

C: Using Scenarios, Interactions and Role Plays

In working with your learner, you will find it most useful to focus on specific interactions in which they will need to use English. All interactions take place in specific contexts which we refer to as **scenarios**.

Your sessions can focus on a single scenario, on reviews of a previous scenario, or a couple of scenarios each time. We are happy to produce scenarios for the workplace that your learner needs. Let us know.

Scenarios now available are grouped here under two categories:

1. **Everyday Living Scenarios:** interactions that people will engage in in the course of their everyday lives
2. **Workplace Specific Scenarios:** interactions that take place in the workplace. Some of these are general (understanding directions) and others are specific (working in hotel housekeeping).

Each scenario includes:

Useful phrases: These phrases are fundamental to building fluency. Learners should be encouraged to practice saying them after you model what they sound like (spoken at a natural speed) and then by themselves. (Feel free to share the written phrases with them).

Have your learner practice them until they can say them fluently as a unit. For some learners, this takes a bit of time, and may take up an entire session, with frequent reviews over several sessions during the time that you meet.

Memorized phrases are important because they prevent learners from trying to translate word for word from their first language.

Role Play suggestions: Lists of interactions and role plays are included for each scenario. Think of scenarios as settings where commonplace types of interactions take place. They are predictable and you can help your learner become aware of where the kind of talk that they can anticipate. This helps to build learners' confidence.

Noticing How Language Works

As a skilled, ordinary English speaker, you know that interactions (talk between people) take place commonly in everyday life. You also know, but may not always notice, that talk differs depending on the kind of interaction involved (asking for information, waiting on tables, taking orders, negotiating, etc.) **But such interactional talk is predictable.**

Note: Conversations and interactions are different. **In interactions people transact. They engage in an exchange that has a specific purpose.** Conversations take place normally between people who are acquainted and who exchange general pleasant talk as part of their ongoing relationship.

We want to prepare learners to become familiar with interactions that take place in specific scenarios so that they can participate in them easily. They might also converse with coworkers and other acquaintances, but conversational exchanges (as compared to everyday transactions) are not as frequent.

We have included common interactions in which you will engage with your learner in role plays. Many of these interactions involve just a few turns of talk. However, difficulties and challenges can often arise for new learners of English.

The idea is that learners use the phrases that they rehearsed and can use them in pretend interactions with you. This builds their confidence. But we also have to prepare them for difficulties that might come up. This is where your help is especially important.

Because you are an expert on the English-speaking world, you can add to these interactions adding complications as your learner becomes more confident. This will increase their ability to process language in real time and to trust their understanding of the interaction in which they are engaged.

For example: In a simple interaction involving giving directions, you can introduce unexpected comments or questions. You can act confused, ask them to repeat, ask whether there is a gas station nearby, or the distance between the destination and another location. What you want is for your learner to gain confidence in dealing with the unexpected. You can coach them on what to say back (giving them additional phrases to learn to say smoothly).

The rule for new phrases is: Short and simple.

Remember: the goal is to help learners produce language that is **comprehensible in context.**



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