

Methodology For Developing Oral Speech In Russian Language Lessons Based On The Communicative Approach

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ABSTRACT

The development of oral speech is a core indicator of success in Russian language learning, especially in multilingual educational contexts where learners need functional speaking skills for study, work, and social interaction. This article proposes a communicative-approach methodology for developing pupils' oral speech in Russian lessons through meaning-focused interaction, task-supported speaking, and systematic feedback that balances fluency with accuracy. The methodology is grounded in the concept of communicative competence, integrates classroom interaction as the primary learning medium, and operationalizes lesson design through staged speaking tasks, scaffolding, and formative assessment. The paper outlines implementation principles, describes a procedure for selecting and sequencing speaking activities, and presents assessment criteria suitable for school practice. The expected outcome is stable growth in learners' willingness to speak, pragmatic appropriateness, interactional strategies, and linguistic control within real classroom time constraints.

Keywords: Communicative approach, oral speech, Russian language teaching, communicative competence, interaction, speaking tasks, formative assessment, fluency and accuracy.

INTRODUCTION

In contemporary education, oral proficiency is no longer treated as an optional "advanced" skill; it is a necessary condition for academic participation and social integration. In many post-Soviet and Central Asian contexts, Russian continues to function as a language of wider communication in higher education, professional mobility, and information access. As a result, Russian language teaching in schools is increasingly evaluated by learners' ability to speak in realistic situations: to ask and answer questions, maintain dialogue, negotiate meaning, and express opinions with appropriate register. However, classroom reality often reveals a gap between learners' knowledge about the language and their readiness to use it orally. This gap is typically caused by insufficient speaking time, fear of making mistakes, overreliance on teacher-fronted explanation, and the dominance of written exercises that do not automatically transfer into spoken performance.

The communicative approach addresses this problem by shifting the pedagogical focus from reproducing linguistic forms to accomplishing communicative intentions in interaction. Communicative language teaching (CLT) is not a single technique but a methodological orientation that prioritizes meaning, purposeful exchange, and the learner's role as an active speaker. Its theoretical basis is the concept of communicative competence, which includes not only grammatical knowledge but also sociolinguistic appropriateness, strategic resources for coping with communication problems, and discourse management.

In the Russian methodological tradition, communicative principles were elaborated as a coherent system of teaching speaking, emphasizing real communication, motivation, situationality, and learner activity. Passov's work on the communicative method, though originally framed within foreign language pedagogy, remains methodologically influential because it formalizes lesson logic around

communication rather than explanation. For Russian language teaching in educational institutions, modern methodological literature also stresses that effectiveness depends on the alignment of objectives, speech practice, and assessment criteria, rather than on the quantity of grammatical material “covered.”

This article aims to present an implementable methodology for developing oral speech in Russian language lessons based on the communicative approach. The objective is not to replace grammar or vocabulary instruction, but to reorganize them so that forms are learned as tools for meaning in interaction. The research questions guiding the methodological design are: How should speaking tasks be selected and sequenced to ensure progressive oral development? What teacher actions support both fluency and accuracy without suppressing initiative? Which formative assessment instruments are feasible for routine school practice?

The proposed methodology is built as a pedagogical design model that can be integrated into regular Russian language lessons. It draws on communicative competence theory and classroom practice descriptions widely used in language pedagogy, including the differentiation between fluency-oriented work and focus-on-form procedures that maintain learners’ attention to linguistic accuracy while communication remains primary. The methodology also aligns with competence-oriented educational planning, where outcomes are formulated as “can-do” speaking actions and interactional behaviors rather than as lists of grammar topics. The CEFR perspective is useful here because it describes language ability in terms of communicative activities and offers descriptors for interaction, mediation, and pragmatic appropriateness.

The instructional process is organized through a repeating lesson cycle that includes three pedagogical phases. The pre-communicative phase prepares learners for speaking by activating relevant vocabulary, establishing a communicative goal, and modeling interactional language. The core communicative phase provides structured speaking time through tasks that require information exchange, decision-making, or problem solving. The post-communicative phase consolidates learning through reflection and targeted feedback, helping learners notice gaps between intended meaning and produced language.

Task selection is guided by two criteria: communicative necessity and cognitive accessibility. Communicative

necessity means that learners must speak to reach an outcome; speaking cannot be replaced by silent reading or copying. Cognitive accessibility means the task logic is simple enough for the age and proficiency level so that mental resources can be allocated to speaking. The methodology recommends starting with high-support tasks (predictable language, shared context, short turns) and moving to lower-support tasks (longer turns, less predictable responses, more independent planning). This sequencing corresponds to speaking-development research that distinguishes between controlled production, guided interaction, and freer performance, and highlights the importance of practice under time pressure and attention management.

Teacher behavior is treated as a key methodological variable. The teacher’s talk is intentionally reduced during the communicative phase to avoid monopolizing interaction and to increase learner speaking time. During task execution, the teacher monitors, supports participation, and collects language samples for later feedback. Error treatment is postponed unless an error blocks meaning or causes repeated misunderstanding. In post-task work, the teacher conducts brief, selective focus on form, using learners’ own utterances as material for improvement. This approach is consistent with communicative-method principles in Russian methodological literature and in general language-teaching descriptions.

Assessment is embedded as formative practice. Oral progress is monitored through short performance evidence: paired dialogues, mini-presentations, role-play outcomes, and recorded speaking logs. Rubrics focus on communicative success, interaction management, and linguistic adequacy, and can be adapted to local curricular requirements.

The primary result of the study is an operational methodology that defines what “communicative development of oral speech” looks like in routine Russian language lessons and how it can be sustained over time. The model produces a clear instructional logic: learners are guided from supported interaction to more autonomous oral performance, while linguistic accuracy is improved through targeted feedback linked to communicative needs.

In classroom implementation, the methodology translates into a stable distribution of lesson time where speaking is not a “final five minutes” activity but a central learning

mechanism. Pupils repeatedly experience situations in which meaning matters: they must clarify, ask for repetition, reformulate, agree or disagree politely, and keep a conversation going. Such interaction trains strategic competence—resources speakers rely on to handle communicative breakdowns—described in communicative competence theory.

The methodology also yields an instructional repertoire of speaking tasks that differ by interactional format and cognitive demand while remaining aligned with communicative principles. In lower grades or beginner levels, controlled interaction is built through short dialogue frames and role cards that limit linguistic load but preserve choice and intention. As proficiency grows, tasks shift toward information-gap exchanges, collaborative planning, and opinion-based discussion where learners must justify decisions. The speaking skill is developed not only as pronunciation or grammar performance but as discourse organization: learners practice opening and closing conversations, signaling turn-taking, linking ideas, and adapting speech to the interlocutor. This reflects the view that spoken language has distinct features from written language and requires explicit pedagogical support.

Another result is a practical assessment profile. Instead of grading speaking by counting errors, the methodology evaluates whether a learner can complete a communicative action with an interlocutor: maintaining comprehensibility, responding appropriately, using repair strategies, and showing pragmatic sensitivity. Such assessment logic corresponds to competence-oriented frameworks and can be connected to descriptor-based planning.

The proposed methodology is effective conceptually because it resolves a classic contradiction in language teaching: learners need fluent speaking practice, but teachers fear that too much free speaking will fossilize errors. The communicative approach does not ignore accuracy; it changes its timing and function. Accuracy becomes meaningful when it is tied to communicative breakdowns or to learners' desire to express more precisely. In this way, grammar and vocabulary instruction supports oral speech rather than competing with it. Richards and Rodgers emphasize that communicative teaching involves both meaning-focused activity and attention to form when needed; the present methodology follows that balance through planned post-task focus.

A second important issue is classroom psychology. Many

learners avoid speaking because of fear of negative evaluation, particularly in classes where teacher correction is immediate and public. Communicative methodology reduces this risk by normalizing interaction and treating errors as part of meaning negotiation. Reflection after tasks allows learners to reinterpret difficulties as solvable problems rather than as personal failure. This supports willingness to communicate, which is often a decisive factor in oral progress.

In multilingual environments, oral Russian development interacts with learners' first language and the language of schooling. Code-switching is not simply "bad discipline"; it can be a temporary strategy for meaning, especially at beginner levels. The teacher's methodological task is to gradually expand learners' Russian resources for the same intentions, so that reliance on another language decreases naturally. Strategic competence (asking for help, paraphrasing, checking understanding) becomes a bridge between multilingual reality and Russian-only performance.

From a practical standpoint, the methodology also addresses time constraints. Teachers often report that communicative lessons are "slow" because interaction takes time. Yet speaking development cannot be accelerated by explanation alone; it requires repeated production under varying conditions. The solution is not adding separate "speaking classes" but redesigning ordinary lessons so that every unit contains an oral outcome. When speaking tasks are short, frequent, and systematically recycled, progress becomes visible without sacrificing curricular coverage.

Finally, assessment culture is decisive. If oral performance is evaluated only by error counting, learners will prioritize avoidance and silence. If assessment recognizes communicative success and improvement, learners take risks, which is necessary for developing oral competence. Descriptor-based assessment, inspired by CEFR thinking, is useful because it links evaluation to observable actions and encourages realistic goal setting.

Developing oral speech in Russian language lessons requires a methodology that treats speaking as the central learning mechanism rather than as an optional supplement. The communicative approach provides a coherent basis for such methodology by prioritizing meaning, interaction, and communicative competence. The proposed model organizes instruction through a recurring lesson cycle,

progressive task sequencing, teacher-mediated scaffolding, and formative assessment focused on communicative actions. It balances fluency and accuracy by postponing most correction to post-task work and by connecting language form to communicative needs. Implemented consistently, the methodology strengthens learners' readiness to speak, their interactional strategies, and their ability to use Russian in real classroom and social contexts.

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