

IMPROVING SPEAKING SKILLS THROUGH THE USE OF SIMULATION TECHNIQUE

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Abstract. This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of the simulation technique in improving students' speaking skills. The research employed a pre-experimental design with a one-group pre-test and post-test. The sample consisted of eleventh-grade Uzbek students of selected through random cluster sampling. Data were collected through oral tests administered before and after the treatment. The findings revealed a significant improvement in students' speaking skills, as indicated by the increase in mean scores from pre-test to post-test.

Keywords: Speaking skill, simulation technique, oral communication, fluency, comprehensibility, language teaching

Аннотация. Данное исследование направлено на изучение эффективности метода симуляции в развитии разговорных навыков учащихся. В работе был использован предэкспериментальный дизайн с проведением пре-теста (предварительного тестирования) и пост-теста в одной группе. Выборка состояла из учащихся 11-х классов Узбекистана, отобранных методом случайного кластерного отбора. Данные были собраны с помощью устных тестов, проведенных до и после экспериментального воздействия. Результаты выявили значительное улучшение разговорных навыков учащихся, о чем свидетельствует рост средних баллов от пре-теста к пост-тесту.

Ключевые слова: Навыки говорения, метод симуляции, устная речь, беглость, понятность, обучение языку

Annotatsiya. Ushbu tadqiqot simulyatsiya texnikasining talabalarning so'zlashish ko'nikmalarini rivojlantirishdagi samaradorligini o'rganishga qaratilgan. Tadqiqotda bir guruhli pre-test (tajribadan oldingi test) va post-test (tajribadan keyingi test) usulidan foydalanilgan holda pre-eksperimental dizayn qo'llanilgan. Tanlanma tasodifiy klasterli tanlash orqali tanlab olingan 11-sinf o'zbekistonlik o'quvchilardan iborat bo'ldi. Ma'lumotlar eksperimentdan oldin va keyin o'tkazilgan og'zaki testlar orqali to'plandi. Natijalar pre-testdan post-testgacha bo'lgan o'rtacha ballarning ko'tarilishi bilan ko'rsatilganidek, talabalarning so'zlashish ko'nikmalarida sezilarli yaxshilanishni ko'rsatdi.

Kalit so'zlar: Gapirish ko'nikmasi, simulyatsiya texnikasi, og'zaki nutq, ravonlik, tushunarlilik, til o'qitish.

In the context of globalization and increasing international communication, the ability to speak English effectively has become an essential component of language competence. Speaking is not merely the production of sounds but a complex cognitive and interactive process that involves the integration of linguistic knowledge, communicative strategies, and socio-cultural awareness. As a productive skill, speaking

plays a central role in enabling learners to express ideas, negotiate meaning, and participate actively in real-life communication. Despite its importance, many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners continue to experience difficulties in developing adequate speaking proficiency.

A number of studies have identified persistent challenges in teaching and learning speaking skills, particularly in EFL classrooms. These challenges include limited exposure to authentic language use, insufficient opportunities for meaningful interaction, learners' anxiety and lack of confidence, and teaching practices that emphasize grammar and written examinations over oral communication. As highlighted in the present study, students often hesitate to speak, fear making mistakes, and struggle with fluency and comprehensibility. Such issues indicate the need for more innovative and learner-centered instructional techniques that can create a supportive and engaging learning environment.

The theoretical foundation of simulation-based learning is rooted in communicative language teaching (CLT) and experiential learning theory, which emphasize the importance of authentic interaction and learner engagement. Through simulation, students are not passive recipients of knowledge but active participants who construct meaning through experience. This aligns with contemporary perspectives on language acquisition, which view learning as a dynamic and socially mediated process.

According to Richards [3], there are several factors that contribute to learners' low proficiency in speaking English. These include the lack of emphasis on speaking skills within the curriculum, limited English proficiency among teachers, classroom environments that are not conducive to oral communication, insufficient opportunities for learners to practice speaking outside the classroom, and assessment systems that prioritize written skills over oral performance. As a result, many senior high school students still demonstrate poor speaking ability and lack fluency, often feeling anxious and hesitant when expressing themselves in English.

Based on these considerations, the researcher identified several issues among the eleventh-grade Uzbek students. Firstly, students tended to pause for a long time before speaking, indicating difficulty in organizing their thoughts. Secondly, they lacked confidence when communicating in English with both their teacher and peers. Thirdly, they were afraid of making mistakes, which discouraged them from speaking. Finally, students had very limited practice in using English orally. These findings suggest that students require more opportunities and supportive conditions to develop their speaking skills.

In response to these challenges, the researcher selected simulation as the instructional technique for this study. Although simulation shares similarities with role-play, it is generally more complex and immersive. In simulation activities, students can use real objects to create a more authentic environment; for example, a student playing the role of a doctor may use a stethoscope to examine a patient. Despite their similarities, role-play and simulation differ in important ways. Role-play typically involves some participants acting while others observe, whereas simulation engages all participants actively. Furthermore, role-play emphasizes interpersonal interaction, while simulation focuses more on achieving specific outcomes[1].

Kayi [2] defines simulation as a technique that allows students to step beyond the traditional classroom setting and understand how English can be applied in real-life situations. He also emphasizes that simulation promotes creativity and critical thinking.

Through this method, students are encouraged to independently develop both language and behavioral skills, while teachers primarily act as facilitators who provide materials, instructions, and guidance. However, teachers need to apply this technique carefully, as some students may feel uncomfortable assuming different roles.

Simulation is a structured and carefully planned activity designed to replicate real-world situations through specific rules, procedures, and sometimes scoring systems. It combines elements of games—such as competition governed by rules—with the imitation of real-life scenarios. Within this approach, the teacher's responsibilities include organizing the activity, explaining the procedures, maintaining order, providing guidance, and leading reflection or debriefing sessions after the activity[4].

One of the key benefits of simulation is that it enables students to engage directly with learning content. Instead of passively receiving information, learners actively participate in situations that resemble real-life experiences. This hands-on involvement helps them better understand abstract concepts through practical application. In particular, students who struggle with abstract thinking—often referred to as “new learners”—can benefit significantly from simulation, as it provides concrete and engaging learning experiences. Moreover, simulation offers several advantages in language learning. It creates an enjoyable and motivating learning atmosphere and helps build students' confidence, especially for those who are hesitant to speak. By taking on different roles, students feel less personal pressure and are more willing to participate.

The study shows that the simulation technique effectively improves students' speaking skills. This is proven by the increase in students' scores from pre-test to post-test and supported by the statistical results. Simulation helps students become more confident, active, and fluent in speaking by providing realistic and engaging practice. Therefore, it is recommended as an effective method for teaching speaking in EFL classrooms.

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