



USING GAMES AS AN EFFICIENT WAY OF TEACHING VOCABULARY

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Table with 2 columns: ABSTRACT and KEYWORDS. The abstract describes the article's focus on using games for ESL learners. The keywords include target words, game-based learning, appropriate teaching strategy, and time-fillers.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most effective activities that support the students' vocabulary were games activities. The students will be interest and also not feel bored with the lesson. Teaching vocabulary by using games can make students relax and more enthusiast when they learn English. It is also can facilitate students in memorizing English vocabulary. As practiced by the teacher of SMK Sultan Agung Sumber. He usually used the games of guessing and matching words in teaching English, especially to memorizing English vocabulary. El Shamy (2001), defines a game as a "competitive activity played according to rules within a given context, where players meet a challenge to achieve an objective and win". Language games comprise many factors such as rules, competition, relaxation and learning in particular. Rules have to be clear, few and well-explained so as no difficulty is faced. They are designed in different levels as well as topics that suit different students' levels what make them enjoy all together and gain the best results. Learning vocabulary is a hard work, so attempt is required to understand, produce and manipulate the target words.

However, games can help and encourage many learners to learn target language more easily. They also help teachers to create contexts in which the target words are useful and meaningful; they also bring fun for students, thus help them learn and retain new words more quickly. In other words, game-based learning can create a meaningful context for language learning process. After learning and practicing new vocabulary through games, students have the opportunity to use language in non-stressful way. Teaching vocabulary by using games is one of the most effective strategy that usually practiced by teacher at SMK Sultan Agung Sumber, especially in teaching English. Based on the main problem which investigated by the researcher, most of students consider that English is one of the difficult subjects in their school. When they learn English, they feel trouble because they did not understand English vocabulary well. They have less understanding in English vocabulary. Consequently, they have less motivation besides they lazy to learn English. In this case, the teacher of SMK Sultan Agung Sumber applied one of the strategies to make students easier and enjoy the learning process when they learn English. The teacher applied teaching vocabulary strategy for the purpose to make students comprehend vocabulary step by step. Based on the teacher's interview, he applied games as one of

the most effective strategy in teaching vocabulary. Indeed, most of students at SMK Sultan Agung Sumber have limited English vocabulary. So, the teacher used games to make students interest and enjoy the learning process. In addition, games are beneficial in learning vocabulary because it can increase students' ability to memorize words, encourage student's interaction and improve their communicative skills and enhance students' motivation. Games also can help the teachers to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. As Donmus (2010) stated that the value of educational games has been increasing in language education since they help to make language education entertaining. Traditionally, vocabulary has not been a particular subject for students to learn, but has been taught within lessons of speaking, listening, reading and writing. During the lesson, the teacher introduced the new vocabulary to students which apply in classroom activities. To make students not stressed when they learn English which is considered difficult, the teacher can apply learning strategies by using games. Freeman (2000) considered that games take a very important role in language teaching and learning since, through the use of games, the high levels of stress and anxiety can decrease considerably. Students do not feel forced to develop a proposed task. Besides, games also provide motivation and entertainment and providing students' opportunities to express their opinions and feelings. In other words, from many teaching strategies which implemented by the teacher, games as one of the most effective learning strategies to apply and it can make students interested in what the teacher taught, especially when the teacher teach English. Basically, there are many difficult words in English for students that learn a foreign language. Therefore, the teacher should apply appropriate teaching strategy to make students understand English vocabulary. In addition, it is necessary for the teacher to connect teaching strategy with the interesting method such games. Games are the more innovative strategies which allow learning and acquiring knowledge from different perspectives.

Thus, teaching vocabulary by using games can make students comprehend and memorize words step by step. They can learn while playing. Usually, by using games in teaching and learning process, students can remember the word by their self. They also more active in the classroom and they can interact with their classmates and teacher each other. According to Ersoz (2000) held those games are highly appreciated thanks to their amusement and interest. Teachers can use games to help their students practice more their skills of communication. Games also can arouse students' sense of enthusiasm and confidence when they learn. As Huang (1996) stated that learning through games could encourage the operation of certain psychological and intellectual factors which could facilitate communication heightened self-esteem, motivation and spontaneity, reinforcing learning, improving intonation and building confidence. Besides, there are many types of games which applied in teaching and learning process. Based on the researcher observation at SMK Sultan Agung Sumber, the teacher usually used matching and guessing words in teaching vocabulary. He asserted that: Based on the interview, the teacher usually uses the types of games in the form of matching and guessing words. However, the teacher not used pictures as a learning media. He used students as a learning media that directly practiced in front of the class. The teacher used vocabulary which contained in the textbook. Then, he will appoint students in pairs to come forward in the front of the class. After that, the teacher asked students to guess the words. One of students to practice what is meant of the words, and his partner should guess what the meaning of the word is. However, teaching vocabulary by using games not always bring benefits for teachers and students. Based on the teacher's interview at SMK Sultan Agung Sumber, indeed, teaching vocabulary by using games can make students more quickly

understand the material presented. However, there are some of weaknesses when teaching by using those strategies. He stated that: Based on the teacher's statement above, teaching vocabulary by using games is more effective than the other teaching strategies. Students are more interested and enthusiastic during the learning process. However, there is the main problem when the teacher taught by using games. Learning time is very limited. Moreover, at SMK Sultan Agung Sumber, the schedule of English lesson at grade tenth held one week only two times meetings. Then, in every meeting lasts for about 2 hours. In this case, the teacher should be able to utilize and manage the time as well as possible so that students can learn effectively. Besides, teaching strategy by using games make students really enthusiasts, so all of them were active and made noisy. Sometimes they too much moved and spoke. That condition made the teacher difficult to control them. According to Pham (2007), "there are some of the weaknesses teaching strategy by using games, includes: 1) it has limited time; 2) discipline issues, learners may get excessively noisy; 3) straying away from the basic purpose of the game-play activity, perhaps, due to inadequate rules instruction, resulting in playing too much and the lack of learning; 4) if games are already familiar or boring, students might not get equally involved; and 5) some learners, especially teenagers, may find games unnecessary and childish." Unfortunately, some of the teachers think that language games are nothing more than a waste of teaching time and that they do not have educational value. Others use them, but they do not give them a central part in the foreign language teaching program but use them as the time-fillers.

## The List of Used Literature

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