

USING FLY SWATTER GAME TO IMPROVE STUDENTS' VOCABULARY OF GRADE 5 OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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Abstrak

Fly swatter game adalah kegiatan yang menarik bagi siswa karena mereka dapat belajar sambil bermain. Dalam permainan ini, siswa merasa tertantang untuk mencari atau menemukan kata-kata yang telah tersedia. Dalam permainan ini, siswa akan dibagi menjadi dua kelompok dan setiap kelompok mendapatkan sebuah pemukul alat. Sebelum permainan dimulai, guru menuliskan beberapa kata di papan tulis. Setelah itu, guru memperlihatkan beberapa gambar kemudian mengucapkan kata dalam Bahasa Inggris, serta memperdengarkan suara berdasarkan kata-kata yang tersedia. Tugas siswa adalah menemukan kata-kata yang ada di papan tulis berdasarkan instruksi guru. Jika siswa menemukan kata yang dimaksud, siswa harus memukul kata tersebut dengan alat pemukul yang telah diberikan, mengucapkannya dalam Bahasa Inggris dan mengejanya. Poin akan diberikan kepada kelompok yang cepat dan benar dalam menemukan kata. Jadi, dengan adanya permainan ini kelas akan lebih menyenangkan dan membuat siswa lebih tertarik untuk mengikuti pelajaran Bahasa Inggris di sekolah.

Kata kunci: Fly swatter game, vocabulary, elementary school students

A. INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, English has been taught as local subject at elementary school. Jannati (2010: 5) says that:

To master English language, it should be introduced in preschool like play group and kindergarten. It is done to make students understand English before they study in the next level of school. Besides, to master English is a demand of recent days.

Based on her statement, every school has to have English subject to prepare students to face the world in the future. The aims of English instruction are to make the children understand English and to enable them to speak English in the future.

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Mastering English is not only for the four skills, listening, speaking, reading, and writing but also a component of the language itself that is vocabulary. Richards (2005: 16) states that vocabulary is a core component of language proficiency and provides some basics for how well learners can speak, listen, read and write. In addition, he also says that to master language skills, the first thing that should be learned and known is vocabulary. Without vocabulary, students cannot understand and speak English well because they do not know the meaning of the words. That is why teaching vocabulary is very important to be taught from an early age.

Based on the writers' experience, the teaching of English vocabulary does not run well, especially at elementary school. The elementary school students are often bored with the technique used by the teacher. Students like something new and they often imitate what they see and hear but the teacher does not use various techniques to students. As the result, they do many things when the teacher explains the lesson. Some of them make a noise, make a joke with friends next to their seats, or sleep in class when teacher explains the lesson. So, the students do not pay attention to the lessons taught by the teacher.

Another fact is that students are passive in the classroom. It is caused by some reasons. First, they are asked by teachers to find out the meaning of words in dictionary. It is a boring activity for students because in that age students like to study while playing. Second, they are asked to listen and write what teacher says on his/her book. In this case, they do what teachers say, like dictation. Third, they are asked to read together what the teacher writes in the blackboard including the meaning of words. After that, they are asked to study at home by using dictionary.

Teachers should have known that at the age of six years to twelve years is a childhood where students are very excited to play. So, it would be nice if teacher changes the technique of learning by providing a game in teaching English to make them enjoy learning English.

As a good teacher in teaching learning process, she/he should be able to select and implement appropriate techniques, especially for elementary school students. Teachers have to develop vocabulary exercises. Since students in that age like to play in the classroom, teacher should not teach them by using a monotonous technique because they will get bored easily.

Some problems are found at elementary school. First, the students cannot master vocabulary because they get bored easily. Second, inappropriate technique used by the teacher makes students uninterested in the lesson. So, teachers have to find an appropriate technique to develop their vocabularies.

Based on the problems, teacher is expected to implement appropriate technique to develop vocabulary instruction for elementary school students that enable them to enjoy the classroom activities. This paper is intended to use fly swatter game to improve vocabulary instruction at elementary school. It is believed that this game is able to develop students' English vocabulary.

In teaching English language, teachers are encouraged to be creative to make the learning process successful. In teaching vocabulary, teachers should be able to apply an interesting and appropriate technique to make students enjoy the learning process.

Since vocabulary is an ultimate source of building a language, the learners will be able to understand the listening, speaking, reading and writing when they have sufficient vocabulary. One of the strategies or methods that can be used to teach vocabulary is *fly swatter game*. It is a game where the students have to get the word in the blackboard by using the teacher's instruction. This game helps the students to improve their sight-word dictionary and it can be a very valuable tool.

In this game, students are encouraged to be active and creative in finding words based on a certain clue. This game is interesting enough and can change untrue judgment that learning English is so complicated and boring.

According to Haring (2003: 1), fly swatter is:

“...an instrument used to kill flies that consists of a small square piece of material or mesh which is on the end of a short flexible stick and it makes a great thwacking noise when hit onto a wall or similar surface”.

Besides, Haring (2003: 1) states that there are three rounds or levels in this game. In the first round, teacher tells to the students something easy. Teacher says the word and the two students have to find it in the blackboard. In the second round, teacher pairs students up differently so that they are competing against different persons from the opposite team. At this time, teacher says the word in students' native language and they have to find the English one. In the last round, teacher gives clues, such as something that we wear on feet. After that, students have to find the possible answer in blackboard. So, if students get the correct word, they get the point.

In addition, Flores (2000: 1) emphasizes that the objective of this game is teacher will say a word and students will turn back and run to "fly swat" the word that has the bug over it. Students who "kill" the fly have to spell the word and then they will score a point for their team. Beside, Schmenk (2001: 1) says that the objective of this game is when teachers say a word; students are able to match the written form. So, students can also accustom their listening skill in this game

Fly swatter can be applied to any level of students. According to Hembree (2008: 3), this game can be used in any level of students who need to practice and improve their vocabulary. It is an exciting activity in the class especially to warm up the class. In the classroom, the atmosphere will be different from the usual. Students will make a bit of noise in the classroom but that is the point of this game because students will feel more enjoyable and get them addicted to the game.

It can be concluded that fly swatter game is a kind of activity that students do in the classroom by using a fly swatter that students use to hit the word in the blackboard that teacher says before. In this activity, teacher and students can make a good relationship in learning process.

B. DISCUSSION

a. Preparation of Fly Swatter Game

In teaching English to elementary school students, teacher should consider the learners' level and their cognitive development. Teacher does not only focus

on the subject but also on the way he/she teaches the subject to the learners. This paper explains the use of Fly Swatter Game in teaching vocabulary to elementary school students.

1. Material

The first thing that must be considered by teacher is the preparation of material. Teacher should make a lesson plan that includes the activity and steps in teaching vocabulary by using Fly Swatter Game. The lesson plan is very important for teacher as a guide in teaching and learning process. Besides, teacher should inform students on how to use Fly Swatter Game in their classroom. Then, teacher chooses a topic that has been learned before. Teacher has to prepare the media for teaching and learning activity such as: fly swatter and some words on whiteboard.

2. Media

After teacher chooses the material, teacher must prepare the whiteboard as the place for sticking words. The whiteboard is a medium that teacher uses to place some words. Teacher should make sure that words on the whiteboard can be seen by students. Teacher may decorate the wall becomes as beautiful as possible. It can be wrapped by colorful papers or other properties. Students are also free to decorate it and they can use their imagination to make it become attractive. In addition to the whiteboard, the teacher should also get ready with marker and fly swatter to hit their bug (pictures that students have to hit in the whiteboard).

b. Procedure of Fly Swatter Game

Actually, in this game, there are some procedures that must be followed. First, students will compete each other to hit the word by fly swatter. Second, two students stand in front of the class and face their firends. Third, students listen to what the teacher says carefully. Fourth, they may face the white board and find out the word after they listen to the word said by teacher. Fifth, after they have hit the word, they have to circle and spell it in front of their firends. Sixth, teacher knows the winner by listen the first sound of fly swatter. Seventh, the first student who hits the word will get a point. Eight, the winner will get a reward.

This game has three rounds. First and second rounds have same activity. Every student competes to win the game. But in the third round, students work in group and try to win the game together. Students will be divided into two or three groups. Every group is given a fly swatter by teacher.

c. Teaching Implementation

Fly swatter game is a game that can be used by teacher in enriching students' vocabulary. In this case, it will be focused on fifth grade of elementary school students. The implementation of using Fly Swatter game is divided into three steps; they are pre teaching activity, whilst teaching activity and post teaching activity.

1. Pre teaching activity

Pre-teaching activities are done at the beginning of teaching learning process in the class, which is used to attract students' motivation and make them ready to learn. In pre-teaching, there are some activities that will be followed.

First, teacher introduces and brainstorms a topic about animal. It helps students to consider what they have already known about the topic and present some vocabularies. There some ways that can be used in introducing the topic. One of them by using video. The teacher shows a video that has connections to the topic.

Second, the teacher checks students' background knowledge by asking some questions about the video that have been watched. Some animals on the video are commonly found in their daily life and on television. After that, students may ask about the translation of such kind of animals in English.

Here some sample questions:

- a. What do you see in the video?
- b. How many animals in the video?
- c. Where do they live?
- d. How do the animals like?

Then, the teacher tells to students that they will play a game. But, before starting the game, the teacher has to tell the procedures of the game. Finally, the teacher gives explanation about the rule of the game that must be followed by students. The rules of this game are as follows:

- a. They should not hit another student by fly swatter.
- b. They should not throw the fly swatter to anyone.
- c. They should not "block" another player with their arm or their body to prevent them from getting at a word.

2. Whilst teaching activities

In this stage, the teacher rechecks students' readiness. It is important to do before the game is started. After students are ready, teacher begins to lead them to the game. The game is played during 30 minutes. There are some important points that should be paid attention along the game.

a) Teacher's role

Teacher's role is to establish the successfulness of playing this game. In this game, teacher has several functions. Teacher's functions can be:

- 1). Teacher is as a facilitator. It means teacher prepares anything students' need that concerns with the game such as animal's video, group formation, and pictures and other needs.
- 2). Teacher is as an instructor. Teacher gives an instruction to students that are related to the game. Sometimes, teachers' instruction is difficult to understand by some students because of the language usage. In using a language, teacher should not use difficult terms because they are not understood by students. If teacher speaks in English, he/she mentions the

translation into the Indonesian language if necessary. The activity can be as follows:

Teacher : Ok, now we start the game. Everybody has to focus and listen to my instruction. (*baiklah, sekarang kita akan memulai permainannya. Semua harus focus dan mendengarkan instruksinya.*)

Students : Yes, Ma'am.

Teacher : Do not break the rule, ok. (*jangan melanggar aturan, ok.*)

- 3). Teacher is the leader. It means teacher leads students to the game. The game is started by the teacher and students follow teachers' rule during the game is played. Teacher can make his/her own rule. In addition, teacher controls anything that is necessary during the game. Moreover, in this section, teacher also functions to check the correctness of students' pronunciation. Commonly, elementary school students have bad pronunciations. They speak based on the originally written in text. No word is missed. In this stage, teacher makes a correction about mistakes and mentions the right one.

Here is the illustration:

Round 1 and 2:

Teacher asks two students to come in front of the class and face their friends. Then, teacher gives each of them a fly swatter and a marker. Before teacher shows a picture, they should to pay attention to teacher.

After they look at the picture, they face the whiteboard and find the word out. Student B is the first who hit the word. Student B has to circle and spell it. Here, teacher has to check the correctness of their pronunciations. But, the winner is students who hit the word first. This activity continues until the last students. After that, teacher says the word in English. Two students who have been called by teacher before find the word in the whiteboard. She/he who finds the word first is the winner.

Next activity is that the teacher asks students to create two groups; group A and B. Each group has one fly swatter and marker. Each group makes a line and the first student that hits the word is he/she who is standing far away from the whiteboard. The rule of the game is same with round one and two. But, teacher does not only show a picture and say a word but also gives a sound of the word.

Teacher : Ok are you ready?

Students : Yes, Ma'am.

Teacher : Ok, listen carefully. (Students listen to the sound of elephant)

Other students in group may help him/her to guess the word. After they know the animal, they run and find out the word. Group B is the first which hits the word. He/she has to circle the word and spell it. This activity continues until the last round. Group that gets many points is the winner. They will get a reward from the teacher.

By playing the game, students can increase their knowledge about vocabulary. A great expectation to win the game will make them serious and concentrate well. Meanwhile, they can remember the word easily with an activity like this game rather than the students read a vocabulary book itself. They will be enthusiastic and tend to have a great motivation to master a certain vocabulary.

b) Students' role

In this game, students are as the objects of learning. It means that students follow each instruction related to the game from their teacher. They play the game based on the rules managed by teacher. Moreover, all students should participate in expressing vocabulary they have and also pay attention to their friends' performance in the game. Besides, students should also keep the situation well during the game is played.

Based on those activities, students can improve their vocabulary because; first, they learning while playing. In elementary school students, students like doing something fun. They will be more interested in the classroom. Second, there some moments that can make students remember some words like when their friend doing something wrong or funny, other students can remember those moments and also the words, automatically. Third, by using fly swatter game, students will compete with each other to find out the meaning of words by following some interesting activities in that game. So, students can enrich their vocabulary without using monotonous activity.

3. Post teaching activities

In the post teaching activities, teacher gives exercises. Students do the exercises individually. It can be by writing words as many as possible including the meaning of words based on a certain clues given by teacher. This activity is necessary in order to check students understanding about the vocabulary that they acquire during the game.

d. The Advantages of Playing Fly Swatter Game in Teaching and Learning Vocabulary

Playing Fly Swatter Game to elementary school students may give some advantages. First, fly swatter game does not use a monotonous activity. Second, it is fun for students. They can learn through playing. Thus, it helps them learn and acquire new words easily. Third, it involves friendly competition and keeps students interested. Fourth, it serves students to learn pronouncing and spelling words. Fifth, students are more active than teacher. Teachers' roles are just to give explanations and corrections about the students' task.

D. SUGGESTION

In order to develop and improve students' vocabulary, teacher is suggested to use Fly Swatter Game in teaching English. Students will be more enthusiastic in learning because they will have something interesting in learning English. Besides, students will be more active than teachers. Here, teacher must not talk too much because they just give an instruction to students. So, students can creative and attractive in learning process.

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