

## 4.3 Speaking

### Tricky situations

Focus: *developing speaking strategies for different situations.*

#### Situation 1

1. Read the following dialogue that takes place in a shop:



**Customer:** *Er... I need to buy something for my phone.*

**Shop assistant:** *Sure.*

**Customer:** *Eh it's very small, it's about this size.*

**Shop assistant:** *Yeah.*

**Customer:** *Em... it's for, em..., I want to put lots of music on my phone.*

**Shop assistant:** *You mean you want a memory card.*

**Customer:** *Yeah, yeah, that's it.*

2. The speaker couldn't remember the name of the object he wanted to buy (this can happen in your first language and not just in English!)
3. Underline and discuss the three strategies the customer used when he couldn't remember or didn't know the word for what he wanted.
4. List other things that you might do when you cannot remember or don't know a word.
5. Now practise in pairs. Act out the situation below, then swap roles. When you are ready, act out one of your dialogues for the class.

#### **Student A**

Think of something you want to buy. Go into a shop to ask for it – but don't use the name of the object you want! Use other strategies until the shop assistant guesses what you are going to buy.

#### **Student B**

You are a shop assistant. Are you young or old? Male or female? Are you in a good mood today? Are you fed up? A young person comes in looking for something – but s/he can't even remember the name of it. Have a conversation until you work out what s/he wants.

## Situation 2

1. Sometimes when you are asked a question, you need to think before you answer. You need 'thinking time' but you don't want to just stand there and say nothing.

Below are some phrases that you might use:

*Ah, yes, now...*  
*Actually...*  
*That's a very good question...*  
*You see...*  
*Well, as far as I can see...*  
*Honestly...*  
*You know what I think...*

Add to this list if you can.

2. Now practise. Play the **Just a Minute!** game.

You or your teacher can think of some topics.  
They could be easy:

**Food**

**Music**

Or more difficult:

**The life of an ant**

**The economic situation in (...)**

List as many as you can. You or your teacher should write down the topics on pieces of paper.



3. Take it in turns. Select one topic (without looking) you have to speak on this topic for one minute. YOU can't have preparation time, but use the phrases above to give you thinking time. Go! Don't be afraid of making mistakes.

While other students are listening, they can tick the 'thinking time' phrases that they hear.