Using Simulation in Teaching English for Elementary School Students

By
Mutohhar, S. Pd., M.Pd
English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education
Universitas Muria Kudus

Abstract

Language teaching is ideally suited to language practice. Language teaching can be an interesting process when teachers make the effort to explore a variety of approaches. Unfortunately only a few teachers can do it. It can be caused by the lack of experience and knowledge about the varieties of teaching methods and teachniques.

There are many techniques can be applied in teaching English for elementary school students, one of them is simulation. Simulation is a language learning model which allows students to express themselves to their peers in a group setting, groups comprising usually three or four. Some benefits of simulation are allows students to experiment with new vocabulary and structures and gives students the chance to carry out a task or solve a problem together

The most common view of simulations is that they provide a way of creating a rich communicative environment (a representation of reality) where students actively become a part of some real-world system and function according to predetermined roles as members of that group

In short, by using simulation, the students will get more chances to practice their English grammatically and pragmatically, because it makes them in a real world.

Key words: *Simulation, Language Teaching, Elementary school students*

INTRODUCTION

Nowdays, English learning is more directed at the communications function. learning english is intended that students are able to use English to communicate not only learn the

science of language itself. this is in line with the communicative approach which emphasizes that learning a language is learning to communicate (Richards, 1986)

however, in practice, learning models are still not able to provide many opportunities for learners to use language that has been studied. this is proved from the number of students who are still afraid to speak English even though they have enough vocabulary. this is not apart of the methods and techniques used by teachers. many teachers are split between teaching materials and the ultimate goal of learning, for example, teachers could give their own vocabulary without entering the vocabulary of a context for communication.

Another problem that is found in learning process is that the students are in classroom environments that provide few opportunities to engage in communication in realistic situations whereas practice plays an important role in improving communication skills, but learners have a lack of opportunities to do so

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Simulation technique follows from the interactional view. This view sees language as a vehicle for the realization of interpersonal relations and for the performance of social transactions between individuals.... Language teaching content, according to this view, may be specified and organized by patterns of exchange and interaction or may be left unspecified, to be shaped by the inclinations of learners as interactors." (Richards and Rodgers, 1986 : 17)

Simulation clearly promotes effective interpersonal relations and social transactions among participants. "In order for a simulation to occur the participants must accept the duties and responsibilities of their roles and functions, and do the best they can in the situation in which they find themselves" (Jones, 1982 : 113)

DISCUSSION

Simulation is an interactive learning that involves students both personally and groups in a real setting. Jones (1982) defines a simulation as reality of function in a simulated and structured environment. Additionally, Garcia, Carbonell et al (2001) define simulation as an exercise in which participants are competing against nature

from the definition above, it can be concluded that the simulation is a learning model that is able to provide opportunities to students, especially young learners to develop thinking skills to respond to anything directly, and also the ability to interact with other students in a real context.

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According to Hyland (1993)There are three things that make the simulation becomes very important to apply in English language learning for young learners. *First* simulations motivate learners, young learners are naturally curious to explore and discover. If their explorations bring pleasure or success, they will be motivated to learn more. By having some interesting and real activities, simulation encourage them to explore their experience to make decisions so unconsciously they feel that they are not in the process of learning. *Second* encourage interaction, simulation provide a supportive atmosphere for the students to do some interactions. Students will interact with the other students and also with the teacher based on the topic or material. And *third* provide opportunities for purposeful communication, in a setting of simulation, the students will have some purposeful communication, for example the students will communicate with other how to buy some fruits, how to go somewhere while the others also communicate how to give an offer and gow to give direction.

In addition to the three issues above, there are some other benefits to be gained from the use of simulation in teaching english. They are as follow:

1. Simulations can provide realistic situations that have functional resemblance to the outside world of the classroom and lead learners to create real communication by offering them roles in which to function. it will promotes children's engagement and enjoyment in learning. This in turn impacts positively on children's personal and social development, general behaviour and wellbeing (Jenkins, 2011)
2. Students in simulations continually interact exchanging thoughts and negotiating meanings as they take roles and try to fulfill the duty
3. In simulations, learners, being participants in the event, will experience the way people behave in a certain culture. Learning a language is also to learn how to behave in accordance with the correct cultural context. students do not only know how to spell the language, but also how to choose the right utterance and in line with the existing culture. In simulation children are expected not only able to communicate verbally but also how to behave in a non-verbal, for example, through a post office or a bank simulation

IMPLEMENTING SIMULATION

Using simulations for a basic level class, it is a good idea to use or create simple simulations with less complicated processes. Hyland (1993) proposes four-part structure in implementing a simulation

1. Preparation
   a. In preparation, the teacher ensure the students familiarity and confidence with interactive learning. For some children, meeting new friend, new environment can be a scary thing. So the teacher must have a good way to make the students feel confident to interact with other friends.
   b. Assessing students' needs, interests, and abilities. To assess the students' need and interest, a teacher can observe what do they usually want and do in the classroom or a teacher can ask what they want to do in the classrom. Spontanously they will answer honestly.
   c. After knowing the students' need and interest, the teacher selects or writes the simulation
   d. Then the last step in preparation is organising the room and gathering resources. As it is discussed above that simulation uses real-world setting, so the room or class must be completed with some media or tools which support the activity.

2. Introduction
   a. Information input: tasks, roles, background.

   In determining the task, a teacher must consider several things, one of them is identifying the target of the task itself. in this case a good task is a task that can provide opportunity for students to develop their language skills relevant to their real world needs.In this step the students were briefed about the task of what they should do in simulation

   Different activities in a simulation creates a different role for each student. in a simulation, a teacher must determine which role will be played by the students. So, explanation of the role to be performed is very important to the students so that the purpose of a simulation can be achieved

   Then, the teacher gives some information about the condition and situation in the simulation
   b. learners engage in information collection tasks

   Students' engagement in information collection task is very important in order to understand what they will do and further their engagement will make them become independent learners
   c. Language input: useful lexis, structures, genres, etc.

   Before starting the simulation, the teacher should also provide language input that is related to what they will need to interact, such as a list of vocabulary or expression because of their limitations in the mastery of vocabulary and phrases used in a particular topic
3. Activity

   after entering the stage of activity, a teacher can have multiple roles depending on the planned activities. a teacher may be the observer of the performance of their students, or a teacher can also participate actively involved in the simulation in other words, teachers also play a role in the simulation.

   The role of a teacher is also determined by the model of student learning, whether students perform simulations in the form of small groups or large groups or even individuals.

   Therefore the determination of the main activities in the simulation becomes very important, because the success or failure of the simulation depends on whether the activities designed by teachers
   d. Debriefing

   Debriefing is essential element of simulation. The teacher helps students understand the exercise, review the language used, and build on weaknesses. Debriefing after simulation activities is very important. Debriefing is not just summing up the event; in fact, it is the most critical stage of the simulation process. Lyu (2006) states "for the basic level learners, the teacher may have to help them to explain what they did and why by asking questions like "What was your role?", "Where did you go?", "What did you want to do/buy/ask ?", 'Why did you do that?", etc. since they may not be able to explain fully in the target language."

   Warrick, Hunsaker, Cook, and Ahman (1979) in Dreifuerst (2009) noted that the "debriefing phase is an intentional and important process that is designed to synergize, strengthen and transfer learning from an experiential learning exercise". They further defined the objectives of debriefing as follows:
1. Identification of the different perceptions and attitudes that have occurred.

2. Linking the exercise to specific theory or content and skill-building techniques.
3. Development of a common set of experiences for further thought.
4. Opportunity to receive feedback on the nature of one's involvement, behavior, and decision making.
5. Reestablishment of the desired classroom climate, such as regaining trust, comfort, and purposefulness.

CONCLUSION

Language learning is a learningabout how to use language to interact and communicate with other learners or with teachers in a real context, and the model of learning or teaching techniques that are able to implement these goals is the simulation. Simulation create some opportunities for the students esepecially elementary students to interact and communicate with others. The other benefit of using simulation is that the students can develop their personal and social characteristics, general behaviour and wellbeing

Additionally, simulation promotes children's engagement and enjoyment in learning. In short, by using simulation, the students will get more chances to practice their English grammatically and pragmatically, because it makes them in a real world.

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