

COMMUNICATIVE SPEAKING ACTIVITIES FOR B1-LEVEL UZBEK EFL LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT. This thesis offers a practical set of communicative speaking activities for B1-level Uzbek EFL learners. The proposed activities are centered on intentional interaction and comprise information gaps, role-play, exchange of opinions, storytelling, jigsaw, and problem-solving. The suggested framework involves communicative practice preceded by brief pre-task language support and followed by post-task feedback. The framework is intended as a methodological proposal for English lessons at secondary schools and as a basis for future classroom-based research.

Keywords: communicative activities, EFL, speaking, B1, pedagogical technology, CLT

INTRODUCTION

The development of speaking competence demands not only the instruction of correct sentences but also their usage in the context of particular purposes (e.g., asking, clarifying, expressing an opinion, narrating something, responding to another speaker). Communicative Language Teaching provides a theoretical basis for the creation of such conditions, as it prioritizes the usage of language for meaningful purposes and learner interaction (Richards, 2006; Richards & Rodgers, 2014).

PROPOSED ACTIVITY SYSTEM

The proposed activity system comprises six types of activities. Information gaps are aimed at exchanging information that is absent in one of the learners' possession. Role-plays are activities in which learners practice certain functional language in situational contexts (e.g., asking for help, making plans, giving advice). Opinion activities involve stating a position and providing supporting reasons. Storytelling includes the development of longer turns and their sequential combination. In jigsaw activities, information is distributed between the members of a group and thus cooperation is required. Problem-solving activities presuppose discussion of possible solutions and coming to a consensus.

These activities can be arranged from more supported to more independent communication. The teacher can provide the learners with phrases, vocabulary, or a model before the task. During the main activity, learners should have enough time to exchange information without permanent interference. After the task, the teacher can provide feedback related to the recurring language difficulties of the learners and offer them to reflect on how they managed to interact successfully.

INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGICAL FEATURES

The innovation of the proposed framework cannot be reduced to technology. It consists in a change in the organization of participation in the class. Instead of one learner talking while others are listening, pair and group structures allow a number of learners to talk simultaneously. Task output such as filling missing information, selecting the most appropriate solution, or agreement gives the interaction its goal. Redoing the task with a new partner may help learners to reformulate their ideas and become more efficient in the language use.

The digital tools can be additionally introduced in case of their availability as visual hints, short audio input, collaborative slides, recording of speaking reflection. However, the core of the methodology remains applicable even in a conventional class with task cards and prepared prompts. Therefore, this model is flexible enough to be implemented in classes with different equipment.

CEFR-INFORMED CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT

The CEFR Companion Volume describes spoken production and interaction in the form of communicative activities and qualitative descriptors (Council of Europe, 2020). Classroom assessment based on this approach can analyze the following aspects: fluency and coherence, lexical resource, grammatical range and accuracy, pronunciation, interactive communication. Such a rubric can be used for feedback and for further research, but it should be referred to as CEFR-informed rather than certified CEFR rubric.

CONCLUSION

Communicative speaking activities can be organized into a coherent pedagogical framework rather than be sporadic games. Information gaps, role-play, exchange of opinions, storytelling, jigsaw, and problem-solving create different reasons for the learners to talk and respond to each other. When supplemented with pre-task and post-task stages, these activities create a methodological framework for B1-level Uzbek EFL classroom. Further research may be conducted to verify the framework with authentic pre-test, post-test, observation, and perception data.

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