

## Promoting Oral Skills through Communicative Activities

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### ABSTRACT

“Promoting Oral Skills through Communicative Activities” is the title of the study carried out at Amizade secondary school, grade 12, day shift. It was observed that most grade 12 teachers did not give emphasis on oral activities in their lessons. The problem of not giving emphasis on communicative activities was identified during supervision of Teaching Practice III. Thus, the objectives of this research were to find out why most teachers of English at Amizade secondary school did not use communicative activities in English Language Teaching (ELT); Describe the benefits of using oral activities in ELT at Amizade Secondary School; Analyse oral activities used by teachers at Amizade Secondary School; Propose simple ways of teachers get their students to communicate with each other in the classroom. Seventy-five students and two teachers were involved in the research process. In addition, it was also the aim of this study to familiarize teachers of English from Amizade Secondary School with the effectiveness of using oral activities in their English Language Classes. The researcher used a blending of qualitative and quantitative approaches and techniques and instruments, including direct classroom observation, two sets of a questionnaire consisting of the research instruments (the first was a questionnaire for teachers –qt; and the second was a questionnaire for students - qs). In this research, both open and closed questions were employed to discover why most teachers at Amizade Secondary school did not use communicative activities in their lessons.

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### 1. Introduction

The research entitled “Promoting oral skills through communicative activities” was carried out at Amizade Secondary School, grade12, day shift. Thus, the objectives of this research were to find out why most teachers of English at Amizade secondary school did not use communicative activities in English Language Teaching (ELT); -show the benefits of using oral activities in ELT at Amizade Secondary School; -identify oral activities used by teachers at Amizade Secondary School; -propose simple ways of teachers get their students to communicate with each other in the classroom.

The researcher used a blending qualitative and quantitative approach and techniques and instruments, including a classroom observation sheet and questionnaire form that consisted of the research techniques of data collection (the first was a questionnaire for teachers –qt, and the second was a questionnaire for teachers- qt, and the second was a student - qs).

Seventy-five students and two teachers were involved in the research process. In addition, it was also the aim of this study to familiarize teachers of English from Amizade Secondary School with the effectiveness of using oral activities in their English Language Classes.

The research was conducted through questionnaires and observation sheets as instruments of data collection. Open and closed-ended questionnaires were employed to discover why most teachers at Amizade secondary school did not use oral activities in their lessons.

Amizade Secondary school is the public school located in Lichinga town alongside Julius Nyerere Avenue in the West. It limits with Sanjala neighbourhood in the North and East. In the South, the school is bordering on Ngungunhana Industrial and Commercial Institute. In the school's backyard, there are old offices of the Africa Ex-Muslim Agency and one mosque. The school runs the classes in streams formed on the basis of gender. That is, girls and boys, study separately according to Islam principles.

### **1.1 Background to the problem**

During the observation of teaching practice at Amizade Secondary School, the researcher noticed that the emphasis of teaching the English language focused on **metalinguistic awareness**, that is, the ability to treat language as an object, for example, being able to define a word and the ability to state grammar rules. Or to say what sounds make up that word. Moreover, teaching and learning have been focused on the form only despite teachers knowing the potential of using communicative activities in their classes. As a result, this has led teachers to use teacher-centred methodology like repetition drills, memorization and lecture method (Mwamba, 2005).

On the other hand, the researcher noticed a general public concern at Amizade Secondary School that the majority of grade 12 students lack communicative and linguistic competence and thus cannot sustain a conversation in the English Language without occasional code-switching Portuguese.

Furthermore, the problem with the frequency of classroom activities was that most teachers tended to use less especially oral drills and language games.

The situation in the current research pinpoints the lack of use of communicative activities that allow the students to practice speaking the language in the classroom.

In the present research context, communicative activities include any activities that encourage and require a learner to speak with and listen to other learners and people in the program and community (Harmer, 1991).

The researcher still noticed that most of the teachers skipped activities that required students to practice oral communication. Hence, the research question is: **"Why do not most teachers use communicative activities in their classes?"**

### **1.2 Statement of the problem**

The present study seeks to determine why most teachers at Amizade Secondary School do not use oral activities in their classes and suggest ways to overcome the problem.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

Mozambique is surrounded by countries whose official language is English. These countries are Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, South Africa, etc. Therefore, Mozambique's English Language Teaching policy aims to develop English Language skills that will enable students to communicate with English speakers on everyday topics in various situations.

The Teaching of English in Mozambique aims at enabling students to communicate in English. Thus, the approach adopted is communicative language teaching. The main aim of using communicative activities such as role-play, games, debate, discussion, and simulation in language classrooms is not to teach students to talk about the language but to develop students' communicative competence. The present study put together ideas to inspire teachers, give them some practical support for their work, and suggest activities or strategies of helping them to use oral activities to promote real communication.

However, if students at Amizade Secondary School are not exposed to communicative activities, students will unlikely familiarize themselves with different language uses, forms or conventions. As a result, language will be difficult to develop. On the other hand, students may not feel developing fluency.

If we want our students to communicate efficiently in the classroom, we would like students to be trained to deal with the unpredictable nature of language. By doing so, we need to provide our students meaningful activities in the class such as role-play, guessing games, information exchange exercises, quiz and simulations (Ladousse, 1987).

In addition, the findings of this study will be of high value for teachers as well as for students. As professionals, teachers will improve the quality of teaching skills. For the students, it will be helpful because oral activities will enhance their motivation and interest in learning the English language. Students may feel that Learning English is not just about something written in the textbooks but also as a tool for real communication outside the classroom.

### **1.4 Critical questions**

- How to make teachers acquainted with the use of oral activities in ELT at Amizade Secondary School?

- Do teachers of English at Amizade use oral activities in their English Classes?
- What can be done to make teachers get their students to communicate with each other in the class?

### **1.5 General objective**

Discuss the effectiveness of using communicative activities in the language classroom.

#### **1.5.1 Specific objectives**

- Describe the benefits of using oral activities in ELT at Amizade Secondary School;
- Analyse oral activities used by teachers at Amizade Secondary School;
- Propose simple ways for teachers to get their students to communicate with each other in the classroom.

#### **1.6 Hypotheses**

- Teachers may not be using communicative activities in the class because they do not give themselves time to adapt extra materials.
- Teachers may not use oral activities in their classes due to an overloaded English Language Syllabus.
- Maybe teachers are not aware of ways of getting students to communicate with each other in class.

## **2. Literature review**

Within the field of language teaching, there is plenty of knowledge that has been gathered by different authors or scholars who talked about Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). In this chapter, the researcher begins with a brief historical background of CLT. Then, he presents some concepts related to communicative competence and linguistic competence as well as a discussion around activities that promote communication.

### **2.1 Brief historical background of Communicative Language Teaching Approach (CLT)**

The communicative approach was developed particularly by British applied linguists in the 1980s as a reaction away from grammar-based approaches, such as **Situational Language Teaching** and the **Audio-lingual Method**. The major principles of CLT are:

- 1 Authentic and meaningful communication should be the goal of classroom activities
- 2 Fluency and accuracy are both important goals in language learning
- 3 Learners use a language through using it to communicate
- 4 Communications involve the integration of different language skills
- 5 Learning is a process of creative construction and it involves trial and error.

Some of CLT principles have been incorporated into other Communicative Approaches, such as **Task-based Language Teaching**, **Cooperative Language Learning**, and **Content-based Instruction**.

The communicative Language Approach is an approach to foreign or second language teaching that emphasizes that the goal of language learning is communicative competence and seeks to make meaningful communication and language use a focus of all classroom activities.

Richards. J.C (1986) says that one of the most important features of communicative Language Teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional as well as structural aspects of language. It is not just teaching grammar rules that we can expect our teachers to produce competent student speakers of English Language.

For most teachers, CLT means using procedures where learners work in pairs or groups, employing available language resources in problem-solving tasks. What is paramount in Communicative Language Teaching is that at least two parties are involved in an interaction or transactional of some kind where one party has an intention and the other party expands or reacts to the intention.

### **2.2 Communicative competence versus Linguistic competence**

It is worthwhile to pinpoint the difference between Communicative competence and Linguistic competence.

Lightbown, P. & Spada, N (1993) state that

Communicative competence is the ability to use language in a variety of settings, taking into account relationships between speakers and differences in situations. The term has sometimes been interpreted as the ability to convey messages in spite of a lack of grammatical accuracy (p. 119).

According to the definition above, we can say that communicative competence (*linguistic performance*) has to do with the actual use of linguistic knowledge in speaking production and comprehension. So, it has no limits in using words, whereas Linguistic competence (*Linguistic knowledge*) is a mastery ability of grammar rules and it is finite and it has limits in using vocabulary.

Teachers from Amizade Secondary School should ensure that learners are equipped with comprehensive language usage and can express themselves in all situations. However, based on the persistent lack of communicative competence by grade 12 students at Amizade Secondary school, there is still a problem with teaching speaking skills in the school; in addition, researchers believe speaking is an undervalued skill (Alonso, 2014).

**2.3. Communicative activities**

In real life, we usually talk in order to tell people things they do not know or to find out things from other people; we have a reason to communicate, a “communicative need” (Doff, 1998).

In classroom activities, teachers can create a similar need to communicate by introducing an “information gap”, that is, some students have information that others do not have. So there is a reason to talk and ask questions.

In the present research context, communicative activities are oral activities that require students to say something orally.

**2.3.1 Role Play**

It is a communicative activity in which learners are given a task to complete. In order to ensure a lively and unpredictable course of the activity, students are told who they are, what their opinions are and what they know that is unknown to others (Harmer, 1990).

All role-plays are simulations, but not all simulations are role plays.

**2.3.2 Simulation**

Simulation is a communicative activity in which learners are told who they are and what their task is. Then, students present arguments according to their own beliefs. i.e. cabin crew instructions. In the simulation, students present arguments according to their own beliefs.

**2.3.3 Similarities between simulation and role play**

In both activities, the students play a role. However, there is a big difference: while in role-play, the students play the role of someone else (they have to imagine that they are someone else), in simulation, students play themselves as they behave in out-of-class, real-world situations.

The advantage of simulation is that a student may be more comfortable playing himself or herself than that playing some assumed but unknown personality. See the table below:

**2.3.4 Difference between role-play and simulation**

Roleplay	Simulation
Students have to imagine the situation that they are someone else.	It is an event or action.
Students invent	✓ It must have <i>reality function</i> , in other words, the participants must step inside the role they've accepted and act accordingly.
	✓ Use strict language
	✓ The environment is simulated (there's no contact with the real world)
	✓ It must have a structure. The participant must not pretend or invent. Students play themselves as they behave in out-of-class, real world.

Source: author

## **2.4 Pros and cons of role play**

### **2.4.1 Pros of Role Play**

In line with Ladousse, (1987), role play can highlight the linguistic need of the students: by monitoring the role-play, the teacher becomes aware of the errors such as phonological, semantic, pragmatic and syntactic errors that students make.

1. The teachers should also notice gaps in their knowledge; they may be using inadequate language.
2. Using the information teachers have collected during the role-play, the teacher can feed in the relevant language.
3. Role plays often produce real communication. That is, role play is much more effective, which involves the expression of students own feelings. Roleplay which involves no emotion is less effective.
4. Students practice using authentic language.
5. Students improve oral fluency.
6. Role play helps the students to use the natural expression.

### **2.4.2 Cons of Role play**

1. There might be students' opposition to role play.
2. Students may complain that they are not being corrected.
3. Although it is good to correct to some extent, students should be allowed plenty of freedom to experiment with language, and too much correction inhibits this.
4. Roleplay may go dead.
5. Silence is something that we, as teachers, tend to fear. We should remember that it is an essential part of normal interaction between native speakers.

### **2.4.3 Four essential elements of role play**

- Movement
- Discussion
- Variety
- Timing

### **2.4.4 Examples of Role play activities**

- Planning a party
  - Pretending you are a tourist
  - Improvising dialogues
  - Interviews based on a text.
- a. One student imagines he/she is a farmer.
  - b. A group of students imagine they are friends planning a holiday together. They try to decide where to go and what to do.
  - c. One student has lost a bag. He/she is at the police station reporting it to police. The other student is the police officer, and asks for details.

## **2.5 Role cards**

- How could you produce role cards?
  - What should they contain?
1. Be concise and contain only the essential because students could not frequently be referring them to any time.
  2. It should impose emotionally states on the students.
  3. If you wish students to express strong emotion, it is better to ensure that this comes naturally out of the situation you had set up.

### **2.5.1 Examples of role cards**

<p><b>Student A:</b> You're planning your weekend and you would like to go to the beach. You invite your best friend.</p>
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Source: author

**Student B:** Your best friend has invited you to spend the weekend on the beach.  
 You accept or refuse always giving the reasons why.  
 i.e. Yes, I would because ....  
 or No, I wouldn't because....

Source: author

**2.6. Characteristics of communication in the classroom**

In classroom situations, teachers and students will act as both speakers and listeners. Hence, if classroom communication and learning are to be assured, all the participants need to have knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate to speaking and listening in schools.

**2.6.1 Guessing games:** a teacher or a student at the front has a picture or sentence that the class cannot see. Students guess what it is by asking questions. Guessing games can also be organized in groups; one student in each group has the information, the others guess. Examples of guessing games; see appendix 4.

**2.6.2 Information gap exercises for pair work:** students work in pairs. To create a communicative need, the two students in each pair are given different information—examples of information gap exercises.

**2.6.3 Exchanging personal information**

Students work in pairs, and exchange information about their own lives, interests, experiences, etc. As they listen, they make notes about their partner using a grid. There is a natural "information gap", because every student has slightly different experiences and interests.

**2.6.4 Advantages of using oral activities in English Language Teaching (ELT)**

There are more advantages than disadvantages of using communicative activities.

- 1 They involve all students;
- 2 They force students to say something;
- 3 It reduces teacher talking time;
- 4 It makes students to develop fluency;
- 5 It makes students look at the language as a means of communication.

To sum up, in line with Harmer (2007: 70), "communicative activities should attempt to replicate real communication as being in marked contrast to grammar-translation, direct method and audiolingualism". Communicative activities are at opposite ends of a "communication continuum as shown below:

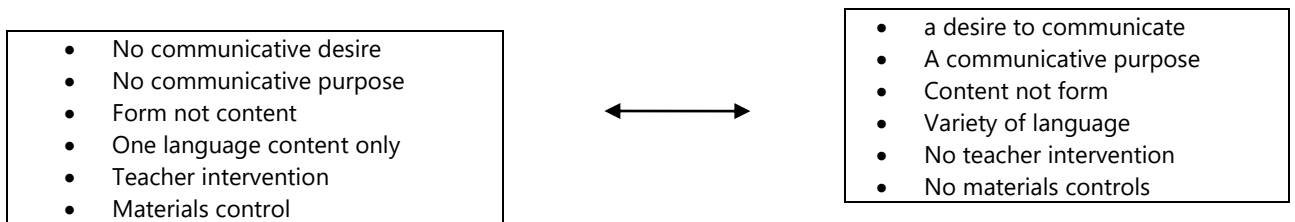


Figure 1: the communication continuum

**2.6.5 Limitations of using oral activities in English Language Teaching**

Communicative Language Teaching has come under attack for being prejudiced in favor of native-speaker teachers by demanding a relatively uncontrolled range of language use on the part of a student, and thus expecting a teacher to be able to respond to any and every language problem which may come up (Medgyes, 1992 cited in Harmer, 2007). Furthermore, oral activities have their limitations as they follow:

- 1 The choice of topic: if the topic is not well chosen, oral activities can be uninteresting and boring.
- 2 Noise: noise is a problem if the teacher next door complains.

### **2.6.6 Oral performance**

Oral language is the ability to listen and speak. These essential everyday skills can improve with age-appropriate instruction and practice. However, Teachers of English face low oral performance in their classes due to different reasons. For instance, the syllabus focused on vocabulary memorization, non-communicative activities, contextual constraints of space, time and resources (Urquijo, 2012). As a consequence, students have poor participation and interaction during English classes.

Although the oral language is used in most classrooms, students often become passive speakers since the teacher and not the students do almost all the talking. As Palmer (2014) indicates, teachers who include oral activities into their classroom instruction will not automatically make learners good speakers. As revealed by Trout (2016) when teaching foreign language learners, it is pertinent to encourage students to express their ideas and not to focus on language and correct grammar as well as to allow students enough time to practice.

Considering that the majority of our communication is oral and our students are exposed continuously to face to face interaction with classmates and peers, we must consider that it is necessary to plan lessons that enhance students' oral production.

In classroom situations, teachers and students will act as both speakers and listeners. Hence, if classroom communication and learning are to be assured, all the participants need to have knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate to speaking and listening in schools.

## **3. Methodology**

This section of the study is concerned with the methodology used in this research. It entails the research design, the population of study, the sample and sampling technique, the instrumentation, and the data analysis methods.

### **3.1 Research design**

The present study followed a blending of qualitative and quantitative approaches, which according to Creswell et al. (2003:46) enables us "to gather qualitative input to explain and extend quantitative results to gain a comprehensive insight of the research."

The researcher employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches because they are complementary approaches in that they formed a balanced whole and provided more attainable dimensions of the research than just focusing on one approach. In the qualitative approach, the researcher did not set out to test hypotheses but rather to observe what was present with his focus and consequently, the data varied during the observation. A quantitative study, on the other hand, measured variables. That is, it involved measuring the degree to which some features were present.

The survey research was also applied to this study. It helped in comparing conditions with predetermined criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of project planning and implementation.

### **3.2 Instruments and techniques of data collection**

The instruments that the researcher used to collect the data were questionnaires and observation formats.

#### **3.2.1 Questionnaire for teachers (qt)**

For this study, the researcher had to use a questionnaire that, according to Nkpa (1997: 74), "Elicits written responses from the research subjects through a series of questions/statements, put together with specific aims in mind."

The researcher opted to use this type of data collection technique due to the relative cost-effectiveness of constructing and administering to large samples compared to other techniques. Moreover, it is not as time-consuming or cumbersome as an interview or observation.

#### **3.2.3 Questionnaire for students (qs)**

The questionnaire was administered to the sample selected from grade 12 (twelve) at Amizade Secondary School. There were 75 (fifty five) students: 30(thirty) female students and 45 (forty five) male students. The main purpose of the questionnaire for students was to find out whether students enjoyed oral activities.

#### **3.2.2 Direct classroom observation**

The researcher also collected the data through the instrument of observation. It is believed that classroom observation enables researchers to obtain firsthand information about the events, objects, and objective event interaction of interest, allowing her/him to see what is actually taking place (Nunan, 1992).

Therefore, observation was the only way of getting direct firsthand information that was more valid than reported information obtained from questionnaires and it provided unexpected but useful information.

### 3.2.3 Participants of the study

A target population, also simply called a population, is a set of all elements. It is a large group to which a researcher wants to generalize his sample results. In other words, it is the total group that the researcher is interested in learning more about (Nunan, 1992).

In this section, the researcher presented the subjects that were involved in the research. However, the researcher did not use the entire population of interest as this may result in huge spending of resources. The researcher neither did involve the whole school community nor other schools. Indeed, the researcher has just considered the participants of the present study. Thus, this research involved 150 students from Amizade Secondary School distributed in two Streams: A and B and two male teachers.

### 3.2.5 Sample and sampling techniques

In any study, it is usually impossible to use the entire population of interest as this may result in huge spending of resources. Hence, the selection of a proportion is a sample with the population's characteristics. In selecting the sample for this study, the random sampling technique was employed.

Thus Nkpa (1997:14) asserts that "there is no hard and fast rule to sampling technique, but in general, for populations that run in hundreds a 50% sample is recommended".

Therefore, 77 participants were selected and they comprised 2 teachers and 75 students from grade 12 at Amizade Secondary School. (See the table below).

Name of the school	Teachers		Students		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Escola Secundária de Amizade					77
	02	0	45	30	

Table 1: Distribution of the sample

Source: author, (2020)

According to Nkpa (1997:35) "random sampling is that each member of the target population has an equal and independent chance of being included in the sample", so in grade 11, the students that represented the sample were selected randomly, that is, the researcher had chosen 75 (seventy five) students from grade 12. This involved students from two (2) streams. For the teachers, they were also selected randomly, that is, two teachers.

### 3.2.6 Procedures

The questionnaire for teachers comprised two sections: one was about the respondents' personal data and section two was about the list of learning activities.

To guarantee validity and reliability, the mode of administering questionnaires to respondents fell into personal administration with the on-the-spot collection category. Guidance to the teachers, as well as students, was provided. In line with Nkpa (1997), questionnaires can be delivered by the investigator in person. The researcher waits for respondents to complete the questionnaires and collect them back.

Finally, observation sheet was used to determine and identify the teaching material and oral activities teachers used to promote real communication in class.

### 3.2.7 Data analysis

The data for this research was analyzed, processed and presented in the shape of tables and pie charts where subjects were discriminated in students, teachers, and gender. Similarities and differences of information were grouped, interpreted and placed into categories, patterns and items of particular significance.

### 3.2.8 Limitations of the study

During the research process, the researcher had the following constraints:

- Difficulty in collecting the questionnaire sheets from teachers and students.



- Time pressure: it was not easy to research while teaching.

**4. Results and Discussion**

Here, the researcher presented the data collected using (2) two instruments: questionnaires administered to teachers and classroom observation. The questionnaire was administered to 2 teachers from grade 12 at Amizade Secondary school. There were (2) male teachers. The main purpose of the questionnaire for teachers was to find out why most teachers do not give emphasis on oral activities in ELT (English Language Teaching).

**4.1 Data presentation and analysis based on the questionnaire for teachers**

This section included the outcomes of the questions which the researcher addressed to the teachers of English who participated in this study and there were 2 (two) male teachers involved.

**Teacher qualification, gender and experience**

The question was concerned with teachers training. The aim was to find out where the teachers were trained before they started teaching. So, out of the total number of teachers which was 2 (two), all the teachers corresponding to 100%, were trained at UP (Universidade Pedagógica - Niassa). See the table below:

Training institution	Number of teachers	Percentage
UP	2	100%
Not trained	0	0

Table 2: Distribution of teacher training institution

Source: author, (2020)

**Question 1: How long have you been teaching English?**

The first question was raised in order to know the years of experience of the teachers involved in the study. This question showed that the 2 (two) teachers, corresponding to 100%, were experienced. See the table below:

Years of experience	1-2 years	3-6 years	7-10 years	More than 10 years
Teachers		0	0	2
Percentage		0%	0%	100%

Table 3: Distribution of teachers' years of experience

Source: author, (2020)

**Question 2: How often do you use oral activities in your English classes?**

In question number 2 (two), the researcher wanted to know how often teachers used oral activities in their English classes. The 2 (two) teachers, 2 (two) teachers, corresponding to 100%, had chosen "sometimes", it meant that they sometimes used oral activities in their classes (see the table below).

**Teachers' frequency of oral activities usage in English Language class**

Total sample number of teachers	Criteria	Usage of short stories	
		Frequency	Rate of frequency (%)
2	never	0	
	sometimes	2	100
	rarely	0	0

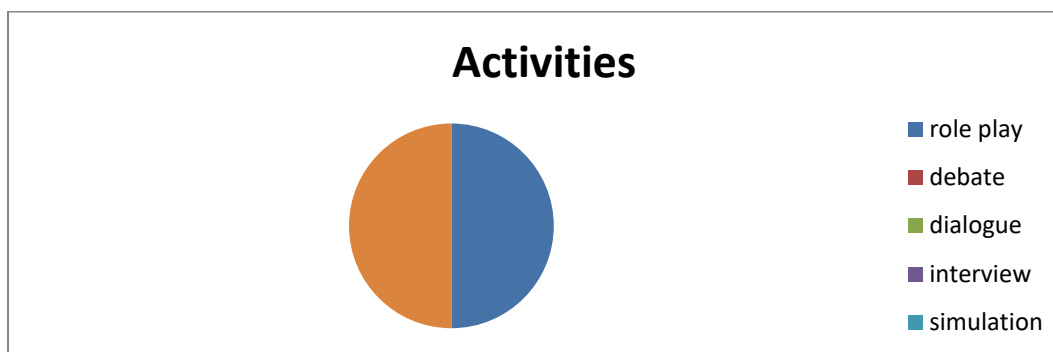
Table 4: Frequency of usage of oral activities in the class

Source: author, (2020)

**Question 3: What types of communicative activities would you use in ELT?**

In question number 3 (three), the researcher wanted to know what types of oral activities teachers used in their classes. Out of 2 (two) teachers, 1 (one) student, corresponding to 50% had chosen discussion; the other teacher, corresponding to 50% selected role play.

Teachers considered role play as well as dialogue as communicative techniques which develop students' fluency. They just did not use them because they were not tested. The table below is about types of oral activities which teachers might use in their ELT. The data showed that half of the respondents, amounting 50% would use role play. Another half was favourably for using discussion. See the Pie chart 1 below:



Pie chart 1: Preference for types of oral activities

Source: author, (2020)

**Question 4: Where do you get oral activities?**

In question number 4 (four), the researcher wanted to know where teachers found oral activities. All teachers, corresponding to 100% said they found oral activities in coursebooks. When asked to specify others, *teachers simply did not comment on it.*

**Question 5: Do you think it is advantageous to use oral activities to develop speaking skills in ELT?**

In question number 5 (five), the researcher asked teachers whether oral activities were advantageous to develop speaking skills. All teachers, corresponding to 100%, supported the idea of using oral activities because of being advantageous due to the fact that they might use oral activities to develop speaking as a crucial part of foreign language learning and teaching. These activities include role play, information gap, brainstorming, storytelling, interviews, story completion, discussions, simulations, interviews, reporting, etc.

**Question 6: In what levels do you think should oral activities be included in English language classes?**

In question 6 (six), the researcher wanted to know at what level teachers thought oral activities were suitable for all learners, since oral activities stimulated students' interest and were motivating.

**Question 7: which one do you prefer to deal with in language skills classes, oral activities or grammar rules?**

Finally, in question number 7 (seven), the researcher wanted to know teachers' preferences in relation to oral activities or grammar. 1 (one) (teacher) corresponding to 50 % preferred oral activities. The teacher who preferred grammar rules commented that he used grammar because they were straightforward and saved time other than oral activities since they require careful planning.

**4.2 Data presentation and analysis based on classroom observation**

Here, the researcher had to sit in the classroom and observe different lessons from the teachers involved in this study. And they were from grade 12. This process was done using an observation sheet. The data obtained pointed out that most observed teachers neither used short stories in their language teaching classes nor used communicative activities such as role-play, dialogues, and simulation.

**In question 1:** the researcher wanted to observe which methods of introducing an oral activity the teacher used. Teachers were teaching grammar points based on the coursebook, so grammar rules were taught despite being aware of the potential use of communicative activities.

**In question 2:** the researcher wanted to observe what skills were developed in the class. The researcher observed that teachers were developing mostly writing and reading of grammar rules, no oral practice.

In question 3, the researcher wished to observe what activities were developed to help students practice the language. The findings showed that individual work was the predominant activity used in the classroom. Finally, in question 4, the researcher observed that the teaching and learning process was based on form-focused instruction. This contradicts what teachers answered in the questionnaire.

**4.3 Data Presentation and analysis based on a questionnaire for students**

The questionnaire was administered to the sample selected from grade 12 (twelve) at Amizade Secondary School. There were 75 (fifty five) students: 30 (thirty) female students and 45 (forty-five) male students.

The main purpose of the questionnaire for students was to find out whether students enjoyed oral activities.

**Question 1: Do you like speaking English in the class?**

In question number 1 (one): the researcher wanted to know whether the students liked speaking English or not. All 75 students, corresponding to 100 %, said that they liked speaking English. In this number of seventy five (75) students, thirty (30) Female students ranged from 15 to 16 years old while male students ranged from 16 to 20 years old.

**Questions 2, 3: What types of oral activities does your teacher use to practice the English language in class?**

In question number 2 (two): the researcher asked the students in order to know the types of oral activities they liked practising in the class. All 75 students, corresponding to 100% commented that they did not practice speaking. Students were given grammar exercises and questions from the text to answer most of the time in the classroom. These grammar exercises were solved in pairs and individually. This is in line with (Urquijo, 2012) who said that the school syllabus focused on vocabulary memorization, non-communicative activities, contextual constraints of space, time and resources. As a consequence, students have poor participation and interaction during English classes. See graph 1 below:

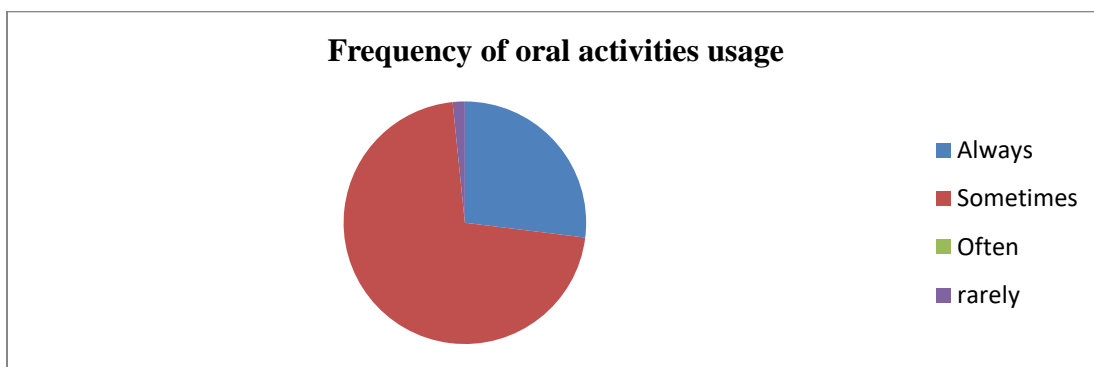


Pie chart 2: Rate of frequency for types of oral activities

Source: author, (2020)

**Question 4: How often does your teacher use oral activities in the class?**

In question number 4 (four): the researcher asked students whether the teacher used oral activities with students in class. Out of 75 students, 15 students, corresponding to 20%, chose "always", twenty (20) students, corresponding to 26.7%, selected "rarely" and 40 (forty) students, corresponding to 53%, selected "sometimes" that meant that teacher had sometimes used oral activities. See pie chart 3 below:



Pie Chart 3: Frequency usage of oral activities

Source: author, (2020)

### **In question 5: Do you like practicing English in the class?**

In this question, the researcher wanted to know whether students liked practising English in class. All students, corresponding to 100%, said they liked practicing English in class. In addition, comments from students pointed that they enjoy speaking English because they would like to have a good job.

#### **4.3.1 Results**

At this stage, the researcher presents the research findings in reflection of hypotheses prior presented to predict the study's possible outcomes or evaluate their reliability and validity. Based on questionnaires from teachers and students and classroom observations, the activities used by teachers of the English language at Amizade Secondary school in their lessons included individual work with an emphasis on form-focused instruction. Thus, teacher-centred methodology was predominant.

#### **Testing the hypotheses**

- **Teachers may not be using communicative activities in the class because they do not give time themselves to adapt extra – materials in ELT.**

The findings from the questionnaire for teachers revealed that most teachers knew the importance of oral activities. In addition, when teachers asked whether oral activities were advantageous or not, most of them supported the idea that oral activities were stimulating and motivating. However, most grade 12 teachers of English at Amizade Secondary School recognize the benefits of oral activities in their lessons but most teachers have little opportunity to use communicative activities such as role play and simulation because they require careful planning. Instead, they stick to the syllabus in the course books that they know that will be tested. In addition, most teachers of grade 12 at Amizade Secondary school rely on teaching grammar rules to their students. Thus, this hypothesis has been proved.

- **Teachers may not use oral activities due to an overloaded school syllabus.**

The findings from observation and questionnaire for students showed that most teachers would rather use more form-focused instruction than communicative activities such as dialogues, role play, simulation, etc. In fact, the teaching of grammar rules was predominant. Teachers did not give time to themselves to exploit extra materials. Teachers used individual work for speaking and listening in the classroom, which overtly displayed many teachers talking time. The syllabus contributes for teachers not to make use of oral activities because speaking skills are undervalued. The students know that at the end of the unit, they would not be tested orally. Again, this hypothesis was considered valid.

- **Maybe teachers are not aware of ways of getting students to communicate with each other in the class.**

The questionnaire's findings revealed that most teachers of grade 12 at Amizade Secondary School were more dependent on the students' course books than on extra materials in their lessons. Most grade 12 teachers emphasise oral activities in ELT because oral activities required careful planning. On the other hand, most teachers of grade 12 at Amizade Secondary School felt restricted by their own teacher-centred method: much time teacher talking. Students were passive. Thus, students were not exposed to communicative activities and they have not familiarized themselves with different language uses, forms or conventions. As a result, language was difficult to develop. On the other hand, students might not feel developing fluency. Furthermore, oral activities in the students' course books were not enough time to practice oral skills. Much time was devoted to aspects related to vocabulary, grammar and reading. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed and validated.

### **5. Conclusion**

This study investigated why most teachers did not use oral activities in their English lessons.

According to the results of the study in general, it can be concluded that communicative activities are far from being fully implemented at Amizade Secondary school, the case of grade 12 students. There is a clear dependence on course book texts. Teachers do not give time to exploit extra materials.

Since EFL teaching aims to communicate fluently, teachers focus on linguistic and non-linguistic benefits, that is, cultural knowledge and sensitivity and values. Moreover, oral activities help students expand their social and academic skills.

Considering the analysis of this research, it is worth pointing out that communicative activities play a very great role in English Language Teaching. So, their use in the classroom is important because they provide a variety of language use. Thus, the researcher recommends that teachers use them in their classes.

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**Appendix 1**

**Questionnaire for teachers**

This questionnaire aims at finding out communicative activities used for most teachers at Amizade Secondary School to promote oral skills in their English classes. Please answer as many questions as you can and your answers will be kept strictly confidential. The results will be used for research purposes only. Please write (X) for the correct answer in the box.

**Teacher qualification:**

- a) Academic\_\_\_\_\_
- b) Professional\_\_\_\_\_
- c) Training Institution\_\_\_\_\_

**Gender**

Male  Female

**Teaching experience:**

**1 How long have you been teaching English?**

1-3       4-7       8-10       more than 10

**2 How often do you use speaking activities in your classes?**

- a. Always
- b. Never
- c. Sometimes
- d. Rarely

**3 What types of oral activities do you use?**

- a. Role play
- b. Debate
- c. Dialogue
- d. Interview
- e. Simulation
- f. Discussion
- g. None of them

Comment: \_\_\_\_\_

---

**4 Where do you get oral activities?**

- a. School course books
- b. Your own oral activity
- c. Others, specify
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

**5 Do you think it is advantageous to use oral activities in English Language Classes?**

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Why?

**6 In what level do you think should oral activities be included in language classes?**

Grade  9-10

grade 1

all levels

Why? -----

**7 Which one do you prefer to deal with in language skills classes?**

oral activities  or expository  passages?

Why? -----

**Thank you very much for your collaboration!**

**Appendix 2**

**Observation sheet**

School \_\_\_\_\_

Average students' age \_\_\_\_\_

Number of students in the class \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher's name: -----

Grade 12

**1. What methods of introducing story the teacher uses**

- a. Vocabulary
- b. Pre-reading questions
- c. Guiding questions
- d. While-reading questions
- e. Others \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Which skill was developed in the class?**

- a. Listening
- b. Reading
- c. Speaking
- d. Writing
- e. Integrated skills

**3. What activities did the teacher give students to help them practice the language?**

- a. Pair work
- b. Group work
- c. Debate
- d. Simulation
- e. Role play
- f. Others \_\_\_\_\_

**4. What activities used in the class suitable for speaking and listening**

- a) Dictation
- b) Role play
- c) Dialogue
- d) Individual work
- e) All of them

**Appendix 3**

**Questionário para estudantes**

O presente questionário visa recolher as informações sobre o emprego da oralidade nas aulas de Inglês na escola Secundária de Amizade, concretamente na 12ª classe, respectivamente. Agradece-se o favor de se fornecer a informação necessária. As

respostas serão rigidamente mantidas confidenciais e servirão apenas para a pesquisa intitulada "o uso da oralidade nas aulas de Inglês na escola Secundária de Amizade, 12ª classe".

**Instruções:** leia as questões abaixo e marque com um (x) na alternativa certa e/ou responda as questões onde for necessário.

**Género**

Masculino

Feminino

**Idade**

10 – 15

16- 20

20 – 25

26 ou mais

**1. Gostas de falar English?**

Sim

Não

**2. Que tipo de actividade oral gostas de praticar na sala de aulas?**

a. Diálogo  Entrevista  Debate  s  ção

b. Outro , mencione-o -----

**3. Que tipo de actividades o professor dá para praticar a língua em sala de aula?**

- a. Trabalho em pares
- b. Trabalho em grupo
- c. Trabalho individual

**4. Quantas vezes o teu professor dá actividades de oralidade na sala de aula para a prática da língua?**

Always  Sometimes  Never

**5. Gostas de falar Inglês em sala de aulas ?**

Sim

Não

**Comente:** -----

**Muito obrigado pela colaboração!**

**Appendix 4**

**A Long Walk Home**

(by: Jason Bocarro)

I grew up in the South of Spain in a little community called Estepona. I was 16 when one morning my father told me I could drive him into a remote village called Mijas, about 18 miles away, on the condition that I take the car in to be serviced at a nearby garage. Having just learned to drive and hardly ever having the opportunity to use the car, I readily accepted. I drove father into

Mijas and promised to pick him up at 4 p.m., then drove to a nearby garage and dropped off the car. Because I had a few hours to spare, I decided to catch a couple of movies at a theatre near the garage. However, I became so immersed in the films that I completely lost track of time. When the last movie had finished, I looked down at my watch. It was six o'clock. I was two hours late.

I knew dad would be angry if he found out I'd been watching movies. He'd never let me drive again. I decided to tell him that the car needed some repairs and that they had taken longer than had been expected. I drove up to the place where we had planned to meet and saw Dad waiting patiently on the corner. I apologized for being late and told him that I'd come as quickly as I could, but the car needed some major repairs. I'll never forget the look he gave me.

"I'm disappointed that you feel you have to lie to me, Jackson."

"What do you mean? I'm telling the truth."

Dad looked at me again. "When you did not show up, I called the garage to ask if there were any problems, and they told me that you had not yet picked up the car. So you see, I know there were no problems with the car." A rush of guilt ran through me as I feebly confessed my trip to the movie theatre and the real reason for my tardiness. Dad listened intently as a sadness passed through him.

"I am angry, not with you but with myself. You see, I realize that I have failed as a father if after all these years you feel that you have to lie to me. I have failed because I have brought up a son who cannot even tell the truth to his own father, I'm going to walk home now and contemplate where I have gone wrong all these years."

"But dad, its 18 miles to home. It's dark. You can't walk home."

My protests, my apologies and the rest of my utterances were useless. I had let my father down, and I was about to learn one of the most painful lessons of my life. Dad began walking along the dusty roads. I quickly jumped in the car and followed behind, hoping he would relent. I pleaded all the way, telling him how sorry I was, but he simply ignored me, continuing on silently, thoughtfully and painfully.

For 18 miles I drove behind him, averaging about five miles per hour.

Seeing my father in so much physical and emotional pain was the most distressing and painful experience that I have ever faced. However, it was also the most successful lesson. I have never lied to him since.