

# Cross-Curricular Dimensions of Language Learning and Teaching



Cross-Curricular Dimensions  
of Language Learning and Teaching

Edited by

Marek Krawiec

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P U B L I S H I N G

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## PREFACE

The present volume is a collection of articles written by language teachers and scholars who in their theoretical considerations and practical implications emphasize the notion of cross-curricularity in language learning and teaching. The volume discusses a variety of aspects connected with the integration of content of different school subjects in language lessons and provides certain solutions to the problems distinguished in this field. It in fact highlights the multidimensional character of language classes conducted at different educational levels, that is from the pre-school to the university level, and draws certain conclusions with regard to the presented aspects. Because of its diversified material, this collection, which builds a bridge between theory and practice in language education, has been divided into four parts, such as:

- 1) Insight into language learning and teaching
- 2) Media in foreign language didactics
- 3) Art and literature in language education
- 4) (Inter-)culturality and cross-curricularity in language learning and teaching.

All the parts complement one another and form a unified whole which essentially reflects the recently promoted idea of integrating different school subjects in foreign-language lessons and presenting the world to students in a more holistic manner. The organization of content in this publication helps to point to the main subjects of concern and to the important theories and practices in the educational field. It is essential now to recognize the predominant aspects of each part of this volume.

Part 1 provides an insight into language learning and teaching. It focuses on the development of learners' knowledge and skills (e.g. listening and speaking) in a language class and exemplifies a series of activities, methods and forms of work that have been suggested to students at different levels of education (from pre-school to university). This part also presents solutions to some problems and difficulties which teachers and students have to deal with in a language class. The notion of students' evaluation is emphasized in this account as well.

Part 2 is primarily concerned with media in foreign language didactics. This part presents a historical background of the use of ICT in language learning and teaching and emphasizes certain forms of work with technological tools (e.g. radio, the Internet) in a language class. The

presented account explains why and how foreign language teachers should apply ICT in their lessons with students. The material here mainly points to advantages which media-based classes bring to students and teachers.

Part 3 concentrates on art and literature in language learning and teaching. The account presented in this part highlights an important role of paintings, music and literary works in foreign language classes. The articles here discuss the notion of encouraging students to communication through messages encoded, for example, in colours, forms of paintings and sounds and through excerpts from literature. The material points to novel teaching techniques and projects which have been suggested by the authors of the articles to their groups of students.

Part 4 highlights the necessity of implementing recently advocated approaches to foreign language learning and teaching, that is interculturality and cross-curricularity. The authors of the articles in this part propose certain forms of work which can help students to develop (inter-) cultural awareness and to link knowledge and skills from different domains in their problem-solving undertakings. This part presents both theoretical foundations of (inter-)cultural language learning and teaching and cross-curricular language education and some practical suggestions to the classroom work.

The publication is thus a multidimensional work representing a complexity of contemporary language education with its various approaches, techniques, methods and content. It is definitely a good source for all scholars and educators interested in the theories and practices developed within the field of cross-curricular language learning and teaching. The book, however, is addressed not only to them but to many others who might find the volume useful and helpful in their daily process of learning and teaching a foreign language.

Editor

**PART ONE:**

**INSIGHT INTO LANGUAGE  
LEARNING AND TEACHING**



# LEARNING BY DOING: A METHODOICAL FRAMEWORK ON TEACHING EFL TO PRESCHOOLERS

ALMA ŽERO

The following article deals with teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to preschool children. Since preschoolers still have not developed adult-like cognitive perceptions and understanding, educational systems undermine the importance of thorough preparation for EFL classes at such a young age. That is why this paper aims to analyze and present an exhaustive methodical framework for teaching listening and speaking skills of EFL to children aged 3-6. In order to do so, we carried out research in the non-governmental organization for communication and creative learning, *Creativus*, in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, for over a year's period of time (2011-2012). The research method encompasses class and student observations corroborated by video recordings. The results show an innovative list of productive teaching activities and methods as conducted in the workshops, as well as explanations on how to deal with difficulties when working with preschoolers in an EFL classroom.

## 1. Introduction

The crucial characteristics of foreign language learning lie in the amount and type of exposure to the language. There is usually very little foreign language experience outside the classroom and encounters with the language are by means of a thorough teaching and learning process which roughly lasts for a couple of hours in a week.

Productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) skills are the most important skills teachers should try to convey and focus on throughout these processes. Since preschool children usually have not yet mastered the skills of reading and writing, it is important that teachers of English as a foreign language focus on the basic skills of speaking and

listening, so as to prepare the students for formal school learning of writing and reading which mostly includes English as an obligatory foreign language. And yet, how should teachers prepare for a preschool classroom? First of all, teachers of young language learners need special skills, besides knowing the language, which falls to be a by-product at such a young learner age rather than the center of learning activities. Helping the child to learn and develop becomes more important than simply teaching the language. Consequently, methods, techniques and approaches should be drawn from a general educational theory and practice and not from a strict range of skills that schoolbooks require from EFL teachers.

An interesting theory dealing with overall educational practice is holistic learning and it certainly completes the teaching process of an EFL teacher. According to Byram and Hu (2000, 292), “holistic, action-oriented learning and teaching are principles in schooling that take account of learners’ undivided physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual preconditions in the learning process as well as their inherent human drive to be actively and wholeheartedly involved in relevant actions”. Thus, children experience holistic learning right from the moment they enter the classroom. It is for this reason that teachers should focus on teaching that involves the children’s senses of sight, sound, smell, and touch, instead of solely speech practice because of the good old “it is a language classroom after all” excuse. With the emphasis on holistic learning, what kind of teaching could provide for such an experience? One good approach could be theme-based teaching. The essential notion of theme-based teaching is that the teacher uses different activities throughout the lessons and connects them by their content, i.e. a theme or a topic which stretches over everything that happens in the classroom. Teachers have usually a hard time deciding what to present to their students and which activities to use since most of them are labeled “5+” referring to be appropriate only for children above five years old. The goal of this paper is to offer an insight into techniques and methods when teaching listening and speaking skills, thereby providing a general revision of activities useful when teaching preschoolers, with pictures (if available). All of the pictures in the paper are authentic and made by the author herself. The research sample is the non-governmental organization *Creativus* in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, since it conducts preschool-children English workshops. Therefore, the author had a chance to exercise both, observe and conduct classes, in order to carry out an authentic and comprehensive research over a year period of time, from 2011 to 2012. The following sections give a methodical framework and represent the author’s personal observations



and judgment on which listening and speaking activities and related approaches are the most productive for preschool EFL learners.

## **2. Listening activities**

The following sections provide some of the most useful activities and tasks for teaching listening skills as observed and conducted by the author in NGO *Creativus* and their preschool English workshops. The teachers structured lessons by using stories, songs and chants, games, and videos in the preschool EFL classroom.

### **2.1. Stories for a resourceful understanding**

Stories are a feature of all cultures and have a universal appeal. Stories fascinate younger, adolescent and adult learners of any language. Interesting story sources could be found on the television, in songs, jokes, myths and legends, films, newspapers, fairy tales, or even inspired by family and friends and completely invented.

There are many ways in which teachers can use stories when teaching listening skills in any EFL classroom, especially the preschool, but teachers have to bear in mind certain facts. Before using a story, it is beneficial to teach the key vocabulary words to help students understand. The story can therefore serve as a basis for learning vocabulary words. The students will not just *learn* the words; they will immediately see how the words are used and hear them in the context of the language. This is so much more beneficial to the students in comparison to rote memorization of target words. If a story is to be successful, teachers of preschool children should never read it but tell it! In order for the listening lesson to be successful, teachers in *Creativus* mostly prepared an outline or skeleton of the story which contains the main points and practised telling the story out loud. They also used expression, mime and, gesture, and changed their voices when necessary. It is also important to remember the target vocabulary and emphasize it. Since children get easily distracted, the teachers kept eye contact as much as possible and used props such as animal puppets or masks. Stories are also a great jumping board for other activities. Teachers can create tasks and games based on the theme and vocabulary of the story to give students more opportunity to practise the language. Here is just a sampling of activities that could be used after a story:

- 1) Give each student a picture that depicts the events of the story and have them line up in order of events.
- 2) Get the children to draw the story or a part they liked the most.
- 3) Teach them actions to go along with the story.
- 4) Get the children dramatize the story perhaps with puppets.
- 5) Let the students talk about similar experiences they might have had.

## **2.2. Songs and chants**

Music and rhythm are an essential part of foreign-language learning for preschool children. Songs and chants make it much easier to imitate and remember the language than words which are just spoken. According to Phillips (1993, 100-101), “a chant is like a song without music, or a poem with a very marked rhythm” and the students like the variety it offers. There are many different songs and chants, from traditional ones to specially written materials for young language learners.

Some songs are good for singing, others for doing actions to the music, but all of them are enjoyable for the students’ ears and development of listening skills. Even those students who do not want to participate in any activities still have to *listen* to the songs – it is unavoidable. After observations, the researcher noticed several incredible benefits of teaching EFL with songs and chants. First of all, teachers can use songs and chants to teach children the sounds and rhythm of English, to reinforce structures and vocabulary, or as Total Physical Response activities but above all to have fun. Unlike listening comprehension, a song is catchy and fun and EFL preschool students will be happy listening to it many times over several months, which makes it re-usable. Songs and chants are also a great memory aid – we all know how songs can stick in our heads and this is exactly what we want for our preschool EFL learners. Integrating music and actions makes the listening lesson appeal to most intelligence types that Gardner mentions (Brownlie et al. 2004, 51). Kinesthetic learners will enjoy using their bodies to the music while auditory and musical learners will be in their element listening to the song. Visual learners see others making actions, while inter- and intrapersonal learners will be happy to dance in a group or by themselves respectively. Songs are also an excellent way to begin or end a lesson. At the beginning of a lesson they can help children make the transition from their mother tongue into

English as the lesson warm-up. Whenever possible it is best to select a piece that is directly related to the content of the lesson. For example, if teaching animals, you could easily begin the class by doing the song *Old MacDonald had a farm*. At the end of the lesson, a good way to dismiss the children is by singing or chanting a *Goodbye song*. This may even be done while children are waiting at the door to head outside.

### 2.3. Games and Total Physical Response (TPR)

It is a commonplace that preschool children learn better through play. Nevertheless, it can be a dangerous issue if used by teachers with insufficient thought and rigor. Fun should not be just a feature of children's education – it must have a role in it. And yet, a great advantage of using games is that children have the opportunity to absorb the language and respond to it subconsciously before they have to say anything. Such responses to listening are associated with Total Physical Response (TPR), an approach to language learning originally developed in the 1960s in America (Phillips 1993, 19). TPR relates learning to physical actions and ensures that learners will hear a lot of natural English in meaningful contexts without having to respond verbally, since it usually includes “listen and do” games such as *Simon says*. It is an extremely useful and adaptable technique, especially in preschool EFL classrooms because most children tend to develop their bodily intelligence and learn as kinaesthetic learners until they explore their environment and find other ways of learning. Children listen to their teacher telling them what to do. Instructions can usually range from something as simple as *Touch your nose* to more complex sentences like *Go and stand next to the board*. Children, particularly very young ones, are able to understand much, much more than they can produce, and this teaching builds on that capacity. However, for the youngest ones, games in a foreign language could be very confusing. While teaching in *Creativus* and browsing through references, the author realized how to increase productivity by following a pattern and giving simple instructions in order to get children used to the routine:

- 1) Introduction: The teacher introduces a situation in which the students follow a set of commands using actions. Usually props such as pictures or real objects accompany the actions. Some actions may be real while others are pretended.

- 2) **Demonstration:** The teacher demonstrates or asks a student to demonstrate the given series of actions. At first, students are not expected to talk or repeat the commands but soon they will want to join in. For example, the teacher gives a command such as *Put on your shirt* and the students repeat the sentence and do the action. *Now put on your trousers*, and so on until everyone is dressed up to *Go outside*.
- 3) **Group action:** Finally, the class acts out the series while the teacher gives the commands. Usually, this step is repeated several times so that students listen to and internalize the series thoroughly before they will be asked to produce it.

Apart from the fact that using games and TPR in teaching EFL is fun and enjoyable, teachers also build a bond with students. Playing games does this in so many ways. We are able to show ourselves as persons, not just as teachers, as we cheer on and encourage our students to do well in the game. Using games from time to time also creates a positive learning environment that allows children to enjoy themselves and their classmates.

#### **2.4. The use of videos (cartoons, movies, educational clips)**

Nowadays, children's lives are immersed in video and television. However, we should always bear in mind the difference between watching cartoons at home and watching an educational video in the classroom, which is supposed to help the students learn. Videos provide a very good context for the demonstration of target vocabulary and structures, as well as great developmental advantages for listening skills. By combining spoken language with images, videos parallel real life (Phillips 1993, 126). The visuals help children understand the situation and therefore the language. For instance, preschool children who just started to learn English as a foreign language and hear *I'm hungry!* on an audio CD will not be able to understand its meaning unless we repeat it and mime the actions. If they were to hear the same sentence while watching a cartoon where the main character provides sufficient gestures, there would be no need for us to exaggerate and we could move on with different structures. It is this aspect that we need to exploit when preparing video tasks.

Teachers can use a wide range of videos such as cartoons, movies, educational clips, picture stories or even videos that have been specially designed for children learning English. In order to avoid some difficulties,

the criteria that teachers should have in mind when selecting a video while teaching, according to Phillips (1993, 133), are:

- 1) The kind of video: when using authentic video, make sure they have a high visual content, such as cartoons, short stories, advertisements, or educational programs, rather than two talking heads debating or discussing something.
- 2) Length: it is better to select a short sequence (5 to 10 minutes) and exploit it to the full, than to spend a whole lesson passively watching a long video. Teachers should always bear in mind preschool children's short attention span.
- 3) Language level: authentic videos (even cartoons) often contain complicated language. Teachers should make sure that there is as much visual support as possible and that the tasks do not require children to understand slang and unusual expressions.

### **3. Speaking activities**

The following sections provide some of the most useful activities and tasks for teaching speaking skills as observed and conducted by the researcher in NGO *Creativus* and their preschool English workshops. The teachers structured lessons by using songs, storytelling, role-play and drama with improvisations, and the most refreshing project works.

#### **3.1. Songs as a boost of energy and confidence**

A great benefit, although not directly related to speaking skills, is the fact that using music can lift the atmosphere in class, bring in a boost of energy and vigor that captures the children's attention and motivates them in their learning process. Using songs for teaching speaking of EFL is a way for children to practise English in a group, joining in when they can without being singled out, and gradually achieving more with each listening. A huge boost of confidence can be gained from this, which applies to all learning. When using songs for teaching EFL that are performed by native speakers, children hear the natural rhythm and stresses of English and this helps their pronunciation and speaking fluency.

There are a number of different ways in which songs and poems can be presented to children. The researcher followed several steps to introduce and present the song *I like the flowers*. The first step is to introduce any

key vocabulary that may be unfamiliar. In order to do so, props such as real objects or flashcards can be used. Actions can also help children remember the words and meanings of new words but also help them remember the context or situation depicted in the song verses. Once the key vocabulary has been presented, teachers find it useful to introduce young learners to the song one line at a time. The teacher usually says one line using props or actions to illustrate it, and then the children repeat the line. This procedure continues until all the lines of the target song have been said and repeated. Next the learners repeat the entire selection song using props and actions to help them remember the words. In addition, teachers may have children clap out the syllables of a piece of verse as a way to keep young learners actively involved.

Songs can be used at any stage in a speaking lesson. For example, at the beginning to mark the change from the mother tongue to English, in the middle of a lesson as a break from another more demanding activity, or at the end to wrap up a lesson (Phillips 1993, 94). Songs can also help to create a sense of group identity. Apart from the songs that come with the course book and program, preschool EFL teachers could be more creative and use a wider range, such as zipper songs (Mitten 2005, 2). Teachers encourage children to compose their own songs by adapting songs they already know. For example, *I am a pilot* could become *I am a princess* or *I am a bird* with different gestures and movements.

### 3.2. Storytelling

We have already mentioned that learners of all ages learn better with stories. Using stories in the classroom is fun, but the activity should not be considered trivial or frivolous. There is strong support for storytelling in pedagogical theory. McCloskey and Thornton (2002, 10) point out that storytelling is fundamental to education and specifically to language teaching. Whether they are fairy tales, legends, fables, or based on real-life incidents and experiences by students themselves, stories can help appreciate and respect the culture and the values of various groups. While older learners can read and discuss a story, teachers of preschool children should pay attention to more than just the proficiency and interest level of the students in order to make a lesson based on storytelling successful and productive.

First of all, teachers should collect all types of stories as well as pictures, children's books, nursery rhymes, and small everyday objects and toys. They can also start by using stories or songs (for the children to re-tell in English) from the culture of the children (for example, *Zeko i*

*Potočić* which translates as *The Bunny and the Stream*, which we used in *Creativus*); since children may know the stories in their native language and this could support understanding and self-esteem among the students. After the preliminary stage, there are several activities that could be used in a preschool EFL classroom:

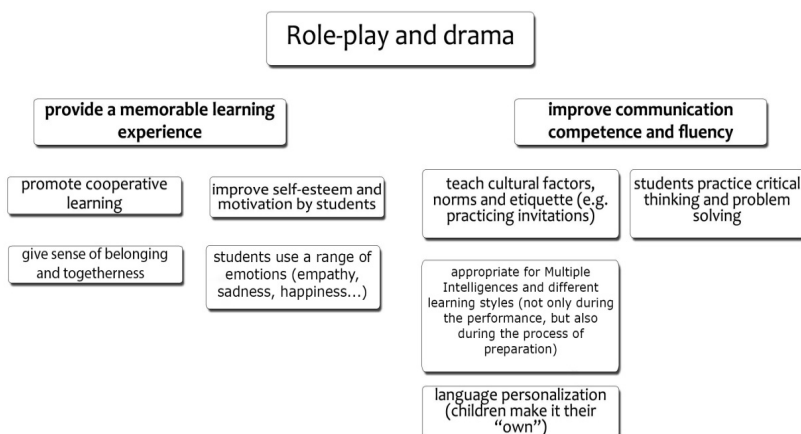
- 1) Re-telling of a story. Although similar to drill-like repetition, this type of using stories in the classroom is extremely popular with preschool children. After listening to a story for several times and over a couple of weeks, the students should be ready to know it by heart and repeat almost without making any mistakes. No props are used, except for flashcards or posters related to the story, which children use as some kind of guidance while speaking. The teacher focuses on the accuracy of the students' use of particular words and phrases rather than on the content, which is already known.
- 2) Spontaneous storytelling. This is an interesting way to gather information on our students since they usually portray their own emotions and expectations while telling a story spontaneously. The teacher does not correct every possible mistake and focuses on the content rather than accuracy of the students' speech.
- 3) Storytelling with objects and pictures. We can use objects such as toys, spoons, cups, or pictures of those objects in order to trigger stories. For example, we could divide students into groups of three to five and distribute objects or pictures to each group. Then, we could ask them to make up a story that includes all of their objects (e.g. a ball, a teddy bear, a car, a costume).

### 3.3. Role-play and drama

Anyone who has worked with young children knows that they learn chiefly by exploring their world using their imagination and engaging in pretend-play. The link between imaginative, or pretend play, and language is particularly strong. Communicational and conversational skills develop as children develop scenarios, assign roles and direct the action, and slip in and out of multiple roles (e.g. *Now it's my turn to be the teacher. You will be my student.*). The imaginary play gives the child an understanding of the power of language. By including their friends in the pretend play; the children learn that words make it possible for them to make their imaginative scenarios real. According to Brown (2001, 183), "role-play

minimally involves giving a role to one or more members of a group and assigning an objective or purpose that participants must accomplish". Role-play is usually part of a lesson activity with a specific learning goal or an extension to an activity. Drama, on the other hand, can be regarded as a whole project including different props, materials, costumes, many rehearsals, a stage (whether improvised or a real one), and many more.

While teaching in NGO *Creativus*, the researcher noticed several benefits of using role-plays and drama in the EFL classroom, such as provided in Figure 1-1:



*Figure 1-1: Benefits of using role-play and drama in the EFL preschool classroom.*

In addition, EFL teachers could use role-play and drama as assessment tools. It is very difficult to evaluate preschool children's progress and achievement by using grades or tests, especially as they are lacking in literacy proficiency. Thus, a play in the form of an end-product of a whole semester or course offers immense possibilities for the teacher to observe the learner's work on it with the other children, the use of English, engagement during preparations, as well as the actual performance. Nevertheless, role-play and drama are not the only forms of acting students can enjoy.

### 3.4. Improvisations

Improvisation is defined as any role-playing activity which is centered on a dramatic incident or series of incidents as in a story (Lewis 1999, 136).



The actions are usually worked out spontaneously or by class and group discussion, which means that there is no script; thus, it is perfect for preschool children. No language practice is included, as the possibilities are limited only by the children's abilities. The children usually practice various pre-fabricated sentences from stories, songs, or rhymes. Above all they can draw on their own linguistic resources to create original language. The ratio of pre-fabricated to original language will be determined by the children's experience with English and their general language level. Improvisations show language at work so to say, and provide the children with real communicative experience.

Children could make their own suggestions for improvisations based on pictures, the use of hats and masks, and a short story of a dramatic incident. In fact, any speaking activity which involves role-playing such as puppet shows, going to the shops, domestic scenes and telephone conversations, can be developed into an improvised small play. Some suggestions for improvisations in the preschool EFL classroom are:

- 1) Pair and group work is perfect after, for example, reading a story that the children liked. The teacher could make groups of three or four and have each group perform in front of the others. This should be attempted if the children had considerable practice so as not to be upset by criticism from peers.
- 2) Whole class activities, during which the teacher takes the role of the narrator and guides the class through a range of experiences while they react accordingly. For example, an easy way to begin is with the children as audience at, let us say, a circus. The teacher describes what they are watching and the crowd reacts: with fear (if there is a huge and dangerous lion) or joy (if clowns are being funny), talking/whispering to their neighbors, jumping up, and so on.
- 3) Whole-class speaking, which seems impossible but is extremely interesting and stimulating for the children. The teacher tells the class they are in a busy place, for example, the market, the zoo, or a toy shop. The class then goes about their business as individuals in, for instance, a large toy shop. The teacher then stops the action and the children describe what they were doing at that moment. Some will be looking at model trains or other toys, others will be demonstrating animals, some will be buying and some will be taking the money as cashiers. The action starts with each group

knowing what the others are doing. It is very engaging and more interesting if the classroom is briefly transformed in some kind of a shop (or whatever the setting of choice may be).

### 3.5. Project work

Project work and crafts are an important part of teaching preschool children in general due to holistic learning theories, as they not only stimulate children's imagination, but also develop skills such as hand-eye coordination. They are also very enjoyable and motivating. Many students in *Creativus* enjoyed project work from the very beginning and even those who did not, started loving such activities after a couple of months. Teachers could use them as an opportunity to give instructions in English, and obviously use what the children make for great speaking activities.

For example, children could make their own picture books for storytelling, paper animals for games, "a seasons circle" for vocabulary practice, puppets and masks for drama and role-play, and many more. When planning a creative activity, it is essential that teachers themselves try it out first. They should also not expect works of art from the students (although we may as well get some), but always keep in mind that it is the *process* that is important, and the language used (Phillips 1993, 114). Project work is very helpful for the development and assessment of the students' speaking skills, since teachers usually ask children to explain what they are doing or to describe the very end-product.



*Figure 1-2: A student coloring, cutting, and presenting the project "Bunny Ears"; from the researcher's record, Creativus/2012.*

Nevertheless, it is unrealistic to expect the children to speak in English all the time while they are working, but we should still always encourage them to use phrases such as *Can I have the scissors?*, *Do you like it?*, or *It's really funny!* This is an excellent opportunity for some real communication in English, which should not be missed. These activities

not only give excellent speaking practice but also offer opportunities for incorporating into the English class multiple intelligences through coloring, cutting out, sticking, and making simple objects. When the children have finished their masterpieces, it will be very motivating to put on a display of what they have made, either in the classroom or at the end of their course as some kind of exhibition for parents and relatives. This gives the children a sense of belonging, togetherness and pride in their work.

#### **4. Concluding remarks**

Many educators and theorists do not consider listening to be an important skill, perceiving it to be passive and not engaging for students; but that is simply not true. Listening is an active skill and there are many elements that contribute to its difficulty. One source of difficulty is the constant use of the mother tongue that preschool children just cannot do without. It is important to set up certain rules at the very beginning so as to make it a regular practice to use English in daily phrases such as *Thank you, You're Welcome, Have a seat, Could I get a sheet of paper?* and so on. While listening to each other's use of the foreign language, children will accommodate to different accents and sounds of the foreign language. They also will switch to English as soon as they enter the class and realize that mother tongue belongs to the outside world.

Another source of difficulty are poor listeners, who are more likely to be restless and whose behavior can make it more difficult for the rest of the class. They also find it more difficult to play and interact with others. Children who have not learned to stay quiet when other people are talking and listen to what they are saying find it more difficult to form successful social relationships. Some of the children could have ADD (Attention Deficit Disorder) or ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), and teachers should try to keep the child occupied by maybe even assigning them the role of the helper. In this way, the child would find some sort of reason and motivation to be an active participant in the language classroom. Apart from that, the very type and length of the text the children listen to could also bring more difficulties than joy in activities. EFL teachers of preschool children should find suitable and interesting listening materials (if not provided with the coursebook), because too long and difficult texts can easily bore and demotivate any learner, not to speak of the youngest ones. While remaining faithful to the *i +1* concept (one level above the children's current stage of knowledge) (Pinter 2006, 28) in constructing activities, teachers should check the level

of difficulty of the actual listening material. In order to do so, the teachers should ask themselves whether the text is too long and how familiar the students are with the topic, whether it offers variety and involves multiple individuals, whether it offers visual support, and similar questions.

While teaching the speaking skills of EFL to preschool children, teachers will encounter several problems, including the students' lack of confidence, different approaches to their environment, the students' lapses into their own language, and frustration while trying to participate in some of the above-mentioned activities. A common problem in monolingual classes (i.e. where all of the students speak the same language) is that the children escape to their mother tongue, often through frustration at not having the English to do the tasks. Teachers should try to choose tasks that are within the students' capabilities and make it clear when they can and cannot speak their own language. If the children know that at the end of a task they will be able to have a couple of minutes in their own language, they are more likely to keep to the rules and try to do the task in English. The rules can even be supported by props such as posters or picture cards that the children get used to with time. Children who lack confidence in their ability to participate successfully in a speaking activity often listen in silence while others do the talking. One way to encourage learners to participate is to help them build up a stock of minimal responses that they can use in different types of exchanges (e.g. *I agree, Thank you, I dislike it*). Having a stock of such responses enables the learner to focus on what the other participant is saying, without having to simultaneously plan a response, which is especially difficult for preschoolers.

In the end, the research and methodical framework prove that teachers in Bosnia and Herzegovina have started to pay more attention to teaching EFL to preschool children and that they are willing to use as many interesting and productive methods and techniques as possible to achieve that goal. Although we did portray listening and speaking activities separately because preschoolers usually find it difficult to speak and listen to a foreign language at the same time, the skills of listening and speaking as such are inherently connected and teachers should nurture and teach both in order to develop a secure and beneficial environment for their learners. In addition to the linguistic element, we should never forget the unique curiosity and enthusiasm that preschoolers bring to language learning and use that to produce a lesson as productive as possible.

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