Project/sequence GUIDELINE

1. Preface

Traditionally, English lessons (and languages in general) were based in memorizing grammar and vocabulary and other dimensions were forgotten. The goal of this project is to make use of different tools and resources in order to create short oral activities in class to promote the usage of the English speaking language. The idea is to include these activities at the beginning or at the end of each session refreshing and putting in practise the contents of that unit/lesson. By using this methodology adult students will slowly feel more confident about speaking and improve the most demanded skill when learning English: speaking.

2. The project/sequence

The project is about making the students talk and interact between the other classmates and with the teacher as well. We have created different short oral activities which are thought to “break the ice”, that’s why they can be carried out at the beginning of the session. They can also be done at the end of the class just to check the contents done in class.
2.1. The context

Our target group are adult learners, from A2 level. These students are characterised for their heterogeneity. So, that means, we can have some students with some more knowledge of English skills and some others who have some lacks in speaking English. That means, the teacher has to deal with the challenge of adapting each activity into their students. The teacher also needs to take into account the different levels, intelligences and ways of learning of the students. All of the activities proposed are short and simple, so they can have the option of making them more complex depending on the group.

The activities proposed are thought to be done at the beginning or at the end of the lesson. We’ll give a sample of some of them.

2.2. Objectives, competences, contents and assessment criteria

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### ENGLISH. SHORT ORAL ACTIVITIES

**level: A2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Didactic objectives (communicative dimension)</th>
<th>Competences</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve pronunciation.</td>
<td>Linguistic: Develop the ability to express orally.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk without hesitation and linking sentences.</td>
<td>Social: Use the language to communicate in class and in real life.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Structure the speaking.</td>
<td>Information processing: Understand and produce oral language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use a variety of vocabulary and expressions.</td>
<td>Autonomy and personal initiative: Be able to talk with self confidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participate in different discussions and tolerate different ideas</td>
<td>Social: Get skills to express personal opinions assertively</td>
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**Contents**

**Functions and sociolinguistic aspects:**
1. Describing images
2. Speaking freely
3. Ask questions
4. Basic features (basic linguistic structures, polite forms…) of habitual oral texts: everyday conversations, descriptions, TV news…
5. Everyday actions like asking for advice, facts, verify information, describe experiences, express
6. Opinions about our current world

**Organization of the speech and types of text:**
1. Working on the oral text and all its dimensions
2. Showing opinion in favour and against a topic

**Lexical and semantic aspects:**
1. According to the different activities: countries of the world, expressing feelings, sensations, likes, dislikes…

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Template adapted from Sonia Guilana
2. Vocabulary and expressions referred to objects, places and people of our environment (family, home, society…) and ordinary situations (routines, transport, shopping, professions)

**Morphosyntax:**
1. Action verbs in present simple and introduction of simple forms of past simple and future
2. Oral structure of the sentence
3. Short answers and tag questions
4. Names, pronouns, articles, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions and conjunctions in order to join basic structures and words.
5. Common idioms in English
6. Connectors in order to join words and group of words

**Orthography:**
1. Contractions of the grammar tenses
2. would/like + -ing
3. checking all the grammar tenses

**Pronunciation and Intonation:**
1. Connecting the sound with the word
2. Pronounce correctly
3. Intonation and rhythm
4. Production of English sounds and differences between English and Catalan and Spanish

### Assessment criteria

- The student understands simple and more complex oral instructions.
- The student knows how to deal with expressing himself/herself using appropriate vocabulary and grammar worked in class.
- The student shows a predisposition to work in pairs, in group…and has a collaborative attitude.
- The student is able to understand and reproduce communicative situations.
- The student shows interest in participating in class and is respectful with his/her mates.
- The student is interested in learning a new language, is capable of detecting a mistake and is able to correct it.
- The student pronunciation and intonation are almost always very clear and accurate.
- The student keeps on talking without hesitating and knows how to link the sentences.
- The student structures the speaking well and it has an order.
- The student uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions.

### 2.3. Activities

1. **Name of the activity: Roll the ball**
   (a brief title and objective. Eg: Project presentation. Warm up)
   **TIMING:** 15 minutes at the beginning and at the end of each class
   **PROCEDURE:** The students are expected to refresh the contents of the last day class by practising speaking skills. The idea is that they have to talk about something in which appears the word written in the ball (it can be vocabulary done in the last day class) or they can ask questions among them using one of the words also written in the ball. For this activity, I imagine a ball that has different and separated parts (like a football ball, but smaller), so then, the teacher can write the choosen words on it. When each student throws the ball, he/she has to talk about the word he/she has in front of him/her.
   (briefly state what students are expected to do with it)
DYNAMICS: When the students speak they speak and work individually, but all the class participates. At the end of this activity, all the students (or most of them) have to speak. At the end of the class, you can repeat the activity just to summarize the work done that day in class. Students work individually, in pairwork, groupwork,…

2. Name of the activity: Dating

TIMING: 15 minutes
RESOURCES: a video projector
Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9j9nei1ECv0

PROCEDURE: First we would watch the video about dating. It’s about different opinions about dating. After that, we could talk about students’ experience on dating. We could talk about how dating has changed in the last years (using smartphones and internet), their view about blind dates, their worst or best place to have a date, when they had their first date…

NAME OF THE ACTIVITY: Beauty standards
TIMING: 15-20 minutes
RESOURCES: a video projector, some magazines or photos of women and men
Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RT9FmDBrewA

PROCEDURE: First we would watch the video about the beauty standards around the world. We could start asking: What do you find beautiful? What has been the beauty standard in the video you agree with? Which one do you find quite strange or not beautiful at all? Why?.. We could also introduce the topic about how this beauty standard has changed all over the years and the opinion of it nowadays.

3. Name of the activity: Where the hell is Matt?

TIMING: 15 minutes

RESOURCES: video projector. Photocopy of a map.
Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlKdbWwruY

PROCEDURE: First we give the photocopies to the students. We explain that they are going to watch a video about a man that goes around the world meeting people. They have to watch the video (2 or three times) and cercle in the map the places Matt visits and the order that they appear in the video. Example: 1. Sama’a Yemen 1/ Mumbai, India 2… The idea is to find information about places. After it we can talk about places we would like to go, countries we know etc...

4. Name of the activity: Favourite word

TIMING: 10-15 minutes

RESOURCES: board; piece of paper and pen

PROCEDURE: Write on the board one of your favourite words and explain why… it sounds nice to you, it looks nice, it’s useful...

The students should now write down some of their favourite word(s) and then give their reason for choosing them.

(from: Penny Ur & Andrew Wright: Five-Minute Activities, Cambridge University Press, 1992)
5. **Name of the activity: Find someone in the class who...**

* **Purpose:** Make the students know each other, practise speaking, practise questioning structure, learn new vocabulary, refresh old vocabulary they already knew (like jobs, nationalities, colours, genders...)

* **Material needed:** some flashcards (one per student) with information about an invented character. For example:

  Name: John McAdams  
  Nationality: English  
  Favourite colour: black  
  Job: Maths teacher  
  Hobbies: reading, going to the opera

And you would also need a paper with a chart they have to fill in once they get the information of the other characters.

* **Development:** The students have to speak with all the students in class in order to fill their chart, being able to find the person who is a dancer, another who is from Canada, another who enjoys cooking pasta...

The result of my experience doing this activity was quite successful. The students really enjoyed it and they could put into practise some issues worked in class. It was a different way of learning and all the students could participate on it, so it's a good idea if we have to deal with different student typologies.

6. **Name of the activity: Learning a Christmas song**

Timing: 15-20 minutes

Resources: Listening to the podcast and having the lyrics of “White Christmas” song

Podcast: [http://learningenglish.voanews.com/content/im-dreaming-of-a-white-christmas/1795953.html](http://learningenglish.voanews.com/content/im-dreaming-of-a-white-christmas/1795953.html)

Development: We could start talking about Christmas time (students’ opinion). Then, we could introduce the idea of Christmas songs and then listen to the podcast about the history of White Christmas’ song. After that, we could practise, listening to the song and doing a filling the gaps exercise working on the lyrics.

Name of the activity: Let’s be video creators for a day!

Timing: 15-20 minutes (at home)

Resources: using a video creator application such as wevideo, animoto...

Development: We can encourage students to invent a story and use a video creator programme to explain it. We can give the the main plot, or the structure or even how should the beginning of the story be, and then, let them get inspired and create a story by using their voice and some pictures from internet.

7. **Name of the activity: I like...I love....I hate**
Timing: 15-20 minutes

Resources: the video presentation of the teacher talking about the expressions to give someone’s opinion.

Development: The session starts with the video presentation of the teacher talking about the expressions: I like, I dislike, I love, I don’t like, I hate...then, we ask for questions and we practise in class asking the students for their likes and dislikes. If the group have a higher level, we can encourage them to create a video presentation recording themselves explaining what they like/dislike and add some pictures, sentences, or short videos in it too.

Another good exercise related to this could be about creating a video in which they do like the teacher: explaining a new English lesson or item. For example: explaining in their own words the usage of the Present Perfect and saying some examples using this grammar form.

8. Name of the activity: Guess the place

Timing: 25 minutes

Resources: A bag with different objects (a piece of bread, a coin, a plastic bone, a needle, an apple, a newspaper, one pair of socks, an envelope)

Procedure: Activity related with different places in a town: baker’s, bank, butcher’s, chemist’s, newsagent’s, market and post office.

The teacher divides the class in groups of four or five people and gives to each group a bag with different objects (a piece of bread, a coin, a plastic bone, a needle, an apple, a newspaper, one pair of socks, an envelope). Anyone of the group can’t see the objects inside the bag. One of the members puts her hands inside the bag and touches one object, without picking it up. The other members should ask her some questions about the size (e.g. ‘is it big?’), the form (e.g. ‘is it round?’), the texture (e.g. ‘is it soft?’)... The students should guess which object is inside the bag and which place is related with it. Another alternative is that the member who put her hands inside the bag describes the different features of the object.

9. Name of the activity: Corruption Spain

Timing: 25 minutes

Resources: Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0v0x8Y2WC0, video projector and worksheet

Procedure:

The teacher ask some questions about corruption and then the students watch a video based on Spanish corruption https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y0v0x8Y2WC0. After that, students should answer and debate some questions about the documentary.
Corruption in Spain

In group of three answer the following questions. You can use some words or expressions related with the topic like party, treasurer, accountability, corruption, judge, illegal funding, Spanish building boom or money-laundering practices.

1. What is the reason of the demonstration?
2. Where it takes place?
3. Which is the problem?
4. Which newspaper published the information?
5. Who is the main responsible of the illegal funding?
6. What is the Barcena’s list? Tell some members
7. Which solutions do you drive if you were the Prime Minister? Suggest two or three possible solutions to solve or to decrease the corruption.

10. Name of the activity: What do you know about history?

Timing: 20 minutes

Resources: Video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-VmbxpEFAA, video projector and worksheet. This video belongs to A Day in the Life Of A 10-Year-Old Evacuee - Hands on History - BBC

Procedure: The teacher ask some questions about History. The video is about life in Roman Empire and students should speak about some aspects of the documentary, universal History and History of Catalonia.

What do you know about History?

In group of three answer the following questions

1. What period of History describes this video?
   a. Medieval Ages
2. What does Eric’s father do?
   a. He works as a tax collector
   b. He works as a farmer
   c. He is a musician

3. Who is Quackus Maximus?
   a. Eric’s brother
   b. Eric’s grandpa
   c. Eric’s pet

4. Who is going to visit the Villa where Eric lives?
   a. The governor
   b. The major
   c. A football player

5. Which is the period of history that you prefer? Why?

6. Which historical character do you like more? Explain why

7. Do you like to visit historical cities or museums? Which ones? Explain one of your experiences

8. Decide who you think are the top four people of all time of Catalonia. Explain some reasons of this election

2.4. Evaluation

We are going to evaluate taking into account all the oral activities in class, and specially these items: pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, organization and participation.

We would give objective grades and a helpful feedback. For some activities we would use a rubric, showing the criteria on which we would evaluate our students. We would let our students know that we will be listening for these qualities when we evaluate their progress. We would also listen to them when they talk to us but also when they talk with other students doing oral activities in pairs.

We wouldn’t only take into consideration the final oral exam, but, as we said before, it would be a continuing assessment. We would take into account that some students may excel in one criteria but struggle in another. So, we definitely defend that following
objective criteria is much more encouraging than just putting some marks.

In some activities, we would make the students assess themselves. We would distribute a list of criteria and ask students to assess their partner/s following the list. Then, we could talk about the criteria and the mistakes.

Here we show the rubric idea with an example: “Describing the physical appearance of a partner”. We also attach the rubric of the activity.

Name of the activity: **Describing the physical appearance of a partner**
Student’s name:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronunciation</strong></td>
<td>Pronunciation and intonation are almost always very clear and accurate</td>
<td>Pronunciation and intonation are usually clear and accurate with few mistakes</td>
<td>Pronunciation and intonation errors sometimes make it difficult to understand the student</td>
<td>Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fluency</strong></td>
<td>Keeps on talking without hesitating and knows how to link the sentences</td>
<td>Keeps on talking but sometimes hesitates about the next sentences</td>
<td>Talks using short sentences and doesn’t use links or connectors.</td>
<td>Talks using very short sentences and doesn’t know how to link the speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Structures the speaking well and it has a complete order. Uses appropriate connectors</td>
<td>Structures the speaking quite well and it has a bit of order. Uses, in most of the cases, appropriate connectors</td>
<td>Weak structure of the speaking.</td>
<td>No structure and no order at all. There are no connectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions</td>
<td>Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions, but makes some errors in word choice</td>
<td>Uses limited vocabulary and expressions</td>
<td>Uses only basic vocabulary and expressions</td>
</tr>
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Template adapted from Sonia Guilana
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Uses a variety of structures with few grammatical errors</th>
<th>Uses a variety of grammar structures, but makes some mistakes</th>
<th>Uses a variety of structures with frequent errors, or uses basic structures with occasional mistakes</th>
<th>Uses basic structures and makes frequent errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Participates actively and respects the other partners when talking</td>
<td>Participates in the activity and respects the other partners when talking</td>
<td>Finds it difficult to participate.</td>
<td>Finds it difficult to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>Shows ability to understand the conversation perfectly</td>
<td>Understands the general sense of the conversation but asks in some case</td>
<td>Finds it difficult to understand the conversation</td>
<td>Does not understand anything</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**PROCESS:** Students working on the activities

**PRODUCTS:** Results of the activities

**FINAL PRODUCT:** do you expect your students to implement a final product?

It is probably a good idea to get/to design a rubric for the final product and share it with students so they know what is expected from them.

### 2.5. Class management and methodology

With such type of activity -short and oral- it is important:

1) To explain the activity very well before starting it, so students know what they are supposed to do and how are they going to be evaluated.

2) To get students involved in the activity to make easier for them to speak freely.

We would take into account the multiple intelligences and the NLP in the methodologies carried out in class. For instance, we would try to make our activities as varied as possible in order not to focus only in the writing, grammar task, so insist on the speaking, the visual activities, the listening, the interpersonal relationship among the students....We also consider a good idea to give a survey at the end of each term to let the students assess the activity, their opinion, what they have learnt at the end, if they had fun doing it...doing this good practice you show that you really care about their opinion and so they feel more attended.
3. Final thought

Traditional methodology (grammar and writing skills) in English is boring and the results are not encouraging. Motivating activities like watching movies, listening to the music or debating about current topics are necessary to implant in our lessons. In our case, we strongly believe that a mixture of different motivational speaking activities can make our students feel more confident when speaking and learn more. If they find themselves speaking in class, with their mates, with the teacher, in different activities, it will be easier for them to use oral English in real-life situations. Most of our adult students want to learn English to practise orally, so it’s a great idea to spend class time practising this skill and having fun at the same time. Last but not least, the enthusiasm and happiness of the teacher are essential values to encourage our students to get comfortable and to reach educational success.

Mind Map about Short Oral Activities

Blendspace about Short Oral Activities