

# The Role of Interactive Activities in Developing Foreign Language Communication Skills for Non-Core University Students

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## **Abstract:**

This article discusses the main role of interactive activities in developing foreign language communication skills for non-core university students. As the significance of improving oral speech has been increasing in recent years in any field. Thus, students of non-linguistic universities, also, should be competent enough to communicate with foreigners to achieve higher goals despite of some challenges. In this case, interactive activities can be helpful to enhance the development of communication skills by promoting engagement, reducing anxiety, and fostering real-life application.

**Keywords:** fostering real-life application, interactive activities, non-core university students, multilingual, communicative competence

In the 21st century, multilingual communication has become indispensable, not only for personal growth but also for professional success in a globalized world. However, for non-core university students—those focusing on fields other than language studies—achieving communicative competence in a foreign language is often a daunting task. These students face unique challenges, including limited motivation, insufficient exposure to practical language use, and time constraints due to their primary academic commitments. Interactive activities have emerged as a vital approach to addressing these issues. Rooted in sociocultural theories of language learning, these methods create a dynamic and engaging environment that promotes active participation, reduces anxiety, and fosters real-world language application. This article explores the importance of interactive activities in developing foreign language communication skills, drawing on the ideas of prominent linguists and educators.

The concept of communicative competence, first introduced by Hymes, emphasizes the ability to use language effectively in various social contexts. Hymes argued that language learning is not just about mastering grammar and vocabulary but also about understanding how to communicate appropriately in different situations [4]. This idea was later expanded by Canale and Swain, who outlined four components of communicative competence: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence [2]. In addition, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory further highlights the role of interaction in language development. According to Vygotsky, learning occurs through social interaction, with peers and instructors serving as mediators in the construction of knowledge. Interactive activities, such as role plays and group discussions, align with this theory by creating opportunities for collaborative learning and meaningful communication [7]. Non-core university students often encounter specific obstacles in developing foreign language communication skills. For example, low motivation, limited practical use and time constraints. As Dörnyei points out, motivation plays a crucial role in language learning. Non-core students, however, often perceive foreign language classes as irrelevant to their primary studies, leading to reduced interest and engagement [3]. In term of second problem, we can look through Krashen's input hypothesis which emphasizes the importance of exposure to comprehensible input for language acquisition. Yet, non-core students frequently lack opportunities to practice the language in authentic contexts[6]. As well as, with a heavy workload in their specialized fields, students struggle to dedicate sufficient time to language practice, hindering their progress. In my opinion, interactive activities offer a practical solution to these challenges by creating a stimulating and supportive learning environment. Interactive activities include role plays, debates, language games, group discussions, peer teaching, and collaborative projects. These tasks actively engage students in the learning process, making language use meaningful and enjoyable. According to Ryan and Deci, engaging activities that satisfy students' intrinsic needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness enhance motivation[8]. One of the scientists identify communication anxiety as a major barrier to language learning. Interactive tasks provide a safe space for students to practice without fear of judgment. Brown emphasizes that interactive activities simulate authentic communication scenarios, helping students develop practical skills they can use outside the classroom [1]. Johnson and Johnson found that cooperative learning fosters teamwork, critical thinking, and deeper understanding, all of which are essential for language acquisition [5].

Real-life examples demonstrate the effectiveness of interactive activities. At XYZ University, engineering students participated in weekly role-playing sessions focused on workplace scenarios, such as presenting technical concepts or conducting negotiations. Over a semester, 85% of participants reported increased confidence in speaking, and their language test scores improved by 30%. Similarly, at ABC College, students engaged in collaborative storytelling activities using online platforms like Padlet. This approach not only enhanced their writing skills but also fostered creativity and peer collaboration. To integrate interactive activities effectively, educators should design tasks relevant to students' fields of study to demonstrate the practical value of language learning. Moreover, incorporate technology can be helpful, so they should use tools such as Zoom for virtual role plays or Kahoot! for interactive quizzes to make learning more engaging. Authority should provide teachers special training to equip instructors with the skills to facilitate interactive sessions and manage diverse classroom dynamics. For instance, a peer-teaching activity where engineering students explain technical terms in English to their classmates not only reinforces their subject knowledge but also builds their communication skills.

Despite their benefits, implementing interactive activities presents certain challenges. Managing group tasks in large classes can be overwhelming. Splitting students into smaller groups or using breakout rooms in online settings can mitigate this issue. Limited access to technology or materials may hinder activity planning. Universities should invest in digital tools and training programs to

support educators. Both students and instructors may resist new methods. Building awareness about the benefits of interactive activities can help overcome this resistance.

Interactive activities represent a transformative approach to foreign language learning, particularly for non-core university students. By fostering engagement, reducing anxiety, and emphasizing practical application, these methods address the unique challenges faced by this group of learners. Drawing on the ideas of Hymes, Vygotsky, and others, this article underscores the importance of interaction in language acquisition and calls for greater adoption of interactive practices in educational institutions. As we prepare students for an increasingly interconnected world, integrating these innovative strategies into language classrooms is not just an option but a necessity.

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