



USING MEMORY CARD GAME IN TEACHING VOCABULARY TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstract

Memory Card game adalah salah satu aktifitas yang tepat yang dapat diterapkan oleh guru dalam mengajarkan *vocabulary* kepada siswa yang dapat dimainkan secara berkelompok sehingga dapat meningkatkan motivasi siswa untuk berkompetensi dengan siswa lainnya. *Memory Card game* ini tentang bagaimana siswa bisa menemukan pasangan dari gambar-kata yang tepat dengan cepat sesuai dengan *vocabulary* yang sudah diperkenalkan sebelumnya. *Memory Card game* ini dapat meningkatkan kerja sama anggota kelompok dan dapat mengasah ingatan siswa. Kelompok tercepat yang dapat menyelesaikan pasangan dari gambar-kata adalah pemenang dari *game* ini dan akan mendapatkan hadiah dari guru. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan tentang bagaimana penggunaan *Memory Card game* dalam pengajaran *vocabulary* untuk *young learners*. Dalam makalah ini dijelaskan langkah-langkah yang harus diterapkan oleh guru dalam mengajarkan *vocabulary* kepada siswa dengan menggunakan *Memory Card game*, terutama untuk *young learners* di tingkat Sekolah Dasar (SD). Hal ini dilatarbelakangi oleh kesulitan-kesulitan yang dialami oleh guru dalam mengajarkan *vocabulary* kepada siswa di dalam kelas, seperti memilih aktifitas yang sesuai dengan karakteristik dan perkembangan siswa.

Kata kunci: *vocabulary, young learners, memory card game.*

A. INTRODUCTION

English is one of the languages mostly needed in the world. It is the mother tongue for several nations. English as a mother tongue means that the language of those who born and raised in one of the countries where English is historically the first language to be spoken (Jenkins, 2009:16). People all over the world use a language to communicate and interact with other people not only around them but also around the world. Language can be used not only in the spoken form but also in written form. English is one of the connecting languages that is used to communicate and interact with other people because it is one of the international languages

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At school, there are four basic skills that need to be learned by students; those are listening, reading, speaking, and writing. These four skills are used all together to communicate and support each other. Sari and Safei (2013:128) say that if the students master English vocabulary, they will be easier to master the four basic skills in English. In short, to be able to master these skills, there is also a need of an adequate mastery of vocabulary so that students can learn English well. An adequate mastery of English vocabulary can determine the quality of students' speech where vocabulary is a core component of the ability to speak. Vocabulary is also the basic component for the students to speak, listen, read, and writing well.

Vocabulary has an important role in making use language skills. Students will not be able to use English without mastering vocabulary. By improving students' vocabulary, it will affect the improvement of their language ability. The more students have vocabulary, the easier they understand the language, and the more easily they express their thoughts. In learning vocabulary, the students do not only need to memorize the words, but also need to understand the words. They are not only required to know the meaning of the words, but also required to use the words correctly. It means that they understand what they are talking about.

Dealing with vocabulary, according to Sari and Safei (2013:127-128), vocabulary is a total number of words that have meaning and can be used in a language, and it is considered as one of the important element in language. She also adds that students need to master vocabulary in order to be easier to master the four skill in English and be able to express a language. In addition, Prasetiawati (2012:3) states that language is very important in human life, and vocabulary is an important thing in language learning in spite of other language components such as, reading, grammar, morphology, and so forth. It can be said that vocabulary is a set of words, which produces a language. The more words the students knows, the more ways they can use to think about things and express themselves to communicate successfully.

Nevertheless, there are differences in teaching vocabulary to young learners compared to teenagers or adults. Teaching vocabulary to young learners are more difficult than teaching to teenagers or adult because they easily get distracted even with a small interference. According Harmer (2001:37), the age of our students determines our decisions about how and what to teach where students of different ages have different needs, competences, and cognitive skills. In brief, an appropriate method is needed in teaching vocabulary to young learners that fits to their ages, needs, and competences in order to avoid students get distracted and boredom in teaching and learning process. So, the teacher needs to pay a lot of attention in choosing the suitable technique, media, and strategy that will be applied in teaching vocabulary to young learners.

Teaching vocabulary is an activity where the students obtain some new words to improve the language. Teacher should arouse students' interest in obtaining new words, the so that they can absorb properly what being taught to them in their long term-memory. The teacher also should need to consider how

to present vocabulary in class before teaching the students. It is necessary to make lesson plan. Before presenting new vocabulary to students, the teacher should take into consideration some factors as the foundation in presenting vocabulary and know how much vocabulary to present to them. According to O'Dell (1997:276), memory is important in learning vocabulary the benefits of revision and repetition have been obviously proved in studies of learning vocabulary.

The objective of teaching vocabulary to young learners through game will make learning process be fun and relaxation, so the students will be easier in memorizing the vocabulary. They will be able to comprehend the words by mentioning the words and their translations clearly and also describing the words by drawing them. According to Wright (1983:1), game is one of the way in helping and encouraging young learners to keep their interest and work. . It can motivate students and increases cooperation to work together.

From the explanation above, the writer choose "Memory Card Game" in teaching vocabulary to young learners, especially elementary school students. Memory card game is modification of memory game. It is a game in which the object is to find a picture-word pair. Each person turns over two cards at a time, with the goal of turning over a matching pair, by using their memory. This game will make the students trying to remember the words they have introduced before. This game is played in a group, so it can build students' motivation due to the nature of its competitiveness.

Memory card game also can help to motivate the young learners in learning vocabulary. Young learners become motivated to compete with other students to win the game. The competition factor stimulates and encourages young learners to participate in the activity as naturally they want to beat the other teams. Young learners will have fun and enjoy the game while playing.

B. DISCUSSION

1. Teaching Preparation

Teaching learning English is not a spontaneous activity but it is an organizational activity in order to make the processes of teaching run well. Therefore, the teacher always needs preparation before teaching the students. Furthermore, the preparation itself is one of the aspects that will give a big impact to the process of the teaching and learning process in the classroom. So, it is better for the teacher to have good preparation that the goal of learning can be achieved easily.

The first step that determines the success of teaching process is planning. A teacher has to make some preparations in support of the teaching process. Having a good preparation will help the teacher in teaching and also increasing their confidence because they have already known things to do in classroom. This preparation is formulated in a lesson plan. A good lesson plan consists of core competence, basic competence, indicators, objectives, learning materials, learning models, teaching and learning activity, media and evaluation.

2. The Procedure of Using Memory Card Game in Teaching Vocabulary to Young Learners

In applying memory card game, the teacher divides the teaching process in three stages, they are pre teaching, whilst teaching and post teaching.

a. Pre- teaching activity

Pre-teaching activity is the first stage in teaching and learning process, and it is an important stage where the teacher can see the readiness of students in receiving given materials. For the beginning at this stage, the teacher greets students to attract their attentions and to see their readiness for learning. After that, the teacher asks the chairperson to lead a pray before starting the lesson. Then, the teacher checks students' attendance. Before starting the lesson with a new topic, the teacher reviews the last lesson and gives motivation to their students. It is important to know the students' understanding of the previous lesson in which the teacher can identify the students' background knowledge related to the lesson given. It can be done by asking several questions related to the last lesson.

b. Whilst-teaching activity

In the stage, the teacher explains the lesson and applies the memory card game. This activity includes several steps: observing, questioning, experimenting, associating and networking.

1) Observing

This is the stage where the teacher makes the students observe given objects by giving some questions. *First*, the teacher shows pictures related to the lesson. The theme of vocabulary the teacher is going to teach to the students is animals, so the teacher will show the pictures of animal to the students to do observing stage. *Then*, the teacher will ask the students some questions related to the given pictures to see their background knowledge (*See appendix 2*). After getting some information about the pictures of animal, the students will repeat together the name of the animal (*spelling*) with the teacher by showing the picture of animal's name (*See appendix 3*).

The following questions are the example of the questions that can be asked to the students about the animal.

- 1) Have you ever seen the animal like in the picture before?
- 2) What do call this animal in English?
- 3) Where did you see the animal?
- 4) What is the color of this animal?
- 5) What is your favorite animal?

2) Questioning

In this stage, the teacher gives an opportunity to students to ask further information about what they want to know related to the pictures in observation stage for example pictures of animal.

3) Experimenting

In this stage, teacher starts playing the game. Before playing the game, firstly, the teacher will explain about the game, how to play the game, and its rule. The teacher has to make sure that she/he already introduced the topic being learned to the students first before playing the game. The topic is about animal.

- 1) The teacher introduces the game to the students by explaining how the game is done and should be played, and what theme of vocabulary that is going to be played. The theme is about animal. Due to its name, memory card game, so the game will be played by using cards.

The teacher will say,

Now we are going to play a game. It is called 'Memory Card' game. Memory card game is a game in which the object is to find a picture-word pair. Each person turns over two cards at a time, with the goal of turning over a matching pair, by using their memory based on the vocabulary that already introduces to them before. I will divide you into several groups. I'll give you 5 minutes to finish the game. The first group who finish the game first will be the winner and gets reward. The winner group is a group who can find matching pair of the cards.

- 2) The teacher puts the students in group. This group consists of two to four students in each group. The total member of the group depends on the total of students in the class.
- 3) The teacher needs to prepare set of the cards based on the total of the group. The teacher will give each group a set of cards and then the teacher shuffles the cards and lays them face down on the desk. Each set of the card consists of 12 cards.
- 4) Every student in a group takes in turns to turn over two cards at once to try and find a picture-word pair. The picture-word pair is the matching pair of the cards where the first card has picture on it (the picture is based on the theme given), and another card has the spelling word of the picture in that card. That is why it is called picture-word-pair in order to find their matching pair of the cards, the picture and the word. There is no rule which card the student wants to turn over the card, for example she/he can

turn over her/his first card at the first row in the first column and the second card at the third row in the second column.

- 5) If the student is successful, she/he takes the card and turns over two more cards. If she/he is not successful, the cards are turned face down again and the next student has a turn. The successful of the student here does not depend on luck. Their success depends on how they can remember all the vocabulary that already have been introduced to them before. When they turn over two cards and cannot find the suitable picture-word pair of the card, they need to remember all information about the cards they have already turned over until they get their turn again, for example what the cards are about, where it is placed (based on column and row), etc.
 - 6) The group who can find all the suitable picture-word pair cards in this game first is the winner of the game.
- 4) Associating

In this stage, the students are given the exercise individually. The students are introduced to some new vocabulary. The teacher asks the students to memorize the vocabulary by showing the pictures that have animal's name on it. They are given 10 minutes to memorize the new vocabulary which is the theme is about the animal. Then, the teacher puts the students in a group again. It can be with their old group member or with the new one to play the game again with the new vocabulary they have memorized.

5) Networking

In this stage, the students are given a task individually where the task itself consist of two section which are already prepared in pieces of paper by the teacher (*See appendix 4*). The first section is to match ten vocabularies of picture-word pair. The students need to find the *picture* and match it with the suitable *word* related to the picture, for example the picture of the cat, so the students need to find the suitable word related to the picture, that is CAT. The second section consists of ten vocabularies to guess animals' name. In this section the teacher provide picture of the animal only and the students need to guess the name of the name by filling the blank column right below the picture. The vocabularies in this task are randomly chosen by the teacher from what they have learned in the previous lessons in order to evaluate students' comprehension. Each vocabulary is worth five points. If they can match and answer all the questions, they will get 100 points. If the students get under 80 points, they will considered failed.

c. Post teaching activity

In this stage, teacher evaluates students' understanding by giving feedback and motivation. To make the students more motivated in attending the lesson, the teacher gives rewards to the winner of the game.

At the end of the lesson, the teacher and the students will draw conclusions about what they have learned together.

C. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

1. Conclusion

Vocabulary is the first thing that should be done by learners in learning a language. Vocabulary can be considered difficult because there are many words that learners need to master. Student's mastery of vocabulary will increase along with how much vocabulary they have learned. Teaching vocabulary is an activity where the students obtain some new words to improve the language. The important part of teaching vocabulary is to get the students more proficient in learning vocabulary.

One of many appropriate methods in teaching vocabulary to young learners is by playing game. Game is considered as an effective ways in teaching vocabulary to young learners because of one of many reasons is that they love to play. Memory card game is one of the methods that can be used in order to avoid young learners feel boredom in learning and teaching process. This game brings in relaxation and enjoyment for learners which help them master new vocabulary with ease. This game will also make the students try to remember the words they have introduced before. This game is played in a group, so it can build students' motivation because of the nature of its competitiveness.

2. Suggestion

To be successful in implementing Memory Card game in teaching vocabulary to young learners, the writer suggests some following points. *First*, teacher has to make sure that she/he already introduces some new vocabulary to students before starting playing the game in the class. *Second*, when playing the game, it is better to play the game in group rather than individual because playing the game in a group will save time and more efficient. *Third*, it is important for the teacher to choose suitable material and organize the activity well in the classroom. Therefore, the teacher should put more effort in the preparation before teaching, for example preparing attractive pictures and cards by putting some creation on them so that they will attract more students' attention and influence students' interest in playing the game. *Lastly*, in order to know the effectiveness of using memory card game to teach vocabulary to young learners, it is expected that there is further research on how memory card game can be used to improve young learner' vocabulary.

Note: This article was written based on writer's paper under the supervision of Drs. Saunir Saun, M.Pd.

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