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INTERACTIVE TEACHING ACTIVITIES FOR COMMUNICATIVE PURPOSES AT THE ENGLISH LESSONS**Shevelova-Harkusha Natalia**

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Abstract

This research focuses on the study of interactive teaching strategies and methods to let students of different language levels master English for communicative purposes.

The article analyzes the peculiarities of the use of the interactive teaching activities to improve communicative competence by getting learners to solve a task or set of problems by communicating together in the target language. This article highlights the basic principles and types of interactive student/group/class activities to allow students to effectively and quickly achieve the desired result, namely free and fast communication in a foreign language. The article shows that this innovative strategy motivates students, resulting in a more pleasurable and successful learning experience, as interaction promotes a collaborative learning atmosphere in which students are comfortable asking questions, exchanging ideas, and expressing themselves. It is stated that interactive teaching methods encourage excellent two-way communication between students and teachers, allowing for quick changes in learning processes and approaches.

Keywords: *interactive teaching, student-student interaction, note cards, integration of innovative tools and interactive activities.*

The purpose of the article is to study the main types and characteristics of modern interactive teaching strategies, methods, tools and games which improve learning by increasing student involvement and providing educational benefits, understanding and recall at the English lessons.

Main material presentation. *Interactive teaching is a way the students are actively involved in the learning process to acquire communicative skill while mastering English as a second language. There are different ways to create an involvement through:*

- 1). *Teacher-student interaction.*
- 2). *Student-student interaction.*
- 3). *The use of audio, visuals, video materials.*
- 4). *Hands-on demonstrations and exercises [5].*

*The following **interactive student activities** (S-S) are three of the most effective ways to encourage more speech in your classroom.*

1. Think, pair and share. *A teacher sets a problem or a question around a certain topic, and pair up students. Then s/he gives each pair of students enough time so they can reach a proper conclusion, and permit the students to share their conclusion to others.*

2. Brainstorming. *Interactive brainstorming is mostly performed in group sessions. The process is useful for generating creative thoughts and ideas. Brainstorming helps students learn to work together, and above all, learn from each other [9, 62].*

3. Buzz session. *Participants come together in session groups that focus on a single topic. Within each group, every student contributes thoughts and ideas. The teacher has to encourage discussion and collaboration among the students within each group. Everyone should learn from each other's input and experiences. A teacher could give the students some keywords to spark the conversation [5].*

Among other interactive teaching activities, there are the following categories: 1) individual student activities, 2) student pair activities, 3) student group activities, 4) interactive game activities.

*As for **individual student activities**, there are the following types:*

4. Exit slips, *also known as exit tickets, are brief, informal assessments or reflections that a teacher can use at the end of a lesson or class period. Exit slips are designed to quickly gauge students'*

understanding of the material covered at a lesson, identify any areas of confusion, and provide valuable feedback about the effectiveness of teacher's instructions. A teacher can ask the students to write ideas for one minute on a specific question/topic. The exit slips provide you with an informal measure of how well students have understood a topic or lesson. They help students reflect on what they have learned. They allow students to express what or how they are thinking about new information and teach students to think critically [9, 65].

The exit slips are used at the end of the lesson, when a teacher can ask students to respond to a question or prompt. Then a teacher provides the prompt orally to students or projects it visually on an overhead or blackboard. After that s/he distributes 3x5 cards for students to write down their responses. Later then a teacher collects and reviews the exit slips as a part of an assessment portfolio for each student [7, 21].

According to Fisher and Frey, there are three categories of exit slips that you can use:

1. prompts that document learning, 2. prompts that emphasize the process of learning, what was clear and what wasn't simple to understand, 3. prompts to evaluate the effectiveness of instructions, what students liked most of all during the lesson [3, 34].

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Exit slips can be written responses from students to questions teachers pose at the end of the class. An entrance slip is also a student response to a question that teachers pose related to the upcoming or the previous instruction. It provides teaches what students already know and their belief system. It also provides information to teachers regarding individual needs and strengths and their current level of understanding. Teaching and learning then become customized and personalized [9, 66].

5. Misconception check. A misconception check is a type of formative assessment that is meant to see if students, when given a common misconception about a covered concept, can explain why they agree/disagree with the statement. A teacher sees if students can identify what is the correct answer when given a false fact. It's useful when going over a previous lesson. It encourages students to think deeply and wager all the possibilities. Different methods of presenting students opinions within a classroom setting can be used: colored cards (green for agree, red for disagree), thumbsup/thumbs down, standing up or sitting down, polls: students tally on the board, through poll application on ipads, handing in notecards [6].

6. Circle the questions. A teacher makes a worksheet or a survey that has a list of questions (make them specific) about the given topic, and asks students to circle (or check) the ones they don't know the answers to. Then, s/he creates corners concerning different questions that were circled and let students work on the extra exercises and explanation in the corners, individually / in groups [5].

7. Ask the winner. A teacher asks students to silently solve a problem on the board. After revealing the answer, s/he instructs those who got it right to raise their hands (and keep them raised). Then, all other students have to talk to someone with a raised hand to better understand the question and how to solve it next time [3, 27].

There are some **student pair activities**:

8. Pair-share-repeat. After a Think-pair-share experience, a teacher can also ask students to find a new partner and share the wisdom of the old partnership to this new partner.

9. Teacher and student. A teacher lets students brainstorm the main points of the last lesson. Then, s/he pairs up students and assigns them 2 roles. One of them is the teacher, and the other is the student. The teacher's job is to sketch the main points, while the student's job is to cross off points on his list as they are mentioned and come up with 2 to 3 points that the teacher missed [5].

10. Wisdom from another. After an individual brainstorm or creative activity, a teacher pairs students to share their results. Then, s/he calls for volunteers who found their partner's work to be interesting or exemplary. Students are often more willing to share the work of fellow students publicly than their work.

11. Forced debate. Students can debate in pairs. Students must defend the opposite side of their personal opinion. It encourages them to step away from their own beliefs and teaches them to look through a different colored glass once in a while. Variation: one half of the class takes one position, the other half takes the other position. Students line up and face each other. Each student may only speak

once so that all students on both sides can engage the issue. When the debate is finished, the jury can recite the main arguments and decide which side wins the debate [2].

12. Optimists vs Pessimists. In pairs, students take opposite emotional sides of a case study, statement, or topic. A teacher encourages them to be empathic and truly “live” the case study. A pessimistic thinker tends to believe that things are going to turn out badly and there is little hope for the future. An optimistic thinker believes that most things are good and that things will work out for the best. Students can take turns being the pessimist or the optimists and share with their partner how they feel about each situation. A teacher may switch partners after every statement [1].

13. Peer review writing task. To assist students with a writing assignment, a teacher can encourage them to exchange drafts with a partner. The partner reads the essay and writes a three-paragraph response: the first paragraph outlines the strengths of the essay, the second paragraph discusses the essay’s problems, and the third paragraph is a description of what the partner would focus on in revision if it were her essay. Students can learn a lot from each other and themselves as well. Peer review allows students to clarify their own ideas as they explain them to classmates and as they formulate questions about their classmates’ writing. This is helpful to writers at all skill levels, in all classes, and at all stages of the writing process. [5].

There are also some **student group activities**:

14. Board rotation. A teacher can divide a class into different groups of students and assign them to each of the boards which are set up in the room. There is one topic/question per board. After each group writes an answer, they rotate to the next board/station. Here, they write their answer below the first answer of the previous group. A teacher lets them go around the room until all the groups have covered all the boards.

Stations are areas or setups within a classroom where different learning activities take place. Each station is designed to focus on a specific topic (e.g. future predictions) or skill (e.g. reading). This model is also perfect for implementing blended learning, which combines traditional, in-person teaching methods with online digital media and activities. At least one of the stations usually includes using online sources (completing quizzes, playing online games, watching a video). The model can also be easily applied in online lessons making them even more efficient. In this virtual setting, the ‘stations’ can be represented by separate online rooms.

It allows the teacher to:

- manage large classrooms more effectively;
- assess individual student performance and progress;
- provide personal feedback to each student;
- work on different skills (like reading, listening, speaking) at the same time;
- keep the lesson dynamic and interesting [4].

The most important part is giving your students instructions and making sure they understand what they are expected to do. It’s highly recommended to prepare clear instructions and provide either cards with the scheme of the stations or a map on the board. There are usually 4-5 stations for a lesson, 10-15 minutes long each.

They might include: a station in which the students work together in a group (working on a project, or brainstorming); a station for individual work (for example, a writing or reading task); a technology station with interactive learning using computers or tablets, often with educational software.

After rotations, the class can regroup for a discussion. This can include sharing what they learned, asking the teacher any questions, doing a quick test, getting feedback from the teacher, or connecting the activities to the lesson objectives [4].

15. Pick the Winner. A teacher divides the class into groups and lets them work on the same topic/problem. They can record an answer/strategy on paper or digitally. Then, s/he asks the groups to switch with a nearby group and lets them evaluate their answer. After a few minutes, s/he allows each set of groups to merge and asks them to select the best answer from the two choices, which will be presented to the complete class [5].

16. Movie Application. In groups, students discuss examples of movies that made use of a concept or event discussed in class, trying to identify at least one way the movie makers got it right, and one way they got it wrong. It’s better to think about movies showing historical facts, geographical facts, biographies of famous people, etc. [8].

Interactive game activities.

Games are so much fun for students since it doesn’t feel like learning. With the help of different websites and apps, a teacher can make interactive learning games like crossword puzzles, pair matching

games, bingo games, jigsaw puzzles, memory games, and many more in minutes (and there's a Google Classroom integration as well).

17. Crossword puzzle. The crossword game is perfect to use as repetition activity. A teacher can choose a list of words and their description, and an app like BookWidgets can create an interactive crossword for students. The crossword game transforms boring lessons into a fun experience [5].

18. Scrabble. A teacher can use the chapter (or course) title as the pool of letters from which to make words, and allow teams to brainstorm as many words relevant to the topic as possible. A teacher can also actually play scrabble and ask students to form words from the newly learned vocabulary.

19. Who/what am I? A popular party game, "Who Am I?" (and its varieties) promotes concentration, awareness, perspective-taking, lexical development, working memory, and self-regulation – skills that greatly benefit children with any learning differences. A teacher can tape a term or name on the back of each student, or on their forehead. Each student walks around the room, asking "yes or no" questions to other students in an effort to guess the term. Of course, the term has something to do with a lesson topic.

A teacher can think well-known celebrity, actor, athlete, movie character, politician, historical figure, etc. Everyone stands or sits in a circle. The tape-wearer can only ask yes/no questions to try to guess the name on their forehead. If the answer to the question posed is yes, the tape-wearer gets to ask another question [10].

20. Bingo. Bingo is a fun game that can be used for all sorts of exercises: language exercises, introductory games, math exercises, etc.

Conclusion. Every student has unique learning needs and preferences, and advanced tools can cater to those individual requirements. This personalized approach ensures that students receive the support and guidance necessary to excel in their studies, regardless of their strengths and weaknesses. Innovative tools and interactive activities can enhance collaboration and communication among students and teachers. They facilitate seamless collaboration and communication among students and educators, irrespective of geographical limitations. Students can connect with peers from across the globe, engaging in collaborative projects, sharing diverse perspectives, and fostering a sense of global citizenship. Additionally, educators can provide real-time feedback and support, creating a dynamic and interactive learning environment.

Innovation is the driving force behind the transformation of education, and embracing innovative tools is key to unlocking its full potential. The integration of innovative tools and interactive activities in education can transform the learning experience into an engaging, personalized, and collaborative journey.

Interactive teaching methods improve learning by increasing student involvement and providing educational benefits. Students actively participate in lessons using interactive methods, which improve understanding and recall. This innovative strategy motivates students, resulting in a more pleasurable and successful learning experience.

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