

## **Sample Activity 1: Developing Oral Proficiency in the Classroom**

**Goal:** To provide learners with an opportunity to combine previously studied language with listening and speaking practice. Ultimately, learners will deliver and analyze their own oral production.

**Materials:** This will work best when used with the prompt: “Describe the most important moment in your childhood.” The one used here is Claire. She describes secretly leaving Iran as a child. Other useful examples include: Elizabeth, Rachel, Karen, Emily, Alexis, Anthony, and Robert.

### **Stage 1: Preparation**

- Teacher asks students, “What is an anecdote?” and starts a checklist on the board with the students adding ideas.
- Teacher asks students, “What makes a good anecdote?”
- Teacher asks students, “Describe the most important moment in your childhood” while writing their responses on the board.
- Teachers leads discussion in:
  - o What type of memories are these (good vs. bad)?
  - o How do you feel about the memory/moment?

### **Stage 2: Listening**

- Play the beginning of the clip: (the question being asked and the first response).
  - o Ask students to discuss the response type: Was it a question, repetition, false start, re-phrasing, etc.?
- Continue to play the recording up until the interviewee begins to tell the story, then stop the recording
  - o Ask students to predict what happens: Where, when, who, what, how do they feel?
  - o Ask students why they are making these predictions: facial expression, body language, explicitly explanations?
- Play the remainder of the story.

### **Stage 3: Analysis**

- Place students in groups for intimate discussion
- Raise awareness of the story by asking them:
  - o What was the situation: good, bad, exciting, etc.?
  - o What happened?
  - o What was the result?
- Ask students to discuss how the story was told: pauses, body language, interjections.
- Ask whether this was a good anecdote. Why or why not?

- Ask students what type of role the interviewer played: responses, comprehension checks, negotiation of meaning.
- Discuss as a class the above questions.

#### **Stage 4: Planning**

- Students prepare their own anecdote and teacher/students are available for individual help.
  - o When and where did it happen?
  - o Who else is in the story?
  - o What happened?
  - o How did you feel?

#### **Stage 5: Production**

- Students practice their story in front of their small group. Listeners are encouraged to interject.
- Afterwards, students are asked:
  - o How did you feel speaking?
  - o Did you use body language or any other type of extralinguistic aid?
  - o Did the listeners help you?

#### **Stage 6: Analysis**

- Students analyze their partners' anecdote with some questions from the video as guidance. They will mainly focus on:
  - o Grammar
  - o Vocabulary use
  - o Fluency
  - o Conversational management and structure
- As an alternative, the students can pair up outside of class, interview each other, tape the interaction, transcribe it, and analyze the transcription. They can then present their findings to the class.
  - o What was the hardest part (grammar, vocabulary, fluency)?
  - o What helped?
  - o How can you improve?
- Another alternative: pick one of the other speakers and have them do an analysis on their own outside of class and present it to the class with the corresponding video segment. This could be done individually or as a group.