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# Promoting oral communication skills in ESP classroom



## Authors:

U.Umirziyayev  
M. G'aniyeva  
G. Mirzayeva  
R. Ortiqov  
Sh. Dushatova  
N. Nizomova  
B. Muxtorova  
Z. Mamadaliyeva  
Dr. Shahbaz Amil



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# **Promoting oral communication skills in ESP classroom**

Monograph

**Compiled by**

**U.Umirziyayev**

**M. G'aniyeva**

**G. Mirzayeva**

**R. Ortiqov**

**Sh. Dushatova**

**N. Nizomova**

**B. Muxtorova**

**Z. Mamadaliyeva**

**Dr. Shahbaz Amil**

**Professor of Jawaharlal Nehru University**

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*For ESP students to communicate professionally in seminars, workshops, student conferences, and professional associations, they must have strong oral communication skills. However, because they are unable to comprehend the ESP lexis on their own, the students' oral presentations lack correctness and fluidity. When under pressure to communicate with professional clarity, learners continue to mentally translate in their home tongue before speaking, frequently substituting improperly simple vocabulary for formal lexis. Thus, the ability of a learner to generate precise target language lexical phrase and word combination equivalents in spontaneous contexts is what is essentially meant to be understood under oral skills in ESP.*

*In this paper we concentrate on different theories, techniques and methods that have been put forward by prominent researchers to promote oral communication in ESP context.*

Chief Editor:

M. Mamajonov – doctor of philosophy in philological sciences

Reviewers:

doctor of philosophy in pedagogical sciences, N. Abbasova,

doctor of philosophy in pedagogical sciences, N. Gofurova

### **Promoting oral communication skills in ESP classroom**

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## Acknowledgment

Although there are a lot of researchers and academicians who studied the importance of oral communication, we have used ideas and theories mostly put forward by Scott Thornbury and Jeremy Harmer. Actually, we talk about conclusions made by various researchers in the sphere, however, these two names are well worth the acknowledgement.

Scott Thornbury (born 1950 in New Zealand) is an internationally recognized academic and teacher trainer in the field of English Language Teaching (ELT). Along with Luke Meddings, Thornbury is credited with developing the Dogme language teaching approach, which emphasizes meaningful interaction and emergent language over prepared materials and following an explicit syllabus. Thornbury has written over a dozen books on ELT methodology. Two of these, 'Natural Grammar' and 'Teaching Unplugged', have won the British Council's "ELTon" Award for Innovation, the top award in the industry (in 2004 and 2010, respectively).

Thornbury's book "How to teach speaking" (2005) is especially relevant to the topic at hand. This book offers methods for boosting students' confidence in speaking English outside of the classroom in addition to scheduled speaking exercises. In essence, this book looks at the various methods and exercises that can be used to teach and assess speaking.

-encompasses speech characteristics including register, fluency, and articulation.

-examines methods used in the classroom, including dialogue, acting, drilling, and discussions.

-explores the various methods and exercises that can be applied to the instruction and assessment of speaking

-includes speech aspects including register, fluency, and articulation.

-examines instructional strategies such role-playing, drill, discussions, drama, dialogue, and conversation

Another academician that we should acknowledge is Jeremy Harmer. He is currently a course tutor and designer for the online MATESOL at the New School, New York, but he has taught extensively in both the UK and in Mexico, where he worked for many years.

As both a coursebook writer and the author of key titles on EFL teaching methodology, Jeremy is a frequently invited speaker at conferences and seminars all over the world. When not teaching, writing or travelling, his interests include listening to and playing music (he plays piano, guitar and viola with more passion, perhaps, than skill), and this obsession with music is reflected in his two readers for Cambridge University Press.

In writing this paper, the authors mostly worked with the fourth-year students in the faculty, as they have ESP course and their linguistic competence is higher.

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## **Introduction.**

After getting the Independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan has worked out an own model of development, taking into account the specific communication skills and its development in our country. One of the most important conditions for the development of any country is a well-functioning education system. As the education system ensures the formation of a highly developed that must be able to live in a highly with communication skills, ability to communicate independently in an informational society. As I have mentioned above after getting the Independence we can develop our educational system through new methods and ways. Independence and sovereignty after September 1991 in Independent Uzbekistan many political, economical, cultural and social factors have changed. Therefore, the very time of getting Independence the head of the republic I. A. Karimov attended to change Educational system and the attempts reflected on changing in Educational system in 1997, the Educational system and personnel. Training so high developed before Independence no longer meets requirements of democratic and market changes occurred in the Republic today.

It should be noted that the National Program me of Personnel training had some unique features. The reforms are carried out on a extensive scale and are supported scientifically.

As the President I. A. Karimov emphasized in his book “Uzbekistan along the road of Independence and progress” There are of four path of reform and development is based.

- Adherence to universal human values
- Consolidation and development of the nation’s spiritual heritage.
- Freedom for the individuals realization

- Patriotism<sup>1</sup>

The highest objective of reformation in Uzbekistan is to revive those traditions fill them with new content and set up all necessary conditions achieving peace and democracy, prosperity, cultural advancement freedom of conscience and intellectual maturity for every person on earth.

According to the requirement of the National Program of Personal training and reforming of highest education in the republic of Uzbekistan, it is important to make effective changes in the system of higher Education. As I. A. Karimov highlighted “Our young generation must be quick- cutter, wiser, healthier and of course, must be happier than us”<sup>2</sup>

*The object of research of the given work* is helping to overcome difficulties in learning English using communicative way of teaching language in ESP classroom.

*The purpose of qualification paper* is to work out the methods of teaching English while applying communicative approach in the communicative language classroom.

*The aim of the qualification paper* is raising interest of the learners and developing communicative competence in teaching English.

*The novelty of my work* isto discover whether there is a positive relation between creation and application of speaking activities designed to fit the needs of an ESP classroom and students’ knowledge and ability to react in conversational situations related to several study programmes.

*Practical value of the work* is the promotion of oral communication skills of the learners in the ESP practical lessons,with a help of some activities that had been worked out and approbated during my pedagogical practice.

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<sup>1</sup>I. A. Karimov “Uzbekistan along the road of Independence and Progress”, Tashkent 1993, page 67

<sup>2</sup>I. A. Karimov “There is no future without history” Tashkent 1997, page 47



The thesis sets several goals. Firstly, it wants to introduce some issues connected to teaching speaking in foreign language classes as well as to point out to the specifics of teaching speaking in ESP classroom. Secondly, it aims at creation of speaking materials that could be used at secondary schools offering Tourism and Hotel Keeping study programmes.

It is divided into two parts, the theoretical and practical part. In the theoretical part, the problem of teaching speaking as the second language is described from various perspectives and basic approaches for teaching speaking with a special emphasis on Communicative Approach are introduced. Furthermore, the thesis tries to clarify specifics of teaching speaking in ESP classrooms.

The goal of the practical part is to discover whether there is a positive relation between creation and application of speaking activities designed to fit the needs of an ESP classroom and students' knowledge and ability to react in conversational situations related to Hotel Keeping and Tourism themes. The research also tries to answer additional questions regarding relationship between the activities and students' motivation, self-confidence or effect on their speaking fluency.

The materials will be aimed at a specific area connected to hotel industry, tourism and travelling. A number of various activities will be used in order to motivate students to participate in them and encourage them in conversation. The list of materials is not supposed to serve only for the purposes of the Tourism and Hotel Keeping study programme, but should be ready to be used in any other lesson as a supplementary material. It might also be used by other teachers as a source of inspiration for their own lessons and preparations.

Communication refers to a time when two or more people have the right to talk or listen without having to follow a mixed schedule, such as an agenda.

In communication, everyone can have something to say and anyone can speak at any time.

In everyday life we sometimes refer to communication as “chat” and the focus of my diploma work is on this type of spoken interaction, rather than on more formal, planned occasions for speaking as muting’s.

The purposes of communication include the exchange of information: the creation and social roles, as well as deciding on and carrying out joint actions. Communications therefore has many functions, although its primary purpose in our own language is probably social. People sometimes see the term “communication” to mean any spoken encounter or interaction. Communication is such a natural part of our lives that many people are not conscious of what happens within it. However, communication follows certain rules, which can be described. For example, which we look at normal communication we notice that:

- Usually only one person speaks at a time;
- The speakers change;
- The length of any contribution varies;
- There are techniques for allowing the other party or parties to speak;
- Neither the content nor the amount of what we say is specified in advance.

Besides this, the purposes of communication include the exchange of information: the creation and maintenance of social relationships such as friendship; the negotiation of status and social roles, as well as deciding on and carrying out joint actions. Communication and communication skills therefore has many functions, although its primary purpose in our own.

I want you to communicate. This means that I want you to understand others and to make yourself understandable to them. These sound like the obvious goals of every language learner., but I think these simple goals need to be emphasized, because learners too often get diverted from them and fall into more of a struggle with the mechanics of grammar and pronunciation that they should. Learners can become timid about using what they know for fear of making horrible mistakes

with what they don't know. All the attention paid to the mechanics of communication sometimes gets in the way of communication itself.

In the early lessons of many language courses, students are encouraged to concentrate heavily upon pronunciation and grammar, while vocabulary is introduced only very slowly. The idea seems to be that even if one has very little to say, that little bit should be said correctly. Students can worry a great deal about the machinery of language, but they worry rather little about real communicating much of anything. Under such circumstances, learners have to think about an awful lot of things in order to construct even a simple sentence. They are supposed to force their mouths to produce sounds that seem ridiculous. They have to grope desperately for words that they barely know. They have to perform mental gymnastic trying to remember bizarre grammatical rules. All these challenges are a fatal distraction from what skillful speakers worry about – the message that they want to convey. If early learners have to worry about getting everything correct, they cannot hope to say anything very interesting. They simply cannot do everything at once and emerge with any real sense of success.

In the German original 'mittteilungsbezogene Kommunikation was coined by Black and Butzkamm (1977)<sup>3</sup>. They use it to refer to those rare and precious moments in foreign language teaching when the target language is actually used to arrange communication. A prime instance of this use is classroom discourse, i.e. getting things done in the lesson. Sometimes real communicative situations develop spontaneously, as in exchanging comments on last night's TV programme or introduction someone's new haircut. The majority of ordinary language teaching situations before reaching an advanced level, however, are geared towards language-oriented communication or what Rivers calls 'skill-getting': they make use of the foreign language mainly in structural exercises and predetermined responses by the learners. Since foreign language teaching should

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<sup>3</sup> Black C, and W. Butzkamm (1977) Praxis des neusprachlichen Unterrichts Vol. 24, #2, pp. 115-124

help students achieve some kind of communicative skill in the foreign language, all situations in which real communication occurs naturally have to be taken advantage of and many more suitable ones have to be created.

Two devices help the teacher in making up communicative activities: information gap and opinion gap. Information-gap exercises force the participants to exchange information in order to find a solution (e.g. reconstitute a text, solve a puzzle, write a summary). Problem-solving activities. Opinion gaps are created by exercise or program controversial texts or ideas, which require the participants to describe and perhaps defend their views on these ideas. Another type of opinion-gap activity can be organised by letting the participants share their feelings about an experience they have in common. Furthermore, learning a foreign language is not just a matter of memorising a simple set of names for the things around us; it is also an educational experience. Since our language is closely linked with our personality and culture, why not use the process of acquiring a new language to gain further insights into our personality and culture? This does not mean that students of a foreign language should submit to psychological exercises or probing interviews, but simply that, for example, learning to talk about their likes and dislikes and bring about a greater awareness of their values and aims in life. Many of the activities are concerned with the learners themselves. For learners who are studying English in a non-English-speaking setting it is very important to experience real communicative situation in which they learn to express their own views and attitudes, and in which they are taken seriously as people.

As applying the principles of information gap and opinion gap to suitable traditional exercises the teacher can change them into more challenging communicative situations. Thus the well-known procedure at beginner's level of having students describe each other's appearance is transformed into a communicative activity as soon as an element of guessing (information gap) is introduced. However, not all exercises can be spruced up like this. Manipulative

drills that have no real topic have to remain as they are. Information and opinion-gap exercises have to have some content worth talking about. Students do not want to discuss trivia; the interest which is aroused by the structure of the activity may be reduced or increased by the topic.

Many of the activities are concerned with the learners themselves. Their feelings and ideas are the focal point of these exercises, around which a lot of their foreign language activity revolves. For learners who are studying English in a non-English-speaking setting it is very important to experience real communicative situation in which they learn to express their own views and attitudes, and in which they are taken seriously as people. Traditional textbook exercises — however necessary and useful they may be for all- communicative grammar practice — do not as a rule forge a link between the learners and the foreign language in such a way that the learners identify with it. Meaningful activities on a personal level can be a step towards this identification, which improves performance and generates interest. And, of course, talking about something which affects them personally is eminently motivating for students.

Furthermore, learning a foreign language is not just a matter of memorising a simple set of names for the things around us; it is also an educational experience. Since our language is closely linked with our personality and culture, why not use the process of acquiring a new language to gain further insights into our personality and culture? This does not mean that students of a foreign language should submit to psychological exercises or probing interviews, but simply that, for example, learning to talk about their likes and dislikes and bring about a greater awareness of their values and aims in life. A number of activities, adapted from 'values clarification' theory have been included with this purpose in mind.

Learning is very effective if the learners are actively involved in the process. The degree of learner activity depends, among other things, on the type of material they are working on. The students' curiosity can be aroused by texts or pictures containing discrepancies or mistakes, or by missing or muddled

information, and this curiosity leads to the wish to find out, to put right or to complete. Learner activity in a more literal sense of the word can also imply doing and making things; for example, producing a radio programme forces the students to read, write and talk in the foreign language as well as letting them learn with tape recorders, sound effects and music. Setting up an opinion poll in the classroom is a second, less ambitious vehicle for active learner participation; it makes students interview each other, it literally gets them out of their seats and — this is very important — it culminates in a final product which everybody has helped to produce.

Activities for practising a foreign language have left the narrow path of purely structural and lexical training and have expanded into the fields of values education and personality building. The impact of foreign language learning on the shaping of the learner's personality is slowly being recognised. That is why foreign language teaching — just like many other subjects — plays an important part in education towards cooperation and empathy. As teachers we would like our students to be sensitive towards the feelings of others and share their worries and joys. A lot of teaching/learning situations, however, never get beyond a rational and fact-oriented stage. That is why it seems important to provide at least a few instances focusing on the sharing ideas. Jigsaw tasks, in particular, demonstrate to the learners that cooperation is necessary. Many of the activities included in this book focus on the participants' personalities and help build an atmosphere of mutual understanding.

This section deals with the importance of the atmosphere within the class or group, the teacher's role, and ways of organising discussions, as well as giving hints on the selection and use of the activities in class.

A lot of the activities will run themselves as soon as they get under way. The teacher then has to decide whether to join in the activity as an equal member (this may sometimes be unavoidable for pair work in classes with an odd number of students) or remain in the background to help and observe. The first alternative

has a number of advantages: for example the psychological distance between teacher and students may be reduced when students get to know their teacher better. Of course, the teacher has to refrain from continually correcting the students or using her greater skill in the foreign language to her advantage. If the teacher joins in the activity, she will then no longer be able to judge independently and give advice and help to other groups, which is the teacher's major role if she does not participate directly. A further advantage of non-participation is that the teacher may unobtrusively observe the performance of several students in the foreign language and note common mistakes for revision at a later stage. A few activities, mainly jigsaw tasks, require the teacher to withdraw completely from the scene.

Whatever method is chosen, the teacher should be careful not to correct students' errors too frequently. Being interrupted and corrected makes the students hesitant and insecure in their speech when they should really be practising communication. It seems far better for the teacher to use the activities for observation and co help only when help is demanded by the students themselves; even then they should be encouraged to overcome their difficulties by finding alternative ways of expressing what they want to say. There is a list of speech acts which may be needed for the activities and the relevant section may be duplicated and given as handouts to help the students.

## II. Communicative language teaching.

### 2.1. Teaching Speaking in a Foreign Language classroom.

To start with, it is necessary to realize that speaking our mother tongue is something everybody takes for granted. It is used naturally on everyday basis by people from various classes, with different social status and intellect. As Thornbury (2005) puts it, “so natural and integral is speaking that we forget how we once struggled to achieve this ability – until, that is, we have to learn how to do it all over again in a foreign language” (p. 1).

The truth is that every child learns to speak naturally and unaware of the fact that it is actually learning something. People talk to them, sing them songs or read fairy-tales, in other words, they expose children to as much mother tongue as possible. Regarding teaching speaking English as the second language, Harmer (1998) sees exposure to the ‘new language’ among four basic things that students need to be present and clear before they are able to master the language. The other three are to understand its meaning, understand its form and practise the language (p. 64)

Nowadays, it might seem very easy for the learners to acquire a certain lexical level, grammatical structures or catch correct pronunciation since the modern world and its technological inventions and gadgets brought a lot of changes. Learners are exposed to English much more than they used to be before thanks to the Internet, mobile phone applications, games, entertainment industry (films, series, music) etc. All of the previously mentioned elements may play a substitutional role for the teacher in learning foreign language. Taking in consideration the massive possibilities of exposure to English as well as time spent at school in foreign language classes, a question arises: “*Why are there so many students whose level of English is inadequate compared to the number of years they have been learning the second language?*”



One of the possible answers is provided by Scrivener (2005) who claims that “teaching does not necessarily lead to learning” (p. 17). He adds “the fact that the first is happening doesn’t automatically mean the other must occur” (Scrivener, 2005, p. 17). To put it simply, the teacher might be an excellent methodologist, have deep knowledge of the language and academic education, spend a lot of energy preparing for and performing in the lessons, but there may still not be the expected result. If he or she cannot motivate the students, bring the language closer to their interests or needs, they will not invest their energy into learning. And it is obvious that language needs to be practiced not only in the classroom, but anywhere else where there is an opportunity to do so.

According to Scrivener (2005), what a teacher can do for his students is to “help create the conditions in which they might be able to learn” (p. 18). Harmer (1998) confirms this by saying that “class management – the ability to control and inspire a class – is one of the fundamental skills of teaching” (p. 3).

I agree with both authors. The teacher’s role is more role of a facilitator whose major aim should be to prepare a safe and friendly environment where students are led to a certain degree of autonomy. Thornbury (2005) defines autonomy in sociocultural terms as “the capacity to self-regulate performance as a consequence of gaining control over skills that were formerly other-regulated” (p. 90). On the topic of students’ autonomy, Harmer (1998) also sees it as one of the main teachers’ aims when he claims that “to compensate for the limits of classroom time and to counter the passivity that is an enemy of true learning, students need to develop their own learning strategies, so that as far as possible they become autonomous learners” (p. 335).

Apart from this goal, learners should be taught various communication techniques and motivated to work on their weaknesses and achieve personal growth instead of being fitted into the roles of passive listeners who memorize chunks of text and drill grammatical rules. Scrivener (2005) then suggests other

methods how to engage students in the lessons e.g. “enabling them to work at their own speed, not giving them long explanations, encouraging them to participate, talk, interact, do things, etc.” (p. 18).

Harmer (2001) goes further in eliciting the roles of a teacher, apart from the role of a facilitator, he suggests 8 roles for the teacher – a controller, organiser, assessor, prompter, participant, resource, tutor and observer (p. 58-62).

Based on the categorization of various roles, Harmer (2001) claims following:

What we can say, with certainty, is that we need to be able to switch between the various roles, judging when it is appropriate to use one or other of them. And then, when we have made that decision, however consciously or subconsciously it is done, we need to be aware of how we carry out that role and how we perform. (p. 63)

The fact is, that the teacher needs to be very skillful at realizing when it is about time to shift from one role to another. The boundaries are often not clear, it requires experience and intuition combined with certain knowledge from fields of sociology and psychology. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that several roles might be more beneficial in the process of developing speaking skills. The role of an organizer functions as the backbone for further development of the speaking skills. Only well prepared activities with clear instructions can provide suitable conditions for enhancement of speaking skills inside the classroom. For maximizing the effect, the role of an organizer can be accompanied by the roles of a prompter or tutor which guide students through the activities, suggest ideas, encourage and motivate or help students find the lost thread. These roles are beneficial in development of speaking skills by means of creating friendlier and more helpful atmosphere. This claim is confirmed by Harmer (2001) when he

says that “In this more personal contact the learners have a real chance to feel supported and helped, and the general class atmosphere is greatly enhanced as a result (p. 62). On the other hand, as he adds “We need to make sure we do not intrude too much” (Harmer, 2001, p. 62). The role of a participant might also become an asset for the lesson, since the teacher can join either a pair or a group and spark some further discussion. However, situation should not occur, when the teacher becomes too dominant and catches all attention for himself.

To sum it up, sometimes various roles need to be performed in different stages of the lesson. It might be necessary to act as a controller to restore order in the classroom, while only a few moments later, the roles of an observer and tutor might be much more beneficial and lead to better results at learning. In my view, this ability cannot be learnt from books, they only provide us with guidelines. However, the most difficult task is up to the teachers to process the information and practise applying it during educational process.

## **2.2. Fluency vs. Accuracy in Developing Speaking Skills**

There is a distinction between fluency and accuracy. According to Harmer (2001) “we need to make a clear difference between ‘non-communicative’ and ‘communicative’ activities; whereas the former are generally intended to ensure correctness, the latter are designed to improve language fluency” (p. 104).

We can conclude that each activity taking place in the lesson is being done either to improve fluency, accuracy or in some cases both.

This is supported by Scrivener (2005) who claims that:

Certainly there are activities in which you are arguably working on both accuracy and

and fluency in relatively equal measure, but many everyday language-teaching lesson

stages are focused on one more than the other, and at any moment, in any activity, it is likely that you will be aiming to focus on accuracy rather than fluency, or fluency rather than accuracy. (p. 160)

Speaking activities focused on accuracy aim at elimination of mistakes and at correctness of produced utterances not only in terms of grammar, but also vocabulary and proper pronunciation. The biggest difference compared to fluency can be seen in the time the feedback is being provided and its amount. According to Harmer (2001) “when students are involved in accuracy work it is part of the teacher’s function to point out and correct the mistakes students are making” (p. 105). He further calls this ‘teacher intervention’ (Harmer, 2001, p. 105). In general, the frequency of interventions and corrections is much higher than during fluency-oriented activities and often it is done instantaneously, breaching the flow of the speech. The question of teacher feedback will be dealt with in Chapter 3.

The goal of fluency-focused activities is according to Davies and Pearse (2000) to practise utterances of newly acquired language in natural communication (p. 36). During these activities, learners are not expected to avoid mistakes at any cost, they are encouraged to be able to express their opinions, react spontaneously to real-life situations and to convey the message as quickly as possible.

As for interrupting, Scrivener (2005) recommends not to interrupt learners during communicative activities, but rather make notes about various contributions for later feedback (p. 161).

Harmer (2001) shares this opinion when he concludes:

During communicative activities, however, it is generally felt that teachers should not interrupt students in mid-flow to point out a grammatical, lexical or pronunciation error, since to do so interrupts the communication and drags an activity back to the study of language form or precise meaning. (p. 105)

From my point of view, error correction during activities aimed at fluency might be rather discouraging for the learners. Personally, I believe that at these stages of lessons, teacher should be present, but should not be a distracting factor. It is certain, that the activity being in progress plays the major role regarding teacher's activity and a situation may occur, that despite the goal of the activity, which is to practise speaking, it is necessary to intervene in order to clarify something important. I can imagine e.g. a situation, where most of the students did not understand the instructions properly and are doing something completely different than they are supposed to. In this case, it is vital to interfere so that the purpose of the activity could be fulfilled.

Regarding the practical part of the thesis, this approach is widely preferred for most of the designed activities. By creating a number of versatile speaking activities, learners should be encouraged to participate in the lessons and the class management will be adjusted to maximize their space for using and practising language.

There has been a debate about the amount of the Teacher Talking Time ("TTT") and the Student Talking Time ("STT") spent in lessons. At first sight, the answer might seem very simple. It is logical that the more time the students speak, the better for them. The truth is, that currently there are tendencies to maximize STT and minimize TTT (Harmer, 1998, p. 4). He adds that "the best lessons are lessons where STT is maximized, but where at appropriate moments during the lesson the teacher is not afraid to summarize what is happening, tell a story, enter into a discussion etc." (1998, p. 4).

Scrivener (2005) says that there are arguments which claim that teacher is the role-model and the picture of correct language and that interaction with him is more useful than talking to a poor language user. He adds that according to such argumentation, time spent talking with other learners cannot be considered to be particularly useful (p. 84).

Considering the above mentioned arguments, it might be concluded that TTT is inevitable and it needs to be present in every lesson as a tool to instruct, clarify, encourage and reflect on students' language production. Nevertheless, it shouldn't be overused and every time the TTT is used in the lesson, it should be done with a special consideration regarding the aims of the lesson. In my opinion, it is always up to the teacher to divide TTT and STT reasonably throughout the whole lesson, preferably in favour of STT.

### **2.3 . Communicative Approach and Language Teaching**

All the "methods" described so far are symbolic of the progress foreign language teaching ideology underwent in the last century. These were methods that came and went, influenced or gave birth to new methods - in a cycle that could only be described as "competition between rival methods" or "passing fads" in the methodological theory underlying foreign language teaching. Finally, by the mid-eighties or so, the industry was maturing in its growth and moving towards the concept of a broad "approach" to language teaching that encompassed various methods, motivations for learning English, types of teachers and the needs of individual classrooms and students themselves. It would be fair to say that if there is any one "umbrella" approach to language teaching that has become the accepted "norm" in this field, it would have to be the Communicative Language Teaching Approach. This is also known as CLT.

The Communicative approach does a lot to expand on the goal of creating

"communicative competence" compared to earlier methods that professed the same objective. Teaching students how to use the language is considered to be at least as important as learning the language itself. Brown (1994) aptly describes the "march" towards CLT:

"Beyond grammatical discourse elements in communication, we are probing the nature of social, cultural, and pragmatic features of language. We are exploring pedagogical means for 'real-life' communication in the classroom. We are trying to get our learners to develop linguistic fluency, not just the accuracy that has so consumed our historical journey. We are equipping our students with tools for generating unrehearsed language performance 'out there' when they leave the womb of our classrooms. We are concerned with how to facilitate lifelong language learning among our students, not just with the immediate classroom task. We are looking at learners as partners in a cooperative venture. And our classroom practices seek to draw on whatever intrinsically sparks learners to reach their fullest potential."

CLT is a generic approach, and can seem non-specific at times in terms of how to actually go about using practices in the classroom in any sort of systematic way. There are many interpretations of what CLT actually means and involves. See [Types of Learning](#) and [The PPP Approach](#) to see how CLT can be applied in a variety of 'more specific' methods.

From the remarks already made, it should be obvious that the current interest in tasks stems largely from what has been termed 'the communicative approach' to language teaching. In this section I should like to briefly sketch out some of the more important principles underpinning communicative language teaching.

Although it is not always immediately apparent, everything we do in the classroom is underpinned by beliefs about the nature of language and about language learning. In recent years there have been some dramatic shifts in attitude

towards both language and learning. This has sometimes resulted in contradictory messages to the teaching profession which, in turn, has led to confusion.

Among other things, it has been accepted that language is more than simply a system of rules. Language is now generally seen as a dynamic resource for the creation of meaning. In terms of learning, it is generally accepted that we need to distinguish between 'learning that' and 'knowing how'. In other words, we need to distinguish between knowing various grammatical rules and being able to use the rules effectively and appropriately when communicating.

This view has underpinned communicative language teaching (CLT). A great deal has been written and said about CLT, and it is something of a misnomer to talk about 'the communicative approach' as there is a family of approaches, each member of which claims to be 'communicative' (in fact, it is difficult to find approaches which claim not to be communicative!). There is also frequent disagreement between different members of the communicative family.

During the seventies, the insight that communication was an integrated process rather than a set of discrete learning outcomes created a dilemma for syllabus designers, whose task has traditionally been to produce ordered lists of structural, functional or notional items graded according to difficulty, frequency or pedagogic convenience. Processes belong to the domain of methodology. They are somebody else's business. They cannot be reduced to lists of items. For a time, it seems, the syllabus designer was to be out of business.

One of the clearest presentations of a syllabus proposal based on processes rather than products has come from Breen. He suggests that an alternative to the listing of linguistic content (the end point, as it were, in the learner's journey) would be to prioritize the route itself; a focusing upon the means towards the learning of a new language. Here the designer would give priority to the changing process of learning and the potential of the classroom — to the psychological and social resources applied to a new language by learners in the classroom context. ... a greater concern with capacity for communication rather than repertoire of



communication, with the activity of learning a language viewed as important as the language itself, and with a focus upon means rather than predetermined objectives, all indicate priority of process over content.

(Breen 1984: 52-3)<sup>4</sup>

What Breen is suggesting is that, with communication at the centre of the curriculum, the goal of that curriculum (individuals who are capable of using the target language to communicate with others) and the means (classroom activities which develop this capability) begin to merge; the syllabus must take account of both the ends and the means.

What then do we do with our more formal approaches to the specification of structures and skills? Can they be found a place in CLT? We can focus on this issue by considering the place of grammar.

For some time after the rise of CLT, the status of grammar in the curriculum was rather uncertain. Some linguists maintained that it was not necessary to teach grammar, that the ability to use a second language (knowing 'how') would develop automatically if the learner were required to focus on meaning in the process of using the language to communicate. In recent years, this view has come under serious challenge, and it now seems to be widely accepted that there is value in classroom tasks which require learners to focus on form. It is also accepted that grammar is an essential resource in using language communicatively.

This is certainly Littlewood's view. In his introduction to communicative language teaching, he suggests that the following skills need to be taken into consideration:

—The learner must attain as high a degree as possible of linguistic competence. That is, he must develop skill in manipulating the linguistic system, to the point where he can use it spontaneously and flexibly in order to express his intended message.

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<sup>4</sup> Breen, M. 1984 Processes in syllabus design, *General English Syllabus Design*. Oxford: Pergamon Press

—The learner must distinguish between the forms he has mastered as part of his linguistic competence, and the communicative functions which they perform. In other words, items mastered as part of a linguistic system must also be understood as part of a communicative system.

—The learner must develop skills and strategies for using language to communicate meanings as effectively as possible in concrete situations. He must learn to use feedback to judge his success, and if necessary, remedy failure by using different language.

—The learner must become aware of the social meaning of language forms. For many learners, this may not entail the ability to vary their own speech to suit different social circumstances, but rather the ability to use generally acceptable forms and avoid potentially offensive ones.

(Littlewood 1981: 6)<sup>5</sup>

At this point, you might like to consider your own position on this matter. Do you think that considerations of content selection and grading (i.e. selecting and grading grammar, functions, notions, topics, pronunciation, vocabulary etc.) should be kept separate from the selection and grading of tasks, or not? As we have already pointed out, we take the view that any comprehensive curriculum needs to take account of both means and ends and must address both content and process. In the final analysis, it does not really matter whether those responsible for specifying learning tasks are called 'syllabus designers' or 'methodologists'. What matters is that both processes and outcomes are taken care of and that there is a compatible and creative relationship between the two.

Whatever the position taken, there is no doubt that the development of communicative language teaching has had a profound effect on both methodology

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<sup>5</sup> Littlewood W. 1981 *communicative Language Teaching – an Introduction* cambridge University Press

and syllabus design, and has greatly enhanced the status of the learning 'task' within the curriculum.

Students need to be understood and to be able to say what they want to say. Their pronunciation should be at least adequate for that purpose. They need to know the various sounds that occur in the language and differentiate between them. They should be able to apply certain rules, eg. past tense endings, t, d or id. Likewise, a knowledge of correct rhythm and stress and appropriate intonation is essential.

In Extract 1, the teacher plays the part of ringmaster. He asks the questions (most of which are 'display' questions which require the learners to provide answers which the teacher already knows). The only student-initiated interaction is on a point of vocabulary.

- In the second extract, the learners have a much more active role. They communicate directly with each other, rather than exclusively with the teacher as is the case in Extract 1, and one student is allowed to take on the role of provider of content. During the interaction it is the learner who is the 'expert' and the teacher who is the 'learner' or follower.

From time to time, it is a good idea to record and analyse interactions in your own classroom. These interactions can either be between you and your students, or between students as they interact in small-group work. If you do, you may be surprised at the disparity between what you thought at the time was happening, and what actually took place as recorded on the tape. You should not be disconcerted if you do find such a disparity. In my experience, virtually all teachers, even the most experienced, discover dimensions to the lesson which they were unaware of at the time the lesson took place. (These will not all be negative, of course.)

The raw data of interaction, as above, are often illuminating. The following reactions were provided by a group of language teachers at an inservice workshop. The teachers had recorded, transcribed and analysed a lesson which they had

recently given and were asked (among other things) to report back on what they had discovered about their own teaching, and about the insights they had gained into aspects of classroom management and interaction. Most of the comments referred, either explicitly or implicitly, to teacher/learner roles:

'As teachers we share an anxiety about "dominating" and so a common assumption that we are too intrusive, directive etc.' 'I need to develop skills for responding to the unexpected and exploit this to realise the full potential of the lesson.' 'There are umpteen aspects which need improving. There is also the effort of trying to respond to contradictory notions about teaching (e.g. intervention versus non-intervention).' 'I had been making a conscious effort to be non-directive, but was far more directive than I had thought.'

'Using small groups and changing groups can be perplexing and counterproductive, or helpful and stimulating. There is a need to plan carefully to make sure such changes are positive.' 'I have come to a better realisation of how much listening the teacher needs to do.' 'The teacher's role in facilitating interaction is extremely important for all types of classes. How do you teach teachers this?' 'I need to be more aware of the assumptions underlying my practice.' 'I discovered that I was over-directive and dominant.' 'Not to worry about periods of silence in the classroom.' 'I have a dreadful tendency to overload.' 'I praise students, but it is rather automatic. There is also a lot of teacher talk in my lessons.' 'I give too many instructions.' 'I discovered that, while my own style is valuable, it leads me to view issues in a "blinkered" way. I need to analyse my own and others' styles and ask why do I do it that way?'

Speaking is with no doubt one of the most important language skills students can acquire during their ESL ("English as the Second Language") classes. In the past, there had always been strong emphasis on teaching grammar and vocabulary as the crucial tools for communication, but as Thornbury (2005) claims "It is generally accepted that knowing a language and being able to speak it are not synonymous". (p. IV).

I strongly agree with his statement, because during my studies and pedagogical practice I have visited several secondary and elementary schools as a part of my practical training. After several observations I can conclude that at some schools, methods no longer considered to be effective and modern are still widely being used. One of them is *the Grammar translation method*, where teachers focus predominantly on grammar and teach language via translating texts and utterances. This leads to situation, when students know a large number of vocabulary and in some cases their level of grammar is at higher level than the one of native speakers. However, when they are supposed to activate their theoretical and passive knowledge in everyday real-life situations, they either fail to produce any coherent utterance or their fluency does not correspond to the needs of the conversation. The use of old-fashioned methodology is confirmed by Finocchiaro (1989) who states “Many theories and methods favoured at the turn of the century are still in use in classes today in many parts of the world” (p. 6). She adds that not too many of them have disappeared. On the contrary, they have been kept and adapted to fit modern approaches (Finocchiaro, 1989, p. 6).

English Language Teaching Methodology offers a vast number of various approaches, methods, procedures and techniques for learning and teaching foreign language such as the Grammar translation method, Audio-lingualism, PPP (“Presentation-Practise-Production”), the Communicative Approach, Task-based learning, , Humanistic teaching, the Lexical Approach and many others. There is no need to emphasize that each of them has its own advantages and disadvantages. For the purpose of the practical part of this thesis, the Communicative approach, also known as Communicative Language Teaching (“CLT”), is preferred. The Reason for this was the fact that one of the aims of the practical part was to develop spoken fluency among the students, as well as to prepare them for real-life situations by creating similar conditions in the lessons. From this point of

view, Communicative Language Teaching seemed the most suitable to fulfill these aims.

According to Richards and Rodgers (1986) “The origins of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) are to be found in the changes in the British language teaching tradition dating from the 1960s” (p. 64). They add that this approach had replaced Situational Language Teaching, which represented the most widely used approach towards teaching English as a foreign language in Britain at that time (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 64). Emphasis started to be given not on teaching and mastering language structures and their application in meaningful situation-based activities, but on the communication aspect of the language, in other words on how to become able to communicate fluently in various real-life situations.

Richards and Rodgers (1986) see the changing situation throughout Europe in the second half of the twentieth century and growing interdependence of European countries as one of the reasons for attempts to find more modern approach towards teaching English as a foreign language (p. 64-65). These ideas spread rapidly especially thanks to the work of the Council of Europe and British applied linguists such as Wilkins, Widowson, Candlin, Brumfit or Johnson, who formulated theoretical basis for approach to teaching a foreign language later known as the Communication Approach or Communicative Language Teaching (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 65-66).

Communicative Language Teaching did not remain applied only in Britain, but it began to be used and adapted in many other countries, including the USA. Apart from other approaches and methods, according to Richards and Rodgers (1986) “There is no single text or authority on it, nor any single model that is universally accepted as authoritative” (p. 66). It can be concluded that there are many interpretations of this approach throughout the world. As an example, Howatt’s theory of ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ versions of CLT can be chosen.

Howatt (1984) claims that:

There is, in a sense, a 'strong' version of the communicative approach and a 'weak' version. The weak version which has become more or less standard practice in the last ten years, stresses the importance of providing learners with opportunities to use their English for communicative purposes and, characteristically, attempts to integrate such activities into a wider program of language teaching.... The 'strong' version of communicative teaching, on the other hand, advances the claim that language is acquired through communication, so that it is merely a question of activating an existing but inert knowledge of the language, but of stimulating the development of the language system itself. (p. 279)

Richards and Rodgers acknowledge the fact that there are many various interpretations of Communicative Language Teaching approach, on the other hand they try to search for similarities among the different interpretations.

They state that:

Common to all versions of Communicative Language Teaching, however, is a theory of language teaching that starts from a communicative model of language and language use, and that seeks to translate this into a design for an instructional system, for materials, for teacher and learner roles and behaviors, and for classroom activities and techniques. (Richards and Rodgers, 1986, p. 69)

Features of Communicative Language Teaching are summarized by Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) as following:

- Meaning is paramount

- Dialogs, if used, center around communicative functions and are not normally memorized
- Contextualization is a basic premise
- Language learning is learning to communicate
- Effective communication is sought
- Drilling might occur, but peripherally
- Comprehensible pronunciation is sought
- Any device which helps the learners is accepted
- Attempts to communicate may be encouraged from the very beginning
- Judicious use of native language is accepted where feasible
- Translation may be used where students need or benefit from it
- Reading and writing can start from the first day, if desired
- The target linguistic system will be learned best through the process of struggling to communicate
- Communicative competence is the desired goal
- Linguistic variation is a central concept in materials and methodology
- Teachers help learners in any way that motivates them to work with the language
- Language is created by the individual often through trial and error
- Fluency and acceptable language is the primary goal
- Students are expected to interact with other people, either in the flesh, through pair and group work, or in their writings
- The teacher cannot know exactly what language the students will use
- Intrinsic motivation will spring from an interest in what is being communicated by the language (p. 91-93)

Harmer (2001) puts emphasis on the following rules he calls 'communicative activities':

- A desire to communicate



- A communicative purpose
- Content, not form is important
- Variety of language
- No teacher intervention
- No materials control (p. 85)

Despite the fact that the above mentioned authors formulate the features of Communicative Language teachings differently, the following basic principles can be devised:

**1) Promote learning by creating a number of various activities corresponding to real-life situations.**

This issue is connected to the choice and variety of appropriate activities. Richards and Rodgers (1986) reflect on this issue when they state that “The number is unlimited provided that such exercises enable learners to attain the communicative objectives of the curriculum, engage learners in communication, and require the use of such communicative processes as information sharing, negotiaton of meaning, and interaction” (p. 76).

**2) Meaningfulness and comprehensibility of the designed activities**

So that the conversation should be effective and motivating, the activities need to be designed to correspond to the needs of the learners, as well as to their interests. Special emphasis should be given on the instructions, which should be simple and clear. Only learners who are aware of what to do and who are involved in the activity can get the maximum effect of it.

**3) Teacher as a facilitator**

The main goal of the Communicative Approach is to develop communication skills and fluency. It would be counterproductive to interfere in the conversation flow in a larger extent. The approach assumes that learnes will

learn to communicate by struggling with the language and by making errors as a prerequisite towards steps to perfection and mastering the language.

The role of the teacher shifts into the role of a facilitator or a participant who encourages students and motivates them.

#### **4) Promotion of cooperative and collaborative learning**

It is assumed that by working in pairs or smaller groups, learners use foreign language to communicate and reach a common goal. The biggest advantage here is the fact that speakers are required not only to listen, but to produce language as well. Harmer (2001) sees the key to enhancement of communication in information gap (85). The fact that one student is missing a piece of information that the other one possesses is only one of the options how to encourage conversation. Other useful techniques can be seen in negotiating, giving opinion, showing approval or disapproval, agreeing and disagreeing etc.

#### **5) Focus on fluency rather than accuracy**

Learners are encouraged to work on their speaking fluency and to use extensive range of vocabulary and grammatical structures instead of focusing on one structure. The errors do not play the major role, the essential fact is whether the speaker is able to convey a message which can be understood by the recipient.

### III. Clarifying Specifics of Teaching Speaking in ESP classrooms.

#### 3.1 Defining English for Specific Purposes

To be able to define ESP, it is necessary to clarify its position towards the rest of ELT (“English Language Teaching”). Hutchinson and Waters use for this purpose an analogy with a tree structure (see fig. 1.). It can be concluded that there are various levels of ESP courses. At the top, individual courses can be seen, the lower level than shows that each ESP class can be further categorized as an EAP class (“English for Academic Purposes”) or an EOP class (“English for Occupational Purposes”). Furthermore, each individual ESP course is a part of one of the broader ESP courses – EST (“English for Science and Technology”), EBE (“English for Business and Economics”) or ESS (“English for Social Sciences”) (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, pp. 16-18.). Nevertheless, based on the tree structure, it is apparent that every English course has the same roots and belongs into the general category of language teaching which suggests that there might be some common background for learning and teaching in all the classes.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) attempt to define ESP negatively by saying:

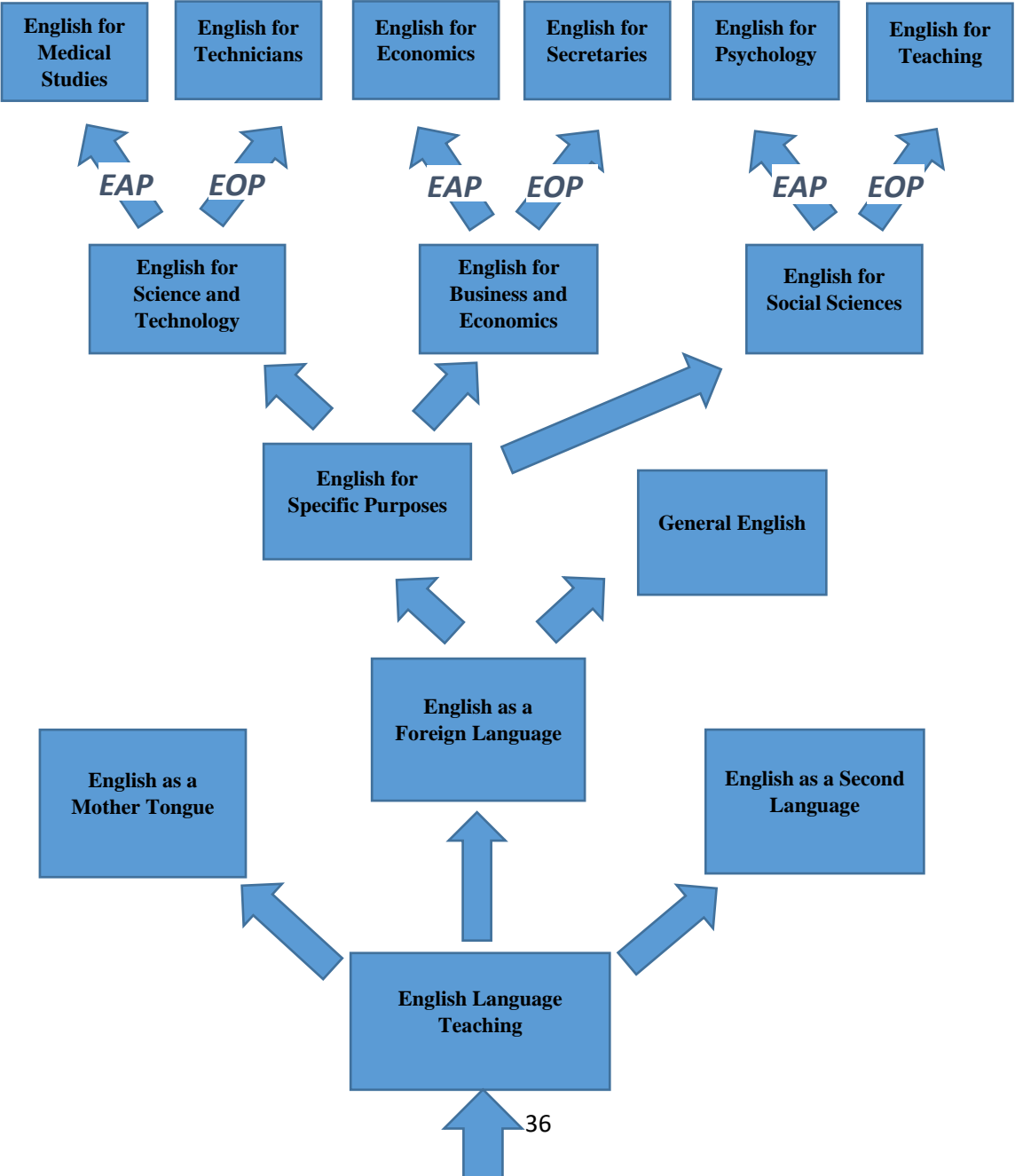
- a) ESP is not a matter of teaching ‘specialized varieties’ of English.
- b) ESP is not just a matter of Science words and grammar for Scientists, Hotel words and grammar for Hotel staff and so on.
- c) ESP is not different in kind from any other form of language teaching, in that it should be based in the first instance in principles of effective and efficient learning. (p.18)

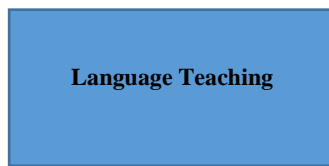
This stands against the general belief that ESP courses are predominantly based on acquisition of vocabulary related to the field of study. According to the above-mentioned definition, it might seem that there is no clear

distinction between ESP and other types of language teaching, thus a question of what makes teaching and learning ESP different arises. The answer is provided by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) who claim that “ESP must be seen as an approach not as a product” (p. 19). They continue to explain that the ESP is “Based on the learner need” and can be defined as “An approach to language teaching in which all decisions as to contents and method are based on the learners’ reason for learning” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 19). Day and Krzanowski (2011), who also focus on teaching and learning in ESP classes, state that “ESP involves teaching and learning specific skills and language needed by particular learners for a particular purpose” (p. 5).

Based on the definitions, it can be said that each ESP class is different, learners have various needs and reasons for studying, they pursue specific goals and these factors put high demands on the teachers, whose main task is to identify those needs and design a suitable course.

Fig. 1. The Tree of ELT



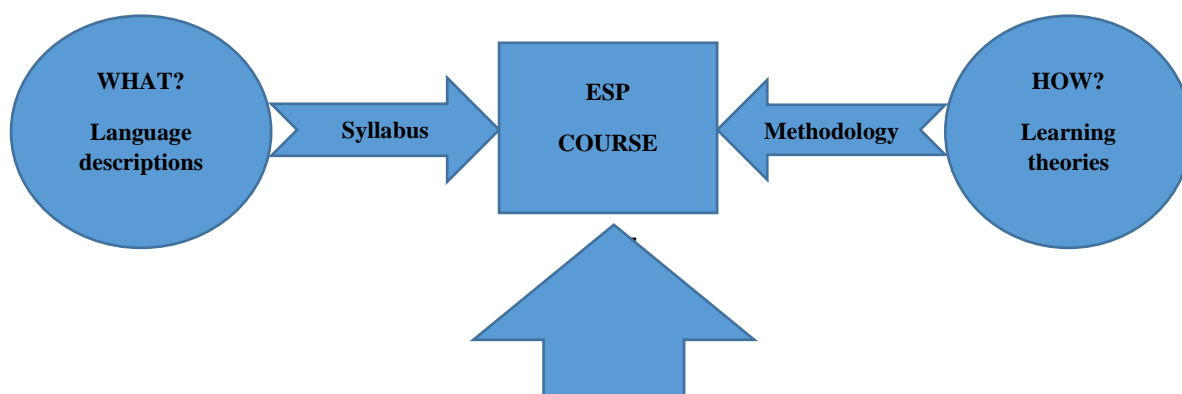


Source: Adapted from Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 17).

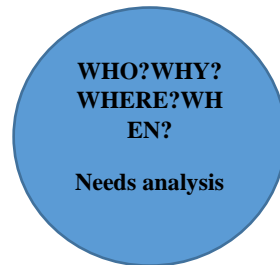
Apart from teachers of General English who do not have to spend so much time designing courses, as they often use the same text-books and study materials for each class at the same level, ESP teachers have to devote enormous amount of time for preparing the course syllabus and activities. The reason for this was described in the previous chapter as the needs of the target course.

According to Hutchinson and Waters (1987) “Designing a course is fundamentally a matter of asking questions in order to provide a reasoned basis for the subsequent processes of syllabus design, materials writing, classroom teaching and evaluation” (p. 21). Day and Krzanowski (2011) also emphasize the necessity to make an analysis which should “Include many relevant details about the target learners and their needs and wants” (p. 9). All the authors agree that a thorough survey, answering various questions concerning target language skills, language proficiency, vocabulary and many others, has to be carried out before the course can be designed. The issue of how to reasonably structure such survey is provided by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) in the figure regarding factors affecting ESP course design (p. 22). (See fig. 2.).

**Fig. 2.** Factors Affecting ESP Course Design



Nature of particular target  
and situation



Source: Adapted from Hutchinson and Waters (1987, p. 22).

From figure 2. it is apparent that there are many factors that have to be carefully considered concerning all the language skills. Further in this chapter, special focus will be given on questions related to teaching speaking skills in ESP classes.

As far as the language descriptions are concerned, the main question that needs to be answered is what is going to be taught and learnt. Based on the survey, the teacher has to find areas of language necessary to comply with the needs of the learners and then contextualize them, to put it simply, to create a list of materials that will be motivating and will provide useful and meaningful conversational opportunities to practise speaking skills. For this, he first needs to elaborate a course syllabus, which is defined by Hutchinson and Waters (1987) as “a document which says what will (or at least should) be learnt” (p. 80).

The ESP teacher also needs to answer the question of how he wants to teach, in other words what methodological approaches, methods, techniques and principles he will use in the ESP course. A number of various approaches can be applied in the lessons, on the other hand for teaching speaking, there should be a special focus on methods allowing learners to practise their fluency skills without worrying about mistakes they might make during their spoken production. From

this point of view, methods such as Communicative Approach or Task-based Learning might be preferred as they both aim at practising real situations. To keep students motivated and involved in the lesson, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) suggest using a wide range of techniques like information gaps, variety of activities, topics or learner roles and many others (pp. 139-140).

As for the needs analysis, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) see the biggest difference between teaching General English and ESP in “The awareness of the target situation – a definable need to communicate in English” (p. 54). They further distinguish between the target needs and learning needs (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 54). The first one answers the question of what target situation needs to be achieved by learning English, whereas the second rather tells us how the target situation can be achieved. Every good ESP teacher must create analysis of target situation and learning needs which includes sets of questions that allow the teacher to specify the course needs.

### **3.2 The Role of a Teacher in an ESP Classroom**

One of the possible and probably most common pitfalls of being a teacher in an ESP class is the fact that students often possess better knowledge on the subject than the teacher himself, which can be seen as a big difference compared to teaching in General English classes. It is natural that no teacher would cope with situation when his students know more than him and he is often unable to answer their questions. Hutchinson and Waters (1987) provide a simple solution in “The ability to ask intelligent questions” (p. 163). The truth is that it would be impossible for the teacher to know everything about the terminology of the specific field of study or how things work there etc. Important is to activate the knowledge of the learners by becoming curious and thus engage learners in



conversation where we as Hutchinson and Waters (1987) put it “Become an interested student of the subject matter”

Another big problem for ESP teachers might be how to cope with fear of the subject. The fact is that majority of ESP teachers receive their degree at universities with no connection to the area of science, IT, medicine or other specific fields of study. In extreme cases, this fear can lead to alienation and this might be projected in the lessons which are boring and fail to attract students’ attention and motivate them, consequently resulting in deterioration of the learning process.

Hutchinson and Waters (1987) offer several causes why ESP teachers find it difficult to comprehend ESP subject matter:

- 1) There is a tradition in education of separating the Humanities and the Sciences
- 2) Many ESP teachers are reluctant settlers in new territory.
- 3) Considering the scale of the ESP revolution it must be admitted that little effort has been made to retrain teachers or to at least allay their fears.
- 4) The general attitude in ESP seems to be to expect teachers to conform to the requirements of the target situation.

The truth is that there has always been a huge gap between Humanities and Sciences, instead of cooperating together, they developed relatively independently on each other, apart from a few exceptions. Nothing much has changed about it at present time, which is why some ESP teachers might feel uncomfortable teaching such subjects. Moreover, the ESP teachers do not realize they do not have to possess the same knowledge of the field of study as is their learners’ target situation as it was discussed above.

Various comparisons could be made between ESP teachers and the General English teachers, the most important of them being the fact that “The ESP teacher is faced by a group of learners with certain expectations as to the nature, content and achievements of the course” (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987, p. 165). It can be admitted that students of ESP classes are often adults who can evaluate their target needs and have different ideas how to reach them than the ESP teachers. These ideas than have to be confronted and discussed so that the purpose of learning process can be achieved.

To sum this chapter up, it can be devised that the role of a teacher in an ESP classroom is not easy. Apart from all the roles of the General English teacher, he often needs to act as a negotiator between the subject matter knowledge he already possesses and the targeted situation needs. To put simply, he must find the balance between what he already knows, how much he should learn and what to elicit from the learners so that everybody feels comfortable in his role and motivated to work and learn.

### **3.3 Application of speaking activities designed to fit the need of an ESP classroom.**

The main aim of the research is to discover whether there is a positive relation between creation and application of speaking activities designed to fit the needs of an ESP classroom and students' knowledge and ability to react in conversational situations related to the Hotel Keeping and Tourism themes.

The research will answer the following questions:

- 1) Can participation in the designed activities lead to boost in students' self-confidence?
- 2) Will all the activities lead to better fluency in spoken language?
- 3) Will students feel more comfortable and natural in everyday conversational situations connected to their study programme after they have gone through all the activities?
- 4) Can the activities motivate students to active participation in the lessons and to self-study?
- 5) What effect will the designed activities have on students' opinions on the lessons?

The biggest problem of the books which we use at the lessons is the insufficiency of speaking activities. The book offers some, but they are rather rare. It can be used as a general teaching aid, on the other hand, it lacks specific vocabulary and conversational situations .

This is the reason, why a set of activities has been created to help students prepare better for their future carrier or further studies The thesis is focused on promoting oral communication skills in ESP classes. For the purpose of the thesis, I have decided to choose the Hotel Keeping and Tourism study themes. After students have gone through all the activities, they should improve their speaking skills in everyday situations connected with travelling, hotels and tourism, as well as improve their self-confidence in these situations.

### **Aims of the Activities**

Since all of the activites are focused on speaking, the aims could be summarized as following:

- Prepare students for real-life situations
- Improve their fluency
- Boost and build up students' self-confidence
- Strenghten students' future postions in labour market by specialization in language
- Encourage students to continue working and preparing on their own
- Enhance their vocabulary related to their study programme
- Eliminate stress from speaking by bringing joy into the activity

Some of the aims are difficult to measure and quantify, yet I strongly believe that they play a major part in the process of learning. The higher self-confidence grows within the students, the higher motivation and participation in the lessons can be expected. Bringing joy into the learning process is another important factor, in some cases resolving in further self-study and reasearch at home. The main 'unofficial' goal of the teacher is to light up the spark of students' curiosity.

To make it clear and comprehensible, a common outline for all the activities has been created. I expect that the activities will be used not only by me, but also by other colleagues in their lessons. Each activity can be adapted for various levels or changed to fit the current needs and circumstances.

Name of the Activity

### **Linguistic aims**

The main linguistic aims of the activity are described, concerning various language skills and development.

### **Non-linguistic aims**

Other aims than linguistic. They might not be connected directly to the language, but help learners cope with it. These aims can differ from building up self-confidence, to improving bonds between classmates.

### **Characteristics of the activity**

Offers a brief summary of the activity. This section should help other users to get the idea of the activity.

### **Preparation time**

Time estimated for preparation for the activity.

### **Realisation time**

Time necessary for realisation of the activity during the lesson.

### **Materials**

Elicits the materials needed for the activity.

### **Motivation**

This part refers on how to attract students' attention and draw it to specific activities.

### **Procedure**

This section describes the activity more thoroughly, it describes various steps and works as a guide for other users on how to use each activity and on what factors focus.

### **Methodology**

Suggestions for teachers who are going to try the activities.

### **Modifications**

Suggestions for modifications and adjustments will be dealt with in here.

### **Evaluation of the Activity**

Author's evaluation of the activity based on the observation done in the lesson is mentioned here. As each activity was done in twogroups, distinctions between them might be stated here as well.

## 1 Guess the Word

### **Linguistic aims**

- Practise communicative skills and ability to define words without using their roots
- Enhance fluency
- Revise vocabulary related to hotel facilities and equipment

### **Non-linguistic aims**

- Create positively competitive atmosphere
- Show students they can make themselves understood in an easy way
- Working on team skills, students help each other and cooperate to reach a common goal

### **Characteristics of the activity**

Students try to describe words related to area of hotel facilities and equipment to their colleagues.

**Preparation time: No time for preparation needed**

**Realisation time: 15 minutes**

### **Materials**

No special materials are needed, only a whiteboard, blackboard or a projector.

### **Procedure**

Students are divided into maximally three groups. It should be done with special consideration, since the game might turn rather demotivating and boring when one of the groups is dominating the game. Finding balance between the groups is teacher's most important role. It is suggested that he or she does it in a diplomatic way. It would not be beneficial to point out students' weaknesses and strengths of the others and might be one of the factors leading to deterioration of the classroom climate. When the groups are created, it is essential that the classroom is reorganized to fit the purpose. Students sit around three desks and face the whiteboard. Each group chooses a representative who will sit opposite them, this person must not see the whiteboard.

At this point, the role of the teacher shifts to the role of a facilitator, he is responsible only for writing vocabulary on the board or operating the projector, in case the activity had been prepared in an electronic way. The teacher writes words on the board one at a time (or does the same with the projector) and students from every group are expected to define the words to the people sitting with their backs turned to the board. The fastest group which signals their correct answer by raising somebody's hand gets the point. The winner is the group that ends up with the biggest number of points. Before the beginning of the game, the teacher should clarify the rules to all the participants.

A list of possible words:

“Laundry, twin beds, reception, bunk beds, dormitory, babysitting service, safe, bedding, porter, concierge, air conditioning, check-in“

### **Modifications**

The rules might be adapted to fit various levels of difficulty, as well as various topics. In weaker classes, gestures can be allowed, in stronger classes, only verbal definitions might be allowed under the penalty of a point loss.



## **Evaluation of the activity**

During the activity, students mostly preferred short and simple sentences to be able to express themselves as quickly as possible which led to swift conversation. Since the activity was a groupwork, some students relied on others and tried to avoid active language production. After they had been encouraged to use at least short utterances to help their colleagues, they started to be involved in the conversations more than before. Based on the observation, the aim to improve students' fluency had been met, because students spoke English all the time and no major interruptions could be heard.

Students seemed to be highly motivated during the activity and the activity offered a great opportunity to improve their self-confidence. Every time the word was guessed correctly, students' confidence raised. Another proof for this claim was the fact, that even weaker students shared their contributions with the others and joined the discussion. However, some of them had to be encouraged at first.

It can be said, that at the end of the activity, students had practised vocabulary related to hotel facilities and equipment and should be able to talk about it in more detail.

Overall atmosphere throughout the activity was good, students seemed to feel comfortable in their roles and the competitive character of the exercise might have been one of the factors that led to higher students' motivation to actively participate in the lesson and use foreign language.

## **2 Itineraries**

### **Linguistic aims**

- Discussion and agreeing on issues related to designing a tour

- Reinforcement of fluency skills
- Activisation of vocabulary related to tourism

### **Non-linguistic aim**

- Share experience, knowledge and ideas on specific topic
- Teach students to give and accept feedback from their colleagues
- Support students' creativity

### **Characteristics of the activity**

Students design a five-day itinerary of a tour in a popular destination located in the USA, followed by presenting it in front of the class.

**Preparation time: No time for preparation needed**

**Realisation time: 30 minutes**

### **Materials**

As the class is divided into two groups, two notebooks with working sound system are needed for smooth progress of the activity. It is recommended that the students bring dictionaries to look up vocabulary.

### **Motivation**

To make division of students more interesting, two songs will be used to introduce the core of the lesson - *Somewhere over the Rainbow* (Mountain Apple Company, 2010) and *Surfing ' USA* (Douglas Roth, 2011).

Students listen to samples of the songs and after that they decided which song they prefer. In the meanwhile, teacher prepares two desks with the state flags of California and Hawaii, including pictures representing various aspects of life in these two states.

It might be a good idea to ask some lead-in questions such as:

*Do you know anything interesting about California and Hawaii?*

*Would you like to see any of these countries? Why?*

*How can you get there?*

*Do you know any famous people connected to these countries?*

## **Procedure**

After students are divided into two groups, the teacher announces that they have become travel agents and are supposed to design a five-day itinerary for a tour in the country they have chosen. They need to agree on accommodation, type of board, activities, optional trips, price of the holiday, transport etc. The activity has been created to resemble work at the travel agency, where specific language knowledge is required for the job.

Students are also supposed to work with computer during their work and create a simple power point presentation of their holiday which they will present to the second group. After the presentation, the second group evaluates them in terms of what they liked or disliked about it, what they would change and whether they would go on such a holiday.

## **Methodology**

The biggest anticipated problem during this activity is using Uzbek language while contributing new ideas and talking to each other. To prevent this, it is possible for the teacher to mingle between the groups and listen to the suggestions and ongoing discussion. On the other hand, it does not create a very safe learning environment as some students might feel shy to speak in front of their teacher. Another and better solution could be to use some motivation techniques to prevent this from happening e.g. good grades for all the group members who he does not hear speaking Uzbek for the whole lesson (obviously providing the fact that they produced some English and contributed to the groupwork). As can be substituted

by something else, for example lesson outside school, a promise of cooking something for students, telling them a secret or a funny personal story.

### **Modifications**

This activity can be used during lessons about English speaking countries such as Canada, Great Britain, Australia, New Zealand etc.

It can be also enhanced for brainstorming activity at the beginning of the groupwork. Students could play the songs once again and during this activity brainstorm any vocabulary which they feel might be related to this music and holiday connected to it. This may serve as a source of inspiration for later activities. From my perspective, these situations very often present a great number of various ideas and points of view and might be quite helpful, since the student-oriented approach is being used here, students are learning from each other. Another benefit is that not only the most talkative people contribute, but there is a fair chance for weaker students to add some ideas of their own as well and thus get some self-confidence.

### **Evaluation of the activity**

As far as the fluency practice is concerned, it must be acknowledged that the aim was met only into certain extent, as some of the students tend to switch to their mother tongues fairly often. After they had been encouraged to use English, they tried to produce at least some utterances in foreign language. However, when the teacher was not present directly, Uzbek utterances could be heard again. This can be seen as the biggest drawback of this activity. On the other hand, majority of students activated their vocabulary related to the topic of travelling and travel agencies and practised it with minimum use of their mother tongue. Based on this fact, it can be admitted that the aim to work on speaking fluency skills was mostly met.

The activity was designed to attract students attention by providing famous tourist destinations, as it was expected that they would be motivated to actively participate in the discussions and development of the itinerary. As it turned out, this assumption was correct, students were highly motivated during the activity, based on my personal observation, it might have been due to the possibility to apply some of their knowledge about the destinations in practice, as well as to the opportunity to use their creativity and imagination during designing their own tours. The reactions and comments received from the other group were both rather positive, which was one of the factors that contributed to the growth of students' self-confidence. The process of discussion, giving opinions and arguments and reacting on other people's suggestions went fairly well, students were able to present their opinions and react on other opinions, which was another positive contribution towards the improvement of students' self-confidence in speaking foreign language.

It can be stated, that after the activity, students had practiced vocabulary related to travelling and travel agencies as well as they had been given an opportunity to implement this vocabulary in a meaningful real-life conversational situation.

The atmosphere during the activity could be described as creative and motivating. Students combined their forces and knowledge to work on a common goal, which allowed everybody to contribute with different information or ideas. Overall, students seemed to be enjoying the activity, as well as the presentation of their tour.

### 3 Dubbing – At the Reception

#### **Linguistic aims**

- Revise social English related to the work at the reception desk

- Improve fluency skills
- Practise a real-life face-to-face conversation

### **Nonlinguistic aims**

- Prepare students to handle similar situations in future
- Make students think about what situations need to be solved at the reception
- Create relaxed atmosphere for a serious topic

### **Characteristics of the activity**

A pairwork activity in which students are shown a muted video taking place at a hotel reception and their task is to dub it.

**Preparation time: 7 minutes**

**Realisation time: 25 minutes**

### **Materials**

Only a projector connected to speakers is required.

### **Motivation**

Students are asked to imagine a situation that they are married couples. All of them have been together for 30 years and the evening shows on television got boring, so they decided to spice it up. They will turn on their television and will dub what they see on their own.

### **Procedure**

Students are divided into pairs, one of them becomes a receptionist, the other one a guest and they try to simulate various situations, from booking a room or checking-in to losing a key or checking-out. This is a first step that should make them remember and activate vocabulary and phrases learned in the previous lessons. It should not take more than seven minutes.

After students have practised enough and feel confident, the teacher shows them a video from a hotel reception (LinguaTV, 2010). The video is provided with subtitles, which should remain hidden during the activity. The teacher mutes the video and asks the first pair to try to dub the conversation. Gradually, all the pairs try to dub the video.

After all of them are finished, the video is shown with sound and subtitles and students vote for the best dubbing and the most accurate dubbing.

### **Methodology**

It is suggested that the first, preparation part of the activity is not skipped. Students might feel more confident during the dubbing, since they can apply some of the sentences they had practised before.

It is also important that the pairs are balanced, weaker students should be accompanied by stronger ones, so if there is a silence gap, they might help, encourage their partner and get the conversation going.

### **Modificatons**

This activity can be used almost unlimitlessly. Scenes from films, series, famous sketches, documentaries, cartoons, anything can be used to fit the topic of the lesson.

Another modification might be description of what is going on in the video, where one of the pair has closed eyes and the other one tells him what he or she can see.

### **Evaluation of the activity**

This activity was designed to resemble a real-life situation as much as possible. Trial conversations were practised to prevent students from being exposed to stressful situations during the dubbing and to create safer environment for improving speaking fluency skills. As for the activity itself, it can be evaluated as very beneficial towards development of speaking fluency skills. Most of the

students managed to produce logical and coherent conversations and use relevant vocabulary and phrases. Nevertheless, some of the students failed to react properly. The aim of development of fluency was then helped to be fulfilled by their colleagues, who encouraged the conversation and helped the weaker students produce at least some utterances.

It is believed that this activity helped students gain self-confidence in speaking in a specific situation. This conclusion is backed by the fact that most of the students managed to lead the conversation, react on other person's questions, express their wish or claim, as well as solve problems connected to the relevant topic. Furthermore, even the weaker students managed to make themselves understood after they had been encouraged, which can be also seen as a factor leading to development of their self-confidence. The activity was highly motivating, but mostly for the students who were dubbing the conversation. The biggest drawback here was the fact that most of the other students stopped paying attention after some time and started chatting in their desks. This can be seen as a demotivating and distractive factor for the students who are having the conversation. Possible solution in future might be to get the other students more involved in the activity by evaluating each pair after the conversation is finished.

After participating in the activity, students had activated vocabulary related to work at the hotel reception and had been given an opportunity to practise real-life situations connected to such job.

Students seemed to enjoy their roles, they were helpful towards the weaker students in their pairs and. Despite the fact that some of the students seemed stressed about the activity at the beginning, after the trial conversations they seemed more confident and enjoyed the activity.



## 4 Role-play

### **Linguistic aims**

- Practise acting in real-life situations connected to tourism
- Developing ability to express one's point
- Enhancing fluency skills

### **Nonlinguistic aims**

- Create positive atmosphere
- Motivate students by offering them relative freedom to speak
- Draw students' attention to situations they may experience in future

### **Characteristics of the activity**

Students are given cards with fictional information about them and situation that needs to be solved or fixed.

**Preparation time: 5 minutes**

**Realisation time: 15 minutes**

### **Materials**

Cards with personal characteristics and suggested situation.

### **Motivation**

Students are asked to imagine they are one of the best-paid actors in the world and they got a new role to star in. They need to study the role and impersonate the character as best as they can. The winning pair gets the "Oscar" award.

### **Procedure**

Firstly, class has to be divided into pairs. Each student chooses one card from the box on the teacher's desk. There are pairs that fit together – a receptionist and a

guest, a representative of a travel agency and a participant of a trip and an owner of a small travel agency and a customer (for the role description see appendix 1).

The teacher must make sure that the number of cards matches the number of students in the class and corresponds to each other. After they have chosen the card, suitable pairs are written on the board and everybody must find his or her partner.

Each pair has five minutes to get to their roles and prepare for their conversation. When the time is up and perform their gig. After everybody is finished, the class votes for the best actors who get some reward.

### **Methodology**

Since this is a pairwork, it is advisable that the pairs are balanced, so that the stronger students might lead and encourage the weaker ones.

The preparation time for the activity is vital here, as is necessary to study the role and discuss the directions in which the conversation should be going.

There is a danger that some students might fail to produce anything at all, so the teacher should be prepared to interfere in the right time and help the students to find the thread. The activity might be very funny and a lot of students may enjoy the improvisation, on the other hand, some students could feel under pressure, because an almost instant answer is required from them. In this case, patience and a considerate, motivating approach should be preferred.

### **Evaluation of the activity**

As far as fluency is concerned, it can be stated that the aim was fulfilled. Students worked in pairs during the activity and based on the observation, the level of language was rather diverse. Some of the students used only shorter utterances to express themselves, others created longer complex sentences. Nevertheless, all of the students managed to lead conversations according to the roles and situations

they had chosen. The time given students to prepare before the speaking activity was used by most of them to look up vocabulary or discuss the outline of the conversation. During this activity, students were matched in pairs randomly, thus there was no possibility to encourage the conversation in case there were two weaker students in a pair and none of them spoke. Despite this fact, all the students succeeded in playing their roles and produced relevant and coherent conversations.

The fact that student had been given time to prepare for their roles and discuss them with their partners helped them to gain self-confidence during the real conversation. Another important factor was the fact that all the students managed to play their roles and solve the situation, which should help them develop self-confidence in speaking in problematic situations related to their future carrier. All the activity was done in the form of “Oscar“ competition for the best performer, which led to students‘ higher motivation. This might be proved by the fact that even weaker students participated in the activity as best as they could. There were no problems with students not paying attention to the others, because based on the last activity, it was decided, that each student was supposed to evaluate each pair with stars, from one to five, where five was the best performance. This led to better participation and involvement of all the students in the activity.

After the activity, students had activated vocabulary related to travel agencies, travelling and hotels, as well as they had been given an opportunity to practise their speaking in real-life situation related to the above mentioned topics.

Overall atmosphere throughout the activity was very creative and entertaining. Student seemed to be enjoying the roles and practised solving possible situations in a funny and entertaining way. Students were also led to appreciate other people’s work and effort, which could have been another motivating factor for the students.

## 5 Boardgame

### **Linguistic aims**

- Build up ability to react instantaneously in various situations
- Prepare students for everyday situation related to their study programme
- Enhance fluency

### **Nonlinguistic aims**

- create a competitive atmosphere
- make students use their imagination

### **Characteristics of the activity**

A game designed to practise students' reactions in specific situations connected to hotel keeping and travelling.

**Preparation time: No time for preparation needed**

**Realisation time: 20 minutes**

### **Materials**

Students are asked to bring dice and ponds to the lesson. It is also necessary to print several boardgame plans and a list of situations and tasks, there should be one from each in every group.

### **Procedure**

Class is divided into groups of maximally four students. Each group sits at one desk, they receive a boardgame plan, place their ponds on the starting position and prepare a dice. They throw the dice and person with the highest number starts the game.

It is possible to throw the dice only once and player moves his or her pond forward according to the number on the dice. Each position on the board is numbered and

every number has a corresponding task on the list students received before the game started. Student reads his task and must complete it within one minute (the other students in group vote whether he managed or not). If he doesn't make it or when his or her colleagues are not satisfied with his performance, the player has to move back the same number of squares he had thrown before.

Players switch in throwing the dice and completing their tasks until one of them has finished the game and won.

### **Methodology**

It is advisable to remind students to use only English here, since this is a groupwork and they tend to switch to Uzbek more often.

It might be possible that some of the groups might be faster, in this case they may start again, but they can never repeat their previous answers. They always have to come up with a new solution or explanation.

It may be a good idea to bring an extra dice or two in case some of the students forget.

### **Modifications**

This game can be modified in any area suitable for the lesson – means of transport, holiday, gastronomy, etc. The only problem would be that possible modifications could be very time-consuming.

### **Evaluation of the activity**

As for development of fluency, the aim can be seen as fulfilled. This claim is based on the fact, that students spent the whole time practising different situations related to their study programme. Most of the students were able to cope with the questions very well, they used lexically relevant and correct expressions in the sentences and a range of grammar with minor mistakes which did not endanger the aims of the activity. On the other hand, it must be said, that several students

had problems to formulate their answers and since the activity was designed to be competitive, there was nobody who could encourage or help them.

Students were exposed to a wide range of situations related to travelling and tourism industry, each question answered then led to higher students' self-confidence and motivation to participate in the activity. The motivating factor was backed by the competitive character of the activity. On the other hand, it must be realized, that some of the students who failed to answer their questions repeatedly might have felt demotivated and such situation might have resulted in their loss of self-confidence. This should be prevented by various means, e.g. allowing other people to help them or combining students into pairs for answering the questions. Nevertheless, both of the suggested solutions would have their drawbacks, in the first case, it would endanger the competitive character of the game and might lead to loss of motivation for some players, in the second case, there would be danger that only the stronger student would actively participate.

After going through this activity, students had activated vocabulary related to various areas of travelling and tourism industry and had been given opportunity to react in everyday situations connected to these topics.

The overall atmosphere during the activity was quite competitive, students did their best to answer the questions correctly and win the game. Students seemed to be engaged and were enjoying the fact they were allowed to evaluate other students' answers.

## 6 A Deserted Island Dilemma

### **Linguistic aims**

- to be able to give your personal opinion
- practise agreeing and disagreeing with other people opinions

- improve fluency skills

### **Nonlinguistic aims**

- to think about important things in our lives
- to learn to make a compromise
- to consider other people's suggestions

### **Characteristics of the activity**

Students are supposed to agree with each other on one and only thing they could bring with them on a deserted island.

### **Preparation time: 5 minutes**

### **Realization time 20 minutes**

### **Materials**

No special materials are needed.

### **Motivation**

Imagine you have marooned on a deserted island. There is only you, but don't worry, you caught a golden fish and she promised you one wish. The problem is that you can't use the wish to be transported from the island or to wish some means of transport to escort you to safety. What would be THE one thing you would wish?

### **Procedure**

Students start in pairs, each one of them has a special wish of what he would like to have on the deserted island. Their task is to advocate their theory and persuade the other person that their wish is more useful. They should use many arguments to advocate their opinion as well as counterarguments to demonstrate that the other opinion is not wise.

After students reach an agreement, they join another pair and continue their discussion with them. The task remains the same – to convince the other pair that their suggestion is the best. The activity continues until all the people in the class have agreed on one special wish.

### **Methodology**

Relative anonymity of pairwork and groupwork offers easier possibility for students to switch into their mother tongue. It is advisable that the teacher mingles among the groups and checks that only English is used.

This activity is good to boost self-confidence even to students who are usually weaker learners. The fact that they hear the same arguments several times in a row should help them express some opinion of theirs as well or at least repeat utterances of what they had heard.

A problem might occur that students are not able to agree whose wish is better. In this case, if they are not able to solve it, helps the teacher who evaluates the arguments or luck – students might toss a coin or perform “rock, paper, scissors“.

### **Modifications**

This activity can be easily adapted to any situation where reaching an agreement is a necessary step towards making a decision.

### **Evaluation of the activity**

The activity could be divided into several stages concerning the development of fluency skills. During the pairwork, the aim was fulfilled among all the students, as everybody expressed some idea and this idea was backed by relevant arguments. On the other hand, during the work in larger groups, the aim fulfilment was partly in danger, because the conversations were led only by the stronger and more talkative students. The weaker and shier students tried to avoid discussing and had to be encouraged to actively participate and contribute with their ideas.



Students used a wide range of vocabulary and grammar structures to provide their ideas, arguments and counterarguments. A big advantages for weaker students was the repeating character of the activity, further stages of the activity, they could use the utterances and ideas which had already been used before. This resulted in safer speaking environment even for the weaker students and better conditions for development of speaking fluency skills.

As far as speaking self-confidence and motivation are concerned, the aims can also be considered to be fulfilled. It is believed that providing arguments and reacting on other people's arguments leads to growth of students' self-confidence regarding speaking skills. Furthermore, even weaker students had an opportunity to improve their self-confidence, as they were allowed to use or paraphrase other opinions without inventing anything new. This can be seen as one of the ways how to improve speaking self-confidence as well. Students seemed to be motivated during the activity, which might have been caused by the fact that they were advocating their own ideas and were thus personally involved in the activity. There had been a motivation drop during the later stages of the activity, resulting from the fact that some of the students had been advocating ideas which were not their own and they did not share the same opinion.

After this activity, students had activated vocabulary related to travelling and had been given an opportunity to practise giving opinions and negotiating.

The overall atmosphere in the lesson was rather friendly and productive, despite the fact that at the end, students were not able to reach agreement. The structure of the activity was seen as something new for the students and they seemed to be enjoying it.

## 7 Round Table

### **Linguistic aims**

- produce a coherent piece of speech on specific topic
- practise giving opinions and negotiating
- improve fluency skills

### **Nonlinguistic aims**

- attract students' attention towards various foreign countries
- enhancement of general knowledge
- develop ability to reach compromise

### **Characteristics of the activity**

During this activity, students sit at desks organized as “round tables“ and one of leads the discussion on specific topics.

**Preparation time: Preparation is done at home, it differs person from person**

**Realization time: 40 minutes**

### **Materials**

Students are supposed to bring their own materials regarding the country they have chosen, it could be pictures, souvenirs, postcards, etc.

### **Motivation**

After the desks have been reorganized, students are told that they are ministers of foreign affairs from various countries and they have the magnificent opportunity to become gurus of the world's most ambitious project in tourism. Their governments have sent them to negotiate the details of this project and terms of cooperation.

### **Procedure**

Before the lesson takes place, students are asked to choose a country they would like to represent, they are encouraged to search some information about the country online and bring some objects or dress in clothes typical for their country. They also need to come up with an idea for a common project, in which more countries would participate in terms of funding, organizational matters, construction, etc. and provide some arguments to support it and convince the others to join the project. Two people are asked to have different role, they will become the facilitators of the discussions. They are prepare the outline of the debate.

At the beginning of the lesson, students organize the classroom so that there are two circles made of desks. Students are divided into two halves and sit in the desks. Within each group, there is one facilitator. He has the role of a moderator, leads the discussion and moves it forward.

At first, students are asked to give brief characteristics of their country – general information, natural resources, famous sights or areas, typical animals or plants or they are free to include any other information.

After all the people have spoken, the facilitator will move the discussion to the question of the common project and gives word to the representatives of the countries. They are supposed to present their ideas and agree on the most interesting project. The question of funding the project and sharing the profits should be discussed.

At the end of the activities, each facilitator presents the solution to the second group.

## **Methodology**

It is really important that all students prepare before the lesson and do their research. If students come unprepared, the activity loses its meaning.

Bringing some objects connected to the countries might be a good idea, when students use some garments typical for their country of origin, it might be even better, because the discussion then seems more realistic.

The facilitators should be chosen carefully. They need to be good at English and swift at making decisions. It is suggested that stronger students are elected for these positions.

### **Evaluation of the activity**

This activity can be divided into two parts and based on the observation, the aim to develop speaking fluency skills was fulfilled during both of them. In the first part students spent some time presenting their countries of origin. An important asset concerning fluency was the fact that they had been given time to prepare at home, resulting in smooth progress, when all of the students managed to describe their country in terms of basic information, sights, national cuisine etc. Arguments for the second part could also be prepared at home, yet this part required a certain level of improvisation and ability to provide reflections on other people's opinion. At this stage, the role of facilitators turned out to be the most crucial during the development of fluency, especially among the weaker learners. Among others, the role of facilitators included encouragement of weaker students or adjusting difficulty of questions to their level.

The concept of the activity was designed to be highly motivating for the students, as they were encouraged to bring souvenirs or pictures related to the countries or become personally involved by wearing a piece of clothing from the country of origin. The motivation level remained steady even during the presentations where students had an opportunity to go through the pictures and souvenirs. The motivating factor during the second part of the activity was the fact that students had been given absolute freedom regarding their projects and could use their imagination and creativity. Their self-confidence in speaking had also been built up during this activity. This claim can be backed by the fact that all the students

managed to complete the tasks of description of their country as well as to contribute to the discussion at least in a certain extent. The role of facilitators played an important part during building up students' self-confidence as well, as they led the weaker ones to express themselves and their ideas.

After this activity, students had activated vocabulary related to travelling and tourism industry as well as they had been given an opportunity to characterize various countries and practise giving opinions and negotiating concerning a common project related to global tourism.

It can be stated that overall atmosphere during the activity was very friendly and creative. Students seemed comfortable in their roles, clothes from various countries were brought and worn, which was one of the factors that made the discussions more realistic and enjoyable.

For each question, a brief summary is made and examples of the most interesting or creative answers are provided.

### **1. What did you like most about the activities?**

Most of the answers emphasized the diversity of the activities, the fact that they were entertaining and funny. Students also appreciated the resemblance of various activities to the real life.

“I liked that the activities weren't dull and boring as most of the other lessons are. Everybody was involved in the activities and they were often done competitively.” (One of the answers).

“I enjoyed the groupwork, we had a lot of fun and at the same time we were still learning.” (One of the answers).

### **2. Was there anything that you didn't like about the activities?**

A great number of students answered that during some activities they felt a little bit stressed, because they had to react instantaneously. However, some of them added, that they considered it rather challenging and at the end they managed to overcome this problem. Another frequent complaint was about short preparation time during some activities.

“I enjoyed every activity, there is nothing I wouldn’t like about them.” (One of the answers).

“Sometimes there was very little time to prepare for the speaking, I need to think what to say in advance, otherwise I tend to fail to speak.” (One of the answers).

“I sometimes felt under pressure, because the whole class was listening to me and evaluating me.” (One of the answers).

### **3. Do you have any comments to the role of the teacher? Would you change anything?**

Majority of the students mentioned teacher’s friendly behavior, his encouraging approach to them and good mood. Some voices were suggesting that the teacher is more involved in the activities – playing along with the students.

“I don’t have to be afraid to ask for help or if I don’t understand something. Nobody puts me down or look down at me.” (One of the answers).

“I like our teacher’s enthusiasm and patience, I would sometimes kill us for behaving the way we do.” (One of the answers).

### **4. How did the activities help your English?**

Almost everybody believes that his or her English has improved. Students mostly mention the fact that they are less stressed when they are supposed to lead a conversation, even in front of other people. They also feel that by means of ‘playing games’ they have learnt much more than from books and lectures.

“Now I am no longer afraid to travel to Greece on my practical training. I think I would handle most of the basic situations in a hotel.” (One of the answers).

“I would never imagine that acting and playing games could make such a difference in my speaking skills and confidence” (one of the answers).

### **5. Are there any areas that were not covered? If there are, which ones?**

Students expressed a desire to practise speaking situations at the airports, they would also like to practise areas connected to gastronomy – restaurants, receptions etc., learn more about running a travel agency and its everyday agenda and they would like to spend more time speaking about foreign countries.

“I liked the activity where we were organizing the trip in California. I wish there were more activities where foreign countries are involved.” (One of the answers).

“I think we should do more activities connected to food and restaurants. I think that speaking about world famous dishes may be interesting.” (one of the answers).

### **6. In what way were the activities different from the activities in your ordinary lessons?**

A lot of students condemned the ordinary lessons to be dull, the activities are usually taken from the textbook and are not creative, neither encourage students' creativity. The lessons with extra activities were described as challenging, more interesting and entertaining, making students think and express themselves under various circumstances.

“We are never bored, there is no time to be bored during the activities. We have to think fast and use a lot of imagination.” (One of the answers).

“We use textbooks in every subject and every lesson, this is a nice change. It always wakes me up.” (One of the answers).

## **Conclusion**

The main aims of the thesis were to design a set of materials focused on conversational activities in an ESP classroom and to discover whether there is a positive relation between creation and application of these activities and students' knowledge and ability to react in conversational situations related to the Hotel Keeping and Tourism. Furthermore, the thesis tried to answer the questions of the effect of the activities on students' motivation, self-confidence or speaking fluency.

The theoretical research has provided answers to various issues connected to teaching speaking in a foreign language as well as it has introduced basic English language speaking methodology with a special emphasis on Communicative Language Teaching, its history and principles. Definition of ESP has been provided and various specifics of teaching speaking in ESP classes have been highlighted as well.



In the practical part of the thesis, a set of activities to fit the needs of an ESP classroom has been designed, piloted and evaluated. A research has also been carried out to verify proposed goals . Students acknowledged that the activities have helped them prepare for the real-life conversational situations they might need in future. This finding was supported by the increase of students' self-confidence and fluency observed throughout the lessons.

In my opinion, the activities designed to fit the purposes of an ESP classroom turned out to be a helpful instrument in the development of students' speaking skills and preparation for their future carrier. Broader research might be carried out in the field of students' motivation, as the results here showed the lowest value in all categories.

The English Teacher Designing Lessons and Units In developing a class, interlock lessons and units to build and develop skills and to maintain skills and knowledge. Don't teach something that you drop and never teach any part of again.... or never use the knowledge of any part again. If you do totally drop material, you are teaching the student to forget and/or are confirming the concept that it is ok to forget -and/or- that what you are teaching is not important enough to remember.

Language is a system which needs to be understood and internalized. Language is a habit which requires repetition and intensive oral practice. Language is a set of conventions, customs which the students needs to learn as well as the structures. Language is a means of communication which is used to accomplish different tasks and purposes. Language is a means to an end and is not used for its own sake. Language is a natural activity, not an academic exercise.

### **Knowing the language is not eonugh**

Classroom activities should be planned so that they have a real, natural communicative purpose. It is better to present the language in a text which is studied for a purpose other than language itself (reading a bus shedule to find out

what a bus goes from one place to another). Students need to use language for a real purpose.

**Interesting communicative tasks increase motivation**

Teachers need to give students tasks which develop the skills necessary to communicate in the new language. These tasks should be similar to things that native speakers do with the language.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1: The Role-play Cards

**A receptionist** – you are a 56-year-old spinster, who did not sleep well all night because you have been suffering from bad headaches recently. You don't like your job, but you need money to feed your twenty cats that live with you in your small apartment. There is a solid, almost tangible cat stench coming from your clothes. You hate all men, especially the young, self-confident ones.

**A guest** – you are a 25-year-old manager of one famous corporation, you drive a ferrari car and wear only the most expensive clothes and watches. You are a young self-confident man, who doesn't know the word NO. You came to a hotel and would like to find accommodation in a suite for six nights. Unfortunately, you do not have any reservation, but you are ready to do anything to stay there.

**A representative of a travel agency** – you are a fresh graduate from a hotel school. The problem is that you weren't from the brightest students and now you are in a foreign country with a group of tourists relying on you, but you know nothing of it. You also have troubles with your short-term memory, so you keep forgetting things fairly often.

**A participant of a trip** – you have saved all your life for the holiday of dreams and finally, your dream has come true. You are in a foreign country and you want to visit as many places as possible and learn as much as you can get. Simply, you want to have the time of your life. The problem is that you don't know the language there, so you need to closely cooperate with the representative of the agency regarding information and help.

**An owner of a small travel agency** – you are an owner of a brand new travel agency. This is your first day in a job and you still don't have anybody to sell the trips. It seems today, it is up to you. The only problem is, that you don't know anything about it, neither how to do it, nor what trips you offer. You only hope you will survive till tomorrow when a skilled assistant should arrive.

**A customer** – you are tired from staring into holiday advertisements, so you decided to choose a trip in the first travel agency you see. You like to know all the information you can imagine

about the trips and are afraid of the travel companies going bankrupt. Decide with the owner on the details of your holiday.

## **Appendix 2: Boardgame Questions**

1. What three things would you take with you on a deserted island and why?
2. What is your dream holiday, tell us about it.
3. What room equipment do you expect in a 5-star hotel?
4. What would you do if you lost a passport in a foreign country?
5. Which type of holiday suits you the best and why?
6. Would you go on holiday with a travel agency, why or why not?
7. Which cuisine or traditional meal would you like to taste?
8. What do you need to pack before you go on holiday?
9. What are typical roles of an agency representative?
10. Suggest five places that you would show to foreign tourists in the Czech Republic.
11. Which means of transport is the best for you, justify your choice.
12. What are some places where a travel agency can advertise?
13. If you travelled from Prague to London, what would be your choices?
14. Is there any difference between a tourist and a backpacker?
15. What are typical accommodation facilities?
16. What comes on your mind when we say tourism?
17. Where do you see the future of tourism?
18. What hotel facilities should be in every hotel?
19. What is dark tourism? Would you like to try it, why or why not?
20. What is special about space tourism?
21. If you had your own travel agency, what kind of holiday would you offer?
22. Bonus: you can switch place with any player currently in the game
23. If you had limitless amount of money, which places would you visit, why?
24. What is better, winter or summer holiday, why?
25. What is a package tour, have you ever taken one?
26. What motivates people to travel?
27. What was the most beautiful place you have ever visited, tell us about it?
28. Is tourism harmful towards our planet?
29. If you were on holiday, would pay them with half-board, full-board or all-inclusive, why?
30. What are advantages of organizing tours on our own?

## Appendix 3: A Questionnaire – Blank

### Part 1

For each statement, choose between the numbers 1 to 5 to demonstrate how strongly you agree with the current statement.

#### Legend:

- 1 – Absolutely disagree
- 2 – Rather disagree
- 3 – Neither agree nor disagree
- 4 – Rather agree
- 5 – Absoulutely agree

1. Participation in the activities has improved my self- confidence regarding my speaking skills.

1      2      3      4      5

2. Activities have helped me improve my fluency and verbalize and express my opinion.

1      2      3      4      5

3. 3. After going through all the activities, I feel more comfortable in everyday real-life activities connected to tourism and hotel keeping.

1      2      3      4      5

4. During the activities I realized I am enjoying using the language more than before.

1      2      3      4      5

5. The activities made the lessons more entertaining and I was looking forward to them.

1      2      3      4      5

6. During the activities I had a lot of opportunities to activate the vocabulary relevant to my study programme.

1      2      3      4      5

7. I feel more motivated to learn language not only at school, but also at other places.

1      2      3      4      5

## Part 2

Evaluate each activity on the scale from 1 to 5. Feel free to add any comments to the activities.

### Legend:

- 1 – Terrible
- 2 – Quite good
- 3 – Good
- 4 – Very good
- 5 – Excellent

1. Guess the Word

1      2      3      4      5

2. Itineraries

1      2      3      4      5

3. Dubbing – At the Reception

1      2      3      4      5



4. Role-play

1      2      3      4      5

5. Boardgame

1      2      3      4      5

6. A Deserted Island Dilemma

1      2      3      4      5

**Part 3**

Answer the questions as detailed as possible. Write any comment that comes on your mind.

1. What did you like most about the activities?
  
2. Was there anything that you didn't like about the activities?
  
3. Do you have any comments to the role of the teacher? Would you change anything?
  
4. How did the activities help to your English?
  
5. Are there any areas that were not covered? If there are, which ones?
  
6. In what way were these activities different from the activities done in your ordinary lessons?

