

Expressing Excitement in Spanish

By: Nicole Williams, Language Teaching Studies at University of Oregon

Part I (85 minutes)

This activity was designed for adult learners at the intermediate-mid proficiency level. It was created to build the knowledge and analysis quadrants of the [IPIC chart](#) for Expressing Excitement. Learners will experience a sequence of Observe, Analyze, Extend while building knowledge on how people express excitement. They will also compare phrases provided in a textbook with more natural speech one might find in real situations. The extension activity gives learners a chance to practice the skills learned and apply them to an input of interest to them. (Part II builds upon the content covered in this lesson and addresses the subjectivity and awareness quadrants.)

LEARNING OUTCOMES. Learners will be able to:

Knowledge:

- Use different strategies to express excitement, such as:
 - *Estoy emocionado/-a*
 - *-ísimo, -ísima*
 - *Tan [emoción]*
 - *Qué [adjective]*
 - *¡No me digas!*
 - *Me flipa*

Analysis:

- Identify and understand appropriate ways of expressing excitement based on distance (how well individuals know one another) and power (a peer versus a professor).

MODE(S): Interpersonal, Interpretive

MATERIALS: [Activity Slides](#), Sheet of paper, pencil/pen, [Handouts: to Analyze the Video and to Analyze an Emotion](#)

PROCEDURE

1. *Optional (Slide 1)* Begin with a small warm-up to prime learners for a discussion on emotions (i.e., excitement). In pairs, learners share one piece of good news. You can later refer to this interaction by asking learners how they reacted to the news being shared with them (News could be shared in the L1 or the TL (Spanish).
2. *(Slide 2)* Learners take out a sheet of paper and draw a T table. On the left side, learners brainstorm different ways (in Spanish) that they know to express excitement. They can reference their textbook if they need help. (Avoid drawing their attention to media or tv, as this will be covered later. The goal is to elicit genuine reactions first.)
 - a. After they write down 3-5 phrases individually, learners share with a different partner what they wrote down. These conversations can flow in and out of L1 and TL.

Observe (15-20 minutes):

1. Form groups of 2-3 learners (3-4 if a larger class).
2. *(Slide 3)* Groups have the option of choosing one of three videos:
 - a. An interview with the voice actor of Miguel from *Coco* who is speaking with interviewers.
 - b. A YouTube video of a famous couple, Evaluna and Camilo (two singers) who are sharing the news that they've started their own YouTube channel.
 - c. A video of a young group of TikTokers who are playing a game where they answer questions.
3. Make sure that there is at least one group watching each of the videos - this will be important for the full class discussion. Groups are allowed to choose the video that interests them most - but they will be choosing based on the thumbnail. Do not give them any background information on the videos - they will discover contextual factors as they go.

4. While watching the video, groups write down what they notice and/or their thoughts about the video. (At this point, learners might realize we are talking about emotions, but the instructor is not explicitly drawing this connection yet.)

Analyze (35-40 minutes):

1. (Slide 4) Learners use guided questions to analyze the video they selected. They fill out a handout in groups, paying special attention to who, what, where, and how. The following are some extension questions you could ask to prompt deeper discussion as you circulate the class:
 - a. What do you notice about the speakers' body language?
 - b. What kinds of features are you paying attention to in order to know someone is excited?
2. Learners fill out the handout in the same groups as the Observe phase. Then, learners pair up with another group who analyzed the same video and compare answers.
3. (Slide 5) As a class, the instructor leads a discussion on the comparison of three videos. Call on learners to provide information to fill in the chart. If participation is weak, consider asking:
 - a. What do you notice about the effect of who is speaking on how excitement is expressed?
 - b. Is there a difference in how excitement is expressed about different topics?
 - c. Do you think people would express their excitement differently in a different context? (e.g., in class, in a grocery store)
 - d. What linguistic features did you consider when gauging excitement?
 - e. What paralinguistic features did you consider when gauging excitement?
 - f. Which phrases are similar to ones you use in your L1? Would you feel comfortable using these phrases in your L2?
4. (Slide 6) Wrapping up the analysis discussion, learners return to their T-chart they made earlier and write down 3-5 new ways of expressing excitement that they like or would want to remember. (Learners could also make note of the contextual factors that would influence these specific phrases being used.)

Extend (10 minutes):

1. (Slide 7) For homework, learners apply this thinking routine and analysis procedure to an emotion of their choosing. As an example, they could choose to investigate happiness, sadness, anger, jealousy, frustration, support, etc.
2. Learners complete the same handout that was used in class - with one exception, an additional question asking them to take note of any phrases they would want to remember/use - learners choose one source of input (e.g., podcast, tv show, movie, news report). For this assignment, learners will differentiate their analysis (i.e., not replicate exactly what we did in class) by choosing to either:
 - a. Change the relationship between speakers (we looked at young interviewee/older interviewers, a young couple, and all young adults)
 - b. Change the context of the speakers (we looked at an interview setting, a vlog/announcement, and a TikTok friend group game)
 - c. Change the dialect of the speakers (we looked at Mexican, Columbian, Venezuelan, etc.)
 - d. Change the reason why people are feeling _____ (we looked at excitement for congratulating someone on success, sharing good news, and reacting to funny answers)

Notes: The language use (rate of speech, vocabulary, etc.) varies from video to video which could make some more difficult to understand than others. There are Spanish captions through YouTube that they could turn on. It is also intended for learners to work together to fill in gaps in knowledge. The point of watching the videos is not to completely understand everything, but to get the general gist and pay special attention to phrases of excitement.

Part II (85 minutes)

This activity is a follow-up to Part I, which built the knowledge and analysis quadrants of the IPIC chart for Expressing Excitement. In Part II, attention is focused on learners developing in the Subjectivity quadrant of the IPIC chart, though the Knowledge and Analysis quadrants will be utilized as learners use prior knowledge to assess possible strategies to express their emotions and choose among those. The bulk of the class session will fall under Analyze (as learners investigate an assigned strategy to express emotion) and Extend (in the instructor-created opportunity to generate emotional expressions in relatable and emotion-provoking scenarios).

LEARNING OUTCOMES. Learners will be able to:

Subjectivity:

- Explain why they chose a particular strategy to express their excitement.

Awareness:

- Articulate how their selected strategy demonstrates the magnitude of emotion they would like to express (i.e., how strongly they would like to convey their excitement)

MODE(S): Interpersonal, Presentational

MATERIALS: [Activity Slides](#), [Handout to Analyze](#) (last class's homework), Markers/pens/pencils, Easel Pad sheets, [Handout: Strategies for expressing emotions](#) (printed copy, 1 per person), [What Do You Meme Adapted Cards](#) (printed out decks, 1 per trio of learners), Small Whiteboards (or plastic sheets covers as an alternative, 1 per person), Expo Pens (1 per learner), Sample Exit Ticket Form, Computer/Phone

PROCEDURE

1. Looking at the meme shown on the slide, learners discuss in pairs how they would react to the two described situations. What emotions do they elicit? How would they describe the feelings that are evoked to someone else?
2. Transition into the day's content by having learners pull up a (physical or digital) copy of the homework in which they analyzed a new source of input and changed either the relationship between speakers, the context, the dialect, or the reason for the emotion.
3. *(15 minutes)* In groups of 4-5, learners share their findings and report back. At this time, they will also use a large sheet off an easel pad to write down different strategies and forms they noticed Spanish speakers using to express the emotion they selected. (Remind them to share information related to the people, topic, situation, and communication that is involved).
4. *(5 minutes)* As a class, create a larger list of examples and strategies learners found in their individual explorations. Take note of the form and the corresponding emotion.

Analyze 25 minutes):

1. *(15 minutes)* Considering the list of class examples and strategies, explain that we will take a more focused look at particular strategies to express emotions generally (as opposed to just excitement). Building on some of the strategies found by learners, and connecting to grammar points that are being covered in the course, break the class up into 5 groups. Each group will be assigned a specific strategy:
 - a. augmentatives/diminutives
 - b. metaphors
 - c. adverbs
 - d. hyperboles/prefixes
 - e. superlatives

2. Pass out the [Handout: Strategies for expressing emotions](#) for learners to jot down notes as they speak. They will also fill this out during the class discussion).
3. Collect the following information:
 - a. What is your strategy? How would you define it?
 - b. What are some examples of it being used to express emotions? Can you find this strategy in use in any of the class examples that were generated?
 - c. What are some reasons why someone might use this strategy? How does it help convey emotions?
 - d. What are some questions you still have? Anything you are still wondering?
4. (10 min) As a class, a representative from each group shares their group's findings and question(s). If any examples of the particular strategy are identified in the class generated list, the instructor should use different colors to identify those instances.

Extend (30 minutes):

1. Emphasize the knowledge that has been built by the class and their individual explorations, as well as the critical analysis skills developed through careful observation and attention to different factors impacting the expression of emotions. Explain that now that they have a basic toolkit to draw from (with the five specific strategies explored), learners will have a chance to put those skills to use in ways that are authentic and meaningful to them.
2. Ask if anyone has heard of "What Do You Meme?" Briefly explain that this game involves one person reading a scenario card and the other players choosing a meme that best exemplifies and represents that scenario. The intent is usually to be funny. For today's activity, though, learners will be playing a loosely adapted version of the game.
3. In groups of 3, learners will use the [What Do You Meme Adapted Cards](#) to practice expressing their emotions.
 - a. Directions are as follows:
 - i. In groups of 3, identify who's birthday is coming up next - this person will be the first one to read the scenario card.
 - ii. After reading the scenario card, the other two people have 1 min to craft an emotional expression. Think of it in terms of: 1.) how you would react to this situation and 2.) How might you retell this story to someone else? What would be the tone or the emotional charge of the retelling?
 - iii. As learners craft their response, they can reference their Expressions Handout completed earlier for inspiration.
 - iv. The goal is to be as creative as possible, yet also communicate emotions in a way the listener can understand the intent.
 - v. Learners should choose a strategy that has been studied (and observed) in class as per the [Handout: Strategies](#).
 - vi. Learners write down their creative reactions on the personal whiteboards (they are also free to draw a picture to accompany the words).
 - b. After 1 minute, the person who read the scenario now serves as the judge. Learners have roughly 1 minute each to explain and defend their answers. The judge selects the "best" response depending on:
 - i. How well the other learners explain their rationale for using a specific strategy.
 - ii. How that strategy is used to convey a specific emotion that is elicited from the scenario.
 - c. Once a "winner" is chosen, that person gets to keep the scenario card. Groups can decide whether the next person is selected based on 1.) whoever won the previous round or 2.) sequential turns (clockwise/counterclockwise).
 - d. Repeat the steps until time runs out (or you run out of scenarios).
 - i. In the case that learners run out of scenarios, the instructor can challenge them to think of their own scenarios.

4. As you wrap up the class (and collect the decks of What Do You Meme Adapted Cards), learners complete a short Exit Ticket. Using a Google form, they employ some metacognitive thinking and complete a brief thinking routine ([Connect. Extend. Challenge](#) provided by Project Zero from Harvard Graduate School of Education) meant to identify main gains from today's class and draw connections to their own lives. Results of the survey can be used as a tool for the instructor to evaluate learning and pace of instruction.

Notes: Descriptions and some information on the slides are written in English, however, they can be translated into Spanish as desired for the purposes of your or your learners' needs.