

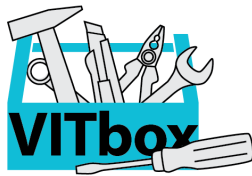
CEFR Companion Volume implementation toolbox

Using emojis for non-verbal communication

Title:	Using emojis for non-verbal communication
Language:	English
CEFR Level:	B1/B2
Author:	VITbox team

Descriptor:

Mode of communication / Activity, strategy or competence: Reading, speaking, writing, mediation	Scale: Online conversation and discussion
Descriptor: B1 Can engage in real-time online exchanges with more than one participant, recognising the communicative intentions of each contributor, but may not understand details or implications without further explanation. Can make personal online postings about experiences, feelings and events and respond individually to the comments of others in some detail, though lexical limitations sometimes cause repetition and inappropriate formulation. B2 Can participate actively in an online discussion, stating and responding to opinions on topics of interest at some length, provided contributors avoid unusual or complex language and allow time for responses. Can recognise misunderstandings and disagreements that arise in an online interaction and can deal with them, provided that the interlocutor(s) are willing to cooperate.	
Goals of the activity: Practice the ability to use symbols such as signs, gifs or emojis to convey tone, stress, affective components of discourse and irony. Understand the use of emojis in different contexts and cultural backgrounds. Practice the use of these symbols embedded in the discourse and in relation with the foreign language. Being able to repair mistakes in communication or use symbols to limit the effect of misunderstandings and bypass language barriers.	



Introducing the activity in the classroom

- ask participants how often do they use symbols to convey additional meaning or to add meaning to their texts
- ask participants which symbols they normally use and why, is there a difference in use between the type of symbols (images, gifs, emojis, etc)?
- ask participants to list the meanings they usually try to convey with these symbols; are the symbols necessary to convey these meanings?
- ask participants if they have ever used symbols to better express an idea in a language other than their first language. Did symbols help them express themselves better in another language?

Description of the main activity:

This activity can be carried out in blended learning courses as an online activity or in traditional courses as a classroom activity. In the second case, make sure your students have phones, tablets or computers, allowing them to participate in an online chat room while they are physically in the classroom.

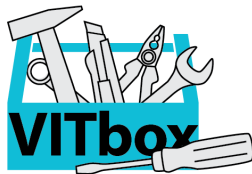
Give each member of the group one of these roles:

Friday evening plans	Friday evening plans	Friday evening plans
<p>Role 1</p> <p>You don't really want to go out for dinner, it's expensive and you prefer to spend your money on something else.</p> <p>You would prefer to go to see a film, there is a new action film out this week and you want to go.</p> <p>You need to get home relatively early because you have to study in the morning</p>	<p>Role 2</p> <p>You would like to go for a late dinner, you finish classes late and you would rather spend your time talking to your friends and sharing a meal.</p> <p>You enjoy going to the cinema but you do not like action films, you would prefer a comedy.</p>	<p>Role 3</p> <p>You are meeting another group of friends for dinner, you don't want to offend either of the groups and you really want to meet them after dinner.</p> <p>You want to be able to talk to them so you would prefer going out for a drink after dinner</p>

Put students in groups of three and set up virtual chat rooms for your groups to replicate instant messaging (in a traditional classroom environment, have each member of the group sit physically separated from the other members of their group and ask them to use emails or instant messaging platforms).

Ask the groups to agree on what they are going to do Friday according to what their cards say. Ask the groups to communicate through message and use the symbols they would normally use when communicating with their friends.

Ask the groups to send you the whole conversation that took part amongst them.



Peer feedback – class discussion

Project the conversations in turns for all the students to see. Have your students look at the conversations that have taken place between the groups and reflect on:

Were there symbols used in the conversation?

Did the use of these symbols represent what would happen in a real-life exchange?

Were there clashes between the friends?

Was communication kept at a friendly level? Explain.

Did symbols (emojis, images, gifs, etc.) help communicate friendliness, irony, humorous tones when needed?

Were symbols used to express ideas that would have been difficult to express with just words?

Did anybody feel offended or annoyed by the others?

Did symbols (emojis, images, gifs, etc.) help diffuse potentially uncomfortable situations?

How?

Assessment

Fill in the following table, or have their peers fill it in. The success in the completion of the task is determined by the number of questions answered affirmatively.

	Yes	No
Did the student make use of emojis in the online exchange?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the emojis convey meaning (the use of the emojis was not just “cosmetic”)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the emojis used help in diffusing potentially difficult situations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Did the recipients of the information understand what was originally meant with the emojis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was communication improved by the use of emojis (the use of emojis facilitated the exchange)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>