



LingroToGo in the Classroom

Open-Ended Questions



Question Types and Learning

One way to categorize questions is whether they are close-ended or open-ended. Close-ended questions are typically answered with “yes,” “no,” or specific information like “behind the eggs on the bottom shelf.” Open-ended questions do not have a single, simple answer. Rather, they generally require a thoughtful, meaningful answer supported with details or analysis. Note that some questions may initially appear to be close-ended (“Is it ever ok to ask a stranger for money?”), but in fact invite a detailed, considered answer, especially when used with a follow-up question (“Under what circumstances would it be ok to ask a stranger for money?”).

Open-ended Questions and Intercultural Communicative Competence

Language learners are doing much more than learning a linguistic code. They must also be aware of cultural contexts and norms, acquire knowledge of themselves and others, and analyze new situations to determine what they wish to communicate and how they can most effectively do so. This intercultural communicative/pragmatic competence is effectively developed through a learner’s reflection on interactions and new information. Open-ended questions ask learners to examine behaviors and assumptions in themselves that they may not have been previously aware of and to relate them to target culture patterns.

Question Types and Learning

LingroToGo includes an introductory video at the beginning of every module that introduces some aspect of intercultural communication and/or pragmatics. The videos, and associated module activities, aim to increase learners’ awareness of target culture communication norms. When you follow up on learners’ video and game play with carefully worded open-ended questions, you enable students to connect their new knowledge of target culture norms with their own beliefs, experiences, and behaviors.

Open-ended Questions Example

Some *LingroToGo* videos specifically target basic concepts in the study of pragmatics or the ways that language is used to convey meaning. One of these is called “Rank of imposition” and can be found in My Community > People and Places > Describing important places in a town.

Ask your students to watch the “Rank of imposition” video. Several of the games in this module support the concept of rank of imposition as it relates to describing places in a town.

After viewing the video, your students can play both Sort Streak: ¿Me ayudas? and Trivia: Imposiciones to reinforce the video content.

Following students' game-play to reinforce the concept of rank of imposition, ask them to answer one or more of the following open-ended questions:

- 1) What sorts of things do you think it is perfectly reasonable for a stranger to ask of you?
- 2) When does a stranger's request make you uncomfortable?
- 3) What might a stranger with a big request do or say to make you more likely to help?
- 4) What are some simple, small requests that you might make in a Spanish-speaking area?
- 5) What are some big requests that you might need to make in a Spanish-speaking area?
How could you phrase them to have the best chance of getting the help you need?





**Center for Applied Second Language Studies
(CASLS)**

**5290 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-5290**

**casls.uoregon.edu
(541) 346-5699 | info@uoregon.edu**

 facebook.com/casls.nflrc

 [@casls_nflrc](https://twitter.com/casls_nflrc)

 [casls_nflrc](https://instagram.com/casls_nflrc)