

Tips and Activities for Creating a Communicative EFL Classroom Using Online Meeting Software

Today, teachers around the world are striving to make virtual English language learning engaging and motivating.

In this webinar, we will:

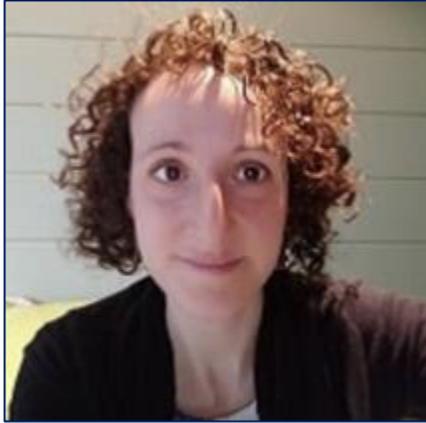
- examine several communicative EFL activities for instructional sessions conducted via video-based online meeting software
- explore practical ideas for fostering students' confidence in their oral communication skills as they learn and practice online
- discuss how to develop contingency plans to prepare for times when technology may fail or malfunction



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Today's Schedule

- **Introduction** to OMS and Communicative Classrooms
- **Warm-Up**
- **Benefits/Challenges** of Using OMS for CC
- **Strategies** for Creating a Successful Communicative Virtual Classroom
- **Guided Practice:** Communicative Activities
- **Adaptations** for Your Classroom
- **Contingency Plans**
- **Final Reflections**

Goals of Today's Webinar



To learn ***what*** OMS are



To learn ***why*** using OMS and technology is useful in English teaching



To learn ***how*** to use OMS with communicative teaching

Introduction

Online Meeting Software and Communicative Classrooms



What Are Online Meeting Software?

OMS are tools used for conducting classes on the internet.



OMS can be
installed
on your
smartphone,
laptop, or
computer.



OMS allows
students to
access
lessons and
learning
materials
ANYWHERE!



OMS allows
students to study
English while
becoming
proficient
in useful
technology.



Online Meeting Software Summary



Can be installed:
smartphone, laptop, computer

Allows students to access
lessons and learning materials
wherever they are!

Allows students to study
English, while becoming proficient
in technology.

SHARE

**Have you used any OMS?
If so, which ones?**

What is a Communicative EFL Classroom?

Communicative language teaching makes use of real-life situations that require **communication**. The teacher sets up situations that students encounter in real life, and students **communicate** about these topics.



What Might a Communicative Lesson Look Like?

Students practice giving directions to their neighborhood market by using prepositions and adjectives.



One student describes their favorite dessert, but they do not know the ingredients! With a partner, they discuss the flavors to determine the ingredients.



So, Communicative Classrooms Can Be Summed Up By...

Communicate!

Communicate!

Communicate!



In the chat box, please list a “real world activity” that you have used for a communicative activity.

Examples:

Asking Questions



Shopping



What would a **virtual Communicative Classroom** *look like*?

An example using Zoom.

1) Teacher posts a grammar lesson on Reported Speech on Zoom Whiteboard. Teacher reviews grammar lesson with students, virtually.

2) Following, in the Zoom Meeting Room, teacher instructs students to spend 2 minutes finding an article on a current event, from an English language online news site. Students have eight minutes to read article.

3) Next, teacher places students in Zoom subgroups of 3 people. In subgroup, each student uses four minutes to describe their article, using reported speech. Other students take notes.

4) Lastly, back in the Zoom Meeting Room, teacher chooses random students to describe one of the articles that they learned about in their subgroup.

Warm-up

Confused

Hesitant

In the **chat box**, please write one word that describes your feelings about creating a Communicative Virtual Classroom with OMS.

Curious

Intrigued

Perplexed



Challenges of Using OMS for Communicative Learning



Internet Connectivity



Some students may have a poor or inconsistent internet connection.





Digital Literacy



Some students may not be knowledgeable in how to use technology, apps, etc.





Sense of Isolation = Unmotivated



Some students may feel unmotivated or bored because they are not in class with peers but are online at home (alone).



SHARE

**Please share other challenges of
using OMS for communicative
learning.**



Benefits of Using OMS for Communicative Learning



Accessible Anytime, Anywhere!



No more missing class! Students can attend class anytime, anywhere! Just turn on the phone or computer. 😊





Suits a Variety of Learning Styles!



Some students are visual learners, some learn through audio. Most prefer using technology, not paper and pencils. All are possible in virtual learning!





Modern Education for a Modern World



Most students will use technology in their future job, and most will do virtual work. We are preparing students to use technology and do virtual work.



SHARE

**What are other benefits of using
OMS for communicative learning?**

Best Strategies for Creating a Communicative Classroom in an OMS





Strategy 1

Allow for activities to be done asynchronously, so students can complete them anytime, even if they lose internet connection.

** This strategy solves the challenge of unpredictable internet connection.*



Strategy 2

Make learning interactive - use pair-work, group work; students work with peers online.

** This strategy solves the challenge of students feeling isolated online.*



Strategy 3

Use physical movement! Kinesthetic learners will benefit from this, and it helps students be active.

** This strategy helps solves the challenge of students feeling inactive/unmotivated.*



Strategy 4

Require students to use camera and microphone in activities. This generates interest and excitement.

** This helps students build digital literacy skills; students feel excitement seeing peers.*

SHARE

**Tell us about your experience
using these strategies or others in
virtual communicative practice!**

Activities

Communicative Activities Using OMS



Activity 1

Virtual Bring Me

Guided Communicative Activity: Virtual Bring Me

- Students will have 1 minute to find the items.
- They will share their items by turning on their camera/audio.
Example: I have a...
- The student with the most items starting with that letter, wins.



SHARE

Which strategies were present in this activity?



- **Students are encouraged to turn on camera/audio**
- **Interactive**
- **Uses physical movement**

Activity 2

Virtual Gift Activity

Dialogue

A: Here this is for you, (say name). It's a _____!

B: Thank you for the _____, (say name).

Guided communicative activity 2: Virtual Gift Activity

- **Nominate two students and ask them to turn on camera/audio.**
- **Student A mimes giving an object to Student B.**
- **Student B mimes receives the object and thanks Student A.**



Guided Communicative Activity: Virtual Gift Activity

Example:

*Student A: Here this is for you (mimes an object). It's **a** seashell!*

*Student B: Thank you for **the** seashell,
(name of Student A).*

- **Note:** This activity can be used to review articles a/the.



SHARE

Which strategies were present in this activity?



- **Encourages students to turn on camera/audio**
- **Uses physical movement**
- **Interactive**

Activity 3

Story Spine

Guided Communicative Activity: Virtual Story Spine

THE STORY SPINE

THE STORY SPINE	STRUCTURE	FUNCTION
Once upon a time...	Beginning	The world of the story is introduced and the main character's routine is established.
Every day...		
But, one day...	The Event	The main character breaks the routine .
Because of that...	Middle	There are dire consequences for having broken the routine. It is unclear if the main character will come out alright in the end.
Because of that...		
Because of that...		
Until finally...	The Climax	The main character embarks upon success or failure
And, ever since then...	End	The main character succeeds or fails, and a new routine is established.

Guided Communicative Activity: Virtual Story Spine

- Show the Story Spine table and explain that students will be telling a story, using past tenses.
- Student A says a sentence, starting with the Story Spine sentence starters:
Once upon a time...



Guided Communicative Activity: Virtual Story Spine

- **Student A nominates Student B to say the next sentence with the next sentence starter:**
Every day....
- **Students continue to nominate each other until the last sentence starter:**
And ever, since then....



Guided Communicative Activity: Virtual Story Spine

Example:

Student A: *Once upon a time*, there was a frog, and his name was Happy.

Student B: *Every day*, the frog visited his friend Sunshine, the fish.



SHARE

Which strategies were present in this activity?



- **Encourages students to turn on camera/audio**
- **Interactive**
- **Can be done asynchronously**

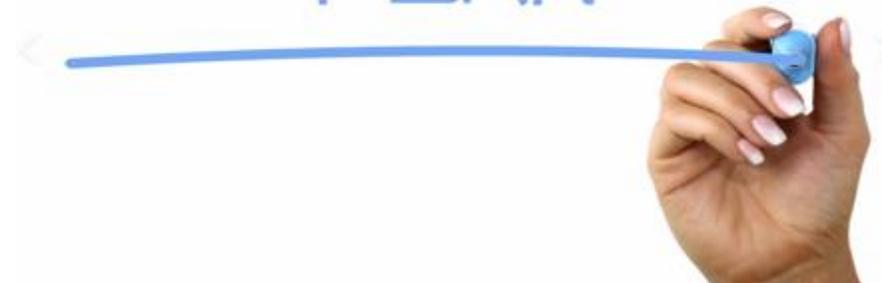
SHARE

How could you adapt these activities to be best suited to your classes/teaching context?

Contingency Plans

Look at technology fails and SHARE how YOU would deal with it!

CONTINGENCY
PLAN



SHARE

The Issue:

- In a group activity, one student does not understand how to use the OMS, so they are unmotivated and unengaged. All other group members do understand the OMS.
- *What do you do?*



Possible Contingency Plans

Peer Teaching

- Students who understand the concept or skill hold a “Peer Teaching” session to help their peers understand skills or concepts.
- Allow different students to be “Peer Teachers” each month, so all have a chance to show their ability in a skill they are good at.

Benefits

- Builds Leadership Skills
- Builds Confidence
- Increases Digital Literacy
- Lowers Student Anxiety

SHARE

The Issue:

- During a class session over an OMS, one student's little brother is jumping in front of the camera, singing, waving and making noise. It is disruptive to all.
- *What do you do?*



Possible Contingency Plans

Reinforce Rules

- Gently remind class that online class IS professional class. No disruptions or visitors are allowed, per usual.
- If behavior continues, tell student they must exit the session or else be disconnected. Any missed work is *their* responsibility.
- Later, gently counsel student on other places where they can go online for class: library, grandparent's house, outside, etc.

Benefits

- Personal Responsibility
- Consideration for Others

SHARE

The Issue:

- A student tells you they are very worried because they cannot afford a phone with data. They cannot access the internet for virtual work.
- *What do you do?*



Possible Contingency Plans

Peer Groups or Offline Work

- Group students in cohorts. In groups, students can contact one another for help and receive the lesson, instructions, schedule, etc., if they don't have internet.

- Send lessons via offline methods such as text. Via text you can send documents, instructions, lessons, etc.

Benefits

- Collaborative Skills
- Creative Solution-Finding
- More Access to Education

Summary

- There are different ways of using OMS.
- Challenges are real, BUT...
- Using strategies can help you create a communicative EFL classroom.



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Reflection Questions

1. Did you learn anything new related to this topic of fostering communication in the online classroom? If so, please describe.
2. What tools or supplies will be helpful for you in your teaching context?
3. How can I best support my students in using OMS effectively?



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