



The Formative Potential of Interactive Instructional Strategies in Oral Assessment for Romanian as a Foreign Language (Levels A1-A2)

Dorina Putină¹, Doina Corobcean²

Abstract: The article aims to highlight the role and formative potential of interactive teaching strategies in the oral assessment of communicative competence in Romanian as a foreign language at the A1–A2 levels, emphasizing their importance in supporting progressive, intentional learning anchored in authentic communicative situations. The approach is grounded in the updated orientations of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and in recent research on formative assessment and foreign language pedagogy, which advocate moving beyond traditional approaches focused exclusively on isolated linguistic skills. The analysis is conducted from a theoretical–applied perspective, drawing on the integrative model of language activities — reception, production, interaction, and mediation — and examining how interactive teaching strategies can be employed in formative oral assessment. The findings indicate that oral assessment, conceived as a formative process, fosters meaning-making, negotiation of meaning, and the development of communicative competence in authentic contexts. The study provides useful reference points for teachers and teacher trainers involved in teaching Romanian as a foreign language, contributing to the optimization of formative oral assessment practices. The originality of the article lies in the coherent integration of interactive teaching strategies into formative oral assessment, highlighting their potential to stimulate learners’ active engagement, self-regulated learning, and the socio-pragmatic dimension of communication.

Keywords: communicative language competence; reception and production; interaction; mediation

¹ PhD, Assistant Professor, Alecu Russo Bălți State University, Bălți, Republic of Moldova, Address: Puskin street 38, Bălți, Republic of Moldova, Corresponding author: dorina.putina@usarb.md.

² PhD, Assistant Professor, Nicolae Testemitanu State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, Address: Blvd Ștefan cel Mare și Sfânt, 165, Chișinău, Republic of Moldova, E-mail: doina.corobcean@usmf.md.



Copyright: © 2026 by the authors.
Open access publication under the terms and conditions of the
Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial (CC BY NC) license
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>)

1. Introduction

Competence assessment represents the central component of the educational process (alongside teaching and learning) and is decisive for the functionality of the instructional system. Assessment also constitutes a fundamental mechanism for generating feedback, providing the information necessary for decision-making related to the regulation and development of the education system (Şevciuc, 2024). Therefore, assessment can be defined as a complex psycho-pedagogical act aimed at establishing the relevance and value of learning outcomes manifested in the form of competencies, by relating them to a system of predetermined indicators.

Within a competence-based educational framework, the vector of assessment is oriented toward continuous or formative evaluation, the latter providing relevant feedback regarding the effectiveness of the instructional process. By its nature, formative assessment is process-centered and designed for the correction, readjustment, and adaptation of instructional activities, as well as for the improvement, optimization, regulation, and self-regulation of teaching and learning (Cerghit, 1989, p. 69). Formative assessment corresponds to a dominant pedagogical approach that encourages active participation and learner autonomy, guiding the learner's own transformation while considering individual difficulties and gaps (Putina, 2012). The curricular and systemic approach grants assessment the status of an integral part of the educational process, which should not be examined separately but in correlation with teaching and learning. Its objective is directed not only toward the content or product of learning but also toward the process through which the learner attains a certain level of competence.

In order to assess competencies—understood as the degree of their manifestation or development at a given stage—it is necessary to focus on their real expressions: learning outcomes and the ability to perform a specific activity in a real or simulated context. The indicators, forms, methods, and techniques of assessment, taken as a whole, must enable the diagnosis of the level of competence formation in action, activity, and context.

Formative oral assessment of communicative competence in Romanian as a foreign language requires the use of interactive teaching strategies that support progressive, intentional learning anchored in authentic communicative situations.

The analysis is grounded in an updated perspective on language activities that moves beyond the traditional approach centered on listening, speaking, reading, and writing, and promotes an integrative vision structured around reception, production,

interaction, and mediation. From this standpoint, oral assessment is not conceived solely as an instrument for measuring linguistic performance, but as a formative process intended to support meaning construction, negotiation of meaning, and the development of communicative competence in authentic situations.

2. Communicative Competence in Romanian as a Foreign Language

Communication in Romanian as a foreign language is grounded in the ability to understand, express, and interpret concepts, thoughts, feelings, facts, and opinions both orally and in writing (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) across an appropriate range of social and cultural contexts (Strah, 2021).

According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), communicative competence in foreign languages represents the set of knowledge and abilities acquired through learning and use in diverse communicative situations, depending on the communicative needs of the foreign learner. Traditionally, communicative competence has been structured around four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, the 2018 edition of the CEFR proposes a reconsideration of this model, arguing that it no longer adequately reflects the complexity and dynamics of authentic communication. Moreover, organizing the teaching–learning–assessment process strictly according to the four language skills risks reducing language to a set of isolated competencies, without fully valuing its social and pragmatic functions. In this context, the CEFR advances an integrative perspective on language activities, more closely aligned with the real process of language acquisition, in which meaning is constructed through interaction and cooperation. The revised structuring of activities—reception, production, interaction, and mediation—captures the functional, contextualized, and action-oriented dimensions of language use (Boufin, 2004).

In line with the CEFR (2018), reception and production activities are differentiated according to the channel employed, distinguishing between oral and written reception, and oral and written production. From a functional perspective, these correspond to the traditional language skills: oral reception (listening), written reception (reading), oral production (speaking), and written production (writing).

Interaction is defined in the CEFR as a complex process involving the continuous alternation and integration of reception and production within authentic communicative exchanges aimed at constructing and negotiating meaning. Beyond the mere formulation or decoding of utterances, interaction entails discourse

adaptation, cooperation between interlocutors, and the dynamic management of the communicative act, occupying a central role in the development of communicative competence, particularly for teachers or learners who are non-native speakers.

Mediation, as conceptualized in the CEFR (2018), involves reception, production, and interaction activities, with the purpose of facilitating understanding between individuals who cannot communicate directly or who possess different linguistic resources. It encompasses processes such as reformulation, paraphrasing, summarizing, and interpreting information, as well as supporting communication in plurilingual and intercultural contexts.

3. The Role of Interactive Teaching Strategies in Implementing Authentic Formative Assessment

Interactive teaching strategies play a central role in the implementation of authentic formative assessment, as they capitalize on active learning, conscious learner participation, and continuous feedback as essential elements of the educational process. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), formative assessment is effective when it is organically integrated into learning activities and supports the ongoing regulation of the instructional process, rather than merely measuring final outcomes.

At the European level, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) promotes formative assessment as a continuous process embedded within learning activities, emphasizing the role of self-assessment, peer assessment, and reflection on progress (Council of Europe, 2001; 2020).

Within this conceptual framework, authentic formative assessment targets not only the final learning product but also the learning process, reflection, and the transfer of acquired knowledge and skills—principles aligned with the assessment for learning perspective (Black et al., 2004). Interactive teaching strategies thus create authentic contexts for the manifestation of competencies, enabling teachers to observe learners' progress in real learning situations.

The application of these principles to oral assessment, through the use of interactive teaching strategies, transforms a process often perceived as stressful into an authentic learning experience. (Corobcean, 2021). This is particularly relevant at levels A1–A2, where linguistic and emotional barriers are more pronounced. At these levels, such strategies acquire essential formative value, supporting learners' confidence, engagement, and communicative progress. At level A1, fear of making mistakes

often inhibits oral production; interactive strategies (e.g., role-play and simulation) shift the focus from “examination” to “communication.”

The transformation of the teacher’s role—from examiner (who “hunts” for errors) to partner and facilitator (who “builds” competencies)—constitutes the foundation of formative assessment. At levels A1–A2, this paradigm shift is crucial for sustaining learners’ willingness to communicate. In contexts of maximum linguistic vulnerability, the teacher is no longer a “judge” of correctness but rather an architect of communicative contexts.

Table 1. The Role of the Teacher as Assessor. A Comparative Analysis

Traditional Assessment Teacher as authoritative evaluator	Interactive Formative Assessment Teacher as facilitator and co-participant in learning
The teacher stands at the front of the classroom, maintaining an authoritative distance.	The teacher participates alongside learners, acting as facilitator and guide within the learning process.
Intervenes immediately, interrupting the learner’s thought process to correct grammar.	Provides timely, constructive feedback without disrupting the flow of learner communication.
Teacher explains and asks questions for approximately 80% of the lesson time.	Learners are active participants, with the teacher prompting, scaffolding, and guiding dialogue.
Closed-ended questions requiring “Yes/No” or fixed factual responses (e.g., “When were you born?”).	Open-ended, authentic questions that encourage elaboration, reflection, and meaningful interaction.
Starts from a perfect score (e.g., 10) and deducts points for each mistake.	Emphasizes progress, partial success, and improvement rather than punitive scoring.
Errors are perceived as failures of learning.	Errors are viewed as opportunities for learning, correction, and skill development.
Students are ranked according to performance.	Learners’ development is assessed qualitatively, focusing on progress, competence growth, and self-regulation.

Table 1 highlights a paradigm shift from traditional assessment—focused on control, formal correctness, and ranking—to interactive formative assessment, oriented toward support, active participation, and the development of communicative

competence. While the traditional model emphasizes teacher authority and the penalization of errors, interactive formative assessment leverages interaction, treats mistakes as learning opportunities, and provides descriptive feedback based on progress. This approach transforms assessment from a mere verification of performance into a learning process in its own right, contributing to increased learner autonomy, maintaining communicative flow, and adapting instructional practices to the real needs of students.

One of the most significant advantages of interactive teaching strategies in oral formative assessment is the reduction of the affective filter, which directly impacts learners' willingness to use the language in authentic communicative situations. When emotional barriers such as anxiety, fear of embarrassment, or stress over grades are diminished, learners become more receptive to language processing and production. At levels A1–A2, oral expression is often perceived as a vulnerable exposure; in this context, interactive strategies act as a “protective shield,” shifting the focus from linguistic form (“How do I say this correctly?”) to communicative purpose (“How do I achieve my communicative goal?”).

The integration of play-based elements and role assumption further reduces affective tension and creates a safe learning environment. Activities involving games, missions, or role-play scenarios stimulate positive motivational and emotional states, incompatible with fear, facilitating learners' spontaneous engagement. Additionally, interactive assessment transforms the traditional power dynamic between teacher and student into a collaborative relationship, where peer interaction becomes the primary context for demonstrating communicative competence. Oral assessment is thus no longer perceived as an individual interrogation but as an authentic social experience, conducive to the development of communicative competence and confidence in using Romanian as a foreign language.

Authentic formative assessment requires the integration of teaching practices that capture learners' real progress in meaningful learning contexts. From this perspective, interactive teaching strategies constitute an essential methodological framework, as they facilitate the dynamic assessment of competencies, valuing both the learning process and its outcomes, as well as reflection on them.

In implementing authentic formative assessment, interactive strategies and techniques such as spoken concept mapping, role-play, the “Think–Pair–Share” technique (TPS), the cube method, the pyramid, and educational vlogging serve as effective tools for leveraging learners' cognitive, communicative, and metacognitive

competencies. These strategies enable integrated evaluation of the learning process, the produced outcomes, and reflection on cognitive engagement, providing the necessary framework for observing progress, offering descriptive feedback, and fostering self-regulated learning.

Table 2. Interactive Teaching Strategies

Teaching Strategy	Description / Formative Use	Formative Feedback
Spoken Concept Map	Used at A1–A2 levels to assess learners’ ability to name basic concepts, establish simple relationships, and formulate short, semantically accurate statements. Supports progressive learning.	Descriptive feedback focuses on clarifying conceptual links, reinforcing correct structures, and gently correcting essential errors. Encourages reflection on organization of ideas and coherence of speech.
Role-Playing	Creates authentic communicative situations (greetings, personal presentation, information requests). Assessment targets functional language use and basic speech acts.	Immediate situational feedback emphasizes intelligibility, adequacy of message, and functional use of language. Highlights successful communicative strategies and suggests adjustments to improve interaction.
Think–Pair–Share (TPS / „GPP”)	Structured short oral tasks allow learners to formulate ideas safely before public presentation.	Collaborative feedback from peers and teacher focuses on clarity of statements, cooperation, and idea elaboration. Encourages confidence, active engagement, and mutual reflection on communicative effectiveness.
Cube Method	Uses simple prompts (e.g., “describe,” “name,” “state purpose”) to evaluate the ability to produce elementary statements and apply vocabulary in concrete contexts.	Criterion-referenced feedback highlights correct responses, clarifies misunderstandings, and guides learners to progressively enhance fluency and vocabulary application.

Pyramid Method	Involves selection and hierarchical organization of key information (e.g., most important words or ideas from a dialogue).	Metacognitive feedback encourages learners to justify choices, reflect on prioritization of information, and improve synthesis skills. Focuses on reasoning and structuring knowledge.
Educational Vlogging	Learners create short video recordings (personal presentations, descriptions of daily activities) to evaluate basic fluency, intelligible pronunciation, and use of simple structures.	Reflexive and prospective feedback emphasizes oral fluency, pronunciation, and functional language use. Encourages self-assessment, reflection on progress, and goal-setting for further improvement.

Spoken Concept Mapping is employed at the A1–A2 proficiency levels to assess learners' ability to identify and label basic concepts, establish simple conceptual relationships, and construct short, semantically accurate utterances. The assessment focuses on the clarity of expression and minimal discourse coherence, with descriptive feedback directed toward correcting essential errors and reinforcing correct structures. This approach aligns with recommendations for progressive assessment and the facilitation of comprehension at initial proficiency levels (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Table 3. Formative Assessment Rubric – Spoken Concept Mapping

Criterion	Observable Indicators	Level
Concept Selection	Identifies and names key basic concepts	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Simple Relationships	Establishes elementary links between concepts	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Clarity of Expression	Produces short, intelligible utterances	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Discourse Coherence	Explains the sequence of ideas logically	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient

Role-Play constitutes a key strategy in oral assessment at the A1–A2 proficiency levels, as it creates authentic communicative situations (e.g., greetings, self-introduction, requesting information). Assessment focuses on the functional use of language and basic speech acts, with situational feedback targeting the appropriateness of the message and its intelligibility. According to the CEFR, functional communication is prioritized at these levels, even in the presence of formal errors (Council of Europe, 2001; 2020).

The Think–Pair–Present (TPP) technique is adapted to A1–A2 levels through short, structured oral tasks that allow learners to formulate their ideas safely before public presentation. Assessment targets the ability to produce simple utterances and engage in verbal cooperation with a partner, while collaborative and reciprocal feedback supports learners’ confidence and active participation. Student involvement in peer assessment is recognized as a factor that enhances responsibility for learning (Black et al., 2004).

Table 4. Formative Assessment Rubric – Think–Pair–Present (TPP) Technique

Criterion	Observable indicators	Level
Individual Formulation	Produces simple, relevant utterances	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Pair Interaction	Listens to and responds appropriately to the partner	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Oral Presentation	Clearly presents the shared idea	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Integration of Feedback	Corrects or improves the message based on peer input	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient

Cube Method is employed at A1–A2 proficiency levels through simple tasks such as “describe,” “name,” and “explain the use of,” which allow for the assessment of learners’ ability to produce elementary utterances and apply vocabulary in concrete contexts. Criterion-referenced feedback is provided based on task completion and

clarity of the message, contributing to the gradual regulation of oral performance (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Table 5. Formative Assessment Rubric – Cube Method (A1–A2 Levels)

Criterion	Observable Indicators	Level of Achievement
Task Fulfillment	Completes the assigned task (e.g., “describe,” “name”)	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Lexical Accuracy	Uses basic vocabulary correctly	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Oral Clarity	Produces simple and intelligible utterances	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Transfer/Application	Applies words/expressions appropriately in other contexts	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient

Pyramid Strategy is implemented as the selection and hierarchical organization of simple information (e.g., the most important words or ideas from a dialogue). The assessment targets elementary-level synthesis skills, while metacognitive feedback focuses on the justification of choices made, supporting the development of self-reflection on learning processes even at initial proficiency levels.

Table 6. Formative Assessment Rubric – Pyramid Method (A1–A2 Levels)

Criterion	Observable Indicators	Level of Achievement
Information Selection	Identifies relevant ideas or key words	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Hierarchical Organization	Arranges information in logical order (most important → less important)	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Oral Justification	Provides simple explanations for choices made	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient

Collaboration	Participates in group decision-making	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
----------------------	---------------------------------------	---

Educational vlogging, adapted for A1–A2 levels, involves creating short video recordings (e.g., personal introductions, descriptions of daily activities) that enable the assessment of basic fluency, intelligible pronunciation, and the use of simple linguistic structures. Reflective and forward-looking feedback focuses on progress monitoring and encouraging communicative engagement, in accordance with CEFR recommendations emphasizing the valuation of functional communicative performance (Council of Europe, 2020).

Table 7. Formative Assessment Rubric – Educational Vlogging (A1–A2 Levels)

Criterion	Observable Indicators	Level of Achievement
Message Clarity	Produces a message that is easily understood	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Pronunciation Intelligibility	Pronounces basic words clearly	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Use of Simple Structures	Uses grammatical structures appropriate for A1–A2 levels	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient
Personal Reflection	Expresses what was learned or what was challenging	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Proficient

Through their active-participatory character, interactive teaching strategies facilitate reasoned oral expression, collaboration, transfer of learning, and the assumption of responsibility for one's own performance. Specifically, the implementation of these strategies in oral assessment contributes to the reduction of performance anxiety and the creation of authentic communication contexts, an essential factor in the development of linguistic and transversal competences, particularly at initial learning levels.

In the context of oral assessment at A1–A2 levels, interactive teaching strategies establish favourable conditions for learners to assume the role of active subjects in

the pedagogical process. By engaging in self-assessment and peer assessment, learners develop a responsible attitude towards learning, consolidate motivation, and collaborate with the teacher in identifying difficulties and learning gaps. This process validates the teacher's observations and supports the adaptation of instructional interventions to the actual needs of the group (Radu, 1988). Research in psychopedagogy emphasizes that involving educational subjects in assessment fosters the definition of their role within the group and the establishment of a personalized learning pace, adapted to individual capacities (Dulamă, 2005). Moreover, interactive strategies employed in formative assessment support the development of metacognitive processes, particularly the capacity for self-regulated learning, through the awareness of cognitive strategies employed and their effectiveness (Cerghit, 2002).

From a formative perspective, oral assessment implemented through interactive strategies contributes to the development of observation skills, analytical reasoning, argumentation, and justification, facilitating the understanding of relationships between learning objectives, content, teaching strategies, and assessment (Mogonea, 2005). Learners are supported in identifying strategies and techniques through which they can address learning gaps, correct errors, and consolidate or expand linguistic acquisitions, aiming to reach a higher level of competence.

For self-assessment and peer assessment to fully realize their formative potential, a gradual transfer of authority, control, and responsibility from teacher to learner is necessary—a process conceptualized in the specialized literature as empowerment. Within this framework, the teacher redefines their role, partially relinquishing the exclusive evaluator function and assuming the role of learning facilitator, guiding learners in identifying needs, interests, and personal goals, as well as in developing an individualized progression plan.

Methodologically, authentic formative assessment oriented toward self-assessment and peer assessment should aim to:

- Identify learners' educational needs.
- Clarify personal learning goals and objectives.
- Systematically apply self-assessment and peer-assessment techniques.
- Stimulate self-reflection and responsibility for one's own learning.

Consequently, interactive teaching strategies employed in oral assessment of Romanian as a foreign language (A1–A2) are not merely methodological tools but

genuine formative mechanisms that support the development of linguistic, metacognitive, and socio-emotional competences, transforming assessment into a learning process in its own right.

4. Conclusion

The formative oral assessment of communication competence in Romanian as a foreign language, implemented through interactive teaching strategies, emerges as a complex pedagogical endeavour, organically integrated within the teaching–learning process and primarily oriented toward the learner’s actual progress. Aligned with the action-oriented perspective promoted by the CEFR, assessment transcends the traditional function of monitoring linguistic accuracy and becomes an authentic space for meaning construction, interaction, and mediation, where communication competence develops in meaningful and functional contexts. The analyzed interactive strategies establish a safe and supportive learning environment, reduce the affective filter, and promote active participation, cooperation, and the willingness to take linguistic risks.

References

- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Assessment and classroom learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 5(1), 7–74.
- Boufin, Y. (2004). L’approche par compétences en éducation: Un amalgame paradigmatique/The competency-based approach in education: a paradigmatic amalgam. *Connexions*, 81(1), 25–41. https://www.cairn.info/article.php?ID_ARTICLE=CNX_081_0025
- Cerghit, I. (1998) Metode de învățământ/ Teaching methods. E.D.P.
- Corobcean, D. (2021). Online assessment techniques and strategies in teaching Romanian as a foreign language. In *Cercetarea în biomedicină și sănătate: Calitate, excelență și performanță* (Ed. 1, 20–22 octombrie 2021, p. 499). https://ibn.idsi.md/vizualizare_articol/145500
- Council of Europe. (2001). *Common european framework of reference for languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge University Press. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages>
- Putină, D. (2012). Tehnici de evaluare formativă în cadrul orelor de pedagogie/Formative assessment techniques in pedagogy classes. *Revista Didactica Pro*. 75(5–6), 98–101. <https://idsi.md>
- Șevciuc, M. (2024). Conceptul de evaluare a gradului de manifestare a competenței/The concept of assessing the level of competence manifestation. In *Integrare prin cercetare și inovare: Conferință științifică națională cu participare internațională. Științe sociale* (7–8 noiembrie 2024, Chișinău, pp. 456–465). CEP USM.

Strah, L. (2021). Eficacitatea pronunției în procesul de predare–învățare–evaluare a limbii române la studenții chinezi/The effectiveness of pronunciation in the teaching–learning–assessment process of Romanian for Chinese students. In *Integrare prin cercetare și inovare* (pp. 32–34). Universitatea de Stat din Moldova. https://ibn.idsi.md/sites/default/files/imag_file/32-34_30.pdf