

IMPROVING THE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY MASTERY' USING GAMES INVOLVING PICTURES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Ira Ida Yustina
AKBA SINEMA YOGYAKARTA
iravustinabi@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The objectives of the study are to describe and find out the effectiveness the teaching of English vocabulary using games involving pictures in class activities at the third grade students of Elementary School. This study is action research. The subject of study is the third grade students of Elementary School of Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta. There were 17 students in the class. The data were collected from the observation, interview and test. The data were analyzed from field notes, interview transcript, the observation sheets and test result. It is concluded that using games involving picture in the class can make some progress to the students. The students can increase their vocabulary mastery and their ability both in writing words and in speaking. The students can pronounce the English words correctly. Besides, using games involving picture make the students active and enjoy English class.

Key Words: Teaching vocabulary, Games, Pictures, Effectiveness

INTRODUCTION

English is global language which is not only used in the countries of its native speakers, but also it used in many countries in the world. It used by people in several professionals' filed to create relationship and communication to other people in overseas. By English, people easy to communicate with others in different language background.

Vocabulary is critical to learn language success for two reasons. First, comprehension improves when you know what the words mean. Since comprehension is the ultimate goal of reading, you cannot overestimate the

importance of vocabulary development. Second, Words are the currency of communication. A robust vocabulary improves all areas of communication — listening, speaking, reading and writing. When children and adolescents improve their vocabulary, their academic and social confidence and competence improve, too.

Vocabulary instruction is one of the most misunderstood aspects of language learning and language teaching. Research shows that most teachers deal with vocabulary in a haphazard and rather unprincipled way and most teachers leave the selection of vocabulary to the course book. Luckily for language teachers and language learners, not all English words need to be learned. Having knowledge about the different types of choices in vocabulary learning strategies will help teachers; researchers and curriculum developers design appropriate materials for classroom purposes. Vocabulary learning strategies (VLS) are intuitively appealing to teachers and learners. It has also become a popular research topic among researchers in the last two decades (Gu, 2010). This is extremely important because it means that everything we do as vocabulary teachers has to be focused on:

- a) building the learner's 'start up' or initial vocabulary
- b) developing the learner's understanding of what learning words means
- c) showing the learner how to learn the words most effectively.

The ultimate aim, of course, is to develop the learners as independent word learners.

Research shows that learners need about 3000 'word families' to be good at English. (A 'word family' is a group of words that share the same meaning such as 'help', 'helping' 'helped' 'helpless' etc.). Teachers should concentrate on the most frequent and useful words first, as it is these words the learners will meet very often. Many teachers focus on rarer words assuming that the basic words like 'get', 'make' and 'bring' are known (Ramadhani, 2015). But it is these words which are among the most troublesome, with their multiple meanings and idiomatic uses. Therefore, teachers and learners should work very hard on the highly frequent words.

The most fundamental idea that should underline any method is that 'the most important vocabulary to work on. It is that the learners learned yesterday'. The nature of human memory dictates that vocabulary (like all item and system learning) will probably be forgotten, especially if the word has just been met. Peter demonstrates this point well with his 'car parts lesson'. Vocabulary loss happens because it is at the initial stage of word learning that word knowledge is so fragile. This means that words and phrases need to be recycled often to cement them in memory. Introducing a word and not recycling or revisiting it, means that it is highly likely that it will be forgotten. Course books are usually very bad at recycling, so the teacher must work out ways to recycle the vocabulary that is introduced in the course book. Halliwell (in Baskhs, 2016) argued that due to the creative language skill young learners bring into the classroom, teachers have to provide them with a communicative atmosphere where they could express themselves. Also, because the language used in any activity is unpredictable, teachers have to encourage them to actively construct language for themselves. That is why games are important and useful. Not only they are fun, but also they create the desire to communicate and create predictability.

Games are identical with the children. It is known that the children like playing games very much. In language learning, games can be involved to motivate the students in acquiring the language activities are tools. Therefore, games involve many factors: rules, competition, relaxation, and learning in particular. The main focus of using games in class is to help students learn and have fun. However, using games in the classrooms, it is equally important that before playing the rules of the games are clearly explained and well understood by the students. There should be only a few, well-explained rules. Demonstrations also can be very helpful because it can help students understand the game and help them follow the rules. Otherwise, they will misunderstand the purpose of the game and they may not get the benefits they should from the game. In playing games, competition is very important because it can stimulate and encourage students to participate in the activity since naturally they want to beat the other teams.

Gibbs, Rixon, (in Baskhs, 2016) defined games as an activity carried out by cooperating or competing decision-makers who want to achieve their objectives following a set of rules. Games is closed activities that have a beginning and an end with a winner who defines the end of the game. Games require cooperation with other members and competition against another team or players. While playing, young learners need to use the language and repeat patterns which will help in developing and improving their skills. Player could communicate with words, mime, use body movements, and gestures among many which guarantee fun and unpredictability

A picture is one of the media used for language teaching that is new commonly used for teaching-learning process. In education, the message or information comes from the teacher, whereas the receiver of the information is the students. Hopefully, the message of things or situations represented in the pictures can be channel more easily to the students as the receivers. By using a picture, it will be easier and faster for the students to understand English lesson. Through pictures, the students can identify people, places, and things in the classroom and recognize objects outside the classroom and beyond their own experiences. The teachers are supposed to teach English language according to the topic.

As stated by Harmer (2007:134) picture can be in the form of flash cards (small cards which we can hold up for our students to see), large wall pictures (big enough for everyone to see details), cue cards (small cards which students use in pair or group work), photographs, or illustrations (typically in a text book). Picture can be taken from books, newspapers and magazines or photographs. Some teachers draw pictures on the board; use projected slides, images from an overhead projector, or projected computer images for teaching language to their students.

Pictures are media to introduce English for young learners. They can understand the meanings of the words from the pictures. There are three kinds of pictures. Thus, we can make wall pictures, flash cards, and cue cards in a number of ways. We can take pictures from magazines and stick them on card. We can draw them. We can buy reproductions, photographs, or posters from shops or we can

photocopy them from a variety of source (though we should check copyright law before doing this).

In teaching vocabulary to young learners the suitable teaching media are pictures. The children like something that can attract their attention. In this case, the teacher has to use picture in order to make the students interested in the lesson. Besides that, the students can find out the meaning of the difficult words by studying the pictures.

Mainly, this paper will focus on vocabulary learning in elementary school especially in the third class. The focus of this discussion the using media and game for English learning process. The research question is formulated as follows: *Can games involving pictures improve the students' vocabulary mastery in the class activity at the third grade students of elementary school of Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta?*

Research Method

This classroom action research started from describing the planned strategy, followed with implementing the planned strategy, observing the implementation of the planned strategy, and reflecting or evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation. The strategy is revised if the evaluation shows that the implemented strategy does not prance satisfactory result yet. It used 3 cycles that implementing to the second grade of students elementary school of Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta. The subject of study was the second grade students of elementary school Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta. There were 17 students in the class. The data were collected from the observation, interview and test. There were three cycles in the research. The data were analysed from field notes, interview transcript, the observation sheets and test result.

RESULT OF THE RESEARCH

1. Finding

Based on the first observations which had been done at March 15th 2018, according to the writer as long as the teaching learning process at third grade elementari school of Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta, there are three problems that have been observed. First, the students were passive in participating the lesson. Second, some students still had difficulties in pronouncing and writing the words. Third, the teaching and learning do not use media to make the process more fun. In description below how three cycle of the research have done in the classroom.

First cycle intervention was started by conducting a meeting with the students about games. There were two games used such as *touch* and *say* games. From the observation during the meetings, students showed enthusiasm. They participated and enjoyed all the games. From the aspect of process, most of the students were very good. However, from the reflection notes, there were some suggestions for the next meeting. The suggestions included the simplification of the games procedure; the picture should be given when assigning the students; and finally conferencing venues should be comfortable. Based on the results above, the following can be suggested: In general, the students were enthusiastic in learning vocabulary using games which could be seen from their attention at the meeting and their willingness to follow the required procedures. The lecturer needs to stress that students follow the procedures exactly. Most students did not follow the procedures and guidelines exactly. This indicates that the procedures and the guidelines the games were too complex, and needed to be simplified.

Two cycle the researcher gave games "Find the Pairs Memory Game" in teaching process, it need two identical pictures. The intervention was started by conducting a meeting with the students about games. From the observation during the meetings, students showed enthusiasm. They participated and enjoyed all the games. From the aspect of process, most of the students were very good. However, from the reflection notes, there were some suggestions for the next meeting. The suggestions

included the simplification of the games procedure; the picture should be given when assigning the students; and finally conferencing venues should be comfortable.

Third cycle the researcher used two games, they were "touch and saying game" and "play card game". In general, the students were enthusiastic in learning vocabulary using games which could be seen from their attendance at the meeting and their willingness to follow the required procedures. However, the discipline to attend the conference and follow the procedure needed to be improved. The lecturer needed to stress that students follow the procedures exactly. Most students follow the procedures and games exactly. This indicates that the procedures and the guidelines the games were easy and more fun.

2. Discussion

During the research, some actions were completely implemented. From the reflections of each cycle and field notes, several points can be found as follows:

- a. In giving instructions to the children, the teacher should give rules and steps clearly. Games involving pictures can be introduced in the following ways: demonstration of parts of game by the teacher and one or two children, trial by a group in front of the class, any key language and instructions were written on the blackboard.
- b. The teacher should monitor and facilitate the games involving pictures conducted in order to avoid "baby sitting" activity.
- c. The teacher should realize that process of playing a game is more than winning. Young children did not need to win. They just needed to experience a game as a group of activities.
- d. The appropriate pictures can be used to support the game.

In this research, teaching vocabulary using games involving pictures technique were applied from the first meeting until the fourth meeting. So, the researcher would discuss from the first meeting until the fourth meeting.

In the first cycle, teaching vocabulary using games involving pictures technique was not satisfied for the researcher and the teacher. Generally, these activities got positive responses by the students and the teacher. In the cycle, the researcher had solved many problems such as the students were interested and enjoyed the lesson, the students were active and motivated in learning English. But there are some problems which can't be solved by the researcher. They still had difficulties in pronouncing and writing a word. And also they were not able to increase their vocabulary mastery. The teacher asked the researcher to correct the students' capability in pronouncing and writing a word in the next cycle. In the first meeting, the researcher chose the material that accordance with the local content curriculum. The new material is about things in the classroom. In the first meeting until fourth meeting the researcher used games involving pictures technique and the media was picture cards. The first meeting and the second meeting the researcher used pointing and saying games and touching and saying games. For example: in pointing and saying games the students point the things in the classroom and say together. After the second meeting the researcher gave the test to evaluate the students. In the second cycle, the researcher focused on improving the students' pronunciation and capability to wrote the words correctly. In the cycle, the researcher checked the students' capability by speaking and writing using simple sentences. In the third and fourth meeting the researcher used new games. They were semantic mapping and point games. In these games, the researcher gave alan articles and simple sentences for the students. For example: *what is that? That is a/an elephant*. The students were enthusiastic and interested with those activities of the meeting; the researcher also gave the test for the students. They did the test well.

The students began accustomed to the teacher's way of teaching. They looked very enthusiastic, interested and fun. They enjoyed the English lesson with the games involving pictures technique. The teacher created some fun activities so that the situations of the class could be controlled.

Based on the result of the test, the scores of test increase from the first test until the third test as below: the score in first test is 5.8; the second test (after cycle 1) is 7.95 and the last test (after cycle 2) is 8.9 (look at the table 1 as shown in appendices). The researcher concludes that the action is done successfully. The researcher also summarizes that the application of teaching vocabulary using games involving pictures is very effective to be applied for the second grade students of elementari school of Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta. Before the games involving pictures technique were applied by the researcher, the students were not interested in and did not enjoy the lesson in their class. After the implementation of the research, they are interested in and enjoy the English vocabulary lesson very much.

Based on the findings above, the implementation of using games involving pictures in teaching vocabulary was success. Teaching English vocabulary using games involving pictures was effective for the third grade students. The result of the tests increased. It can be seen on the appendices. Before the implementation, most of the students were passive in participating the English lesson. They did not pay attention and felt bored with the English lesson. They had no confidence in answering the questions. Some students still had difficulties in pronouncing and writing certain vocabulary items. After the implementation, the students were more interested and motivated in English vocabulary lessons. They participated in every class actively. They enjoyed the lesson very much. They were better both in individual and group work. In every game, they took part actively. They were always attentive and enthusiastic in English classroom. They were able to improve their vocabulary mastery and also the students' pronunciation and capability to write vocabulary items well.

The teaching of vocabulary by using games involving pictures would be effective or not.

i. It was effective if.

- There was an interaction between the teacher and the students.
- The teacher gave motivation for the students to learn and did the activities in the English classroom.
- The students were interested in English lesson.
- The students felt enjoyed in English classroom.
- The students were active in learning English.
- The students liked English.
- The students were able to improve their vocabulary mastery.
- The students were able to pronouncing and writing vocabulary well.

ii. It was not effective if.

- There was not an interaction between the teacher and the students.
- The students unmotivated to learn and did the activities in the English classroom.
- The students were not interested in English lesson.
- The students did not felt enjoyed in English classroom.
- The students were passive in learning English.
- The students did not like English.
- The students were not able to increase their vocabulary mastery.
- The students were not able to pronounce and wrote vocabulary well.

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded the result based on the research. The conclusions are as follows:

1. The procedures in using games involving pictures technique was effective way of teaching vocabulary because in giving instructions to the children, the researcher gave rules and steps clearly. Games involving pictures introduced in the

following ways, they were a) demonstration of parts of game by the teacher and one or two children, b) trial by a group in front of the class, c) any key language and instructions were written on the blackboard. The researcher was monitoring and facilitating the games involving pictures conducted in order to avoid "baby sitting" activity. The researcher realized that process of playing a game was more than winning. Young children did not need to win. They just needed to experience a game as a group of activities. The appropriate pictures were used to support the games. So, this technique was going run well.

2. The implementation of games involving pictures in teaching English vocabulary for the second grade students in primary school was successful. This study was conducted to know the effectiveness of the teaching English vocabulary by using games involving pictures at the second grade of elementary school of Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta. An effective way of teaching was a way which can bring the intended result of the instructional objectives to the students' learning. The result of the study includes success and failures. In the implementation of classroom English, using games, using pictures, and classroom management were successful.

There were also some changes occurring as the results of the actions. The changes include the way of thinking and behaving of the students in the study. In doing the study, the researcher was helped by an English teacher of elementary school of Piri Nitikan Yogyakarta. Before implementing the actions, the students were not interested, unmotivated and less involved in English classroom. They also still had difficulties to pronouncing and writing vocabulary items. After implementing the actions, the students were more active and attention. They also enjoyed the lesson and they were able to write vocabulary well. In other words, their interest, motivation and involvement increased. The students also had confidence in pronouncing the English words.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brown, H. D., 2001 *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching second edition*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Bakhsh, S. B. 2016 Using Games as a Tool in Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners. *English Language Teaching*; Vol. 9, No. 7; 2016 ISSN 1916-4742 E-ISSN 1916-4750 Published by Canadian Center of Science and Education 120 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/elt.v9n7p120>
- Burden, P.R., and Byrd, D.M. 1999. *Methods for Effective Teaching (2nd Ed.)*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Byrne, D. 1969. *English Teaching Extracts*. London: Longman.
- Callahan, J.F., and Clark, L.H. 1982. *Teaching in the Middle and Secondary Schools: Planning for Competence (2nd Ed.)*. New York: Mac Millan Publishing Co. Inc.
- Clark, H.H. and Clark E.V, 1977, *Psychology and Language*, USA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.
- Edge, J. 1999, *Essentials of English Language Teaching*, London: Longman
- Flood, J., 1984, *Language and the Language Arts*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall
- Gu, Y. 2010. Learning strategies for vocabulary development. *Reflections on English Language Teaching*, 9(2), 105-18.
- Harmer, J. 2007. *English Language Teaching. (2nd Ed.)*. England: Pearson Education Limited.
- Ramadhani, A. P., 2015. Techniques in Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners at LIA English Course. <http://ejournal.stkip-pgri-sumbar.ac.id/index.php/tell-us/article/view/1284>