

Single Subject Experimental Research: Measuring Speaking Proficiency in Teaching English as a Second Language

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This piece of Applied Linguistics research utilizes a variant of the “A-B” Single Subject Experimental Research design which is termed as a simple variant of the baseline and intervention model. It seeks to measure and analyse the speaking proficiency of two purposive samples, each comprising four adult Spanish-speaking learners in teaching English as a Second Language within the Anglophone Caribbean country of Barbados. With the intervention of strategies related to the Communicative Approach, each learner’s speaking proficiency is perceived as a complex process related to the development of the interrelated skills of communicative competence and is assessed through a prescribed set of performance-based criteria. In this environment, the research design facilitates the methodical application of the relevant research instruments as well as the systematic and rigorous collection and analysis of quantitative data. Thus, the results showed that the “A-B-B” variant of “A-B” Single Subject Experimental Research enabled the efficient measurement of each learner’s speaking proficiency based on the utilisation of communicative instructional strategies. Furthermore, the findings validated the worth and usefulness of procedures within this type of research design to provide comprehensive and conclusive data of the effectiveness of the intervention.

Keywords: Single Subject Experimental Research; intervention; speaking proficiency; Teaching English as a Second Language; performance-based criteria; communicative instructional strategies

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