

# **Best Practices: Speaking Dynamics**

**8th Annual Conference**

**San Diego Mesa College**

**April 8, 2011**

## **Darlene Múzquiz-Guerreiro: Presenting “Fishing for Words” or “The Art of Circumlocution.”**

This presentation will focus on promoting the use of circumlocution through the use of communicative activities such as the well-known game \$25,000 Pyramid. This game may be designed to play in a variety of ways in order to target different levels of proficiency that range from the native speaker to the intermediate-low speaker.

### **Preparation:**

The instructor should prepare multiple sets of ten vocabulary words on index cards for the target chapter or chapters. The English word on one side, the Spanish word on the other.

Once the vocabulary words have been chosen, the instructor should divide the class in groups of four students, who will then divide into pairs. Each unit of four will decide whom their partner will be in order to play the game and who will give the clues and who will receive them. The students giving the clues should receive five index cards and instructed not to allow their partners to see them.

### **Rules of the game:**

- The instructor should write the following rules on the blackboard to insure that everyone understands.

#### **Clue givers:**

- May use opposites, synonyms, analogies, descriptions or one word related clues.
- May use a sentence with a blank and gesture the blank in the air with their hand or finger.
- May use a complete sentence to imitate what the person or thing would say. When doing this, it helps if the clue giver changes their tone of voice to indicate an imitation.
- May only give three clues per vocabulary word.

#### **Clue receiver:**

- When the clue receiver does not know the word they must say “pasa.”
- They may guess at the word multiple times but must guess the word correctly by the final (third) clue.
- They may only guess using vocabulary words.

- If they guess a form of the word, the clue giver should say “forma de la palabra” (form of the word).  
The instructor may ask the students to set timers. We all know that almost every student in our classes have cell phone. They may set the timers on their phones. If the instructor does not want the activity timed, they may decide that the team with the most correct answers wins regardless of the time that it takes.

The winners of each team then move on to another group until a final winner is left.

**Variations to the game:**

- In order to make the game more challenging, the instructor may try the following:
- Only give the English word on the index card, which would challenge the clue giver.
- As that all clues be given in the past tense.
- As that the clues be given using sentence with the subjunctive.
- If the instructor would like to have a special play off, they may ask that the final two winning teams play against each other using a timer.
- They make chose vocabulary words from past chapters or group vocabulary words from past chapters by special topics or themes.