UNIT 10. The Art of Conversation (Lesson2)

- Idioms about conversation
- Euphemism & exaggeration
- Discussion questions
- Review

1. Idioms about conversation

(1) Talk to a brick wall

- A conversation with him is like **talking to a brick wall.**
- I can't get through to her, every time I try I feel like I'm **talking to a brick wall**.

(2) Blow it out of proportion

- She **blew the story** a little **out of proportion.** I wasn't that drunk and there was only one clown.
- Don't **blow things out of proportion**, just speak the truth plainly and clearly.

(3) Small talk

- I always engage people in **small talk**. It's a good way to get the conversation going.
- I hate **small talk**, I just want people to get to the point, say what they want to say and then leave.

(4) All talk

- They think that they are the best but they're **all talk.**
- Don't listen to their promises, they're **all talk** and no action.

(5) Pep talk

- He felt really bad about his results. It looked like he needed a **pep talk.**
- The boss gave everyone a **pep talk** hoping to encourage the team to do their best.

2. Euphemism & exaggeration

(1) Gentle VS. Harsh

→ **Tom's bathroom is messy.**

- I don't think Tom's bathroom is very clean.
- It seems Tom's bathroom is a little messy.
- Tom's bathroom is absolutely filthy.
- Tom's bathroom looks like a bomb exploded in it.

→ **Norah is busy.**

- I don't think Norah has much free time.
- It looks like Norah is a little bit busy.
- Norah is horribly hectic.
- Norah is the busiest she's ever been in her life.

→ **The students are bored.**

- Perhaps the students aren't really interested.
- It appears that the students are a bit bored.
- The students are fully bored out of their mind.
- The students are bored to death.

→ **The boss is angry.**

- The boss is not quite happy at the moment.
- It might be that the boss is a little upset.
- The boss is completely losing his mind.
- The boss is so mad he is going to have a stroke.

→ **My friend is drunk.**

- My friend is a little out of sorts right now.
- It seems that my friend is a little tipsy.
- My friend is utterly drunk.
- My friend is drunk off his face.

3. Discussion questions

Q: Have you ever had a conversation with someone where it felt like you were talking to a brick wall?

Of course. The last time I talked with my brother, he needed some encouragement so I was trying to give him a **pep talk** but I knew he wasn't listening to suggestions and it felt like I was **talking to a brick wall**.

Q: When couples fight, they tend to blow things out of proportion. Why do you think they exaggerate so much?

I suppose when anyone is upset **they blow things out of proportion** in order to make their argument more powerful. Sometimes their just **all talk** though and there's no real evidence to justify their exaggerations.

Q: Can you think of a more euphemistic way to say these words?

- **fat**
  … not exactly skinny … not exactly skinny
- **dead**
  … no longer alive … passed away
- **ugly**
  … not entirely pretty … they've got a great personality
- **fired**
  … stopped work for a bit … they're between jobs
- **fighting**
  … not getting along … having difficulties