

## The Implementation Of Game In Teaching English Vocabulary

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### ABSTRACT

*The primary activities of students in the classroom is learning. Successful learning is only the right way to lead the process. Good learning atmosphere method and technique will guide the students to learn more serious and meaningful. To accomplish such condition, the teacher must create some types and attractive method or technique in the classroom. To avoid the students bore in the classroom the teacher should use some types of game to be an alternative solution to handle the problem. Games as a matter of fact can help and encourage students to sustain their interest in learning English. In this paper the writer wants to share experiences about the implementation of game in teaching English.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Game, English vocabulary*

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## **Background of The Study**

English is one of the important subjects to be taught in elementary school until tertiary level. Therefore, it is a key for student to explore, to understand and to appreciate the world. English is also important to be taught in early age in the reason that English is international language that will become an important device for the student to receive, to process and to share ideas and information with every people from around the world who has different culture and point of view.

Game is one technique to motivate students in learning English, it is very important especially in refreshing, and amusing students in learning so they will not make students bored while they are studying English. However, most of students do not realize yet that English is very important. Base on the above description, it can be understood that game is needed by students in helping them to increase their abilities in mastering English. Furthermore, it also offers a great solution in which the students may be able to find the meaning and context in the language that they are learning. Furthermore, games demand interaction, which is essential for language itself, as a means of communication. Game promotes to practice English without making the students aware that they are asked to practice. The situation would not seem to be a threat because it is performed in a relaxed and friendly competition atmosphere.

Game also can help the teacher to create a context in which the language is useful and

meaningful. In the whole process of teaching and learning by using game, the students can take part widely and open mindedly. To win the game each students or group should competitively answer the questions addressed by the teacher or other students or group. In order to do so they must understand what the teacher must understand why the teacher or others are saying or have written and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information.

The English instruction in the school is intended to endorse the mastery and development of the four basics abilities and skills. Those are reading, writing, speaking, and listening reflected in abilities and skill concerning the language use so that the students are able to express simple expression with emphasis our vocabulary mastery in order to avoid the vocabulary infraction and attain better outcome, the teacher should choose an appropriate teaching method, which is suitable with subject matter in teaching English process. The need to use various instructional media will be able to help students to increase their English vocabulary

In teaching English, teacher had better uses many kinds of technique which is suitable to students' level and the aim of the study. There is no best technique of teaching that will suit all occasions. A combination of technique in teaching English is better than the one technique only. In the writer's opinion, if we teach the students with various techniques the

students tend to be more interested in learning English.

Therefore to decrease the failure or barrier the beginner students a might have in mastering English, the teacher should apply better method and technique. The method and technique used by teacher absolutely have significant role in the success of teaching process. Among the suggested techniques to be applied in teaching English is game. First of all it is necessary to know that game more than just fun, as cited by Agnieszka “game is having fun and there are hilarity and laughter” So, it is not merely learning actually. It is possible to learn language, as well as enjoy oneself at the same time. So, best ways of doing this are through games. Another support also comes from Wright. According to him “games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest in work. Moreover through game they will get the meaningfulness in language learning, thus the meaning of the language they listen, read, speak and write will be clearer and easier to be remembered.

In this article the writer will describe some component of game in teaching English and provide some elaborate explanation of the component whenever necessary.

### **Games and Language Teaching**

Language games can add fun and variety to conversation session if the participants are fond of games. Games are especially refreshing after demanding conversational activities such as debates or speeches. Here, the change of pace from the serious to the

atmosphere hearted students in welcome learning, although language games can fit into any directed conversation program quite well.

Some teachers feel that languages are more appropriate in the manipulative than in the communicative phase of language learning. Most teachers, however, find language games are valuable in both phases. In the manipulative phase, a game is a wonderful way to break routine of classroom drill by providing relaxation without shifting away from framework of language learning. In the communicative phase, a game can be stimulating and entertaining and when the participants have stopped playing the game, you can use it as a stimulus for additional conversation. For instance, if the group has just finished the game in which players indicate whether a statement is true or false by running to chair labeled ”true” and “false”, you may then ask the questions about what happened during the game. (“who was the first player?” “who knocked the chair over by accident?” what was the first true statement in the game?’How much point did team II score? Etc)

Furthermore, an effective use of game in the language classroom is not necessarily the teacher who has a long list of them in his head, but someone who has really thought about them and known their ingredients and skill from the player. A teacher who understands the games in this way is much more likely to be able to find or create games, so that it will help students to learn something as they play.



Applying this teaching, one can see how students play a game?. It is encouraged using language to some purpose. The purpose may be an artificial one determined by the game, but the skill exercised to achieve that purpose may be applied in every day life just as the skill used in ordinary. There are many varied coordination of hand and eye in game like netball and tennis, tactics, in draughts or chess. Whatever the game, the skills employed in it are developed and improved through the repeated use they get, and most importantly, the players want to improve the skill necessary for the game that they enjoy. These principles apply to language games too.

Therefore, for language teaching purpose we need to make sure that the skill needed in any games are heavily enough weighted on the language side. For example, chess is an excellent game in itself, but it is almost useless from the language teaching point of view. The obvious reason is that players need not communicate with one another during the game at least not with words. The skills used in chess are intellectual, tactical, and not linguistic. This is an extreme example but many other promising looking and well known games depend too little on the use of language to be at all useful to language learners without considerable adaptation.

Another thing that needs to be taken into consideration is the proportion of luck skill in any game. A lot of the fun in many games comes from the unpredictable outcome of a throw or move from the random dealing of cards, but best games also allow players to use

their skill to improve upon what chance brings them. Cards Games such as ridge and whist are good every day examples of this type of game. For the language classroom, a dash of luck in a game can make it more exciting and give the less able students a chance to catch up with their fellows for one. But a game that depends too much on luck and too little on use of language will waste students' time.

Games are closed activities. In other words, they have a very clearly marked beginning and end. There is a definite point at which the game is over or has been won and it is usually easy to see how near to that point the players are. One team is near the target score, for example, some one has nearly finished all his cards or is close to end of the board.

Furthermore, this closure is a very useful feature from teacher's point of view. Because students know exactly when a game will be over or how close they are to finishing it, it helps to give structures to what they are doing. It means that some games can run themselves with little organizational supervision from the teacher. This leaves him free to monitor student's performance and give them appropriate help on the language side. A well-designed game has its own momentum and is far less likely to run out of steam than many other classroom activities. For pairs and small group of students, games are often easier to keep going than even the best-organized open-ended practice exercises.

The fact that all games have players may seem too obvious to mention, but if we compare the way in which players can be

moved about and put into different relationships in different games within the way in which a teacher may want to change the pattern within his class, the interesting possibilities offered by some games will become clear.

### **Definition of Games**

The role of language games and activities in teaching English as a second and foreign language classroom has been assumed as the result in increasing English. The effective teacher realizes that such activities are of an efficient way to improve and to make language learning more enjoyable. Here are some definitions of games used in teaching English.

Commonly, games according to Jack Richards dictionary is "Games are often used as a fluency activity in communicative language teaching and humanistic methods. While Rixon defined game as, "an activity carried out by operating or competing division makers electing to achieve their objective by rules". This idea is supported by Stevick by pointing four features of games in general. They are:

- a. People who want to play a game together have to have certain things in common, such as a playing field chessboard, etc. They also share some activities for example the ability to run, count or tell; like football for instance we need a playing field, ball and goal posts and of course our ability to run.

- b. Game has role in accepting the rule; the players agree not to do everything that they are physically able to do but to restrict their action in certain way.
- c. Any restriction on the players' action still has them enough freedom, so that their action is not entirely predictable. At any point in the course of the game a player takes into account what the other players have done and what choice they have made from among their options. A player then chooses one of the options that are available to him at that point, other players respond in the same ways. According to their choice and so on until the end of the page.
- d. The game has a goal in competitive game like chaos of football the goal is the win by defecting an opponent. In noncompetitive like "twenty questions, all players work together in order to bring light out of darkness or chaos; the goal of this game is to activate all players through communication.

From the above explanation all games have certain thing such as car, chessboard, etc.

According to Rixon (1992:3) the game is a play governed by rules or as an activity carried out by cooperating or competing decision makers, seeking to achieve, within a set of rules, their objective." Whereas, according to Celica-Murcia (1989:53) "games are fun and nearly every one would agree that if learning can make students enjoyable, their

student will learn more.” But why do adolescent and adult not enjoy the games as much as children did?. If the game is explained to them, they do not feel that it is childish to participate in a game in the language classroom.

All games have a certain characteristic. They have a goal, they are governed by rules, and most of them contain an element of competition. Palmers and Rodger say, games are contest having competing players, rules, and rewards assigned to the goal outcome.”

Teacher who would rather discourage competition among their students can also add the games to non-competitive ones. It is sometimes better to avoid having winners and losers when individual students, are supposed to team, because the weaker students may tend to become discouraged by never winning (Gasser, et al, 1994:54) further, Savignon (1992:5) states, “Language game is one of ...activities that not only encourage but also require spontaneous language use in the classroom.” Freeman, (1986:129) agrees that “Game are important because they have certain features in common with real communicative events-there is a purpose to the exchange. Also, the speaker receives immediate feedback from the listener on whether or not he has successfully communicated.”

Byrne D (1983:155) says,” language games can add fun and variety to conversation session if the participants are fond of a game”. Nevertheless, in order to participate actively,

they must understand what other students say or write. They must speak or write to express their point of view or to give information. Furthermore, Gower and Walters (1985:133) add,” Language game is usually designed to give either creative practice opportunities for language areas practice or general communicative practice.” It is expected that games can bridge the gap between the rather artificial world of the classroom with students controlled language practice and the real worlds outside. Thus, language game should be more than something, which teachers use to provide relief from the classroom routine, to get their students attention, or to take up the extra at the end of class. In addition in language game activities a student is free to be himself. He can engage his real personality with those of his friends without the additional burden of trying to be someone else.

A language game is fun and nearly every one would agree that if learning can be made enjoyable, it would force them to learn more. By performing language games, the students have enjoyment or fun which helps them remember new vocabulary items easily and excitedly. This idea is supported by Lee Su Kim (1995) saying “Games are highly motivating since they are amusing and at the same time challenging. Furthermore, they employ meaningful and useful language in real contexts. they also encourage and increase cooperation”.

### **The Advantage of Using Games**



Game is one technique in teaching English; it is considered one of effective and interesting ways to apply in the classroom. Lee (1995:35) lists several main advantages when games are used in the classroom, including 'a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class', 'motivating and challenging' 'effort of learning', and 'language practice in the various skills.' Ersoz (2000) holds that "games are highly appreciated thanks to their amusement and interest".

From the quotation, It can be concluded that games have a crucial rule to break classroom and monotone activity carried out upon the students day to day learning experience. The activity should not be considered just a routine but it should be treated as a control or heart of teaching foreign language. Some opinions state that games are just marginal activities used at the end of the lesson or when the teacher and the class have nothing better to do. Actually, game ought to be used at all stages of the course. However if the students do not focus seriously, the students will not get the advantage of playing the game.

Game has shown some advantages and effectiveness in learning English in various ways. According to Huang (1996:1) learning through games could encourage the operation of certain psychological and intellectual factors which could enhance communication self-esteem, motivation and spontaneity, reinforce learning, improving intonation and building confidence. In effective sides, games activities are effective to encourage more

creative and spontaneous use of language, to increase communicative competence, to motivate students to be fun in learning. Besides game reinforces review, extends and focuses on grammar communicatively and also creates students centered call in which the teacher acts only as facilitator and creates class cohesion. For class participation, it can create healthy competition. The last benefit is adaptability. Game is easily adjusted for age level and interest because it utilizes all four skills and requires a minimum preparation after development.

In addition, Agnieszka states that games encourage, entertain, teach, and promote fluency. Naturally if the students feel entertained and study without stress they can learn a lot. Another support related to that statement come from Kim (1995:35) presenting six advantages of using the language games in the classroom, which are:

1. Games are motivating and challenging.
2. Games are as a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class.
3. Games help the students to make and sustain the effort of learning.
4. Games provide language practice in the various and integrated language skills.
5. Games encourage students to interact and communicate to each other.
6. Games create a meaningful context for language that is being learned by the students.

In line with Kim, Mei and Yu jing (2000) also believe that through playing games, students can learn English the way the children learn and say their mother language without being aware they are studying; thus without stress, the students can learn a lot in learning the target language. While Wright et al.(1984) writes that “games can help the teacher to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful”. The learners who want to take part in the activities must understand what others are saying or have written, and in order to do so, the students then must speak or write to express their own point of views or give information.

#### **The Teacher’s Role in Vocabulary Games**

In vocabulary games, the teachers no longer control the activities. In fact, it would distort the whole purpose if he or she interfered too much. The interaction should be between students and students, rather than between students and teacher. Instead of judging what the students have to say, the teacher should know the way how to help them state what they want to say. Students should know that the teacher is there to be used as a source of information such as on vocabulary and on rephrasing something to make it clearer to other players. It is usually better for the teacher to wait until he is asked for help than to jump in and take over the games when players are struggling. Parts of the training consist of struggling and experimenting with the language to try to get the message across.

Although the teachers do not act as judge during communication games there is plenty of space for observing students’ performance and doing something about serious error or areas of ignorance. In these games, the range of language used is as wide or limited as students can manage. In terms of the games, the errors do not matter, but how the teacher handles it. If the teacher stops a game completely and starts teaching or revising a language point, the whole atmosphere will be spoiled. Students may even get that the games have only been set to trap them into mistakes, and if this happens, they may become too self conscious to get anything very much out of the activities. There is no harm, however, in making quick corrections of some of the errors that you hear from group to group.

However, what is about the more serious problem? Some error or gap in knowledge may need several-minutes explanation. Teacher should collect information on these things as teacher ground with a view to incorporate them in our lesson later on. Some teachers simply make a mental note, but others prefer to record the information more systematically. It is good idea to carry small notepad with you as teacher monitor. These essential things to write down are what the errors are and who is making them. However, vocabulary games can also be very valuable in revealing difficulties a teacher has suspected, whether in language or in skills teacher may find that a student is unexpectedly weak in his use of tenses, or that another is



incapable of listening might emerge so clearly in the course of a normal lesson

Some vocabulary games are competitive and can be obstacle when there are one group of learners not able to settle the vocabulary games on its own. To link students, the teacher should be fair to their opponent in order that students accept and are able to take turn. Another sort of intervention you may have to make is to take arbitration while students are expressing their ideas in communicating. Teacher may find that in their exact message in a foreign language, they slip into their native tongue. It is a complement to the games that they also want to have their game partners play it successfully. It does thwart the opportunity for language practice that teacher is trying to give them the ways to deal with the sort of cheating not through intimidating threat but by increasing the amount of advice that teacher give at this stage. Make sure students realize that the challenge is not so much to succeed in the game itself, but to succeed of using the foreign language. It is one of the rules of the game if you like it. The reason behind it is that, if the students enjoy a game they should not play it at other times in their own language, they may even transfer the strategies that they use in their native language into the foreign language, and this could be very valuable.

Although the suggestion above is concerned with the game, most of what underlies them is common to most successful teaching. The teacher should prepare the lesson, organize the classroom beforehand,

have confidence in the material define the objective of lesson and make sure that the students know what he/she want to achieve so that they have confidence in learning material. Support them and avoid to take punitive action against them.

### **Using Game in Teaching English**

Games are made for fun but please be warned against overlooking their pedagogical value, particularly in foreign language teaching. There are many advantages of using games. Games can lower anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input more likely.

All opinions mentioned above must be followed up through choosing appropriate games. There are many factors to consider in preparing games, one of them is whether game is suitable to the teaching objective. Teacher should be very careful about choosing games if she/he wants to make them profitable for the learning process. Teacher must correspond to either the students' level of age or material that is to be introduced or practiced because not all games are appropriate for all students in respect of their age.

Games become difficult when the task or topic is unsuitable to or outside of the students' experience and knowledge. Then, one thing a teacher should not forget is the duration and the time allocation in running a game. Usually games have a time limit. But the writer thinks that the teacher can either allocate more or less time depending on the students' level, the number of people in a

group and the students' knowledge of the rules of games.

Another thing that must be considered in applying games besides choosing appropriate games is when to use the games. The writer observed that games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of a lesson or when teacher and class have nothing to do. Recently, using games have become a popular technique exercised by many educators in the classroom and recommended by methodologists. The main subject of the game is to introduce students to new words or phrase and help them consolidate lexical items. Game also helps to develop students' communicative competence. There are many kinds of game that teacher can be used in the class rooms such as the Simon says and guessing words, bingo and role play.

### **Simon Says**

Simon says is a game designed for three or more players (most often children). One of the players is, Simon. The others must do what Simon tells them to do when asked with a phrase beginning with "Simon says". If Simon says "Simon says jump", the players must jump (players that do not jump are out). However, if Simon says simply "jump", *without* first saying "Simon says", players do not jump; those that do jump are out. In general, it is the spirit of the command, not the actions that matter; if Simon says "Simon says touch your toes", players only have to show that they are *trying* to touch their toes. It is the ability to distinguish between valid and invalid

commands rather than physical ability that matters here.

It is Simon's task to try to get everyone out as quickly as possible, and it is every one else's job to stay "in" for as long as possible. The last of Simon's followers to stay in wins (although the game is not always played all the way through). To give impossible commands is considered cheating ("Simon says 'lift your left leg'. Simon says 'lift your right leg'. Simon did *not* say 'put your left leg down!'") or phrase the commands in such a way that the other player has no option but to 'go out' ("Simon says 'jump up'. Come down."). However, at least in some versions, it is allowed for Simon to eliminate players by asking them to do something seemingly unrelated to the game (example: "Anyone remaining join me up here.")

### **Guessing Words**

A guessing word is a game in which the object is to guess some kind of information, such as a word, a phrase, a title, or the location of an object. Many of the games are played co-operatively. In some games some players know the answer, but cannot tell the others, instead they must help them to guess it. Thus, in this game, some one knows something and others must find out what it is.

Guessing words technique is also one of teaching vocabulary aids. The functions of guessing word is to make it clearer and easier to memorize vocabulary. Actually using this technique is considered similar to using

pictures. However, the pictures in this technique are in the students' mind that corresponds to given explanation.

In this technique, two students (in pairs) will show how this technique runs. One student will be an explainer of a word provided by teacher and another student will be a guesser. The explainer will make mind's picture for the guesser and the guesser will guess it with a word in answer to of the explanation given. After that the role will be changed. The explainer at the first session will be a guesser at the second session and vice versa. The next session will be played in the same rule but with different words or vocabularies.

### **Bingo**

Bingo is a card game named by analogy to the game bingo. The game is played with a bridge deck of cards. The dealer gives each player X cards, which are held in the hand or placed face-down in front of the player. The dealer places Y cards face down in the center of the table. Typically  $X=Y=5$

A round of play consists of betting, followed by the dealer turning over one of the center cards, so that it is facing-up. Any card in a player's hand that has the same rank value as the rank of the center card just turned are now revealed and discarded. The discards can be placed face-up in front of the player.

### **Role Play**

A role-playing game is a game in which the participants assume the roles of

characters and collaboratively create stories. Participants determine the actions of their characters based on their characterization, and the actions succeed or fail according to a formal system of rules and guidelines. Within the rules, they may improvise freely; their choices shape the direction and outcome of the games.

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

The implementation of game in teaching English can make students more interested in learning beside game significantly plays an important role in developing four languages skill; listening, speaking, reading and writing, an interesting technique which can be applied in teaching English to help students improve vocabulary mastery, and it is quite effective to improve students' ability in mastering English. Therefore, game method has a strategic role in English teaching learning process.

Having presented some conclusions, the writer would like to propose several suggestions for the teacher to use game in teaching English, here there are some suggestions first, teacher who wants to teach English at the school should always present interesting materials and good techniques such as game, role play, etc, so that the students do not feel bored in learning, second a teacher should be able to support students to learn English as much as possible so that they are motivated to study English, the last game technique can be used as one of the methods in the teaching learning process of English.



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