



8. INTERACTIVITY

How to generate interaction during distance communication between participants who speak different languages at different levels

CONTEXT

Typically, the situation concerns a group of teachers/pre-service teachers who wish to use virtual platforms with a group of native speakers in order to improve their oral expression and interactivity skills in the language they teach. The group of native speakers is made up of participants who are interested in the country/culture of the trainee teachers' country, participants who wish to travel to that country or learn that language, and any participant interested in intercultural exchange.

THEORETICAL BASIS

The most effective way to develop speaking skills is to practise the target language while accomplishing an action. Participating in an interaction is a particularly effective method to exchange and learn new cultural content.

ACTIVITY IN A NUTSHELL

The general principle is that teachers/pre-service teachers present an element of their own culture in the foreign language they wish to improve to a group of speakers of that language. For example, a group of Finnish teachers or pre-service teachers of French as a foreign language present a Finnish culinary speciality in French to a group of French-speaking participants. This activity can be performed in a media library context, in which case, the media library can coordinate the group and provide the material.

Activity/Solutions

CONTACT TYPE

Online

TIME NEEDED

1 hour

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

10-15

ACTIVITY TYPE

Group work

TARGET GROUP

- All target groups

VARIATION OF THE ACTIVITY

In addition to recipes, the same activity can be conducted with any other cultural element from the (pre-service) teachers' country (e.g. architectural heritage, craft practice, artworks, literature, etc.)

Goal

- To improve general second-language skills for language teachers, especially speaking skills.
- To develop intercultural relations and knowledge for citizens (from rural areas) or users of media libraries.
- To develop digital skills for these two groups.

How to prepare

- Ask pre-service teachers/teachers to find a recipe of a local/national culinary speciality.
- Ask pre-service teachers/teachers to find at least 10 pictures related to this recipe (ingredients, region where the recipe comes from, the places where and how it is served, etc.).
- Ask pre-service teachers/teachers to prepare an inductive presentation and send it to the moderator via email or other digital means.
- Ask the native speakers to prepare general questions for the start of the activity, about the teachers, their country, etc.
- Prepare two groups (35% teachers and/or pre-service teachers, 65% other participants).

Activity step by step

1. Tell the participants that the (pre-service) teachers will present, in groups, an element of their own culture and that the native speakers can ask them general questions after the presentation (5 questions max.).
2. Oversee that every group gets a chance to present their inductive and interactive presentation, which is done by showing pictures. For example, the (pre-service) teachers can show a picture of the finished dish and ask the participants to guess the ingredients and how they are prepared, or the presenter can do the reverse: show pictures of the ingredients and ask the participants to imagine how they are put together.
3. Oversee that all the native speakers get an equal chance to propose and interpret the pictures.
4. Let the (pre-service) teachers add more accurate information, including their own experience of the recipe (when they cook it, etc.) and summarise the context of the recipe: where it comes from, when it is eaten, on what occasion, etc.
5. Ask the audience to think about similar dishes from their country. Lead the discussion by asking questions of the other participants.