



“Wrong time, wrong place!” – Lesson Plan

Topic: Language for unexpected situations

Level: E3/Intermediate 1 and above

Time: 60-90 minutes

Aims

- To give practice in dealing successfully with transactions about arrangements and appointments
- To help learners to explore the language that they might need to use when situations and events take an unexpected turn (for example, when there has been a misunderstanding about arrangements)
- To enable learners to begin to develop transferrable communication strategies to help them to cope in the real world

Introduction

A: "I'd like to make an appointment to see the dentist"

B: "I'm sorry - I think you've got the wrong number, we are a shoe shop!"

We often provide our learners with functional dialogue practice to help them prepare for spoken exchanges in common situations. For example, we may present a dialogue about making an appointment for the doctor or dentist - but what happens in real life when things don't go exactly according to plan?

This lesson provides an example of how this sort of dialogue work might be extended to include the language that learners need to cope when such exchanges take an unexpected turn, and helps them to develop transferrable communication strategies to help them feel more independent and able to cope with whatever situation they find themselves in.

You will need:

- A whiteboard/interactive whiteboard
- "Wrong time, wrong place" cards - cut up as explained below

The dialogue cards will need to be printed (ideally on card), cut up and folded in half, so that A is on one side and B is on the reverse.

Procedure

Warmer (5-10 mins)

Show the picture of the dentist (at the end of the lesson plan), or find a similar one to show the class. Ask the class how they feel about dentists - do they avoid going? How often do they go? Encourage stories about trips to the dentist, and comparisons between the dental service in the UK and in other countries

Task 1 - Elicited dialogue (10-15 mins)

- First set the context. Tell the learners to imagine they have made an appointment to see the dentist, and they arrive at the dental practice on the right day, at the right time
- The aim of this part of the lesson is to work with the learners to build up a dialogue on the board. You do this by asking a series of prompt questions in order to elicit the language you need from the learners. No elicited dialogue will end up exactly the same, but in this case the dialogue you are aiming at will be something like this:

A: Good morning, can I help you?

B: Yes, I've got an appointment with (*choose a name for the dentist*)

A: Can I have your name, please?

B: Yes, it's (*insert the name of a learner*)

A: Oh yes, here we are, 10.30, take a seat in the waiting room

- Suggested prompts could include: "What would the receptionist say to you when you arrive?" (*Can I help you?*), "How would you reply?" "What would you tell the receptionist?" (*I've got an appointment with..*) "What would the receptionist ask next?" and so on
- Invite several suggestions for each line in the dialogue from the learners, make suggestions about improvements for the language, choose the best suggestion and slowly build up the dialogue on the board until it is complete, writing one utterance at a time
- **Don't allow the learners to write the dialogue down at this point**

Task 2 - Practising the dialogue (10 - 15 minutes)

- Practise the dialogue in a range of ways, keeping the pace as lively as possible:
 - First model each line and get the whole class to repeat chorally (highlight features of connected speech and pronunciation that need particular attention, e.g. "I've got_an_appointment")
 - Split the whole class in two and get half the class to say the "A" lines and the other half to say the "B" lines.
 - Put the class into pairs and get the pairs to practise together
 - Rub out certain key words and ask the group to try and remember the dialogue without them
 - Rub out even more words and repeat this procedure until there is no longer anything on the board
 - Ask the learners to write down what they remember of the dialogue and then to compare with each other to see if they remembered it correctly

Task 3 – An unexpected turn of events (10-15 minutes)

- Nominate one fairly confident learner to practise the dialogue with you again in front of the group. You play the receptionist
- When the learner gives the receptionist (you) their name, instead of saying "Oh yes, here we are, please take a seat", respond instead "Oh dear, I'm afraid there's been a mistake - you haven't got an appointment today - it was last week!"

- This unexpected response usually provokes laughter, and sometimes consternation from the nominated learner. Encourage them to respond in any way they can, and then ask the group for suggestions about how the learner could have responded in this situation.
- Write up their suggestions on the board. You are not aiming for any prescribed expressions, but some phrases you might want to suggest could include:

First reaction:

"Oh dear! I must have made a mistake!"

"Really? That's what is in my diary"

"Are you sure? Could you check again?"

"I feel such a fool!"

To deal with the problem:

"Can I make a new appointment"

"I don't suppose he has any appointments free today?"

"When is the next available appointment?"

"What shall I do?"

- Model the dialogue again with the alternative ending, and help learners to practise responding in pairs

Task 4 – Further practice (10 minutes)

- Hand out the "Wrong time, wrong place" dialogue cards to learners (one per pair).
- Pairs hold one card between them, so that each can only see one side. They take it in turns to practise the dialogues together.
- When they have finished one dialogue they can practise with another pair.
- Monitor and give feedback on spoken errors, as appropriate

Cooler (10 minutes)

Ask learners to tell the group if they have any stories about times when things went wrong like this, and how they dealt with the situation.

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