

The Use Of Games To Develop Oral/Written Skills In Relation To The CEFR

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Abstract:

In this work we want to highlight the role of the game in the foreign language class in general and the French language in particular and how it contributes to the development of oral/written communication skills. In this era of digitization it is essential to find methods and techniques to interact with children, to arouse their interest and to keep a connection with them. Starting from the well-known blockages that students have in French class, the teacher they must adapt strategies and techniques, find varied methods, and use all stimuli to connect with students. In learning a foreign language, the student must be part of the learning process, be involved and have a well-established role. The game puts the student in various situations, challenges him and helps him build, step by step, his educational path.

Key Word: Learning; language skills; foreign language; learning strategies; FLE

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I. Introduction

What skills are required when using the game?

What is a skill? To be competent is to be able to mobilize (choose, combine and implement) one or more mental activities on one or more contents which will make it possible to resolve a problem situation or the task that presents itself.

In the CEFR, competencies are the set of knowledge, skills and dispositions that enable action. General skills are not specific to language but are those that are used for activities of all kinds, including language. The general individual skills established by the Framework include: knowledge, know-how, life skills, learning skills

II. Material And Methods

According to Le Petit Robert, the term competence has several meanings of which we mention those which are relevant to the area with which we are concerned (Le Petit Robert¹):

- Ability legally recognized by a public authority to carry out a particular act under determined conditions; knowledge, experience that a person has acquired in this or that field and which gives them the quality to judge well;
- (engl. Competence, Chomsky) LING. System formed by the rules (grammar) and the elements to which these rules apply (lexicon), integrated by the user of a natural language and which allows him to form an indefinite number of “grammatical” sentences in this language and to understand sentences never heard before.

Through the diversity of activities that can be offered, the learner will be a reader, receiver, writer, speaker and/or interlocutor. He will be required to mobilize his knowledge of vocabulary, grammar, etc. to reinvest them in an attractive and permissive context at a level of performance that he alone sets.

The game provokes interaction in which the learner is both receiver and producer and where he must exercise his capacity for anticipation (he thinks about what he is going to answer while he listens to what is being said to him) like in a real social interaction. To be able to communicate, the general skills that we have just presented are not enough; In this context, language users need what we call communication skills which include three components:

- language skills;
- sociolinguistic skills;
- pragmatic skills (in accordance with the CEFR.²)

In addition, the learner will be led, through the experience of the game, to put into practice two functions that discourse fulfills: the propositional function (what the words say) and the illocutionary function (what we do with the words): words; give an order, accuse, apologize, etc.). These two functions will be implemented spontaneously.

As the CEFR advises, care must be taken to propose tasks with motivating but achievable goals. Be careful therefore to base yourself on the communicative needs of learners, on their skills, both general and communicative language, and on their resources. A high level of personal motivation in carrying out a task will lead the learner to greater involvement and, consequently, to a more effective mobilization of their knowledge, resulting from previous knowledge and experience. These will be compared with those of their interlocutors in order to reach a new level of performance.

There are three important points to which the facilitator must be attentive before embarking, with his class, on the experience of the game.

- That of the necessary prerequisites: do the learners have the necessary tools to experience the activity in a relatively safe manner? If this is not the case, the teacher will take care to make the learner more efficient in carrying out the task by preceding it with other preparatory tasks (answers to questions, identification of linguistic formulas, understanding of the hearing,...).
- That of the objectives pursued: does the activity that the facilitator is going to propose correspond to the objectives that he has set? These can be linguistic, functional, cultural;
- That of meaning: does it make sense to offer this activity at this precise moment?

Does it have its place in the progression of the course? It is possible that the major meaning identified is that of pure pleasure; this goal can be sufficient in itself because it will in any case always be accompanied by communicative advantages, due to the very fact that the proposed game highlights the language and its practice.

We can see that the game allows the learning of skills. Then, from a young age, we have always been passionate about games. Finally, we noticed that every child is much more attracted to games than to any other serious thing.

Teachers and researchers agree that teaching a foreign language means teaching students to communicate orally and in writing. As this world keeps changing, we don't want to stay still, petrified in the past. So, we will have to diversify our objectives, our teaching methods, our practical approaches to respond to rapidly changing educational needs.

Learning a foreign language is not just about learning verb tenses, grammar and phonetic facts or literature. Learning a foreign language also means learning the skills it contains. This is how the communicative method develops around speech acts. Teaching/learning French as a foreign language (FLE) requires its own methodology, special skills and attitudes. Through a language, the child learner discovers learning strategies, new knowledge and new acquisitions.

We know that a child's life is based on play, entertainment and varied activities. The game helps children to develop, by working in a team, it also stimulates memory and creativity. Everyone wants to play, big or small, young or old. Because the appetite for gaming does not pass with age. Although it may seem like entertainment, the most important characteristic of games is that participants must respect certain rules.

In FLE classes, didactic games are more than necessary. It makes the transition from traditional teaching to modern teaching-learning. The game encourages students to use thematic vocabulary and grammar rules, it develops team spirit, attention and the ability to concentrate. Playing also means competing with others. Wanting to win means offering additional motivation to participate and allowing students to be able to express real communication needs.

Didactic games are active or formative-participative methods. These methods are very enjoyable for our students. These are activities that, in general, relax both the learner and the teacher. The advantages are:

- the creation of an active attitude among students who become more interested, learn better and succeed in making progress;
- the classroom climate becomes more favorable to learning;
- relationships between students and relationships with the teacher improve.

My own professional experience allows me to affirm that students learn best by drawing, singing, dialoguing, working in a team, doing fun exercises, and remembering roles. Furthermore, playing with words and on words means learning the language and demonstrating mastery of the language. In conclusion, the more enjoyable the class, the better the results will be. The game, having psychopedagogical functions, ensures the active participation of the student in the lesson, increasing his interest in the study.

The effectiveness of the learning process undoubtedly lies in the quality of the content transmitted during class activities, and in the quality of the strategies implemented to make this content understood, assimilated and accessible. This effectiveness also depends on the perception that learners have of their learning situation. That is to say, they are all the more motivated as they observe the progress they are making. In the language class, this experience of progress is realized particularly during conversations where the participants feel that they are capable of expressing themselves, of implementing the elements and structures that they have recently learned, and of making themselves understand from their interlocutors. By the word playful activity we mean relating to play, involving students in a fun and stimulating way, activating and exercising at the same time linguistic abilities but also cognitive ones. Stimulating, fun and creative activities encourage student involvement and enable them

to be more successful in their learning. To motivate students and encourage them to read, understand, write and speak French, we must explore simple strategies that optimize classroom interactions and encourage students to speak. Successful learning is based on a collaborative relationship; we learn together. It is enough to gradually involve the student through creative oral and written activities that use the imagination.

Language teaching that meets the objectives of oral teaching/learning in FLE always requires a correlation between two basic activities which are comprehension and expression. By following a communicative approach we necessarily start by understanding before producing.

Any production (oral or written) in a foreign language involves an element of stress. The learner feels put in danger when, in front of the class, he has to express himself. The game offers this opportunity to hide part of this anxiety. It generates pleasure which makes the learner partly forget their fears. He takes the plunge and dares. Isn't this one of the goals pursued by the foreign language teacher?

For the learner to feel comfortable in natural communication, it is necessary, within the class, to give him the opportunity to exercise his talents, to express himself in situations which are as close as possible to the situations natural exchanges, not only with the teacher, but also with their peers. He must be given the opportunity to "test" his linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic skills so that he can discover the keys to successful communication in the language he is speaking. The game offers this field of experience.

Another great advantage of fun activities is that they unite the group, they establish a climate of trust, cooperation and respect which allows everyone to feel in their place and to dare to express their needs. They create links between the different participants through group activities. They allow the diversification of associations within learners through the formation and variation of these groups. This atmosphere of conviviality and pleasure makes learners enjoy getting together and come to class more happily. They also want to progress to enrich exchanges.

III. Conclusion

The frequent use of collective or semi-collective activities that the game requires allows everyone to learn from others and contribute their own knowledge in order to move the community towards the final solution. Exchanges help the individual progress within the entity. Learners no longer only receive knowledge from the master but share it with each other and become aware of their own knowledge. This generally makes them more confident about their skills. During this time, the teacher will have more freedom to observe his learners and will thus be able to evolve the course according to the gaps and needs he has identified.

Finally, the introduction of games in French as a foreign language classroom respects the perspective of learning the language through the execution of tasks as recommended by the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). This gives all its importance to the playful, aesthetic and poetic use of language in a resolutely action-oriented approach.

References

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