

## Lesson plan: Circumlocution

Languages: all, with resources in Spanish

Prior knowledge suggested: "It's...", basic description (colors, big, small), common verbs (has, does, makes)

Brain break ideas: Short (clean) clips of song "Qué difícil es hablar el español"; name something obscure and interesting ("offal") and ask students to vote by raising hands whether it's a person, place, thing

### Activation: Categories

- Display (write, slide, etc.) categories:  
*place*  
*person*  
*thing*
- Use proper nouns (Taco Bell, Barack Obama, Forever 21, iPod, Katy Perry, theme park) and ask students to categorize as person, place, or thing.  
Introduce the phrase "*It is a...*"  
--> tech visual idea: Make a grid of photos of easily recognizable logos and ask students until they get the pattern:  
*Scaffolded:*  
T: "What is it? Person or thing?"  
S: "Person"  
T: "It's a person, yes."  
*Goal:*  
T: "What is it?"  
S: "It's a thing."
- Introduce more categories as student comprehension and level allows: animal, machine, food, article of clothing, device, etc.

### brain break!

### Activation: Description

- Show a picture of a thing and ask, "*Is it a person or a thing?*"  
Ask students to list words they can use to describe: color, size, characteristics.  
List their ideas for descriptive words.
- Repeat with a picture of a person (ask, *is it a thing?*)
- Continue until you have a good list to work from.
- Pass out pictures or show a grid of pictures, or a picture of a group of people, or a picture with several things on a table.  
Students take turns describing to a partner something or someone in the picture and the partner must identify from the description what the speaker is referring to.

*Note: At this point students will answer identifying objects in English if they don't know the word in Spanish and that is perfectly fine; the point of circumlocution is to describe words you don't know! It's an added bonus that some students will actually acquire these words as new vocabulary.*

--> tech visual idea: In a school with technology access, have students find their own interesting picture to describe. Direct them to use [images.google.com](https://images.google.com) in safe search or a TL term in [flickr.com/creativecommons](https://www.flickr.com/) and time the search to limit its length.

## brain break!

### Activation: Verbs

- List a few profession words and communicate their meaning. (Profession words within the school would be common for early novices: teacher, principal, secretary, librarian.)
- Ask for students to volunteer to say what profession a parent is in.
- Use the profession words to teach/review common verbs to express what someone or something does: *is, does, makes, has*. Other possibilities: *helps, goes, gives*, etc.
- List objects of common use with your profession words and ask students to assign them a verb.
- Introduce "that" as a connector (and "who" if your language requires the change). Model the description "*It's a [thing] that makes...*" until a few students are ready to volunteer to try this model to describe one of the words in the list. Continue until all students indicate they are ready to try it.
- Show a grid of common objects and people (athlete, movie star, judge, etc.) and students take turns describing one to a partner, who will guess which picture the speaker is describing.

*transition: show pictures again of things they've seen here and give students 1 minute of silence to try to remember the TL word for as many as they can, show the number on fingers (i.e. they know 3 in TL, show 3 fingers)*

### Game: "Speak"tionary

Divide students into two teams.

For the first team, a student comes up. Show the student a picture of something they've seen already in this lesson. Instead of drawing, the student can only use words to circumlocute what's in the picture. Only their team can guess. If time runs out and the team doesn't get, the other team can steal the point by guessing correctly.

*transition: "trophy" for the winning team, pass out grids, give students 1 minute of silence to look at grid and instructions and choose a partner*

**Interpersonal task: It's a....**

Make a grid (at least 2x7) of words that vary in your language. Include at least two countries (or regions) and at least seven unknown vocabulary words ("jacket" "strawberry") with their variations for each country.

Here is a [resource for Spanish](http://bit.ly/1sNPPgd): <http://bit.ly/1sNPPgd>