

Additional Activities for Chapter 11

Activity: Responding to Ongoing Talk

The conversations in Worksheet 5 (below) offer preparation for student production of the continuers. In the activity, students identify points within the ongoing talk at which it would be appropriate to produce a continuer, that is, places at which an utterance could be considered syntactically complete within the linguistic context. (See the Answer Key for answers.)

The conversation excerpts in Worksheet 5 are adapted: Conversation 1 (Jefferson, 1984, p. 209); Conversation 2 (Drummond & Hopper, 1993, p. 205); Conversation 3 (Schegloff, 2007, p. 45); Conversation 4 (Schegloff, 2007, p. 276).

Worksheet 5

Practice Responding to Ongoing Talk

1. Identifying Appropriate Contexts for Continuers

Read the following stories. The responders have been removed, and the talk has been formatted into a paragraph for this activity. Try to find every place where you think responders might be used—in other words, any point at which the speaker could possibly have completed an utterance. Add an asterisk (*) to show places where you might use a responder.

Example: I was just spreading my homework out on the dining room table* when the doorbell rang.* I couldn't imagine who it was* calling that late.* But I figured I'd better....

NOTE: Based on reading, we can mark the grammatical units of talk where a responder might be used. In actual talk, we do not respond at the end of every unit.

1. And uh then I have a man coming Tuesday to see about remodeling the kitchen the way I want it you know and the butler's pantry, and doing a few things like that, and it's just you know working to....
2. So the next day I was out playing tennis and oh my gosh we were out in the club eating? And I almost threw up all over the table.
(Note: *throw up* means "to vomit.")
3. Now I wanna ask you something. I wrote a letter. To the governor. Telling him what I thought about him.

4. Oh he's too much. They put us in this gigantic lecture hall. An:: (0.2) he doesn't speak- (0.2) very lou:d anyway. An' bo:y oh boy (0.2) someone said at the end of class, could ya please bring in a microphone next time

Now listen to the recording (www.tesolmedia.com/books/pragmatics2) and check your answers. Remember, your answers do not have to correspond exactly to those of the listener in the recording to be appropriate.

2. Practice Using Responders in Ongoing Talk

Work in pairs. Student A reads the paragraph aloud with appropriate emphasis and pauses to invite responders at some places. Student B listens and uses responders where fitting. Take turns playing reader and responder. Experiment and play with this even if you do not feel you can get it exactly right.

NOTE: People use responders more often when speakers pause slightly or use a rising intonation at the end of a unit of talk, but listeners also use responders in overlap with the speaker, and the timing is close to the ends of units, but not always perfectly coordinated.

To close down the activity, one or two pairs can perform reading and responding for the class. The teacher can ask the class to reflect on what was most difficult, for example, selecting an appropriate responder to use or knowing exactly when to respond. The teacher can tell the students that even proficient speakers do not always time responders perfectly, and that it is most important for a listener to show engagement, so it is okay even if the timing is not always perfect.

Activity: Using Responders in Communication

The following activity provides opportunities for students who are interested in practicing using responders while focusing on meaningful communication. It may help to have students prepare these stories and instructions for homework. Learners who opt to perform Task 1 may want to bring their recipes, vacation photos, or other resources into class to support their explanation.

Worksheet 6

Communication Practice

Work with a partner. Play the roles of speaker and responder. Then, switch parts. To prepare your talk, make notes (phrases, drawings, diagrams, etc.)

Task 1: Explain one of the following:

- (a) how to get to school from your home or from school to a park or restaurant
- (b) how to cook something, how to make coffee or your favorite drink
- (c) how to study English vocabulary in some creative way

OR

Task 2: Tell a story of a memorable experience:

- (a) tell what you did on a trip or for a major celebration
- (b) tell how you met someone who later became a good friend
- (c) tell about the day you had trouble getting to school because of traffic or problems with public transportation

Answer Sheet: Worksheet 5

The Original Data Transcript below shows the responders that were used. In addition, asterisks (*) have been added at points where a responder also could have been used appropriately. (However, learners should be cautioned not to use a responder at every possible point.)

Conversation 1 (adapted from Jefferson, 1984, p. 209):

- 1 G: So that's the story.
- 2 B: **Mm hm**,
- 3 G: And uh then I have a man coming Tuesday (*) to
- 4 see about remodeling the kitchen (*) the way I want it (*)
- 5 you know and the butler's pantry,
- 6 G: **Uh huh**,
- 7 B: And doing a few things (*) like that
- 8 G: **Uh huh**
- 9 B: And it's just you know working to...

Conversation 2 (adapted from Drummond & Hopper, 1993, p. 205):

- 1 M: So- the next day I was out playing tennis (*) and
- 2 oh my gosh we were out in the club eating?
- 3 E: **Yeah**
- 4 M: And I about threw up (*) all over the table. (*)

Conversation 3 (Schegloff, 2007, p. 45):

1 B: Now, I wanna ask you something. (*) I wrote a letter.

2 (pause)

3 A: **Mh hm,**

4 B: To the governor.

5 A: **Mh hm,**

6 B: Telling him what I thought about him! (*)

Conversation 4 (Schegloff, 2007, p. 276):

1 B: Oh he's too much. (*) They put us in this gigantic lecture hall.

2 A: Mmm.

3 B: An:: (0.2) he doesn't speak- (0.2) (*) very loud anyway.

4 A: Mm hm,

5 B: An' bo:y oh boy (0.2) someone said at the end of class, (*)

6 could ya please bring in a microphone next time (*)