

Interactive Learning: Confronting Teacher Concerns and Fostering Classroom Engagement

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Abstract

Though the importance of developing communicative competence has long been highlighted in Russian universities, the need for acquiring interactional competence is often overlooked, largely due to traditional teaching practices commonly used in Russia. These approaches typically prioritise linguistic accuracy, grammar, and vocabulary mastery over the dynamic, collaborative nature of real-life communication. The pressure to adhere to rigid curricula and the focus on assessments that emphasise memorisation lead to classroom activities centred around monological tasks and rehearsed speeches, rather than fostering dialogical and interactional skills. However, interactional skills, which are crucial for effective face-to-face communication, are not an automatic by-product of language learning. They require deliberate focus and consistent practice to develop. Interactional competence extends beyond language mastery, encompassing the ability to maintain dialogues, manage communication breakdowns, interpret non-verbal cues, and understand socio-cultural norms. To explore the barriers preventing teachers from integrating interactional activities into their classrooms and to understand how these activities influence students' expectations, research was conducted at the Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA) in Moscow. The survey provided valuable insights into teachers' concerns and the impact of interactional activities on students' learning experiences, highlighting the need to address this gap in traditional language education practices.

Keywords: activities; apprehensions; motivation; skills; teaching