Improving EFL learners’ Communicative Competence

Through Simulations:

A Quasi-Experimental Study

The Case of First Year LMD Students of English at L’ Arbi Ben Mhidi University

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DEDICATION

I thank Allah the Almighty for giving me courage and determination to conduct this research despite all difficulties.

This work is dedicated:

To my sympathetic father and thoughtful mother whose love always strengthens my will.

To all my brothers and sister, and nephew Mohamed.

To my friends and classmates, Bouchen Sihem, Amrane Khadidja and Achoura Meriem, especially my Best friend Zerdani Manel.

To my Master One friends, Berriche Abdelali, Rezoug Farres and Mazouz Djemal.

To all my classmates with whom I shared the university life with its lights and shadows.

To all those who love me.
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This dissertation is concerned with the use of simulation as a communicative technique in language classes and its advantages in enhancing foreign language learners’ communicative competence. The present quasi-experimental study explores the use of simulation with the aim of transforming the traditional authority of the teacher in the language class to a more realistic, communicative and student-centred class and, at the same time, enhancing learners’ communicative competence. A pretest-posttest research design is used. The sample population constitutes of two classes of first year LMD students of English at the University of Oum El Bouaghi. A total of fifty two students are involved in this study. The experimental group was taught with the Simulation treatment for one semester; the control group was taught in the traditional way of teaching with no Simulation. Data are collected from two oral tasks and the statistical tool of the Independent Samples Test is used to determine whether there are significant inter-group differences. The results of the study show that the experimental group outperforms the control group significantly (p < .05). Simulation is thus recommended to be integrated, as a technique, into the English instruction as part of the curriculum. The present study ends with some suggestions for future research, limitations, and pedagogical implications of the study are presented.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

CLT Communicative language teaching
FL Foreign Language
EFL English as a Foreign Language
L1 First language
SLA Second Language Acquisition
Sqrt Square root
SEM Standard Error of the Mean
SED Standard Error of the Difference
df Degrees of Freedom
*p the Probability Value (< .05)
SEM 1 Standard Error of the Mean of the Control Group
SEM 2 Standard Error of the Mean of the Experimental Group
SD (σ) Sample Standard Deviation
M (μ) Sample Mean
∑ X_i Total of Scores
σ^2 The sample variance
< Less than
> More than
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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

1. Statement of the Problem

Foreign language teaching/learning has undergone many changes in the methods and approaches to teach/learn languages effectively. In the past few decades, the communicative approach has been overwhelmingly acknowledged as the main stream in ESL/EFL teaching. The ultimate goal of this approach is developing communicative competence. The focus of language teaching has also expanded from the teacher-centred manipulation of discrete grammatical structures to the student-centred acquisition of communicative competence.

However, such an approach has not established a foothold in the English education in Algeria. The traditional teacher-centred approach is still the dominant stream in the Algerian EFL class, where the teacher dominates the floor of speaking throughout the session, and learners are merely passive receivers of the language and rarely initiate talking. This traditional approach of teaching was found to be one of the causes of the generally low English proficiency among Algerian EFL learners. Thus Students are hardly able to communicate in English because there has been too much teaching and too little learning in the traditional classroom.

In spite of the call to develop communicative competence in FL teaching has been around nearly five decades, there is still little consensus on how to develop this skill in language teaching classrooms, especially in foreign settings where there is limited access to the spoken target language outside the classroom. In this study we suggest the use of simulation as a communicative technique, hoping to transform the traditional English class to a more communicative and humanistic learning context, in which learners take initiatives to interact with the language and become active learners of the language. Hence, they will have the opportunity to develop skills to communicate and experience life-like situations.

In conducting this research at the Department of English, at the University of Oum El Bouagui, we attempt to investigate the effects of using simulation in English Oral classes to teach/learn how to communicate in the target language. In other words, we aim to test whether using simulation as a technique will improve learners’ communication skills.
2. Aim of the Study

This research examines the effectiveness of simulation in enhancing learners' communicative and interactive abilities. The main purpose is to provide life like/authentic environments and create real life communication inside the EFL classrooms. Hoping to break the authority structure of the traditional classrooms, and to make learners more engaged in the learning process.

3. Research Questions and Hypothesis

This research addresses two questions:

1- Can simulation be used as a new technique to enable learners of English to communicate in an authentic way?
2- Is simulation effective in improving EFL learners’ communicative abilities?

In the light of these research questions, evidence relating to the following hypothesis will be tested:

- The use of simulations would enable learners to communicative effectively in life-like contexts and improve their communicative competence.

4. Research Means

The sample population is first year LMD students of English at L’arbi Ben Mhidi University Oum El Bouaghi. The sample is two pre-existing classes of first year LMD students, 52 students are involved. The experimental group is made up of 26 students and so is the control group. They are of different age, gender, and abilities.

The experimental method is adopted in this study. Both groups (experimental and control) are pre-tested using a show and tell task, where students are paired and asked to perform dialogues in front of the class, showing and talking about photos of their families and their neighborhood. Then the experimental group is exposed to the new technique, simulation. In each session students are supposed to simulate different situations and environments in groups of three or four to fulfill the simulation needs. The control group is not exposed to any simulation and is taught in the usual teacher-centred approach. Then, a post-test is administered to both groups to check whether simulation brings about some changes in learners’ ability to
communicate with the target language. The post-test is an oral task in which students will be asked to interact with their peers talking about some topics chosen by the teacher, for example asking about their partners’ favorite food and movies. The students’ interactions are tape-recorded in the pre and post-tests for further analysis of their communicative abilities before and after the use of simulations. In testing their oral communicative competence we consider the following aspects: the linguistic competence (grammar and appropriate use of vocabulary), fluency (the length of pauses and students’ silence), and the use of cohesion markers (oral discourse competence). The oral competence of the learners is assessed using the scoring rubric adapted from Weir (1990).

5. Structure of the Study

Our research is divided into two chapters: the first chapter is the theoretical part and the second is devoted to the practical part:

Chapter one deals with the background of the study concerning the communicative competence, and clarification of the meaning and the role of simulation as well as its advantages in language learning, and how to use simulations in the classroom.

Chapter two deals with the effect of simulations on learners’ communicative skills in the context of the Algerian EFL class. The chapter tackles the students’ pre-test and post-test, analysis and interpretation of the findings. The chapter closes with some pedagogical implications from the study.
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Communication and Simulation in Language Learning

Introduction

Nowadays, English learning is more directed at the communication function. Learning English is intended to enable students to use English to communicate not only learn the science of language itself. This is in line with the communicative approach or communicative language teaching (CLT) which emphasizes that learning a language is learning to communicate. The ultimate goal behind the communicative approach is to develop “communicative competence” to meet the demands of learners to use language for communication. The use of simulation, as a communicative technique, in language teaching can be of good help for learners to communicate with the language and interact with their peers in life-like situation. In this chapter, relevant literature is presented, it includes a reference to CLT, the concept of communicative competence, interaction in language learning and the technique of simulation its elements methods and limitations.

1.1. The Communicative Approach in Language Teaching

CLT is generally regarded as an approach to language teaching. As such, CLT reflects a certain model or research paradigm, or a theory. It is based on the theory that the primary function of language use is communication. Its primary goal is for learners to develop communicative competence (Richards 2006). In other words, its goal is to make use of real-life situations that necessitate communication. With a major focus on developing learner’s ability to use language appropriately in context, CLT contrasts sharply with established traditions that emphasize learner’s knowledge of formal features. CLT furthermore takes a pragmatic or performance-based approach to learning. Its goal is to promote the development of real-life language skills by engaging the learner in contextualized, meaningful, and communicative-oriented learning tasks (Celce-Marcia, 1995).

Berns (1990) provides a useful summary of eight principles of CLT:
1. Language teaching is based on a view of language as communication. That is, language is seen as a social tool that speakers use to make meaning; speakers communicate about something to someone for some purpose, either orally or in writing.
2. Diversity is recognized and accepted as part of language development and use in second language learners and users, as it is with first language users.
3. A learner’s competence is considered in relative, not in absolute, terms.
4. More than one variety of a language is recognized as a viable model for learning and teaching.
5. Culture is recognized as instrumental in shaping speakers’ communicative Competence, in both their first and subsequent languages.
6. No single methodology or fixed set of techniques is prescribed.
7. Language use is recognized as serving ideational, interpersonal, and textual functions and is related to the development of learners’ competence in each.
8. It is essential that learners be engaged in doing things with language—that is, that they use language for a variety of purposes in all phases of learning (p. 104 cited in Liang, 2002, p. 09).

1.1.1. Communicative Competence

The discussion of communicative competence started as early as almost forty years ago with Hymes’ (1972) creation of the term communicative competence to challenge Chomsky’s notion of language competence and performance. Hymes pointed out that Chomsky’s competence/performance model did not provide an explicit place for sociocultural features in human communication.

Hymes (1972) stated that communicative competence referred to the ability to use speech appropriately rather than correctly in different social contexts. Being able to produce grammatically correct sentences does not necessarily ensure the acquisition of communicative competence. In similar vein, Widdowson (1978) suggested that an utterance with a well-formed grammatical structure might or might not have a sufficient value for communication in a given context. Whether an utterance had a sufficient communicative value or not was determined in discourse (Widdowson, 1978, cited in Liang, 2002 p. 11).

1.1.1.1 Hymes’ Contribution to CLT

Hymes made two contributions essential to the foundation of CLT (Hymes, 1979). First, Hymes made the critical shift away from Chomsky’s abstract mental structures of language to its social and cultural aspects. Secondly, Hymes (1979) realized that just as culture allows us to make sense of experience, so does language itself: the communicative event is the metaphor, or perspective, basic to rendering experience intelligible (Hymes, 1979 cited in Liang p 10). Hymes referred to the combined aspects of communication and culture in language as communicative competence, which meant knowledge and ability with respect to:
• Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;
• Whether (and to what degree) something is feasible in virtue of the means of implementation available;
• Whether (and to what degree) something is appropriate (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
• Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually performed, and what its doing entails. (Hymes, 1979:19 cited in Liang p 10)

As the term speaks for itself, Hymes’ original concept of communicative competence is primarily sociolinguistic and it emphasizes language use in social context. Nonetheless, it also embraces Chomsky’s psycholinguistic parameter of linguistic competence by including formal possibility along with feasibility for implementation, appropriateness to a context, and actual performance as defining components of communicative competence.

1.1.1.2. Canale & Swain’s Model

Following Hymes’ work, Canale participated in two of the most influential articles in developing the concepts of communicative competence the first paper is Canale & Swain (1980) and then Canale (1983a) which will be taken here as the most elaborate version In Canal (1983a) four widely accepted dimensions of communicative competence are identified: grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, discourse competence, and strategic competence. Grammatical competence is concerned with the mastery of the linguistic code itself. Discourse competence is concerned with the combination of form and function to achieve a unified spoken or written text in different genres that consisted of cohesion and coherence. Sociolinguistic competence addresses the extent to which utterances are produced and understood appropriately in different sociolinguistic contexts depending on contextual factors. Strategic competence was composed of verbal and non-verbal communication strategies that might be called into action for two main reasons: (1) to compensate for communication breakdowns due to limiting conditions in actual communication or insufficient competence in one or more of the other areas of communicative competence; and (2) to enhance the effectiveness of communication (Canale, 1983a cited in Llurda ,2000 ,p 87).
1.1.1.3. Savignon’s Definition

Along similar vein, Savignon (1983), who introduced the idea of communicative competence to foreign language teaching, originally defined communicative competence as the “ability to function in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors” (p. 8, cited in Savingnon, 2002, p 2). She included the use of gestures and facial expression in her interpretation and then she refined her definition of communicative competence to comprise of the following qualifications (Savignon, 1983):

- Communicative competence is a dynamic interpersonal trait that depends on the negotiation of meaning between two or more persons who share some knowledge of a language.
- Communicative competence applies to both written and spoken language.
- Communicative competence is context-specific. A communicatively competent language user knows how to make appropriate choices in register and style to fit the situation in which communication occurs.
- Competence is what one knows. Performance is what one does. Only performance is observable, however, it is only through performance that competence could be developed, maintained, and evaluated.
- Communicative competence is relative and depends on the cooperation of those people involved. (Savignon 1983, cited in Savingnon, 2002)

1.1.1.4. Bachman and Palmer Model

The theoretical framework/model which was proposed by Canale and Swain (1980, 1981) had at first three main components: grammatical, sociolinguistic and strategic competence. In a later version of this model, Canale (1983, 1984) transferred some elements from sociolinguistic competence into the fourth component which he named discourse competence. After Canale’s model, Bachman and Palmer (1996) introduced a more sophisticated model of communicative competence or, more precisely, the model of communicative language ability. According to Bachman and Palmer language knowledge or ability consists of: organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge the former is composed of abilities engaged in a control over formal language structures, i.e. of grammatical and textual knowledge. Grammatical knowledge includes several rather independent areas of knowledge such as knowledge of vocabulary,
morphology, syntax, phonology, and graphology. They enable recognition and production of grammatically correct sentences as well as comprehension of their propositional content. Textual knowledge enables comprehension and production of (spoken or written) texts. The latter refers to abilities for creating and interpreting discourse. It includes two areas of knowledge: knowledge of pragmatic conventions for expressing acceptable language functions and for interpreting the illocutionary power of utterances or discourse (functional knowledge) and knowledge of sociolinguistic conventions for creating and interpreting language utterances which are appropriate in a particular context of language use (sociolinguistic knowledge).

(Djigunović, 2007, p. 98)

The strategic competence is conceived in this model as a set of metacognitive components which enable language user involvement in goal setting, assessment of communicative sources, and planning. Goal setting includes identifying a set of possible tasks, choosing one or more of them and deciding whether or not to attempt to complete them. Assessment is a means by which language use context is related to other areas of communicative language ability: topical knowledge and affective schemata. Planning involves deciding how to make use of language knowledge and other components involved in the process of language use to complete the chosen task successfully. (Djigunović, 2007)

In the description of Bachman and Palmer’s model of communicative language ability, one cannot but conclude that this model is more complex, more comprehensive and much detailed. Despite the simplicity of the model of Canale and Swain, this model has dominated the field of SLA and language testing for more than two decades. Moreover, the tendency to use this model, or refer to it, has remained even after Bachman and Palmer (1996) proposed a much more comprehensive model of communicative competence. On the other hand, because of the easiness with which the model of Canale and Swain can be applied, many researchers of communicative competence still use it. With this notion in mind, the model of communicative competence proposed by Canale (1983) is adapted with few changes in this work to fit the language proficiency of the participants involved in this study.

1.1.1.5. Testing Communicative Competence

There has been a sufficient amount of models offered for testing writing and comprehension proficiency, but there is a distinct lack of models for testing oral language proficiency. Oral skills and the acquisition of communicative competence have been considered more and more
important in recent years, and yet difficulties in testing speaking skills often lead FL teachers into inadequate oral tests or even not testing speaking at all. Models for testing the oral communicative competence such as picture description, role plays used by many teachers and researchers for testing communicative competence proved to be inadequate and limited. There are limitations of this type of oral test because they could test certain organizations such as description or narration or certain verb tenses, but barely the communicative competence (Liang 2002 p.18). McNamara (1996) Also implied that “the weakness of current models [speaking tests] is that they focus too much on the individual candidate rather than candidate in interaction” (p.86 cited in, Liang 2002 p.18).

There is a high level of agreement among theoreticians today on the basic content of the definition of communicative competence. However, it has been often pointed out in the literature on language testing that before undertaking research on communicative competence it is essential to examine and clearly determine the construct of communicative competence (Djigunović 2007), namely, to formulate a definition which will enable a simple operationalization of that construct. Savignon (1972) describes communicative competence as "the ability to function in a truly communicative setting – that is, in a dynamic exchange in which linguistic competence must adapt itself to the total informational input, both linguistic and paralinguistic, of one or more interlocutors” (p.8,cited in Djigunović 2007, p. 96). According to her and other theoreticians (e.g. Canale and Swain, 1980; Skehan, 1995, 1998; Bachman and Palmer, 1996), the nature of communicative competence is not static but dynamic, it is more interpersonal than intrapersonal and relative rather than absolute. In other words, communicative competence is relative and context-specific. The detection of communicative competence will vary according to the language proficiency of the speakers involved.

1.1.2. Pedagogical Implications of the Communicative Approach

A number of theories and models were developed and expanded in the field of applied linguistics, SLA, and syllabus development to account for the concept of communicative competence (Shih, 2001). The concept of communicative competence then became robust and eventually led to the production of so-called CLT practices, which entails the following pedagogical concerns: Appropriateness vs. Grammaticality, Fluency vs. Accuracy, and Active participation vs. Passive reception. Each of these issues are discussed in the following sections.
1.1.2.1. Appropriateness vs. Grammaticality

The development of the evolving models on communicative competence plays a vital role in the teaching of foreign language and thus challenges the pedagogical practice of many language teachers (Liang 2002). Before Hymes’ invention of the term communicative competence, most of the language teachers tend to focus on micromanipulation of vocabulary, syntax, and discrete grammatical rules in language teaching. The so-called competence is therefore restricted only to a syntactic level (cf. Chomsky’s “grammatically correct sentences”).

This microteaching on syntax in foreign language education results in producing learners without adequate competence to communicate successfully. What Hymes tries to illustrate is that communicative competence should definitely go beyond grammatical level and encompass discourse, context, and speech acts, as discussed and developed later by Canale & Swain (1980) and other researchers (Canale, 1983a; Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, & Thurrell, 1995).

The goals of the language class should include all of the components of communicative competence like grammatical, discourse, sociolinguistic, and strategic competence (Canale, 1983a) and should not be restricted to grammatical or linguistic competence only. Form is not the primary framework for organizing and sequencing lessons. Function is the framework through which forms are taught, as proposed in the notional-functional syllabus (Wilkins, 1976). Despite years of language learning many students failed to acquire communicative competence in the target language which prompted researchers and teachers to question the effectiveness of the long existing grammar-based instruction. Therefore, the focus of language teaching has shifted from form-focused instruction of discrete grammatical structures to meaning-oriented interaction (Warschauer, 2000).

As a reaction to the deductive teaching of the Grammar Translation Method which focused on the analysis of isolated elements of language instead of the holistic function of meaningful communication, Celce-Murcia, Dörnyei, and Thurrell (1995) state that CLT should highlight the primary goal of language instruction, namely, to go beyond the teaching of the discrete elements, rules, and patterns of the target language and to develop the learners’ ability to take part in spontaneous and meaningful communication in different contexts, with different people, on different topics, for different purposes. (Liang, 2002).
1.1.2.2. Fluency vs. Accuracy

In addition to the highlight on appropriateness, CLT also outweighs fluency over accuracy in the process of language teaching and learning. In contrast to accuracy, which refers to the ability to produce grammatically correct sentences, fluency signifies the basic ability to produce continuous speech without causing comprehension difficulties or communication breakdowns. Sometimes being able to produce perfect sentences does not necessarily lead to effective communication.

The fluency/accuracy argument corresponds to Krashen’s acquisition/learning hypothesis in second/foreign language learning (Krashen, 1985). According to Krashen (1985), there are two independent systems of second language performance: the acquired system and the learned system. The acquired system or acquisition is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in the communicative act. On the other hand, the learned system or learning is the product of formal instruction and it comprises a conscious process, which results in conscious knowledge about the language, for example, knowledge of grammatical rules (Krashen, 1985 cited in Wang 2005).

Krashen (1985) thought that learning (accuracy) is less important than acquisition (fluency). The Monitor Hypothesis encapsulates the relationship between acquisition and learning and defined the role of grammar. Krashen argues that it is acquisition that is responsible for fluency in second language performance, while the learning system performed the role of the monitor or the editor. It appears that the role of conscious learning is somewhat limited in second language performance. According to Krashen(1985), the role of the Monitor is minor, used only to correct deviations from “normal” speech and to give speech a more polished appearance (Schütz, 2002).

It is a pity that in most teacher-centered language classrooms, teachers now still sacrifice fluency for the sake of accuracy. Mistakes in oral and written output are hardly tolerated in most traditional classrooms. Without being aware that the quality of expression could be developed through large quantity of practice and meaning negotiation, most teachers pursued perfect linguistic form at the expense of fluency.

Gradually, students tend to be afraid to express themselves in the target language for fear of making mistakes because making mistakes and being corrected by the teacher were face threatening (Liang, 2002, p 15). In the long run, both accuracy and fluency became unattainable.
It is certainly understandable that there has been a reaction against the heavy emphasis on linguistic forms and accuracy at the expense of linguistic function and fluency. Though as a reaction against explicit deductive teaching of grammar, CLT does not intend to remove the teaching of grammatical forms completely from the language curriculum. The point lies in how grammar should be taught (Liang, 2000). Instead of deductive instruction on grammatical rules, CLT emphasizes an inductive or a “retrospective” approach to grammar (Liang, 2002 p 16). As Ellis (1999) argues that looking explicitly at grammar might not lead immediately to learning, it will facilitate learning at a later stage when the learner is ready to internalize the new information about the language. Taken together, the above arguments suggest that language is best acquired when it is not studied in a direct or explicit way.

1.1.2.3. Active Participation vs. Passive Reception

In order to equip students with adequate communicative competence, the prevalent philosophy of foreign language teaching since early 1970s had undergone a paradigm shift from a transition model to a communication model (Weir, 1990), which meant that students no longer receive, memorize, or repeat after the tape or the teacher. Instead, students had to actively engage in classroom activities for real communication and learning.

In CLT, students are the central roles in the classroom. They assume active, negotiative, and contributive roles. In the communicative classroom, teachers attend to the input, interaction, and output in the target language. That is, students ultimately have to use the target language, productively and receptively, in unrehearsed contexts (Kagan, 1995 cited in Liang p 16). Teachers are no longer authoritative knowledge givers but they are facilitators of students’ learning. They bring learners to a certain proficiency level with autonomy, so that they can adapt their knowledge to cope adequately with the demands of new situations.

1.2. Simulation as a Communicative Technique

Simulations in language learning can be referred to as “communications” simulations since they are designed to achieve communicative reality (Bambrough, 1994,p. 16). The main goal of a simulation is to give students exposure to a representation of real-life structure. A simulation entails unexpected events in which “real communication”, not played or acted dialogue, can happen.
1.2.1. Definition of Simulations

Jones (1982, p. 5) defines a simulation as reality of function in a simulated and structured environment. This definition shows three essential elements in simulations: reality of function, simulated environment, and structure:

By reality of function, Jones means that participants must step inside the function mentally and behaviorally in order to fulfill their duties and responsibilities in the situation (Jones, 1982, p. 5). The most important part of simulations is having participants accept fully the reality of function (role and duties), not thinking as students but taking the role; otherwise the simulation simply will not work. Acceptance of the reality of function means that a participant who has the function of doctor must examine the patient, communicating effectively to do the job. The role of students in simulations, therefore, is taking the functional roles such as reporter, survivor, or customer, stepping into the event, and shaping the event, carrying out their duties and responsibilities.

In simulations, a provided environment must be simulated. In order to fulfill the essential condition of being a simulated environment, there must be no contact between the participants and the world outside of the classroom (Jones, ibid). In other words, when an office in a company is the setting for a simulation, we do not provide a real office or a building, yet we create a simulated environment representing the office that is outside of the classroom by arranging some desks, computer, office materials, and so on. Likewise, if we need a door, we can provide a simulated environment by putting two chairs together. One thing that we need to keep in mind is that only the environment is simulated, but the behavior of a participant is real. It is important that the essential “facts” of the simulation environment are provided, not invented by the participants, to preserve reality of function (Jones, ibid). Without structure, it is not a simulation because there is no reality of function.

1.2.2. Simulations vs. Role plays

Many times, role plays and simulations are often confused by teachers. Most teachers are familiar with role plays, and not simulations. These techniques are both interactive learning events, but generally role plays involve learners taking on characters that are not their own, while participants in simulation behave as themselves. They therefore apply their own background and first language experiences to a situation. In addition, role plays are often set up to practice particular language functions in a highly controlled context and are relatively simple and short.
The major difference between simulations and role plays is that in simulations the essential facts are provided to participants for the functional part such as their gender, their age, their job, etc., while in role plays, participants have to “invent” key facts or “act out” scenes according to specific scripts or descriptions like, “You are angry because your friend broke your watch.” In role plays, participants are encouraged to act according to the script, which is impossible in simulations, where there is no script (Yeonhwan,2006, p.14). Simulations provide a realistic setting for more extensive interaction in which students can get more personally involved, instead of playing or acting the role. In simulations, imagination may be involved but invention of key facts should be avoided. As Bambrough (1994, p. 14) points out, simulations are differentiated from other role activities in that the roles function within a structure that represents a real world situation, and the elements of this situation are represented consistently in a dynamic way. This is clearly shown in Table.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simulations</th>
<th>Role-plays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Props are provided.</td>
<td>Props are not necessarily provided. (Participants have to create and imagine key aspects of the environment.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(The environment is provided)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key “facts” are provided for “Functional part”.</td>
<td>Participants invent key facts or have to act according to a specific script or description provided.(E.g., “You are angry because….”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E.g., there are representations for gender, age, job, broken watch, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants take on a role.</td>
<td>Participants play/act a role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imagination may be involved, but invention is prohibited.</td>
<td>Participants are encouraged to create/invent whatever is necessary to play the role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants create real communication in a controlled realistic situation.</td>
<td>Do dialogues in a fixed context or improvisational speech in an imaginary one.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Simulations vs. Role-plays (Yeonhwan, 2006 p,15)

1.2.3. Comprehensible Input in Language Learning

Input is one of the important components of second/foreign language learning. There is an issue whether input alone would result in language acquisition or not, but it would be generally accepted that the role of input in language learning is important. Lee & VanPatten (1995) illustrate the role of the input in a way that is easy to understand:

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Input is to language acquisition what gas is to a car. An engine needs gas to run; without gas, the car would not move an inch. Likewise, input in language learning is what gets the “engine” of acquisition going. Without it, acquisition simply doesn’t happen (p.38) (Quoted in Yeonhwan, 2006 p.08)

Lee & VanPatten (1995) continue to explain:

Gas itself is a refined and filtered petroleum product; you simply cannot put crude oil into your gas tank and expect the car to run. And because gas is a refine petroleum product, some is better than others…. Likewise, some input is better than others….
(p. 38) (Quoted in Yeonhwan 2006 p.08)

As Lee & VanPatten (1995) state above, input is an essential part of language learning process and there are better inputs that are more effective than others for language learners. Then what would be the best input that can actually play a role in language acquisition? Many researchers have claimed that comprehensible input is a necessary ingredient for successful language acquisition (Yeonhwan, 2006 p.09). According to Krashen (1985) the only way that people acquire language is by understanding messages or by receiving “comprehensible input”. Larsen-Freeman & Long (1991, p. 142) also emphasize the importance of comprehensible input by stating that all cases of successful language acquisition are possible as a result of the availability of comprehensible input. Emphasizing the importance of comprehensible input seems to make sense since learners of second/foreign language must be able to understand what the speaker is saying if acquisition is to happen.

The input that Krashen (1985), Larsen-Freeman & Long, and Lee & VanPatten (1995) talk about consists of “objects of language” such as words, phrases, sentences, etc. The reason most input in current language lessons consists of language objects is that people only focus on input in terms of learning a language, not on learning how to communicate (Yeonhwan 2006). Input that helps people to learn how to communicate in the real world does not consist of language, which has no objective existence. According to Coleman (2005b), input that consists of language data cannot be what makes learner able to communicate possible. Language is an abstract system
in the mental domain; communication occurs in the physical domain. Klein’s (1986) ‘Chinese Room’ example also shows that input consisting only of linguistic data does not make learning possible; it is the information received in parallel to speech input.

Suppose you were locked in a room and were continually exposed to the sound of Chinese coming from a loudspeaker; however long the experiment continued, you would not end up speaking Chinese …. What makes learning possible is the information received in parallel to the linguistic input in the narrow sense (the sound waves).

(p.44) (Quoted in Coleman, 2005 b, p. 6)

What Klein emphasizes is that input should consist of speech and other information, such as who is involved, when and where the interaction takes place, nonverbal communication like facial expressions and gestures, and the presence of other objects, to make learning actually happen. One thing that needs to be clear here is that this is unlike Krashen’s view (1985) that we are able to understand language with the help of context and our knowledge of the world. Adding something like background knowledge or concurrent events to language does not make language input a real thing. Therefore, input should not be thought of as consisting of language objects, but as consisting of the full range of available sensory experience (Coleman, 2005 b, p. 5).

In order to make input comprehensible, input should be provided to learners in terms of showing meanings of communicative behaviors (including speech), not explaining the meanings of words or sentences. Since explanations often only contain “language”, it is not comprehensible at all unless learners already know it. Also, meaning does not reside in words or utterances, but lies in people who perceive it in the linkage. A linkage, in Yngve’s terms, is a theoretical representation of two or more people communicating - an assemblage-that includes just those properties that are required to account for the communicative behavior associated with the assemblage (Yngve, 1996, p. 126; cited in Yeonhwan, 2006 p.11). Thus, it is important to show meanings with linkages.

Showing various examples for input is also important. Since people do not express what they mean in the exact same way, input should provide various ways of communicating in a certain situation. Contexts in current language textbooks often contain expressions in a situation,
but only present one set of dialogue in a situation, thus lacking reality. For example, when learning expressions used in a fast-food restaurant, a typical dialogue presented in a textbook would be like the following:

A: Welcome to Burger Town. May I help you?
B: Yes, I’d like to have a hamburger and an order of fries.
A: Do you want anything to drink with that?
B: Yes. I’ll have a cup of coffee.

(From Expressways 2 (Molinsky& Bliss, 1995, p. 52 cited in; Yeonhwan ,2006 p. 12).

In a real situation, the conversation in a fast-food restaurant may go differently. The staff member may just say, “Next,” instead of saying “May I help you?” and the customer may say, “Can I have a cheeseburger?” instead of saying “I’d like to have a hamburger.”

When learners are not provided enough input they are apt to fall into communication breakdowns if things do not go exactly like the one sample they have seen.

In sum, in order for input to play an important role in learning to communicate, it should be comprehensible in the real-world sense. To provide input that contributes to effective learning of how to communicate, teachers should demonstrate the correlation of parts of input across sensory modalities and provide variation within and across communicative linkages (Coleman, 2005 b, p. 211, cited in Wang, 2005, p.27).

1.2.4. The Benefits of Using Simulations

Simulations seem to be an ideal technique for allowing learners to use language creatively and communicatively. There seems to be five main advantages to language-learning simulations:

1.2.4.1. Real Communicative Activity/Authenticity

In order to improve communication skills, learners need to be provided a great deal of opportunity to communicate with others. Simulation is a perfect activity that offers ample opportunities for learners to communicate in the target language. As Jones (1982, p. 9) mentions, simulations provide the participants with the mutual need to communicate and the need is inherent in the activity. In other words, participants naturally communicate in order to fulfill the role or solve the problem in simulations.

In a classroom activity like reading a part in a dialogue in a text, in which learners usually memorize the script and act, in the “performing a dialogue”, teachers assign roles such as staff or
customer to students and expect students to perform exactly the same dialogue as the one that students learned as input for the lesson. In this kind of activity, learners seem to participate in a communicative activity by talking, but it is merely saying lines repeating the scripted dialogue. There is no negotiating meaning between participants; thus performing a dialogue does not create real communication. Not all interactive activities that involve speech are communication. We do not call a dialogue in a play or movie “communication” (Yeonhwan 2006 p.20). Real communication involves real people who show their personality and thought in the communication while discussing real issues. In simulations real communication is generated, participants in simulations continually interact exchanging thoughts and negotiating meanings as they take roles and try to fulfill the duty. Jones (1982) depicts a good simulation as a nuclear power breeder reactor. As a nuclear power breeder reactor produces its own fuel, communication in a good simulation leads to more communication, ideas generate ideas, talk leads to thought, and thought leads to more talk (Jones, 1982, p. 9).

The success in simulations does not depend on doing the conversation right or wrong, or doing it according to the teachers’ expectation. In simulations, learning is more important than a successful performance; therefore, the failure in communication between participants is as valuable as success. When there is a communication breakdown, participants will negotiate the meaning, and this results in more communication. Moreover, not only is communication generated within the simulations but also a good deal of the learning may occur afterwards through reflection and discussion (Jones, 1982, p. 9).

1.2.4.2. Acquisition Vs. learning

According to Krashen (1982), language acquisition is a subconscious process: language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication (as cited in Gass&Selinker, 2001). Krashen distinguishes language acquisition from language learning, which is defined as a conscious process with the learned knowledge represented consciously in the brain. In his argument, learned knowledge can never be converted into acquired knowledge, and “thus there is a no interface position with respect to the relationship between acquisition and learning” (Krashen, 1985, p8, cited in Wang, 2005, p5).

Simulations are untaught events (Jones, 1982, p. 2). There is no explicit language teaching involved in simulations. Also, there is no teacher who teaches how to say or what to say in a
situation inside the simulation activity. Learners as participants are the ones who shape the event and are involved in the communicative action. Participants can acquire how to communicate implicitly during simulation activities. When a communication breakdown occurs, participants will be actively involved in negotiating meaning to find the way to understand each other. Participants will try to speak in different ways or use nonverbal behavior to make others understand what they mean.

During the process, learners can acquire the properties that are necessary to communicate successfully. Therefore, simulations deal with acquiring “how to communicate”, not learning or knowing about a language, since participants do not think about language but try to communicate during the activity. (Yeonhwan 2006 p.23)

1.2.4.3. Motivation

Simulations encourage motivation because they ensure that communication is purposeful rather than artificial. Participants are involved as they identify with their roles and have the freedom to choose the meanings they want to express. Because students can bring their background experiences to the classroom and make their own decisions, more interests and excitement is created in learning. Motivation is inherent in a simulation (Jones 1982, p. 10). It is self-generated motive arises out of function, the duties, the responsibilities and the circumstances in which the participants find themselves (Jones, 1982, p. 10).

Since there is no teacher in simulations, learners participate in the activity without trying to please the teacher or worrying about being correct. Making mistakes and even failing the communication are accepted in simulations. Learners do not have to be afraid to fail because communication in simulation does not have to be successful to be beneficial. In fact, failures are as desirable as success (Jones, 1982, p. 9). Learners have ample chances to make it work, not make it right, while they negotiate meanings in simulations.

As Jones (1982, p. 11) states, motivation from function and duty is an essential ingredient in a simulation. Therefore, no effort to motivate learners will be necessary as long as learners accept the reality of their functions. Motivation may also come from the emotional satisfaction or the pleasure of power to make decisions and the enjoyment of interactive excitement.
1.2.4.4. Cultural experience

According to Brown (1986, p. 34), “culture is a deeply ingrained part of our being, but language that is spoken among members of a culture is the most visible and available expression of that culture” (quoted in Kemp, 2003, p. 13). Learning how to communicate cannot be separated from its culture because a unique culture is formed among people who communicate together. It is necessary to understand and know how to behave properly in the culture in order to communicate successfully in the target group. However, learning cultural aspects of a target speech community is often excluded in many language classrooms. Also, learners rarely have chances to have cultural experiences in the language classroom. When the culture of a target group is presented in language, teachers often explain about the country or the culture apart from the target speech community. However, language and culture cannot be separated since the relevant properties are within the person and the groups they interact in.

Simulations can offer an environment where learners learn how to behave in linkages. In simulations, learners, being participants in the event, will experience the way people behave in a certain culture. For example, through a post office or a bank simulation, the Algerian learners of (American) English will learn that they have to wait in line until the employee in the post office or bank looks at them or says “Next.” or “I can help you over here.” etc., if they are not looking back. There is no need to explain about the culture since learners can acquire how to behave in the target culture naturally through simulations. Learners may even learn more if there is a communication breakdown due to cultural differences. Suppose, for instance, participant A, who is Algerian, is the customer and Participant B, who is German, is the employee in a fast-food restaurant simulation. Participant A orders food but not a drink.

B: You don’t want a drink?
A: [nodding his/her head]
B: What do you want?
A: Excuse me?
B: What do you want to drink?
A: I don’t want a drink.
B:???
In this conversation, the Algerian learner’s behavior of nodding his/her head shows the agreement with what participant B says. However, people speaking English have a different property when responding to questions like ‘you don’t want a drink? /don’t you want a drink?’ They will say “No. (I don’t want a drink.)” Or shake their heads when they do not want a drink. There is a communication breakdown due to the different properties between the two participants. In the process of negotiating meaning to understand each other or discussing this communication breakdown during debriefing after the simulation activity, the Algerian learner will learn that when s/he is asked “You don’t want a drink?” s/he has to respond according to his/her agreement with the fact of whether s/he wants a drink, not with what the other says.

Exposure to the cultural experiences of communication may give students confidence for future cross-cultural interactions that they may have with native speakers as well as help to prevent misunderstandings (Rivers, 1987, p. 12, cited in Kemp, 2003, P.14). Learners can acquire the properties of people in the target culture through the experience in simulations. As a result, learners will know how to behave in the target culture and they will be more confident in real situations.

1.2.4.5. Improving communication strategies

Simulations are an ideal way of developing communication skills, since communication plays a vital role in simulations. Learners have to develop skills/strategies to communicate properly, not for using language properly, for effective communication in a certain situation. When teaching is focused on language itself, learners cannot experience real communication since there is no negotiation of meanings (Jones, 1983, p. 8). In this case, when a communication breakdown occurs, learners just fail in the tasks. On the other hand, when teaching how to communicate, learners can have ample opportunities to negotiate meaning since it is a necessary ingredient in communication.

Simulations can provide the environment where real communication can be carried out because participants are constantly negotiating meaning while doing activities in simulations. Participants will try to find a way of showing what they mean when a communication breakdown occurs. Even if participants fail to negotiate meanings in the event, it is still valuable because they will learn from the failure. Fluency also is encouraged in simulations because learners are immersed in a language-rich environment where language use is centered on immediate communicative needs. The context requires that language is subordinate to an activity, and also
attention is focused on the situation rather than form (Hyland, 1993, p.16-17). Language use is an aspect of the communication necessary to perform tasks and not a test of correctness.

Within simulations, learners will face many situations where different communication skills may be required. Sometimes learners have to initiate the conversation to do the job. They may have to convince others by presenting their thought or they may have to reach an agreement through an argument (Yeonhwan, 2006, p. 29). Through exploring different situations, learners will learn how to communicate properly and effectively. As a result, learners will be able to improve their communication skills/strategies.

1.4. Preparing for a Simulation

Preparing for simulation can be a daunting stage in any simulation. Students are often nervous and shy when first asked to participate in a simulation, and it is worthwhile considering this problem and others before their occurrence. Before embarking in simulation, a number of points need to be considered by the teacher these points are illustrated in Figure1 below.
Allocate the students to appropriate groups

Figure 1. Preparing for Simulation (Kent 2003, p. 11)

Can the target language be used to explain to students how the Simulation will work?

YES

Have the students expressed an interest in the proposed topic?

YES

Choose a more suitable topic for the session

NO

NO

NO

Can this lack be quickly and effectively remedied?

YES

Teach the items required in the target language in the preparatory stage

YES

Adapt the room to simulate the environment proposed by the simulation

Install audio/video recorders in unobtrusive location if possible

NO

Consider a more suitable method for the present

NO

Explain the nature of the Simulation, making clear how long the students have to complete the exercise and that the target language is to be used throughout.
1.2.5.1. How to Conduct a Simulation

Before conducting the simulations, we have to ensure that preparation (as shown in figure 1.) was detailed and adequate, that students are aware of the time available to them to conduct the simulation and its constituent parts, and that they know exactly what is expected of them at the various stages of the process. After the preparation stage a number of criteria should be considered:

1. Is it possible or necessary to adapt the classroom so as to replicate the environment posited by the simulation?
2. Do the students have all the materials required to carry out the simulation to the best effect?
3. Are all groups and their members working effectively and contributing to process? If not, it may be necessary - out with simulation time – to mention this in order that the next sessions may be more productive.
4. Has discussion ground to a halt? If so - without intervening in the session - amend the timetable so that students do not feel they are at a loose end.
5. Has monitoring equipment been set up to record the proceedings of each group? (Kent 2003. p 12.)

The last step may not be necessary, since the teacher’s presence in the classroom may not distract the students. In which case the recording equipment is not necessary, but we have to ensure that any notes on errors are made out of sight of the students.

After the simulation process comes to an end, the teacher will have gained an impression of how the students and groups performed in general terms, and whether the exercise in itself was successful as an exercise. This step is called the Debriefing. It is an optional step in simulation but it can be of great help in order to assess students’ performance in the debriefing two aspects that can be discussed: behavior and language. Behavior includes task review, discussion of tactics employed, and assessment of performance and possible discussion of cultural aspects. Language includes the analysis of language used, discussion of errors, remedial work and further linguistic input.
In evaluating the efficacy of the exercise, the teacher must bear in mind whether the following questions may be answered positively:
• **did the groups know what they were doing?**
• **were they able to operate without the assistance of the teacher?**
• **did they operate effectively and carry out all tasks as required?**
• **did they make decisions and exercise options?**
• **were all students/groups reasonably well motivated?**
• **were the bulk of linguistic interactions realistic and natural?**
• **did the students themselves feel the exercise was of benefit?** (Kent, 2003 p.14)

Although it is difficult to give a student a grade for work carried out as part of a group, by using the recorded material, or notes made during observation, the teacher will be able to assess each student diagnostically on the criterion of whether the majority of interactions would have been comprehensible to a fluent speaker of the target language. The effectiveness of the communication, the degree of participation, the quality of students’ performance on individual tasks, and on their contribution to the group effort. It is for the teacher, in accordance with her institution’s guidelines, to determine which levels of pronunciation and usage of vocabulary and structure students have reached as part of the exercise.

### 1.2.5.2. Role of the Teacher/Trainer

The trainer or the teacher defines the overall structure of the simulation, but generally does not actively participate once the structure is set. Jones, (1992) explains the concept as "……the teacher becomes the controller, and controls the event in the same way as a traffic controller, helping the flow of traffic and avoiding bottlenecks, but not telling individuals which way to go.” Further this is consistent with Scarcella & Oxford’s (1992) principles instead of a traditional, teacher-oriented classrooms structure, the teacher keeps a comparatively low profile and the learners are liberal to communicate each other spontaneously. Thus helps in diminishing the learner’s anxiety. The teacher/ trainer is supposed to enhance surplus responsibilities in simulation methodology especially s/he ought to keep learners motivated by stimulating their curiosity to learn.
1.2.6. Limitations of Simulations

Though Simulation has been acknowledged as a very effective technique in language learning and in enhancing learners’ communicative abilities, as discussed in the previous sections, there can be, like any other teaching method and technique, some drawbacks in using simulations. Some of these drawbacks are outlined by Kent (2003). Firstly, simulation reinforces students’ faulty pronunciation and allows students to misunderstand and misuse new vocabulary and structures. Secondly, the use of simulation in language class works best with already effective speakers of the target language and requires preparation which detracts from target language contact time. Thirdly, it might allow less motivated students to withdraw from participation and finally this technique leaves teachers feeling ineffective or excluded.

These limitations of simulation could be reduced to a great extent or even avoided completely if the teachers consider carefully a few aspects. Teachers who wish to implement simulations in their language classes should provide careful planning and explanation of the preparatory stage of simulation that is a crucial stage in the whole process (see figure.1.). The teacher furthermore should ensure that the simulation is of relevance and interest to the students. Another important aspect would be the necessity to construct groups containing mixed or differentiated levels of ability depending on the students’ needs. These groups should be monitored by the teacher in terms of the language they are using and participation levels during the simulation. At last, the teacher has to base subsequent remedial work on observations taken during monitoring. (Kent, 2003).

1.2.7. How Simulations can be used in an EFL Class

1.2.7.1. Basic Level

Teachers often believe that integrating simulations for basic level learners is not suitable. We acknowledge that we cannot expect a full range of conversation from learners at this level since they have limited communication ability in the target speech community. However, it is possible for learners to be able to communicate in a certain situation if they are provided with enough comprehensible input prior to the simulation activity.

When using simulations for a basic level class, it is a good idea to use/create simple simulations with less complicated processes. The idea of doing simulations itself may overwhelm learners at this level if the subject is totally new to them or the process is too complicated. Learners may feel more comfortable with familiar subjects that are based on real
life. At the same time, fictional simulations may help learners be less inhibited and lower their anxiety. In order to have learners able to participate in a simulation, good comprehensible input in the real-world sense must be provided. Since basic level learners have limited skills to communicate, simple simulations about such situations in real life such as greeting, asking directions, ordering food at a fast-food restaurant, etc.

The choice can be based on the learners’ needs and interests. Here, an example that may be used for a basic class activity is a simulation for asking directions. We can do it with props such as maps, pictures, markers, and so on. Providing a good comprehensible input for the basic level learners is important to be able to run a simulation activity later. In the debriefing stage, input that includes showing the meanings of basic elements of street directions, expressions of movement, gambits that trigger repetition, etc. has to be provided by using pictures and video clips. (Yeonhwan, 2006, p.30).

1.2.7.2. Intermediate level

For intermediate level learners, teachers can use/create more complicated real-life subjects such as visiting doctors and job interviews or simple fiction simulations like Jones’ ‘SPACE CRASH’ simulation (1987, cited in Chan, 1999, p. 79-85).

Comprehensible input may be needed, especially if the subject/content of the simulation is new to learners. For real-life simulations, teachers can create scenarios about the subject and prepare the task cards for the participants. The debriefing stages may consist of two parts; one with comprehensible input for new elements and expressions and another with the debriefing for the simulation activity. If learners are not familiar with doing simulations, it is worth spending time to explain how simulations work. It is important to instruct them on how they are expected to behave in simulations. According to Jones (1982, p. 34), the controller should provide enough information for the participants to understand what is involved in the briefing stage and ensure that all required documents are present. Teachers may want to emphasize the necessity of role acceptance and stress not to play or act so that learners can behave properly in the simulations.

We will take an example of a real-life subject simulation proposed by Kent (2003) in his Simulation Manuel. If we do the ‘doctor visit’ simulation, teachers first have to present input for new elements like nurse, doctor, reception desk, prescription, various kind of medicine, and so on. Teachers may have to show what people mean when they describe the symptoms for various illnesses. Also they may need to show meanings of what people say when they make an
appointment. One thing to remember here is that the input we provide does not consist of information about grammar. Prior to the simulation activity, sufficient information about roles and tasks also needs to be provided. Teachers have to prepare role cards that include information about who they are and what the tasks are. The teacher may want to discuss the roles and tasks with learners to make sure they understand their roles and tasks.

Teachers may allow learners to speak their native language to discuss these matters. For the simulation activity, props representing key elements like an examination table, a doctor’s gown, a patient chart, etc. need to be provided. The real objects for props would be the best, but imitated objects can substitute for them as long as they have the same functional role as real objects. Given task cards and props, participants are asked to fulfill the functions of their roles. For example, as a patient, a participant should be able to explain about his/her symptoms and ask questions related to the illness or prescription. If one is a receptionist, s/he should get information from the patient and if one is a nurse, s/he should do pre-exam tasks like measuring weight, temperature, checking pulse, etc.

As for the role of doctor, s/he needs to examine the patient, asking and answering questions involved in the situation. (Kent, 2003, p. 14).

When using fiction simulations, debriefing about the simulation needs to be done. If some elements or expressions that appear in the simulations are new to learners, teachers have to prepare for that too. Jones (1982, p. 20) suggests that the teachers actually participate in the simulation ahead of time with a group of friends or colleagues. He suggests this because this may reveal whether the level of communicative difficulty of the simulation is suitable. Through participation in the simulation, the teachers can get ideas like what input they need to provide or how they will provide it. Also, the teachers can prepare props the participants need. Many of Jones’ simulations can be used for the intermediate level. Teachers also can create simulations that generate discussion and decision-making. If the learners are teenagers, topics such as deciding on school uniforms, interviewing celebrities or a meeting for an entertainment magazine will be interesting subjects.

1.2.7.3. Advanced level

Learners at this level are expected to be able to communicate successfully in most real-life situations. However, the learners may not have native-like proficiency. To help them attain native-like proficiency, the teacher may want them to have a variety of experiences in more
complicated situations. Using/creating high-level simulations may fulfill the learners’ need. Teachers may want to consider the learners’ specific needs such as improving communication skills for business meetings or professional jobs like doctor, pharmacist, or nurse if the group of the learners has the same interests or needs. For this level of learners, teachers do not have to limit the choice to a simulation that is aimed at second/foreign language learners; teachers can choose simulations that are created for native speakers. In this case, input may have to be presented, but often input in the debriefing stage might not be necessary for the advanced level learners as they will receive a great deal during the simulation itself. However, briefing for the activity has to be done.

Coleman’s aircraft company simulation (2005 c) can be an example of a simulation for the advanced level. This simulation is designed for ESL learners and it has been used for both native speakers and non-native speakers. In this simulation, each group has to make an aircraft with paper that fulfills government regulations, with participants being staff members of an aircraft design company. The participant companies, as candidates for the production design, have to submit a prototype for testing as part of the DOVE (Drone Over flight Virtual Exploration) Development Project presented by a governmental organization, ORIUS, the Oceanographic Research Institute of the United States (See Coleman, 2005 c).

After the simulation activity, learners are asked to write a paper about their experience making an aircraft. The teacher may adapt this activity and change it according to his/her intention for the lesson. Participants might be asked to make a proposal and give a presentation without actually making an aircraft. Or, in the debriefing stage, the class may have an open discussion about their success or failure in making the airplane instead of completing the writing assignment.

Conclusion

The principal advantage of the simulation technique for language learning is that it provides students with a realistic environment in which they can develop a range of communicative and interactive skills. It gives students the chance to carry out a task and solve a problem together thus giving them some freedom to make their own choices and decisions. Learners in the simulation are taking responsibilities and have to carry out the task on their own. The teacher is a mere monitor and observer of the task, the traditional authority of the teacher is reduced and
more learning takes place. It is a real language learning technique that demands systematic preparations and due care as well as compatibility in relation to the learner’s requirements and appropriate level. As long as the mentioned guidelines are implied and accordingly followed, it would certainly give birth to rewarding results and experience for both, the students as well as the teacher.
CHAPTER TWO

The Effect of Simulation on Algerian Students’ Communicative Competence:

A Quasi Experiment

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 35

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The Effect of Simulation on Algerian Students’ Communicative Competence:

A Quasi Experiment

Introduction

This chapter reports on the quasi-experiment conducted in the framework of this study to test our research hypothesis: the use of simulations would enable learners to communicatively effectively in life-like contexts and improve their communicative abilities. As opposed to the null hypothesis: the use of simulation will not enable EFL learners to communicate effectively in life-like contexts and will not improve their interactive abilities. Via the Quasi-experiment we will try to see whether our research hypothesis could be confirmed or rejected. As been discussed, the aim of this study is to test the effectiveness of using simulations in language learning to promote learners’ communicative and interactive skills. For such purpose, the designed quasi-experiment would answer the following research questions:

1. Can simulation be used as a new technique to enable learners of English to communicate in an authentic way?
2. Is simulation effective in improving EFL learners’ communicative abilities?

For a complete design to answer the research questions stated above, the methodology will include: the selection of the participants, the instructional design, the process of data collection, the data analysis, and the results and findings.

2.1 Quasi-Experimental Design

The research included a quasi-experimental design. The quasi-experimental design is helpful in examining problems in education (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Researchers employ this design when the purpose is to determine whether differences exist between research groups. Quasi-experiments follow basic experimental procedures in research. Researchers observe single or multiple groups following a treatment variable recognized to cause change (Houser, 2009). Within the quasi-experimental research, the nonequivalent groups are required. Houser (2009) defined the nonequivalent groups as involving the comparison of two groups: one group receives the treatment, and the other does not. According to Smith (2010), researchers can use accidental, or convenience sampling to obtain a representative sample of the population.
depending on the phenomenon measured. In the current study, a convenience sample of university students enrolled in first-year LMD courses is appropriate. A pretest is necessary to determine whether the groups are equivalent regarding relevant data or whether the groups are nonequivalent before the treatment (Houser, 2009). A post-test is used to examine differences between the treated and untreated groups after the Simulation treatment period.

Field (2005) declared that the quasi-experimental design provides a way to evaluate whether the control and experimental groups are initially equivalent. A control group represents a comparison source on treatment effectiveness through measuring differences between the mean of the two research groups after the pretest and post-test.

2.2. Sample

The sample includes male and female university students enrolled in first-year LMD courses at the English Department of L’Arbi Ben Mhidi University: two classes of first-year students: one class as the control group and the other is the experimental group with 26 students per group.

The students are paired in each group to perform the pre and the posttests; therefore, the total number of pairs is 13 in each group. However, only 11 pairs are considered in each group for data analysis stage due to attendance problems or inconsistencies.

Field (2005) noted the sample size determines the strength of the results, but this strength also depends on the value to be achieved. A 95% confidence level was suitable to disprove the null hypothesis (with 5% of results occurring by chance). The problem with the small sample size is the interpretation of results, in particular. It is difficult to uncover meaningful differences between research groups based on data gathered from small samples, because statistical tests in general involve a large sample size to demonstrate that the results did not occur by chance alone (Hackshaw, 2008). Studies on a larger sample size are required to confirm the findings.

From another standpoint, a positive aspect of this small sample size included a shorter research process with regard to enrolling students and the instructor, and allowed the research questions to be addressed in a relatively short time.

2.3. Instructional Design

The instructional design of Simulation in the experimental group is integrated within the students’ regular oral expression syllabus. The instructional design presented in this section includes the teaching procedures in the control group and those in the experimental group.
2.3.1. Control Group

The teaching procedures and activities in the control group belong to the traditional method, whereby the teacher is doing all the talk, explaining the lesson sometimes shifting to the L1 to translate difficult lexis and expressions. Students are mere receivers of the language; students spend most of the class time listening to the teacher and they do not show any intention to participate in the lesson unless the teacher assigns some students to talk or answer some questions. Students are engaged in the learning process only when they are asked to perform or solve classroom activities. Student hardly communicates with each other or with the teacher.

When the teacher assigns some pairs to perform a dialogue or role plays, the rest of the class watch and listen to their performance. There are two or three pairs at most selected to practice the dialogue in front of the class during one class period. Most of the students listen passively and quietly while the chosen pairs are practicing on the stage.

In the listening part of the session, students listen to some authentic audios about the presented unit. After that they are asked to answer some questions to test their listening comprehension, few students answer the questions but in a limited manner because, according to them, they could not catch each word that is spoken by the native speakers in the audio since it is too fast and most of the time incomprehensible. Others are afraid of making mistakes and some of the students tries to explain what they have listened to using their mother tongue.

In sum, the traditional method used in the control group incorporates the following features: Translation of some vocabulary and new expression from the target language to the mother tongue, the teacher dominates the floor and invest the whole class time in explaining the lesson; there are a few activities that include interaction and communication among the students, and students jot down the main points of the lesson with no attempt to interfere in the normal flow of the lesson.

2.3.2. The Experimental Group

The intervention in the experimental group includes two main phases: the first one is a warm up for simulation, and the second phase is the actual treatment: The use of simulations in the classroom.

During the first phase, students are introduced to the idea of simulation. Time and effort are spent into getting students familiarized with the idea of using simulations in the classroom as an integrated activity in the lesson. First stage is the formation of groups. Groups are made of three
or four students; however some students suggest working in pairs. This is allowed since there are some simulations that need just a pair to complete the simulation task. We tried, though, to make friends apart as hard as we can so that each group can form its own dynamic in this new "real" environment. Then, students are shown some videos about how classroom simulations are conducted, as a part of getting them familiarized with the idea and to lessen their anxiety and hesitation toward the activity. Students respond positively after watching the videos and are willing to engage in the task. Before the preparatory stage, (see figure1p.), the teacher tried to propose a topic for simulation to see whether students would welcome the proposed topics. Some students feel enthusiastic to propose some topics and it is a welcomed idea, as far as they are relevant and resemble life-like situations. Students are no longer hesitating and they feel the responsibility of the task.

After the warm up phase, students enter the second phase of simulation. At such a stage, students are given input about how the simulations are conducted by Explaining the nature of the Simulation, making clear how long the students have to complete the exercise and that the target language is to be used throughout. Then groups are assigned different simulations.

An important step to be mentioned is that students should be aware of their roles and responsibilities throughout the simulation process after a thorough explanation on the part of the teacher. This is to avoid any intervention during the simulation process. Another important part in any simulation is the structure of environment. Students should be made aware of the materials needed in their simulation to replicate the environment posited by the simulation, and that is according to the situation being simulated.

2.3.3. Teambuilding

To ensure teambuilding among the groups, the teacher proposed some commitments. These commitments are employed based on the principles of positive reinforcement and are meant for the whole class. The rules are worked out and observed by the whole class. They are spelled out in positive encouraging instead of threatening disciplines. The Commitments that the experimental group follows are illustrated in Table 2 below.
Table 2: Ten Commitments (Liang 2002).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I promise to do my share of work with pleasure and delight.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be brave to express myself in my group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be sensitive to my learning. If I find any problem or difficulty, I will turn to my teammates for help immediately.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When my classmates are doing their presentation, I will encourage them with my big smile and attentive eyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will not laugh at my teammates when they make mistakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will not chat with teammates during group work and discussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am willing to help my classmates and teammates when they need me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will do my best to use English to communicate with my peers and not my native language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I promise I will carry on with the task and take on full responsibility of my role.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will take responsibility of my own learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand, these Commitments are like regulations on self-control for what they should not do in their teams.

Before embarking in the simulations, students are asked to repeat and recall the commitments. The purpose behind this is for habit formation of self-control, discipline, learner autonomy and democracy in the classroom, and for students to get accustomed to this student-centred learning climate. The teacher asks the students to name their groups, for the purpose of fun and motivation, and to make it easier to know the groups and be referred to by their new names or identities. After 10 minutes discussion students named their groups after some famous singers, cars, animals...etc. some groups are named F4, Angels, Metallica...Each group is referred to by their group identities instead of group numbers henceforth.

2.3.4. Positive Reinforcement

During the experimental time span, the students are encouraged through positive reinforcement techniques, such as giving extra points, giving loud praises and positive comments about their work and effort, and applauding the groups in the end of each simulation. A table or chart is drawn on the board with the names of the groups and two columns for score with two
sections, group work and individual effort. Each time the teacher puts a score, a mark out of ten
to group work after discussion and comments about the work, between the teacher and the class,
another mark is given to one or two members in the group when their work seems outstanding
and very effective from the other members. This individual effort is taken into consideration for
the purpose of encouragement, motivation and it creates a sense of competition and
responsibility among the groups. Students are asked to applaud each group in the end for
encouragement and as a “thank you” observation from their classmates and the teacher for their
efforts and teamwork. After that, students get accustomed to the idea and they automatically
applaud, along with the teacher, and thank their classmates after each simulation.

2.3.5. The Simulations

We shall mention two simulations that are conducted in the experimental group by two
different groups: The first simulation “A class trip”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aims</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| b. Language Starting and directing conversations, decision making, and negotiation
of meaning, interaction, problem solving, and improvisation, flexibility in using the
foreign language, fun and imagination. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Group of four students (2 girls and 2 boys)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>verbal instructions and written cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>30-45 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Procedure

The first simulation performed by group F4. The simulation is “A Trip to Scotland”. The
group is made up of four students (two girls and two boys), this simulation was a trip to Scotland
for the first time as a group (Class trip). Students were given some guidelines to engage in the
simulation. Before starting the simulation students receive some input to guide them that
includes role assignments. The roles of learners have been specially defined as they are very prominent in the simulation replica, either through verbal instructions or role cards.

Students are provided with some verbal instructions and cards as a booklet guide for the trip. After a discussion between the groups with the teacher as a guide, the group starts their class trip. It is worth mentioning that students have an idea about the topic and the process of the simulation beforehand, since learners have watched a video with a similar simulation twice. For the sake of getting familiar with this technique and to provide some materials to simulate the environment such as passports, bags and of course the use of the classroom setting to simulated the environment. The various aspects of the class trip events were outlined and the teacher finds out which students are interested in which aspects.

The First thing to do is to apply to the airport in the check-in desk. The teacher is in the check in cabin as the agent since there is no one to fill this role, the agent checked their passports. One girl has forgotten her passport the students discusses what they should in this situation. Her partner suggests that she should call a relative to bring her passport to the airport. After a while the girl brought her passport the group is ready to start their flight. After a pleasant flight they arrive at Edinburgh, in the baggage reclaim there is a problem with the baggage lost baggage. The students then figured out that they should report the lost baggage in the lost baggage counter and fill in the lost baggage form. The students gather to discuss the issue of transportation what transport will they use to reach the hostel. They have to choose between Trains, buses and Taxis … one of the students raises the issue of money so that they should be more cautious in using it. They reach a consensus to use the bus thinking it is an opportunity to explore the city. Finally at the hostel the holiday can begin. They take a rest then decide what to do next according to their budget. Students bring with them some photos of the land marks in Edinburgh and they agree to visit the Edinburgh castle as a first landmark to visit during this class trip. That was the last step in this simulation. At the end the group is applauded and thanked by the teacher for their effort and good work since it is the first simulation.
2.3.6. Evaluation of the Task

In the simulation, the teacher is a mere observer, not participating or interfering with the work of the group, and at no time correcting any errors she hears. If particular errors recur, the teacher unobtrusively notes them. By the end of the task (the debriefing stage) the teacher will have gained an impression of how the students and groups performed in general terms, and whether the task in itself was successful.

In evaluating the efficacy of the simulation, the teacher must bear in mind aspects like learners’ performance, the language used that involves discussion of errors and the tactics employed by the learners. Also whether the group has followed the outlined instructions of their simulation or there are some information gaps and breakdowns. The nature of interaction between the students: is it natural and realistic? , and of course how this interaction is of benefit in solving problems, decision-making and negotiation of meanings.

The second Simulation “At the restaurant”

The second simulation is about visiting a restaurant for lunch. The group is made up of 3 girls and a boy.

Aims

a. Skills – speaking (communication). Preparation for possible real life situations

b. Language Starting and directing conversations, decision making, and negotiation of meaning, interaction, problem solving, hesitating, complaining, and flexibility in using the target language.

Organization Group of four students (3 girls and 1 boy)

Preparation verbal and outlined instructions

Time 35-50 minutes

Figure 3: Second Simulation Plan
The procedure

At first, the central idea of the activity is outlined with some verbal instructions. The group then discusses together these ideas, assign roles and the environment to be simulated. This step usually takes about 30 to 35 minutes. The group starts to arrange the classroom setting for the simulation. The teacher can guide them through these preparatory steps. However once the simulation starts the teacher becomes an observer, intervening when requested to act as an informant on the language or scenario, but otherwise simply collecting data to share in the debriefing. Overt errors correction should be avoided and mistakes noted for discussion later. The simulations then take place; both girls are headed to the restaurant for lunch. When arriving to the restaurant the girls spots a good table and decides to take it, the waitress (the other girl in the group) approaches the new coming girls with a welcoming smile and gives them the menu. The girls discuss what food to order and why, with the help of the waitress. After one minute the girls are ready to order. The waitress takes their order and asks them to wait a bit. At the end the girls went to the cashier to pay (the boy in the group), they ask for the bill and they figure out that they exceeded the amount of money they have. The girls discuss the issue with the cashier and come up with a solution. He suggests that they should give their identification cards and go to fetch the rest of the money. The girls agree and the problem is solved. At the end the girls felt happy for this experience but decided not to visit this restaurant again. The simulation came to an end. In the debriefing, the teacher discusses the overt linguistic errors what can be said instead of this? And why the group made such a choice? What sorts of vocabulary are used and are they appropriate in the situation?

2.3.7. Students’ Assessment

Although it is difficult to give a student a grade for work carried out as part of a group, by note taking and observations, the teacher can assess the students in a variety of ways: The quality of students’ work on tasks, the effectiveness of communication, the degree of participation, and the appropriacy of the group solution to the activity. Generally, however, the assessment will be on how students performed on individual tasks and on their participation and contribution to the group effort. At the end a mark is given to the students as a group with some plus for one or two members that gave good impressions in their efforts.

In sum, these two simulations and others are organized as follows: Preparation which involves the teacher in assessing both the students’ needs and abilities to ensure a suitable
scenario and organizing materials to provide authenticity. The second stage consists of information input. The participants are told what their task is, their roles, the nature of the situation and any constraints. Part three is the activity itself. The key activities are decision-making, problem solving and interacting, and these are the participants’ responsibility. The teacher observes students’ performance and manages the activity as a “controller”. Stage four consists of debriefing where the activity is evaluated and the interaction is discussed. The teacher helps students understand the exercise, review the language used, and build on weaknesses.

2.4. Data Collection

In order to collect data for this study, a pretest and a posttest were conducted. Both tests are oral involving paired dialogues to test the learner’s oral communicative competence regarding four aspects. The oral tasks designed in this study are interaction-based tests, which usually involves turn-takings (Weir, 1995). The reasons for including paired oral task as measurement of communicative competence are that, according to Weir (1995), “we want candidates to perform relevant language tasks and adapt their speech to the circumstances, making decisions under time pressure, implementing them fluently, and making any necessary adjustments as unexpected problems arise (p.31).”

The first task is administered in the beginning of the second semester as the pre-test and the second one toward the end of the semester as the post-test. The first oral task is show and tell. The students in both groups are paired to perform dialogues in front of the whole class, showing and talking about photos of their families and their neighborhood. The students bring photos of their family members to class and talk about the people in the pictures and the neighborhood they live in with their partners. Each pair is given five minutes to perform their conversation.

The grading of the communicative competence is based upon five criteria: appropriateness (20%), adequacy of vocabulary for purpose (20%), grammatical accuracy (20%), intelligibility (20%), and fluency (20%). A scoring rubric (Appendix I) adapted from Weir (1990) is developed along with the actual scoring sheet for the purpose of grading. The second oral task that the students performed as the post-test was talking about their partners’ favorite food and movies.
The aspects of communicative competence under investigation consist of: linguistic competence, discourse competence and strategic competence. The linguistic or grammatical competence in Canals model referred to the knowledge of lexical items of rules of morphology, syntax, semantic, and phonology. In order to measure the language use, the scoring rubric developed by Weir (1990) is adapted as the grading criteria. It suggests include appropriateness, grammatical accuracy, intelligibility, fluency and the adequacy of vocabulary for purpose (See Appendix I). Such grading criteria could possibly achieve the balance between grammaticality and appropriateness well as accuracy and fluency as discussed in sections 1.1.2.1 and 1.1.2.2.

As for the discourse competence, the most common definition of it is the ability to produce unified spoken discourse that shows coherence and cohesion (Canale 1983). However, with the students’ current level in this study, the scope of discourse analysis is altered and is limited to the knowledge and ability to utilize discourse markers of opening, transition, pre closing and closing in conversation and the length of pause between turn takings. All these elements of the discourse competence will be of help in grading the students through the rubric in terms of fluency and intelligibility. On the basis of the observation of most EFL performances, researchers note that the most common pause between turn takings is less than 3 seconds. Therefore pausing less than 3 seconds is considered acceptable in this study. Longer pauses from 4 to 7 seconds in natural conversations result in higher discomfort (Liang 2002). Therefore, any pause longer than 7 seconds will be considered silence and one of the major sign of communication breakdown in this study. How the students repaired their own silence as well as how they fixed other’s silence is considered as the strategic competence which is referred to as the possession of coping strategies in actual performance. Strategic competence as defined by Canale (1983) is composed of verbal and nonverbal communication strategies that might be called into action to compensate for communication breakdowns and enhance the effectiveness of communication.

To most EFL learners, especially learners with limited proficiency, communication breakdown might happen very often. Therefore, the ability to fix or repair when communication breakdown inevitably occurred is particularly important in terms of strategic competence. Silence without a justified cause could be annoying and irritating during face-to-face communication and is considered one of the most common phenomena of communication breakdown. How participants responds to communication breakdown either caused by the addressee or the speaker is an important sign of communicative competence and that is helpful to score students in terms of appropriateness in the scoring rubric.
The scores of the two oral tasks provided the basis for the data analysis in order to examine the effect of using simulations on the learners’ communicative competence. For the measurement of the communicative competence, the scores collected from the two oral tasks are computed to compare the inter-group differences using the Independent Samples Test, and the scores collected from the oral tasks of the five grading criteria are computed using The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

In addition to the analysis of the communicative competence measured and analyzed by statistical tool, the performance of the oral tasks is also transcribed for further analysis on the discourse, strategic competence that were of help in scoring the participants through the scoring rubric. The transcription of the records on the students’ performance is transcribed verbatim for the analysis of discourse competence with regard to the utilization of cohesion markers and the length of pause. The length of each pause is measured and compared. The transcribing conventions used in this study are displayed in Appendix II (with a transcribed sample).

2.5. Analysis of the Findings

This study attempts to examine the outcome of using simulations in language learning on improving learners’ oral communicative competence with regard to the research questions: (1) Can simulations be used as a technique to enable learners to communicate in an authentic way? (2) Is simulation effective in improving EFL learner’s communicative abilities?. The results of the aspects of oral communicative- competence are presented.

2.5.1. The Communicative Competence

For the measurement of the students’ communicative competence, two oral tasks were performed by the students, one as the pre-test, and the other as the post-test. The scores obtained in the pre-test for both groups accompanied with the mean of the groups and the mean of the five grad criteria, are all displayed in Table 3 and Table 4.
Table 3: The Control Group’s Scores and Means in the Oral Pretest (N=22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Students</th>
<th>Appropriateness 20%</th>
<th>Vocabulary 20%</th>
<th>Grammar 20%</th>
<th>Intelligibility 20%</th>
<th>Fluency 20%</th>
<th>Total score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>46.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>4-14</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>45</td>
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<td>5-15</td>
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<td>07</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>36</td>
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<td>6-16</td>
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<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
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<tr>
<td>7-17</td>
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<td>08</td>
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<td>8-18</td>
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<td>9-19</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>M (μ)</td>
<td>∑Xᵢ/n=10</td>
<td>∑Xᵢ/n=10.13</td>
<td>∑Xᵢ/n=9.50</td>
<td>∑Xᵢ/n=8.36</td>
<td>∑Xᵢ/n=7.00</td>
<td>∑Xᵢ/n=44.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample variance

\[ \sigma^2 = \frac{\sum (X_i - \mu)^2}{n} \]

\[ \sigma^2 = 447.21/11 \]

\[ \sigma^2 = 40.65 \]

The standard deviation of the control group

\[ \sigma = \sqrt{\sigma^2} \]

\[ \sigma = \sqrt{40.65} \]

\[ \sigma = 6.37 \]
Table 4: The Experimental Group’s Scores and Means in the Oral Pretest (N=22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Students</th>
<th>Appropriateness 20%</th>
<th>Vocabulary 20%</th>
<th>Grammar 20%</th>
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<td>9-19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample variance
\[ \sigma^2 = \frac{\sum (X_i - \mu)^2}{n} \]
\[ \sigma^2 = 496.06/11 \]
\[ \sigma^2 = 45.09 \]

The standard deviation of the experimental group
\[ \sigma = \sqrt{\sigma^2} \]
\[ \sigma = \sqrt{45.09} \]
\[ \sigma = 6.71 \]

The Independent Sample Test
\[ SEM = \frac{SD}{\sqrt{N-1}} \]
\[ \text{SEM}_1 = \frac{6.37}{\sqrt{21}} \]
\[ \text{SEM}_1 = 1.39 \]
\[ \text{SEM}_2 = \frac{6.71}{\sqrt{21}} \]
\[ \text{SEM}_2 = 1.46 \]

*Standard error of the difference (SED)*

\[ \text{SED} = \sqrt{(\text{SEM}_1)^2 + (\text{SEM}_2)^2} \]
\[ \text{SED} = \sqrt{1.39^2 + 1.46^2} \]
\[ \text{SED} = 2.01 \]

*The t-value*

\[ t = \frac{\mu_1 - \mu_2}{\text{SED}} \]
\[ t = \frac{45.75 - 44.90}{2.01} \]
\[ t = 0.40 \]

Consulting a t-table at 42 df (df = N_1 + N_2 - 2), we find a critical t value of 2.01 at the 0.05 level of significance. Clearly, the observed t-value is less than the critical t-value (2.01 > 0.40).

The results of the pre-test of the oral task indicated that the two classes obtained similar scores on the pre-test. The mean score of the control group is 44.90 and 45.72 in the experimental group, as shown in Table. There is no statistical significance (p=.25) found between the pre-test scores in both groups, as indicated in Table 5.

**Table 5: Inter-group Statistics of the Oral Pre-test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-test</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental group</td>
<td>45.72</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>44.90</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The scores obtained in the post oral task of the control and the experimental groups are displayed in Table 6 and Table 7 respectively.

**Table 6: The Control Group’s Scores and Means in the Oral Posttest (N=22)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Students</th>
<th>Appropriateness 20%</th>
<th>Vocabulary 20%</th>
<th>Grammar 20%</th>
<th>Intelligibility 20%</th>
<th>Fluency 20%</th>
<th>Total score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-12</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-13</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-15</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>04</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-16</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-17</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-18</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-22</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>05</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (μ)</td>
<td>( \sum X_i/n = 8.54 )</td>
<td>( \sum X_i/n = 9.27 )</td>
<td>( \sum X_i/n = 10.27 )</td>
<td>( \sum X_i/n = 7.27 )</td>
<td>( \sum X_i/n = 7.10 )</td>
<td>( \sum X_i/n = 42.09 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample variance

\[ \sigma^2 = \frac{\sum (X_i - \mu)^2}{n} \]

\[ \sigma^2 = \frac{472.85}{11} \]

\[ \sigma^2 = 42.98 \]

The standard deviation of the control group

\[ \sigma = \sqrt{\sigma^2} \]

\[ \sigma = \sqrt{42.98} \]

\[ \sigma = 6.55 \]
Table 7: The Experimental Group’s Scores and Means in the Oral Posttest (N=22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Students</th>
<th>Appropriateness 20%</th>
<th>Vocabulary 20%</th>
<th>Grammar 20%</th>
<th>Intelligibility 20%</th>
<th>Fluency 20%</th>
<th>Total score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-15</td>
<td>07</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-17</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>09</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>56.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-19</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-22</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M (µ)</td>
<td>ΣX_i/n=11.63</td>
<td>ΣX_i/n=11.81</td>
<td>ΣX_i/n=10.90</td>
<td>ΣX_i/n=10.90</td>
<td>ΣX_i/n=11.00</td>
<td>ΣX_i/n=56.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sample variance

\[ \sigma^2 = \frac{\sum (X_i - \mu)^2}{n} \]

\[ \sigma^2 = 225.65/11 \]

\[ \sigma^2 = 20.51 \]

The standard deviation of the experimental group

\[ \sigma = \sqrt{\sigma^2} \]

\[ \sigma = \sqrt{20.51} \]

\[ \sigma = 4.52 \]

The Independent Sample Test

\[ \text{SEM} = \frac{SD}{\sqrt{n-1}} \]
SEM_1 = \frac{6.55}{\sqrt{21}} \\
SEM_1 = 1.43 \\
SEM_2 = \frac{4.52}{\sqrt{21}} \\
SEM_2 = 0.98 \\

Standard error of the difference (SED)

\[ SED = \sqrt{(SEM_1)^2 + (SEM_2)^2} \]

SED = \sqrt{1.43^2 + 0.98^2} = 1.73 \\

The t-value

\[ t = \frac{\mu_1 - \mu_2}{SED} \]

\[ t = \frac{56.27 - 42.09}{1.73} \]

\[ t = 8.13 \]

Consulting a t-table at 42 df, we find a critical t-value of 2.01 at the 0.05 level of significance. Clearly, the observed t-value exceeds the critical t-value. (8.13 > 2.01).

After running the independent sample test, the results in the post test of the oral task indicates that the experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group, with the mean score of 56.27 against 42.09 of the control group as shown in Table 4. The experimental group gained 14.18 more than the control group on the post-test of oral performance. Such a mean difference (MD) is statistically significant because the \( p \)-value is as low as 0.00, as the last column of Table 8 displays.

**Table 8: Inter-group Statistics of the Oral Posttest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>n</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exp</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>56.27</td>
<td>14.18</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>8.13</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cont</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42.09</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
Thus, the difference between the experimental group’s pre-test and post-test scores is highly significant. This means that the obtained results were due to the manipulation of the independent variable and not to chance. This permits the rejection of the null hypothesis. It can be concluded that Simulation does bring about a significant improvement in the learners’ communicative competence.

In addition to the inter-group analysis presented above, the results of the intra-group comparison were also presented as follows. The first intra-group analysis was made on the experimental group. As shown in Table 9, the experimental group gained 10.55 in the post-test, compared with the scores they got in the pre-test. Such gain was statistically significant since the p-value was as low as .0005*.

Table 9: Results of t-test on Oral Tasks in Experimental Group (N=22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>45.72</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>10.55</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>.0005*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>56.27</td>
<td>6.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05

The Independent Sample Test

SEM of the control group in the post test (SEM₁)

\[
SEM₁ = \frac{SD}{\sqrt{N-1}}
\]

\[
SEM₁ = \frac{6.55}{\sqrt{21}}
\]

\[
SEM₁ = 1.43
\]

SEM of the control group in the pretest (SEM₂)

\[
SEM₂ = \frac{6.71}{\sqrt{21}}
\]

\[
SEM₂ = 1.46
\]

Standard error of the difference (SED)

\[
SED = \sqrt{(SEM₁)^2 + (SEM₂)^2}
\]

SED = \sqrt{1.43^2 + 1.46^2}

SED = 2.04

The t-value
t = \frac{\mu_1 - \mu_2}{\text{SED}}
\begin{align*}
t &= \frac{56.27 - 45.72}{2.04} \\
t &= 5.17
\end{align*}

Consulting a t-table at 42 degrees of freedom (df = N_1 + N_2 - 2), we find a critical t value of 2.01 at the 0.05 level of significance. Clearly, the observed t-value exceeds the critical t-value (5.17 > 2.01).

In contrast to the significant improvement of the experimental group in the oral task, the control group, instead of making progress in the post-test oral performance, scored lower than their own pre-test performance. As shown in Table 10, the mean score of the pre-test in the control group is 44.90, but the score of the post-test is 42.09, lower than the pre-test. In other words, unlike the significant progress in the experimental group’s oral performance, the control group’s scores on oral performance dropped 2.81 as illustrated in Table 6. The difference between the score of the pre-test and that of the post test is not statistically significant (p=.25), as shown in Table 10.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre</td>
<td>44.90</td>
<td>6.37</td>
<td>2.81</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>42.09</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The Independent Sample Test**

*SEM of the control group in the pretest (SEM₁)*

\[\text{SEM} = \frac{\text{SD}}{\sqrt{N-1}}\]

\[\text{SEM}_1 = \frac{6.37}{\sqrt{21}}\]

\[\text{SEM}_1 = 1.39\]

*SEM of the control group in the posttest (SEM₂)*
Standard error of the difference (SED)

\[ SED = \sqrt{(SEM_1)^2 + (SEM_2)^2} \]

\[ SED = \sqrt{1.39^2 + 0.98^2} \]

\[ SED = 1.70 \]

The t-value

\[ t = \frac{\mu_1 - \mu_2}{SED} \]

\[ t = \frac{44.90 - 42.09}{1.70} \]

\[ t = 1.65 \]

Consulting a t-table at 42 df, we find a critical t-value of 2.01 at the 0.05 level of significance (p value). Clearly, the observed t-value is less than the critical t-value (1.65 < 2.01).

In addition to comparing the total scores of the two groups, the inter-group analysis of the five items of grading criteria (Appendix I) based on which the students were graded were also investigated for further analysis. The five items included: appropriateness (20%), vocabulary (20%), grammar (20%), intelligibility (20%), and fluency (20%). The results of each of the five items were presented in the following table.

After running the Means of the five grading criteria through the SPSS, we obtained the following results:

**Table 11: t-test Results of Pre-Oral Task in the Five Grading Criteria (N=44)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Experimental (M)</th>
<th>Control (M)</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness</td>
<td>9.81</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>10.36</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>10.00</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligibility</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>7.18</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Table 11, all the items did not show any significant difference between the two groups in the pretest. The mean difference of intelligibility is 0.0 since both groups have the same mean in the pretest.

Table 12 examined the inter-group difference in the post-test oral task, the experimental group outperforms the control group significantly on four items with the p-value lower than .05: (1) the appropriateness (p < .05), (2) vocabulary (p < .05), (3) Fluency (p < .05), and (4) intelligibility (p < .05). The only item that do not show any statistical significance on the post-test oral task between the two groups is grammar (p = .40).

Table 12: t-test Results of the Post-Oral Task in the Five Grading Criteria (N=44)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Experimental (M)</th>
<th>Control (M)</th>
<th>MD</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appropriateness</td>
<td>11.63</td>
<td>8.54</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>11.81</td>
<td>9.27</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.0005*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar</td>
<td>10.90</td>
<td>10.27</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligibility</td>
<td>10.90</td>
<td>7.27</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>.00*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fluency</td>
<td>11.00</td>
<td>7.10</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.00*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

Figure 4 illustrates the comparison of the five grading criteria between the groups in the posttest discussed above.
2.5.2. Discourse Competence

After analyzing the inter-statistical results on the scores of the two oral tasks, the findings of discourse competence in terms of the following aspects are examined: (1) cohesion markers of opening, transition, pre-closing, as well as closing, and (2) the length of pauses. First the analysis of the pre-oral task in both groups will be presented, then the analysis of the Post-oral task.

2.5.2.1. Cohesion Markers

As shown in Table 13 there is no significant difference in the number of students who used cohesion markers in their conversations between the control and experimental group. As shown there is no difference in how the students ended their conversation between the two groups as well as in the use of transition marker.
Table 13: Inter-group Comparison of Cohesion Markers in the Oral Pretest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of cohesion markers</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opening</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Transition</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pre-Closing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Closing</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 14, there was no difference between the two groups in how the students ended their conversation. Though no difference was found on the closing, the experimental group did outperform the control group in terms of the other three cohesion markers: opening, transition, and pre-closing.

Table 14: Inter-group Comparison of Cohesion Markers in the Oral Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of cohesion markers</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opening</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Transition</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pre-Closing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Closing</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 14. Nineteen students in the experimental group employed greetings “hi,” “hello,” “hey,” and “good morning” to open their conversation while only twelve students in the control group used opening markers to start their dialogues. The majority of the participants in the control group cut right into the topic without any opening at all. Without any opening strategies, their conversation sound rather abrupt. Here are some of the examples of the first sentence without proper opening in the control group:
1. What is your favorite food? (Subject C5)
2. I like chicken. How about you? (Subject C18)
3. What are you doing? (Subject C20)
4. Do you like fish? (Subject C13)
5. Which do you like? (Subject C7)

The third sample line of a dialogue is a way of greeting in the Algerian context, but in English it becomes very awkward as an opening to this question (Cultural difference).

Without openings, these dialogues sounded more like pattern drills than real-life conversation. In contrast, the opening excerpts from the experimental groups displayed more smoothness and naturalness to start a conversation:
1. Hi. How are you doing? (Subject E6)
2. Hi, Rim. (Subject E10)
3. Oh, hi. How are you? (Subject E12)
4. Hello, Mohamed. (Subject E20)
5. Long time no see. (Subject E13)
6. Hey! (Subject E02)
7. Hi! (Subject E16)

When it comes to the transition point in the conversation, the contrast was even bigger between the two groups of participants. Table 14 showed that twelve participants in the experimental group used transitions like “hey,” “oh,” “yes,” “hum,” “I am sorry,” or addressed their partners as signals of transition to change the topic. Unfortunately, only four in the control group used transition marker during their conversation. Here is an example of transition occurrence identified in the control group in the dialogue performed by Subject C5 and subject C15: (transitions underlined) (just part of the conversation)

C 5: Hi, Meriem.
C 15: Hi, Amina.
C 5: Which do you like, meat or cheese?
C 15: I like meat.
C 5: I like cheese more. HUM. I have to go now.
C 15: ok. Good-bye.
C 5: Good-bye.
In comparison with the control group, there were not only more occurrences of transition markers in the experimental group, but also more varieties of the transition markers. Here are some examples of the transitions in the experimental group: (transitions underlined)

E 8: Oh, I have English class at six o’clock. Good-bye.
E 14: Hey, Youssef, I have to go now.
E 17: Hum, I have to go home now.
E 21: I am sorry, I need to go now.

Twelve participants in the experimental group used at least five strategies (hey, oh, hum, I am sorry, Youssef) to signal the transition of topic during their conversation, as illustrated in the above examples, but only four persons used the transition marker of hum and oh in the control group. In addition to the transition markers discussed above, another item under examination here was the signal of pre-closing. The cohesion markers of pre-closing that shadowed the end of the conversation seemed relatively difficult to both groups. However, some significant differences could still be traced between the two groups as shown in Table 14. Twelve participants in the experimental group informed their partners of their future activities (like English class, watch a movie, going to the restaurant, call my father, go home, etc.) as signs of pre-closing to excuse themselves. But, only five students employed the pre-closing markers before they ended their conversations. Without the proper signals of pre-closing, the endings appeared out of harmony and, sometimes, even rude. An example of a conversation without opening, transition, and pre-closing performed by Subject C3 and C13 was identified in the control group:

C3: What do you like, horror or romance movies?
C13: I like Horror.
C3: How about your brother?
C13: My brother likes Horror, too.
C3: OK, bye.
C13: bye.

Subject C3 asked C13 directly about his genre in movies without any greeting like “Hi,” or “Hello.” And there was no transition, nor signs of pre-closing before the end of their conversation. In contrast, an illustrated pattern with opening, transition, pre-closing and closing performed by E9 and E19 was pinpointed in the experimental group: (transitions underlined)
E9: Good morning, Bassem.
E19: Good morning, Zineb.
E9: Where are you going?
E19: I am going to the restaurant.
E9: Oh, what is your favorite food?
E19: I like fish. Hey, I am sorry; I have English class at six. I have to go now.
E9: Good luck. Good-bye.
E19: Thank you. Good-bye.

Figure 5 below illustrates the comparison of the cohesion markers between the groups in the posttest discussed above.

![Comparison of Cohesion Markers](image)

**Figure 5: Comparison of Cohesion Markers in the Posttest of Both Groups**

### 2.5.2.2. Length of Pause

In addition to the investigation on the cohesion markers as presented above, the length of pause was examined for further analysis of the participants’ discourse competence. As presented previously, the proper length of pause for the participants in this study is pausing less than three seconds. It could be between one to two seconds, or between two to three seconds.
The analysis of the length of pauses was relatively more difficult to compare between the two groups because of the different total number of turn-takings in each group. There were more turn-takings in the experimental group than those in the control group. Therefore, the comparisons on the length of pauses between the two groups are made upon percentage of the overall profile of the pause these participants demonstrated in both tables.

Table 15: Inter-group Comparisons on length of Pause in the Pretest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse competence (2) Length of pause</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pause between turn taking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 seconds pause</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 seconds pause</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 seconds pause</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 7 seconds pause</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering learners’ level, they tended to pause longer than native speakers would do (less than 0.5 second) in a conversation. The overall assumption in the counting of the pause was that the shorter the pause, the better the cohesion effect. What was compared would be the desired pause between one to three seconds. There are slight differences in both groups with regard to their pausing percentage. There are six students (27%) in the control group and seven students (31%) in the experimental group that paused more than 7 seconds.

Table 16: Inter-group Comparisons on Length of Pause in the Posttest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discourse competence (2) Length of pause</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Experimental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pause between turn taking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 3 seconds pause</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-5 seconds pause</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-7 seconds pause</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 7 seconds pause</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 14, the percentage of proper pause less than three seconds in the control group was 9%, while in the experimental group it was 41%.
2.5.3. Strategic Competence

The strategic competence in this study referred to one’s ability to deal with communication breakdown, in observing the learners’ conversations the main communication breakdown is silence either caused by partner’s silence or one’s own silence. Silence is defined by pausing longer than seven seconds, as discussed previously in the present study. When the participants paused longer than seven seconds, they usually remained silent thereafter. Therefore, the strategic competence examined in this section is based on counting the number of the participants who paused longer than seven seconds. In the pretest, six (27%) students in the control and seven students (31%) in the experimental group, and in the posttest, four students (18%) in the experimental group and eight (36%) students in the control group. The reacting strategies to communication breakdown like silence could be an important indicator of communicative competence. With appropriate tactics, one could reduce the embarrassment to a certain degree. In this study, some of the students signaled to their partners so that their conversation could continue. Others would go on with their own lines despite of their partners’ unresponsiveness. The worst situation is that the students gave up the rest of the task without any endeavor to recover at all. Students in the experimental group demonstrated more positive social skills and are thus more competent in managing communication breakdown. Most of the
experimental group students reacted positively to silence in the posttest either by apologizing, trying to remind their partner and finishing the task or via smiling with a verbal apology “I am sorry”, which is not the case with control group that preferred to remain silent or give up the whole task.

2.6. Summary of the Results

In this chapter, the quantitative analysis of the quasi-experiment was presented with regard to how the intervention of Simulations influenced the learner’s communicative competence; the analysis of the two oral tasks was presented to answer the research questions:

1. Can simulation be used as a new technique to enable learners of English to communicate in an authentic way?
2. Is simulation effective in improving EFL learners’ communication abilities?

The results are summarized as follows:

1. The experimental group scored significantly higher than the control group in terms of communicative competence (p = .00), while there was no significant gain identified in the control group (p = .25). In addition to the comparison of the total scores, each score from the five grading criteria was also compared for inter-group analysis. The experimental group gained significantly on all of the five grading criteria: appropriateness, vocabulary, grammar, intelligibility, and fluency.

2. The experimental group demonstrated better discourse competence by employing more discourse markers of openings, transitions, and pre-closings in their conversations. Besides, the overall length of pause was shorter in experimental group than that in the control group.

3. The experimental group outdid the control group in strategic competence by showing more verbal and nonverbal strategies to fix the communication breakdown occurred during their oral performance.

2.6. Discussions and Conclusions

The results presented in this chapter suggest that the students studying in the simulation context outperform the students in the control group who study English in the traditional method. The effects of simulation seem salient in enhancing the EFL students’ English learning, notably their oral communicative competence. Based upon the findings discussed, guidelines of
implementing simulation in language classes are thus proposed and conclusions are drawn. The pedagogical implications, limitations of the present study, and suggestions for further research will be presented in this section.

The significant gains of the experimental group on the interaction-based oral task supported Hatch’s view (1983) that to acquire a foreign language the most useful form of interaction is a conversation that has no predetermined (by the teacher or others) outcome and where the results are negotiated among the participants. This is precisely what happens in simulation. Thus simulation is actually a practice that could put the communicative approach into action. Due to the socially oriented situations simulated and learned through small group interaction, the students in the experimental group were able to demonstrate better, and significantly better, linguistic competence, discourse competence, strategic competence than the control group. Such findings were congruent with enhancing learner’s communicative competence.

The possible reasons to account for the significant gains in the experimental group in terms of their improvement in the measured aspects of the oral communicative competence could be synthesized into the following categories: the increase of student talk through comprehensible input and interaction (output), the positive reinforcement, and the supportive and communicative communicative competence, as demonstrated in the results of this study.

In the simulation context, there are many interactive tasks that would naturally stimulate the students’ cognitive, linguistic, and social abilities, thus creating powerful learning opportunities. As Weir (1995) stated, interactions between more than two persons are the necessities for effective communication activities and oral practice. The experimental group was endowed with more opportunities to actually practice the target language in class through many of the student-centred activities and simulations that is congruent with Crookall and Oxford (1990) view “Simulation can compensate for the limitations of the traditional teacher-centered classroom by relocating the locus of conversational control and allowing other language models to be introduced and experienced” (p. 228).

Almost in each lesson, along with simulations, the students are asked to practice and perform different interaction-based activities in each new unit presented in the oral expression class. Through The frequent practice of the communicative activities that involved pair work and class work which engaged all students in speaking, the quality of communication of the experimental group was better than that in the control group, and the amount of student-talk was
maximized. Almost up to 80 percent of the class time in the experimental group was scheduled for simulation activities that included a lot of student talk in the target language. And the student talk was done simultaneously so that almost all of the students were engaged in language production and practice. The student-centred method of Simulation helped to increase the active communication for the students in the experimental group.

In a less threatening learning context, that of simulation, students can speak without the fear of committing face threatening errors and mistakes. The students in the experimental group were able to demonstrate higher oral classroom participation which is not the case with the control group. Such findings of the significant improvement of the students’ oral abilities are shown in Table 12, Table 14 and Table 16.

The experimental group had more opportunities to formally and informally interact with their teacher as well as their peers, and, therefore, had more chances to be corrected by their teacher whenever inappropriate behaviors occurred. In simulation practices, the students in the experimental group demonstrated more use of facial expressions, hand gestures, or even body language to make their peers understand than those in the control group. Being able to display eye contact and smile might be attributed to the reason that the students felt more secured and supportive learning with their peers. The smile might also be an indicator that they started to enjoy the class or they felt more relaxed in the Simulation context. Smile could be an essential non-verbal language in communication, especially when some of the students forgot their lines during the oral task. Their partners’ smile would be very encouraging and supportive at this critical moment. It is interesting to note that when the students were able to express verbal apology to their partners, they were able to smile, though unable to utter verbal apology. It seemed that most students in the experimental group were not totally frightened by the occurrence of communication breakdown. They were, at least, able to keep eye contact with their partners to maintain the communication. Maybe that is why most students in the experimental group displayed more cooperative skills and efforts to maintain the communication, like reminding their partners, smiling to encourage, and being able to apologize when silence inevitably occurred.

The value of commitment, inherited from Simulations, to the common goal was displayed in the experimental group’s effort to remind their partners’ lines so that they could complete their task. Apparently, the participants in the experimental group had acquired the cooperative skills
that endowed them to find ways to facilitate and encourage the efforts of others that they learned or acquired from the use of Simulations.

With this inherent value of commitment, the participants who caused silence due to their own fault in the experimental group still searched for ways to fix or repair the embarrassing silence by smiling, apologizing, or at least by maintaining eye contact. Moreover, the positive reaction to communication breakdown also showed that simulation contributed to enhance the students’ social skills and understanding of the demands of the situation. The control group, taught in the traditional method, tended to quit the task when they encountered communication breakdown. Little sign of effort to repair the communication could be traced in the control group. It seemed that these students were not in the habit of facilitating and encouraging others, in order to complete a common task together.

Students in the teacher-centered classroom tended to be passive recipients without much training and opportunities to solve problems on their own. As a result, whenever some unexpected problems occurred during their conversation, like the communication breakdown during their oral task, most of them did not know what to do. The resigning attitude might be possibly caused by the passive and competitive learning climate, which is dominant in most traditional classrooms, each individual perceived that he or she could reach his or her goal regardless of whether other individuals had attained their goals or not. Thus, students tended to seek an outcome that is personally beneficial without concerns for others. Being unable to help out when their partners were in need, the students in the control group were also unable to fix their own silence. This also indicated that the teacher-centered instructional method did not equip students with the problem solving ability.

The experimental group performed significantly better in the analysis of the five grading criteria of the communicative competence (appropriateness, vocabulary, grammar, intelligibility, and fluency), as illustrated in Table 12. In the inter-group comparisons on these five items in the post-oral task, the experimental group achieved significant gains (p < .05) on the grading items of appropriateness, vocabulary, fluency, and intelligibility. The only item that did not gain significantly is grammar, as shown in Table 10. The control group, taught in the traditional method, has performed significantly better on the item of grammar. The possible reason might be because students are learning Grammar effectively in their grammar class.
In sum, the experimental group gained significantly in the measured aspects of the communicative competence and in the meantime, with such results, simulation deserves more attention to be enacted in the communicative approach in the current wave of English education.

2.6.2. Limitations and Suggestions

Though some positive findings are identified in this study to claim the effectiveness of simulation on the EFL learners’ communicative competence some limitations of the present study might be noted before the results could be generalized. Firstly, the sample of the participants was restricted to only two classes of the first year LMD students and the sample size was relatively small. Future studies on more student participants or more teachers using simulation in more classes are recommended in order to generate more evidence on the effects of simulations.

Moreover, the data collected for the analysis of the students’ communicative competence was based only on the design of two interaction-based oral tasks. Though some aspects of oral communicative competence were under investigation, the students’ communicative competence in writing, reading, and listening were not measured in this study. With time constraints the period of treatment was one month two hours a week and 80 percent of the time was spent on getting students prepared for simulations particularly forming groups and raising students’ motivation and excitement for the use of simulations in each session. As a result the findings may not provide valuable evidence on learners’ improvement in communicative competence, and future research might develop reliable and valid measurements as well as significant results.

Another drawback of this study was recording the students’ interactions in the pre and the post tests for the convenience of transcribing the data. Students were resistant to the idea of being recorded during their performances which resulted in reluctance and abandonment of the activity. The teacher recorded their performances with a hidden recorded material. The measurement of the strategic competence was mainly via the teacher’s observations therefore this competence was not adequately representative. For further reassert it is recommended to place a camera somewhere in the classroom for better and elaborate representation of learners’ performance and for observing the nonverbal features which are of very importance in any communication.
In the end it is worth mentioning that testing the communicative competence is not an easy task and cannot be assessed adequately, and any designed oral task will have its own limitations in testing fully all the components of the communicative competence as Chambers and Richards (1992) state "... it is unlikely that all components can be assessed at once at any level by any task, or given equal importance" (p. 8). The communicative competence being tested in this study was narrowed for the purpose of the study. For further research it is recommended to adapt a comprehensive model of testing communicative competence, and to design oral and communicative tasks that will effectively measure this competence.

2.6.3. Pedagogical Implications

There are two major pedagogical implications arising from this study: the preparation of the EFL learners to use simulations within a student-centered context, and the importance of the teacher in the development of simulations.

First of all, it should be noted that simulation does not replace direct instruction completely in an EFL class. As the present study demonstrated, the teacher still employed some direct instruction and provided interaction based activities during the session in the experimental group. The findings of the significant gains in the grading item of grammar in the experimental group supported the claim that communicative instruction should involve some systematic treatments to draw the EFL learners’ attention to linguistic forms to develop well-balanced communicative competence.

Teachers have to be very careful when using simulations techniques to teach beginning level EFL students because the students are not proficient enough to provide adequate input for each other. Teachers may also find it difficult to provide discussion and explanation about the process of simulation; therefore it is advised to endow students with a range of interactive tasks such as pair work, information-gap activities, cooperative tasks and class discussions. Such an interactive learning environment, play an important part that easily accommodates a simulation. Students will then be less inhibited by the idea of getting out of their chairs and participating in a simulated reality. A series of short, simple role plays or group-based tasks can prepare students for what to expect and lead them gradually into a wider activity (Hyland, 1993).

Another way of overcoming students’ reticence of learning is to encourage them to see simulations as an essential and integral part of their language syllabus. In this way students can
prepare for a simulation directly as ongoing part of their course. There are two ways of approaching this:

- One is by integrating simulation into language course book. This requires careful selection of the simulation to ensure both that learners have control over the language required and that the situation is relevant to their linguistic needs. It is probably wise to minimize the amount of newly introduced language required, however, for while some useful lexis may be introduced at the briefing stage, students cannot assimilate a great deal immediately. While attention will be focused on the new items then, language central to simulation to the simulation should be familiar to students. Until students are comfortable with simulations, it is a good idea to keep them short (Hyland, 1993).

- Alternatively, and perhaps preferably, minimal language work be done initially and the simulation integrated into the course by providing an opportunity for students to consolidate the language they have acquired already. This enables learners to practice language they are confident with in realistic settings and to become aware of what they still need to learn in order to deal with particular communicative situation. The more ambitious teacher might then choose the entire course around simulation. This establishes a meaningful framework for integrating language and communication skills while allowing students to work on a variety of task (Hyland 1992, cited in Hyland, 1993, p18).

The teacher role in the development of simulation in an EFL class is of great importance. Before embarking in the simulations, teachers should primarily highlight general objectives as an example: “I want my students to become more comfortable when visiting restaurants or to be more at ease in business situations, such as negotiating a contract.”, and specific objectives, particularly “I want my students to know how to give their orders in fast restaurants”. Initially in simulations, the student’s personal ideas and suggestions are essential to learning but the task has to be chosen under the guidelines of a teacher.

Among most intricate and complex simulations, the activities of the teacher may be more comprehensive and learners’ activities may be more defined. The teacher might, for example, explain a handout or have the student read a case study explaining the situation and role play cards might be distributed. Such simulations can be applied to teaching language in many areas
for instance business, industry and technical English (Jameel 2011). The teacher in the simulation class keeps a comparatively low profile; s/he should work as a controller, an observer, and a guide when necessary, but not participating in the simulation task. Thus this will create spontaneous communication among students and maximizes student talk which works in favor to the students oriented classes instead of traditional teacher oriented classes. The teacher should first familiarize students with the foreign concept of simulation technique as discussed in Chapter One. S/he has to provide useful input as a foundation for students to start the simulations, forming groups, select roles and duties organize the flow of the task are all the teacher duties as a controller and a guide. As an observer the teacher has to observe carefully the simulations jotting down any necessary comments for later remedial work.

The teacher cooperation is as important as reinforcing cooperation among students. It is essential that teachers can establish objectives and goals for their students. Providing feedback along each step in the simulation class can help the students to raise their awareness about the benefit of this teaching technique in enhancing their English learning. These efforts will immensely increase the students’ enjoyment of learning in a more excited environment, as well as increase the teachers’ enjoyment of working and teaching.

CONCLUSION

The strong need for good communicative skills and proficiency in English is as strong as ever. The worldwide demand for English has created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources. A possible teaching technique to address the problem of low English proficiency in most Algerian EFL classes would be the use of Simulations in language learning.

The principal advantage of the simulation technique for language learning is that it provides students with realistic environment in which they can develop a range of communicative skills. Learners need to use the linguistic system creatively and appropriately if they are to obtain proficiency in English, and as a result simulations are particularly useful in contexts where students have few opportunities for contact with native speakers. Realistic communication and high output practice in the classroom is essential for all students where they can transfer their formal classroom learning to the real world.
Such a student-centered teaching technique helps improve the students’ oral communicative and interactive abilities of the target language, which include the linguistic, discourse, strategic, and non-verbal competencies because simulation creates a more friendly and supportive learning environment within which students have more opportunities and enjoy more freedom to explore and practice the target language. This communicative technique creates natural, interactive contexts in which students have authentic reasons for listening to one another, asking questions, clarifying issues, and re-stating points of view. Such frequent interaction among the learners, in turn, increases the amount of student talk and student participation in the classroom. While they may seem a daunting prospect to teachers unfamiliar with them, simulations deserves a central place in our repertoire of language teaching methods and techniques.
REFERENCES


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# Appendix I: Scoring Rubric (adapted from Weir 1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores Total: 100%</th>
<th>Items and percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appropriateness 20%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Unable to function in the spoken language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Able to operate only in a very limited capacity: responses characterized by sociocultural inappropriateness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Signs of developing attempts at response to role, setting, etc., but misunderstandings may occasionally arise through inappropriateness, particularly of sociocultural convention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>Almost no errors in the sociocultural conventions of language; errors not significant enough to be likely to cause social misunderstandings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adequacy of Vocabulary for purpose 20%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Vocabulary inadequate even for the most basic parts of the intended communication.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Vocabulary limited to that necessary to express simple elementary needs; inadequacy of vocabulary restricts topics of interaction to the most basic; perhaps frequent lexical inaccuracies and/or excessive repetition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Some misunderstandings may arise through lexical inadequacy or inaccuracy; hesitation and circumlocution are frequent, though there are signs of a developing active vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>Almost no inadequacy or inaccuracies in vocabulary for the task. Only rare circumlocution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammatical accuracy 20%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Unable to function in the spoken language; almost all grammatical patterns inaccurate, except for a few stock phrases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Syntax is fragmented and there are frequent grammatical inaccuracies; some patterns may be mastered but speech may be characterized by a telegraphic style and/or confusion of structural elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Some grammatical inaccuracies; developing a control of major patterns, but sometimes unable to sustain coherence in longer utterances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>Almost no grammatical inaccuracies; occasional imperfect control of a few patterns.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intelligibility 20%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Severe and constant rhythm, intonation and pronunciation problems cause almost complete unintelligibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Strong interference from L1 rhythm, intonation and pronunciation; understanding is difficult, and achieved often only after frequent repetition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation require concentrated listening, but only occasional misunderstanding is caused or repetition required.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>Articulation is reasonably comprehensible to native speakers; there may be a marked ‘foreign accent’ but almost no misunderstanding is caused and repetition required only infrequently.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fluency 20%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>Utterances halting, fragmentary, and incoherent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>Utterances hesitant and often incomplete except in a few stock remarks and responses. Sentences are, for the most part, disjointed and restricted in length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>Signs of developing attempts at using cohesive devices, especially conjunctions. Utterances may still be hesitant, but are gaining in coherence, speed, and length.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>Utterances, whilst occasionally hesitant, are characterized by evenness and flow hindered, very occasionally, by grouping, rephrasing, and circumlocutions; inter-sentential connectors are used effectively as filters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix: II

### Transcription Conventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>Speakers are generally numbered in the order they first speak. The speaker ID is given at the beginning of each turn.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>A speaker's first name is represented by the plain speaker ID in square brackets [S1], etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1. INTONATION**

- **Example:**
  
  S1: that’s what my next or slide? does  
  Example:
  
  S2: that’s point two. Absolutely yes.

- **Example:**
  
  S1: er internationalization is a very IMPORTANT issue
  Example:
  
  S2: toMORrow we have to work on the presentation already

**2. EMPHASIS**

- **Example:**
  
  S1: aha (2) so finally arrival on Monday evening is still valid
  Example:
  
  S1: what up till (.) till twelve?  
  S2: yes=  
  S1: =really. So it’s it’s quite a lot of time.

**3. PAUSES**

- **Example:**
  
  SX-f: because they all give me different (. ) different (. ) points of view
  Example:
  
  S1: mhm  
  S2: participation from french universities to say we have er (. ) a joint doctorate or a joint master

**4. WORD FRAGMENTS and REPETOIN**

- **Example:**
  
  S2: with a minimum of (. ) of participa-  
  S1: mhm
  S2: -pation from french universities to say we have er (. ) a joint doctorate or a joint master

**5. LAUGHTER**

- **Example:**
  
  S1: in denmark well who knows.  
  All laughter and laughter-like sounds are transcribed with the h symbol, approximating syllable number (e.g. ha haha =
S2: <h>yeah</h> that’s right</noindent>

6. NON-ENGLISH SPEECH

Example:
S5: <L1de>beifirmen</L1de> or wherever

<h h h). Utterances spoken laughingly are put between <h></h> tags.

Utterances in a participant’s first language (L1) are put between tags indicating the speaker’s L1.


Since there are many and different transcription convention, the conventions presented above are the most used ones in this study to facilitate the process of transcription.
Sample Transcription

Interaction between S1 and S11 in the Experimental group (Post oral task)
(The transcription conventions used are in bold type)

S1: Hello, Asma(.)
S11: Hello, Amina(.)
S1: I am good and you?
S11: I am fine, thank you(.)
S1: Hey, [Asma], I want to ask you?
S11:(.)Yes shure
S1: What is your favourite movie?
S11: ah(3), well I I- I- I-have many favourites movies?.
S1: oh really!=
S11: = yes I like ROMANCE and ACTION movies like Titanic and (2) The Transporter.
S1: <h/>Hum<h/>, I like Titanic too (3), but I’m not a fun of action movies (.)
S11:h hh ok.
S1: Well, [Asma], nice talking to you I have Grammar class now (.), see you later.
S11: Thank you [Amina], me too. Goodbye.
Résumé

Cette thèse porte sur l'utilisation de la simulation comme une technique de communication dans les cours de langue et de ses avantages dans l'amélioration de la compétence communicative des apprenants de langues étrangères. L'étude quasi-expérimentale actuelle explore l'utilisation de la simulation dans le but de transformer l'autorité traditionnelle de l'enseignant dans la classe de langue à une classe plus réaliste, communicative et centrée sur l'étudiant et, dans le même temps, l'amélioration de la compétence communicative des apprenants. Un plan de recherche pré-test-post-test groupe est utilisé. L'échantillon de population constitue de deux classes de première année des étudiants LMD à l'Université de Oum El Bouaghi. Un total de 52 étudiants est impliqué dans cette étude. Le groupe expérimental a été enseigné par le traitement de simulation pour un semestre, le groupe témoin a été enseigné à la manière traditionnelle d'enseigner sans simulation. Les données sont recueillies à partir de deux tâches orales et de l'outil statistique des échantillons d'essai indépendants sont utilisés pour déterminer s'il existe des différences significatives entre les groupes. Les résultats de l'étude montrent que le groupe expérimental surperforme considérablement le groupe témoin (p <.05). Simulation est donc recommandée d'intégrer, en tant que technique, dans l'enseignement de l'anglais dans le cadre du programme d'études. Enfin, des suggestions pour des recherches futures, les limites, et les implications pédagogiques de l'étude sont présentés.
ملخص

تتركز هذه الدراسة على استخدام المحاكاة كوسيلة للاتصال في اللغة وقواعدها في تحسين الكفاءة التواصلية لدى المتعلمين من اللغة الأجنبية. فكشفت هذه الدراسة أن استخدام المحاكاة يساعد في تحسين السلامة التقليدية للمعلم في صف اللغة الأجنبية إلى فئة تواصلية أكثر واقعية متحورة حول الطالب وفي نفس الوقت تحسن الكفاءة التواصلية لدى المتعلمين. تتألف عينة الدراسة من فتيتين من طلاب السنة الأولى (6م) في جامعة أم اليوسف بجموع 52 طالبًا.

درست المجموعة التجريبية استعمال المحاكاة لمدة فصل دراسي. أما المجموعة الضابطة درست بالطريقة التقليدية للتدريس دون المحاكاة. جمعت البيانات من فحص شفهيين واستخدمت الأداة الإحصائية "اختبار العينات المستقلة" لتحديد ما إذا كانت هناك فروق ذات دلالة إحصائية بين المجموعتين. تبين من نتائج الدراسة أن المجموعة التجريبية تفوقت بشكل كبير عن المجموعة الضابطة. وهكذا يوصى باستعمال تقنية المحاكاة كأسلوب جديد في تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية و كجزء من المنهج الدراسي. و أخيراً تم عرض اقتراحات للبحث في المستقبل، القيد والآثار التربوية للدراسة.