



LESSON 5: NETWORKING

Expressing your opinion. Talking about sports.



Version without a key



WARM UP

THINK and ANSWER

- What are the most popular small talk topics?

Read the extract from Wikipedia and try to fill in the gaps using the words from the grid.

circumstances	Familiarity	interpersonal
maximized	Relationship	agreement

Small talk topics.

The topics of small talk conversations are generally less important than their social function. The selected topic usually depends on any pre-existing _____ between the two people, and the circumstances of the conversation. In either case, someone initiating small talk will tend to choose a topic for which they can assume a shared background knowledge, to prevent the conversation being too one-sided.

Topics can be summarised as being either direct or indirect. Direct topics include personal observations such as health or looks. Indirect topics refer to a situational context such as the latest news, or the conditions of the communicative situation. Some topics are considered to be "safe" in most _____.

- The weather
- Music
- Television and films
- Sports

The level of detail offered should not overstep the bounds of _____ space. When asked, "*How are you?*" by an acquaintance they do not know well, a person is likely to choose a simple, generalised reply such as, "*Fine, thank you.*" In this circumstance it would probably not be appropriate for them to reply with a list of symptoms of any medical conditions they were suffering from. To do so would assume a greater degree of _____ between the two people than is actually the case, and this may create an uncomfortable situation.

Conversational patterns

A study of small talk in situations which involve the chance meeting of strangers has been carried out by Klaus Schneider. He theorises that such a conversation consists of a number of fairly predictable segments, or "moves".

The first move is usually phrased so that it is easy for the other person to agree. It may be either a question, or a statement of opinion with a tag question. For example, an opening line such as "Lovely weather, isn't it?" is a clear invitation for _____.

The second move is the other person's response. In functional conversations that address a particular topic, Grice's Maxim of Quantity suggests that responses should contain no more information than was explicitly asked for. Schneider claims that one of the principles of small talk contradicts the Maxim of Quantity. He suggests that politeness in small talk is _____ by responding with a more substantial answer. Going back to the example of "Lovely weather, isn't it?", to respond factually by just saying "Yes" (or even "No") is less polite than saying, "Yes, very mild for the time of year".

Schneider describes that subsequent moves may involve an acknowledgement such as "I see", a positive evaluation such as "That's nice", or what's called "idling behaviour", such as "Mmm", or "Really?".



EXTENDING YOUR VOCABULARY

☑ Exercise 1:

Match the definitions with the words from the text.

Idling	→		1. The conditions that existed before a particular event happened, and that help to explain why it happened.
background	→		2. To stop something from happening or someone from doing something.
prevent	→		3. Using or consisting of facts.
overstep	→		4. With no particular purpose or effect.
bound	→		5. To go further than what is considered acceptable or correct.
factually	→		6. Legal or social limits

Exercise 2

Complete the sentences with the words from the previous exercise. Some of the words have to be put in a right grammar form.

idle	background	prevent
overstep	Bound	factually

1. The bad language in that play _____ the limits of what ought to be allowed on television.
2. We weren't aware of the _____ of the situation.
3. What you did was beyond the _____ of acceptable behaviour.
4. This is no to say that you are _____ wrong.
5. It is _____ to pretend that their marriage is a success.



SPEAKING

Understanding the text.

Exercise 1: practice the new vocabulary in speaking.

Answer the questions using the suggested words in brackets.

1. What topic will usually choose a person initiating a small talk?

(background knowledge)

2. What types of small talk are there? What do they depend on?

(circumstances)

3. How detailed should a small talk be?

(overstep)

4. When would somebody give details of their medical symptoms when answering the “how are you” question?

(familiarity)

5. What does Klaus Schneider theorise in his study of small talk?

(consist)

6. What does Grice's Maxim of Quantity suggest?

(explicitly)

7. What maximizes the politeness in small talk?

(substantial)

Exercise 2

Find synonyms for the words in brackets in previous exercise. Answer the questions above again, using your own words and the synonyms.

WORDS	SYNONYMS
background knowledge	
circumstances	
overstep	
familiarity	
consist	
explicitly	
substantial	



PART TWO

🗨️ EXPRESSING YOUR OPINION AND TALKING ABOUT SPORTS.

☑️ Exercise 1

Expressing your opinion – useful phrases.

Look at the words in the box. Use them to build 10 phrases used to express your opinion.

in my	as far as	personally	from my	I am concerned	I
speaking	it seems	I would	my impression	to me that	eyes
is that	say that	I have	reckon	the feeling that	

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

🗨️ Look at the rest of the phrases. Learn them by heart.

In my opinion, ...

As for me / As to me, ...

My view / belief / conviction is that ...

I hold the view that ...

I am of the opinion that ...

I am under the impression that ...

My own feeling on the subject is that ...

I have no doubt that ...

I think / consider / find / feel / believe / suppose / presume / assume that ...

I hold the opinion that ...

I dare say that ...

I guess that ...

I bet that

I gather that ...

☑️ Exercise 2

TALKING ABOUT SPORTS – USEFUL WORDS

Look at the words below and order them to a proper category.

bat	diving	athlete	ace	gall	snooker
golf club	weight lifting	cue	golfer	kit	gymnast
saddle	record	referee	ice-skating	sill	cup
sailboard	cycling	athletics	shuttle cock		

Types of sports

Sports Related Words

People in sport

Sport
Equipment

Networking – lesson number 5.

	amateur		
badminton		basketball/volleyball/hokey/tennis player	football
basketball	basket	squash / snooker player	hockey ball
boxing	captain	boxer	golf ball
		cyclist	
	game	swimmer	
squash	goal	footballer /football player	
tennis			hockey stick
gymnastics	match		ice-skates
surfing	medal	surfer	racing car
horse-racing	net	jockey	racket
	professional	ice-skater	
motor-racing	race	racing driver	
riding		weight-lifter	skis
		rugby player	
skiing		skater	surfboard
	spectators	skier	

SPEAKING EXERCISES

EXPRESSING YOUR OPINION WHILE TALKING ABOUT SPORTS

EXERCISE 1

Using phrases from exercise 1 say what you think about the following:

BOXING AS A SPORT

PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALLERS EARNING A LOT OF MONEY

FOOTBALL TRANSFERS

EXTREME SPORTS AS A DANGEROUS THING

CAR RACING AS AN EXCITING SPORT

☑ EXERCISE 2

Now look at the statements below and say whether you agree with them or not.
Justify your opinion by explaining why.

Riding is an easy sport.

Weight – lifting is not popular in Poland.

Snooker is the most boring sport ever.

Boxing is fascinating.

Horse-racing is exciting.

Gymnastics is a very dynamic sport.

Baseball is extremely interesting to watch.

🗨️ SPEAKING EXERCISES – SMALL TALKING ABOUT SPORTS

✅ Exercise 1

What questions about sport would you ask in a small talk with a stranger?

Suggested answers:

- 🗨️ What's your favourite football team?
- 🗨️ Do you follow Champions League / German League / etc.?
- 🗨️ Do you have any favourite sports?
- 🗨️ Do you prefer doing or watching a sport?
- 🗨️ Do you watch the Olympic games?
- 🗨️ Which Olympic games do you prefer – winter or summer?
- 🗨️ Do you watch the Grand Prix / Wimbledon / World Cup?
- 🗨️ Is there any sport you have never tried and you would like to try?



THINK AND PRACTISE

☑ Exercise 2

Imagine you are in a business lunch with some of your business partners. How would start talking about the following sport news.

Roleplay with your colleague or a friend: tell your partner about the news and get their opinion on it. Then change roles.

📰 News number 1

Lewandowski agrees to Bayern move

Borussia Dortmund striker Robert Lewandowski signs a pre-contract agreement to join Bayern Munich in June.

📰 News number 2

Schumacher health reports irk family

Michael Schumacher's manager warns about "invalid" health reports, after one was quoted as saying his life was not in danger.

📰 News number 3

Arsenal knock out rivals Spurs

Tottenham suffer a first defeat under Tim Sherwood as goals from Santi Cazorla and Tomas Rosicky see Arsenal progress in the FA Cup.

Start your small talk with one of the phrases:

💬 Have you heard about ... ?

Or

💬 Have you heard the news this morning?

News source: <http://www.bbc.com/sport/0/>