

Spanish Phone Net Project
Lesson Plan Template 15
Higher Level (Abstract)

Phone Conversations Lesson Template
Rules of Engagement

(To be used as a lesson in recognizing common conversational patterns and gaining *discourse competence*)

Preparation

Download, print and copy lesson worksheet for students.

Objectives

- (1) Students are reminded that conversations have certain “template” structures that people follow in order to be polite and not violate the expectations of interlocutors.
- (2) Students outline conversational turns in English and compare them to those in the target culture.
- (3) Students listen for and recognize conversational turns in the target language.

Warm Up (10 Minutes)

Ask students to imagine that somebody they haven’t seen in awhile walks up to them in the store and asks if he/she can borrow some money without even greeting or making small talk. How would the students feel? Would they be likely to do the person a favor? Why/why not?

Afterward, ask students to work together briefly in pairs to outline a 15 minute conversation in which the speakers have a short time to agree on something or accomplish a task. What happens first? How long does it last? Second? Third? When does the “meat” of the conversation happen? How does it end?

Transition

Explain that conversations rest on an agreed upon set of social norms that determines the progression and timing of certain parts of the interaction. Point out that these things differ from culture to culture. Ask students what they already know about the structure and timing of conversational elements in the target culture and list.

Listening Activity

Pass out a worksheet listing the commonly accepted turns in conversation for the target culture. Play the conversation for students and have them identify each of the elements and how long they took. Ask them to note any changes in register, tone, etc. as speakers progress through the stages of conversation.

Wrap Up

Have students compare their English conversation outline to the Spanish dialect one. What is similar? What is different? What will English speakers need to remember and practice to conform to conversational discourse norms in the target culture? Encourage students to continue to use the LingNet website and resources to practice listening to Spanish dialects by noting how conversations change based on who is speaking.