

Communicative Games as a Method of Teaching Foreign Languages

I. T. Dekhkonov¹

¹ Associate Professor, Department of German and French Languages, Fergana State University, islomdehqonov1958@gmail.com

Abstract:

This article explores the objectives and functions of communicative games in foreign language lessons and their distinctive features when used in the teaching process. Recommendations are provided on how teachers can organize communication in foreign languages to solve communicative tasks and assignments effectively.

Keywords: communicative game, communicative task, communicative situation, language material, speech activity, role-playing game, lexical material.

Introduction

Communicative games serve as a means of teaching foreign languages by helping students solve communicative tasks in lessons. They are one of the methods used in communicative teaching. Therefore, the primary goal of communicative games is to establish communication in a foreign language while solving communicative tasks and assignments set during the lesson.

Communicative games have a high level of visibility and encourage imitation and patterning in real communication situations, thereby activating the studied language material. They integrate language teaching with communicative and creative tasks, forming part of the educational process.

Literature Review and Methodology

By solving linguistic tasks, students develop and refine their speech skills through purposeful use of language material in class. Communicative tasks also involve the exchange of information between participants through joint activities.

1. The Differentiation Method in Communicative Games

This method focuses on distinguishing objects based on their value and importance. Since games often involve sorting information, different perspectives arise, leading to discussions where students justify their opinions in pairs or groups.

Game variations:

Students work independently, writing down their solutions to a given problem before discussing them in pairs or groups.

Students work in small groups, trying to reach a common decision and justify their choice during discussions.

Students with similar answers form a group to defend their viewpoint, providing more supporting arguments.

Example:

Students may receive an assignment related to nouns and adjectives. For instance, in the topic “Food,” they might choose adjectives like “tasty” or “nutritious.” The lexical material is presented in a table format:

Students categorize food based on their qualities and justify their choices.

2. Communicative Games for Generating Different Types of Information

This method encourages students to develop an interest in communication, activate speech, and clarify ambiguous facts. Information exchange can be one-way or two-way:

One-way exchange: One student possesses specific information while the other does not. The second student’s task is to engage in communication and obtain the missing information.

Two-way exchange: Students collaborate, sharing their available information to solve a common problem.

Example:

Geographical Location Game

Students ask and answer questions about different cities, their location, population, and landmarks. The game can also be played using flashcards:

3. Classification and Matching Games

These games require students to piece together scattered information through interaction. They can be used for constructing sentences, creating stories, or filling in missing parts of dialogues.

4. The “Find Your Partner” Game

Each student must find their ideal partner by asking questions.

Example:

Find Your Travel Companion

The teacher organizes a simulated travel experience where students must find a partner based on predefined criteria.

Possible options:

1. You can travel to: France, England, Russia.
2. By: Plane, car, train

3. For: 15 days, one month, one week.
4. In: Spring, summer, autumn.

Students ask each other about their preferences to find a suitable companion. The game continues until most students have found a match.

5. Interview Games

These games aim to encourage students to collect as many responses as possible on a given topic. Responses are recorded and analyzed.

Example:

The task is to determine which TV programs classmates prefer by asking multiple students. To ensure everyone participates, students form two circles—inner and outer—and rotate in a structured manner until all have interacted.

6. Role-Playing Games

Role-based communication encourages spontaneous thinking and problem-solving. Students must act out a given situation while considering interpersonal, social, psychological, and educational aspects.

A role-playing game should include a communicative scenario that aligns with students' roles and interactions. When adopting a role, students perform naturally without needing a specific character or setting.

Example:

Famous People Game

Each student chooses a famous person but does not reveal their identity. Instead, they answer questions as that person. Other students try to guess who they are.

Possible questions:

What is the most important thing you have done?

Is your personal life well known?

The challenge is to answer in a way that is informative but not too obvious, making it harder for others to guess the identity quickly.

Conclusion

Communicative games are a crucial approach in foreign language teaching as they create a real communication environment, activating lexical and grammatical material in a natural context. Additionally, they increase students' interest and engagement in lessons. Through these games, students acquire new communication tools, enabling them to develop language skills effectively.

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