

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# Communicative Grammar Teaching

---

Jenny Selvidge

US Embassy Tokyo

August 1, 2020

This webinar will help you consider ways to use more communicative approaches to grammar teaching that balance input and output.

Participants will:

1. reflect upon the meaning of a “communicative classroom”
2. understand the balance between input and output
3. analyze lesson plans that use the communicative approach
4. gather ideas and resources to use in their classes



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# Today's Topics

- the definition of a “communicative classroom”
- the balance between input and output (theory)
- two lessons plans that balance input and output
- activity ideas / grammar resources



Discussion Question:

What is a communicative classroom?

Please share your thoughts in the chatbox.

In a communicative classroom, students:

- learn language by **using** it rather than by only being told about it.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# Teachers as Facilitators

Instead of teaching about language, teachers become *facilitators* of language learning and acquisition.

Input alone will not produce language fluency in productive skills.

(Brown & Larsen-Hall, 2012)

\*Mindset shift regarding the role of the teacher.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# Today's Topics

- the definition of a “communicative classroom”
- the balance between input and output (theory)
- two lessons plans that balance input and output
- activity ideas / grammar resources



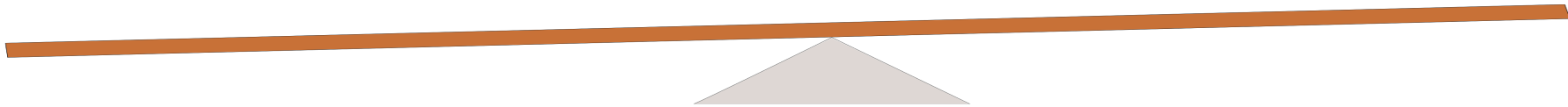
# balancing input vs. output

input - receptive skills

- reading
- listening

output - productive skills

- speaking
- writing



# Participant Poll

What are the top two challenges of balancing input/output in your class?



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



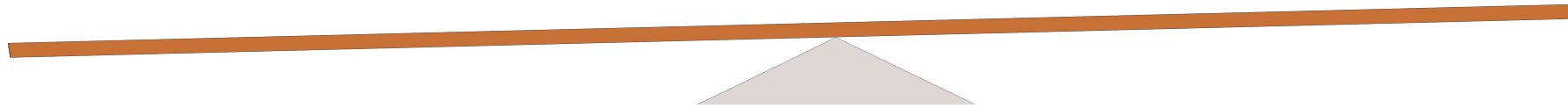
# lesson planning: input and output

1. exploring a topic
2. focusing on language
3. responding to the topic
4. producing language (practice, practice, practice)



# 4 strands of a language classroom (Nation, 2007)

1. meaning-focused input
2. language-focused learning
3. meaning-focused output
4. fluency activities



\*4 strands should be given roughly equal time in a class



# the 4 strands in lesson planning

1. meaning-focused input → exploring a topic
2. language-focused learning → explicit language instruction
3. meaning-focused output → responding to the topic
4. fluency activities → producing language, “getting good at it”

(Nation, 2007)



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# Today's Topics

- the definition of a “communicative classroom”
- the balance between input and output (theory)
- two lessons plans that balance input and output
- activity ideas / grammar resources



# Sample Lesson 1

Audience: Beginners

Goal: to identify household objects using *there is/there are*

1. Teacher shows picture of a living room and asks students what they see.
  2. Teacher writes sample sentences on the board and explains the singular/plural difference.
- 

input

output



Let's use objects that are in our classroom as examples:

There is a teacher.

There are many students.

There is a projector.

There is a laptop.

There are five windows.

There are many drawings.

There is an ALT.

Let's use objects that are in our classroom as examples:

There is **a** teacher.

There are *many* students**s**.

There is **a** projector.

There is **a** laptop.

There are *five* windows**s**.

There are *many* drawings**s**.

There is **an** ALT.

# Sample Lesson 1

Audience: Beginners

Goal: to identify household objects using *there is/there are*

1. Teacher shows picture of a living room and asks students what they see.
2. Teacher writes sample sentences on the board and explains the singular/plural difference.

- 
3. Students brainstorm a vocabulary list of items from *their own* living room and write sentences.
  4. Students practice sentences using *there is / there are*:

input

output

# Sample Lesson 1

Audience: Beginners

Goal: to identify household objects using *there is/there are*

1. Teacher shows picture of a living room and asks students what they see.
2. Teacher writes sample sentences on the board and explains the singular/plural difference.

- 
3. Students brainstorm a vocabulary list of items from *their own* living room and write sentences.
  4. Students practice sentences using *there is / there are*:

input

output





# Sample Lesson 1

Audience: Beginners

Goal: to identify household objects using *there is/there are*

1. Teacher shows picture of a living room and asks students what they see.
2. Teacher writes sample sentences on the board and explains the singular/plural difference.

- 
3. Students brainstorm a vocabulary list of items from *their own* living room and write sentences.
  4. Students practice sentences using *there is / there are*:
    - Gallery Walk
    - padlet

input

output



# Gallery Walk

- can be done in a classroom if there's space
- can be done in the hallway
- students have a task to do while looking at student work



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

# padlet.com - collaborative writing space

padlet

jlselvidge • 1m


## there is / there are

Describing items in your living room

REMAKE SHARE


**my living room**

There are two windows.  
There are curtains.  
There is a white chair.  
There is one sofa.  
There is a small tree.




**My living Room**

There is one window.  
There are three bookcase.  
There is a plant.  
There are two chair.  
There is a small rug.




**My Living Room**

There is three windows.  
There is a rug.  
There are a short table.  
There is a dining table.  
There is television.



**My Living Room**

There is two sofas.  
There is a glass table.  
There is one television.  
There is a carpet.  
There is a basket



## Sample Lesson 2

Audience:  
Intermediate/Adv.

Goal: to describe life experiences using the *present perfect* and *simple past*

1. Teacher reads dialogue between two people.
2. Teacher analyzes text with students to identify target grammar. Discusses difference between present perfect and simple past.

- 
3. Students create sentences of things they have done.
  4. Students get in groups of three to state a claim (only one person wrote it). The rest of the class asks questions to determine who is telling the truth.

input

output



## Sample Lesson 2

Audience:  
Intermediate/Adv.

Goal: to describe life experiences using the *present perfect* and *simple past*

1. Teacher reads dialogue between two people.
2. Teacher analyzes text with students to identify target grammar. Discusses difference between present perfect and simple past.

- 
3. Students create sentences of things they have done.
  4. Students get in groups of three to state a claim (only one person wrote it). The rest of the class asks questions to determine who is telling the truth.

input

output



## Sample Lesson 2

Audience:  
Intermediate/Adv.

Goal: to describe life experiences using the *present perfect* and *simple past*

1. Teacher reads dialogue between two people.
2. Teacher analyzes text with students to identify target grammar. Discusses difference between present perfect and simple past.

- 
3. Students create sentences of things they have done.
  4. Students get in groups of three to state a claim (only one person wrote it). The rest of the class asks questions to determine who is telling the truth.

input

output



# 1. Meaning-focused Input: Dialogue

Hiroko: Hey, Fumika! You and your family have traveled a lot, right?

Fumika: Oh, yeah. We love to travel! My favorite place to visit was Australia. We saw wild kangaroos and visited the Sydney Opera House. So beautiful!

Hiroko: Have you had many outdoor adventures?

Fumika: Some! I've been scuba diving, rock-climbing, and water skiing. I went snow skiing in Hokkaido last year, and that was amazing!

Hiroko: What's still on your travel list?

Fumika: I've never been to Africa or South America. I've also never seen the desert, so that's on my list, too.

**Goal: comprehension of the topic / build student interest**

## 2. Language-focused learning: focus on form

Hiroko: Hey, Fumika! You and your family have traveled a lot, right?

Fumika: Oh, yeah. We love to travel! My favorite place to visit was Australia. We saw wild kangaroos and visited the Sydney Opera House. So beautiful!

Hiroko: Have you had many outdoor adventures?

Fumika: Some! I've been scuba diving, rock-climbing, and water skiing. I went snow skiing in Hokkaido last year, and that was amazing!

Hiroko: What's still on your travel list?

Fumika: I've never been to Africa or South America. I've also never seen the desert, so that's on my list, too.

**Goal: to process the form and function of the present perfect/simple past**

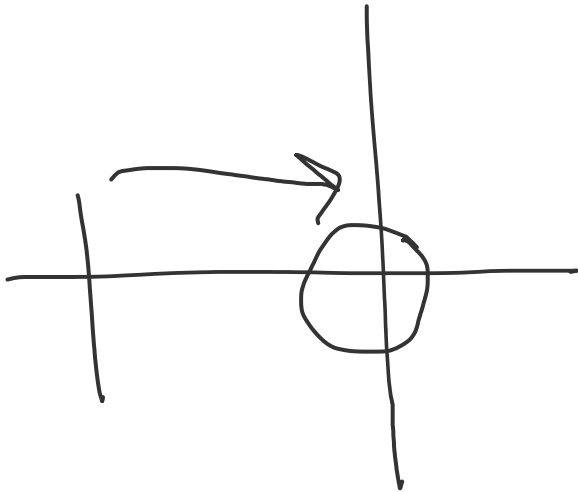


### **Present perfect:**

"started in the past, continues to the present, unfinished (may cont. to future)"

form: have/has + past participle

You and your family have traveled a lot, right?



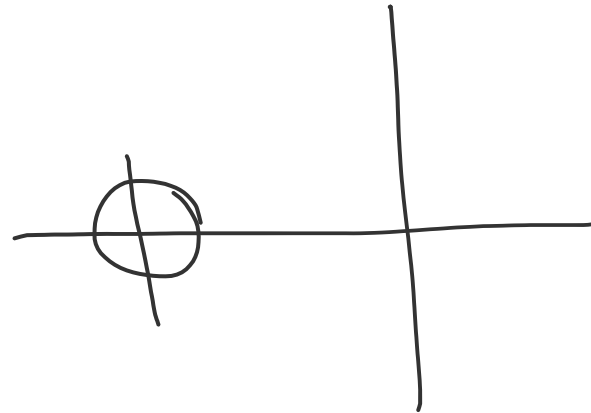
You traveled in the past and will continue to travel → present perfect

### **Simple past:**

"started and ended in the past, finished / specific time"

form: +ed ending / irregular endings

We visited the Sydney Opera House.



You went to the Opera House at a specific time in the past. It's finished.



### **3. Meaning-focused output**

Task:

Write 5-8 sentences of things you have done (in general) and things that you have done at a specific time.

**Goal: to convey meaning**

## 4. Fluency Development

Three people will come to the front of the class. They'll all say the same sentence, "I have ridden a camel," but only one person is telling the truth.

Students will ask simple past questions, such as:

- Where did you ride a camel?
- How tall was the camel?
- Did you have to take riding lessons first?
- Was the camel friendly?
- Were you scared?
- Was there a camel guide there to help you?

**Goal: to practice/feel comfortable and confident using the simple past**

# Today's Topics

- the definition of a “communicative classroom”
- the balance between input and output (theory)
- lessons plans that balance input and output
- activity ideas / grammar resources



“How do my students  
use grammar to  
communicate in real life?”

---



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



---

# Lesson Development Questions

---

1. What is the target grammar?
2. How can students apply this grammar to real-life communication? Tailor to *your* students.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# Real-world Applications

tell a story

- mini-book
- skit
- show-and-tell

explain how to do something

- give directions
- science experiment
- cook
- post on Instagram

explain how to play a game/sport

- ride a unicycle
- soccer
- sumo rules



# Real-world Applications

## hypotheticals

- What would happen if...
- design an ideal school/city
- "If I had a million dollars..."
- If I could change the world...

## advice-giving

- for tourists
- for incoming students
- for teachers

## apply to college

- oral interview
- personal statement





# Where do you go for ideas and resources?

(You don't need to reinvent the wheel.)

---



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

ABOUT US

RESOURCES

ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM

- [State Department Information on Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)
- [Get Updates on Exchange Programs and the Presidential Proclamation](#)



## Teacher's Corner: Grammar Games



*This month in the Teacher's Corner, we present games you can use with your students to make learning grammar fun.*

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Week 1 - Grid Games](#)



[Week 2 - Active Verb Tense Game](#)



[Week 3 - Adjectives and Adverbs in Action](#)



[Week 4 - List and Mingle with Mixed Grammar Skills](#)





## Game 1: The Mystery Bag Instructions

1. Choose an object related to your unit.
2. Put the object in a bag.
3. Have one child come to the front with you.
4. Have the children ask 10 yes/no questions with a chunk.

**For example:**

**Is it fuzzy?**

**Yes, it is. / No, it isn't.**

**Does/Can it fly?**

**Yes, it does. / No, it doesn't.**

5. Allow the children to guess after 10 questions.

# AE Live 4.6: Communicative Grammar Games for the Young Learner

(Coulson, 2019)

## Game 1: The Mystery Bag Instructions

1. Choose an object related to your unit.
2. Put the object in a bag.
3. Have one child come to the front with you.
4. Have the children ask 10 yes/no questions with a chunk.

**For example:**

**Is it fuzzy?**

**Yes, it is. / No, it isn't.**

**Does/Can it fly?**

**Yes, it does. / No, it doesn't.**

5. Allow the children to guess after 10 questions.

1. Brainstorm list of adjectives.
2. Teach *question form* and *Yes/No answer form*
3. Students write down list of questions.
4. Game 1

## engVid's free grammar lessons

### English Lesson Finder

#### Level

- Beginner
- Intermediate
- Advanced

460  
LESSONS

#### Topics

- business english
- comprehension
- culture & tips
- Exams
- expressions
- grammar**
- IELTS

#### Teachers

- Adam
- Alex
- Benjamin
- Emma
- Gill
- Jade
- James
- Jon
- Rebecca
- Ronnie

- business english
- comprehension
- culture & tips
- expressions
- grammar
- IELTS
- pronunciation
- slang
- speaking
- TOEFL
- TOEIC
- vocabulary
- writing

### grammar

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

Countable & Proper Nouns

PRESENT PERFECT

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS or PAST PERFECT

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

PRESENT PERFECT or PRESENT PERFECT?

Learn English Tenses: PAST PERFECT

1-Beginner • grammar

Basic English Grammar: How to use ALSO, TOO, AS WELL

1-Beginner • grammar

# Build your network of support

---



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE



---

# Recap: Four Steps to Lesson Planning

---

1. Introduce/explore a topic
2. Focus on target language
3. Students personalize the topic
4. Students practice, practice, practice



# References

- Brown, S., & Larson-Hall, J. (2012). *Second language acquisition myths: Applying second language research to classroom teaching*. University of Michigan Press ELT.
- Coulson, W. (2019, March 22). *American English*. Retrieved from American English Webinars: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars#child-2505>
- Lemaich, S. (2019, March 6). *American English*. Retrieved July 2020, from American English Webinars: <https://americanenglish.state.gov/resources/american-english-webinars#child-2504>
- Nation, P. (2007). The four strands. *International Journal of Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 1(1), 2-13.





Questions?

---

