teaching students the basis of improvisation (offer, accept, build) have students work in pairs. They should take turns to give each other gifts by transforming a scarf into a different object each time. The recipient should accept the gift with great enthusiasm, then build on the scene by saying how he/she/they will use it, etc. After that, the recipient becomes the giver of the next gift and the cycle continues.

e.g.

A: Leila, happy birthday!! I got you something special. It's a gold necklace.

B: Oh wow! Thanks Alex. I love it! (taking scarf and putting it around neck). It's so sparkly and stylish. It will look perfect with my green dress for my birthday party tomorrow.

B: Alex, I got you this microwave as a housewarming gift. I hope you like it..., etc

Note: this is a great way for students to practise using **future forms**, e.g. *I'm going to take this on my next holiday!!* As well as **adjectives**, e.g. *gorgeous, stunning, soft*. You may wish to set specific guidelines about using adjectives and future forms,

4. Yes and...

Working in pairs, one person makes a verbal offer and their partner accepts by saying 'yes, and....' in order to accept and build the story further. This continues back and forth so that a story develops. You can select a context for the story, e.g. planning a party.

E.g. "Let's have a space themed party for our housewarming"

"Yes, and we'll make a huge rocket out of cupcakes"

"Yes, and we'll have an alien rock band playing on a moon crater stage",

etc

VARIATION: In groups of 3 : e.g. A manager questioning two employees arriving late for a meeting OR a parent questioning their two teenage kids sneaking in after curfew. The offending characters use the "Yes, and" structure to build the story of their excuses. This is a great way to practise using **narrative tenses, e.g. past simple and past continuous**.

e.g. A: We were heading to the meeting when we heard a loud bang in the tearoom

B. Yes, and when we went to check it out, we saw the microwave had exploded!

A: Yes and there were flames everywhere

Manager: Did you call the fire brigade?

B: Yes and while we were waiting for them, I broke a heel on my shoe!!

5. I'm so excited: For this activity, you will work with the supplied jazz chant. "I'm so excited" and the grammatical focus is on **ed/ ing adjective pairs**, such as exciting/ excited.

Note: You can create your own simple jazz chants (or songs) to practise any target area of grammar or pronunciation in any language. Also, see "Jazz Chants" and "Grammar Chants" by Carolyn Graham.

a. Learning the jazz chant

- First, spend time learning the chant together. Help the students to find the beat (through clapping, clicking or knee slapping) and the natural rhythms through identifying stressed words/ syllables (they may wish to mark these on their sheet).
- In a face to face classroom, you can break class into two groups to chant/ enact the dialogue with actions and expression.
- If online, students can all turn off their mics (teacher leaves mic on). Then the teacher can chant one part, while the students respond with the second part.
- Once students are familiar with the chant, they can work with partners (if online, use breakout rooms) to act out the dialogue, still using the rhythm.
- Spend some time discussing/ analysing the nature of **-ed and -ing adjectives** as demonstrated in the chant.

b. Learning new vocabulary

- Introduce new **-ed adjectives**, e.g. *exhausted*, *frustrated*
- Elicit accompanying movements, facial and vocal expressions to match the words and as you hold up cards with each word, have students say the word while enacting the emotion.
- Have students pay attention to syllable stress and incorporate this into the movements.
- Next, ask students to respond as you hold up each card by saying the word “strawberry” (or any emotionally neutral word of your choice) while embodying the emotion on the card.

c. Devising scenes with *nonsense language*

- In pairs or groups of three, students are to choose one of the focus adjectives, e.g. *exhausted*, and devise a short scene (use breakout rooms if online) in which one or more of the characters experiences this emotion.
- They should decide on the situation and the relationship between the characters. e.g. Mother and son hiking in the bush.
- Scarves can be transformed into props/costume items.
- Students must use their physical and vocal expression to convey the emotion and can only speak the following words:
Person A: Watermelon
Person B: Canteloupe
Person C: Pineapple (If in a group of 3)
- Have each group perform their scene and the rest of the class can then try to guess the emotion and context.
- **Tip:** scarves can be used as props/ costume items.

d. Creating new verses

- Groups can now create new verses for the chant based on the scenes they devised and have fun teaching the class.

e.g.

I'm so exhausted, I'm so exhausted

Why are you exhausted, come on tell me why?!

'cause I just climbed a mountain

You just climbed a mountain?

Yes, I just climbed a mountain and climbing is exhausting!!!

IMPRO KEY TERMS: Offer.... Accept.....Build

Don't block!! See below for examples,

Accepting an offer

Oh that bag looks heavy.
Let me help you carry it.

Thanks so much! Carrying four million dollars all this way has given me an arm ache.

Blocking an offer

Oh that bag looks heavy.
Let me help you carry it.

I'm not carrying a bag, I'm walking the dog.

Reflection:

- Create time and space for students to reflect on the language and life skills they are learning through the drama activities.



Want to read more about the benefits and best practice of drama and improvisation in EAL teaching?

Scan this QR code to gain access to publications by Jodie Whitehurst.

If you have further questions or wish to enquire about a workshop, please contact Jodie: jodie@thelanguagescene.com.au