

THE INTEGRATION OF TEACHING READING AND WRITING BY USING MUDDLE WORDS GAME FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstrak

Dalam proses belajar mengajar di sekolah dasar, banyak siswa malas saat diminta membaca dan menulis teks bahasa Inggris karena kurangnya kreativitas guru dalam menciptakan kegiatan yang menarik. Makalah ini bertujuan untuk memaparkan salah satu strategi pengajaran membaca dan menulis di sekolah dasar melalui sebuah permainan. Permainan ini adalah Muddle Words game. Permainan ini dapat digunakan untuk mengajarkan keahlian membaca dan menulis pada siswa sekolah dasar. Dalam permainan ini, guru membagi siswa ke dalam beberapa kelompok. Lalu guru menempelkan sebuah kartu di papan tulis. Pada kartu tersebut terdapat sebuah gambar benda dan huruf-huruf yang masih diacak. Guru meminta siswa bekerja dalam kelompok untuk menyusun huruf acak tersebut menjadi sebuah kata. Tetapi sebelum siswa menyusunnya dalam kelompok, siswa diminta untuk melafalkan huruf yang masih acak tersebut. Kelompok yang tercepat menyusun akan mendapat poin. Kegiatan ini dilakukan berulang-ulang. Kelompok yang paling banyak mendapat poin akan menjadi pemenangnya. Setelah banyak kartu di papan tulis, semua siswa disuruh membaca nyaring kata di papan tulis tersebut. Dengan begitu, indikator pembelajaran reading dan writing pada siswa kelas IV sekolah dasar akan tercapai.

Key words: *Muddle words game, reading a word, arrange letters and sound out*

A. Introduction

In Indonesia, teaching English has been started from the elementary school. The importance of reading and writing skill can be seen in our educational curriculum. Based on “*Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan (KTSP)*” (2006),

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teaching English for young learner is purposed to introduce the young learner with English so that they can meet the English level achievement in Junior High School. It can help them in familiarizing English before they are going to junior high school. According to KTSP 2006, the students at fourth grade of elementary school have to be able to read aloud, sound out, and spell the alphabets from words, phrases, or very simple sentences and arrange the letters into a good word.

Birch (2007:33) defines reading is an interactive process placed between the text and the reader's processing strategies and background knowledge. The text presents letters, words, sentences, and paragraphs that encode meaning. The reader uses knowledge, skills, and strategies to determine what that meaning is. The reader's knowledge, skills, and strategies include: (1) linguistic competence: the ability to recognize the elements of the writing system; knowledge of vocabulary; knowledge of how words are structured into sentences (2) discourse competence: knowledge of discourse markers and how they connect parts of the text to one another; (3) sociolinguistic competence: knowledge about different types of texts and their usual structure and content (4) strategic competence: the ability to use top-down strategies, as well as knowledge of the language (a bottom-up strategy).

In addition, Silberstein (1987:7) defines reading an active cognitive process of interacting with printed symbol to establish meaning. He explains that reading as meaningful interpretation of printed or written symbol. Moreover, Leipzig (2001) exposes that reading is a multifaceted process involving word recognition, comprehension, fluency, and motivation. It means that the readers can make meaning from printed materials if those factors are mastered. So, reading is a very complex process which requires many aspects.

Writing is a process of arranging the grammatically correct sentences into a paragraph, an essay or journal. This is supported by Richards and Renandya (2002:304) who says that writing is a matter of putting together strings of grammatically correct sentences. The grammatically correct sentences it does not mean only focus to the pattern of grammar but also to all of the points in writing, such as, how finding a topic, making drafting, arranging the ideas and until publishing. All of that points must be mention in writing because all of them are related each others. Moreover, in writing the writers must be followed the coherence and cohesion of writing. Similarly Syafi'ie (1988) states that writing is representation of speaking sound in visual form based on orthography system. Basically, writing is what on our mind, we talk, and we read then we write it in a piece of paper with language that we use.

The connections between reading and writing are multifaceted. The most obvious connection is that both skills depend on the written forms of language for communication. Cobine (1995) says that reading and writing are so closely linked, mutually reinforce each other and promote learning when they are integrated in classroom activities. Their integration allows for multiple approaches to tasks, covering all learning styles. Reading and writing skills are very important in the context of language teaching and use.

The young learners refer to the children from ages of seven to twelve. According to Piaget's cognitive developmental theory in Wiener (1989:44), the young learners actively construct their own cognitive worlds; information is not just poured into their mind from the environment. Piaget believes that young learners adapt their thinking to include new ideas because additional information furthers understanding. Furthermore, Brumfit (1991) lists some characteristics of young learners: (1) The young learners are just beginning their schooling, so that the teachers have a major opportunity to mould their expectations of life in school. (2) They tend to be keen and enthusiastic learners, without the inhibitions that older children sometimes bring to their school. (3) Their learning can be closely linked with their development of ideas and concept because it is so closed with their initial experience of formal schooling. (4) They need physical movement and activity as much as stimulation for their thinking and the closer together these can be better.

A game as a part of early childhood education is potential to provide preschool children with highly engaging and meaningful context for learning reading. Through a game, a child strengthens language development. Uberman (1998:25) says that the games are very effective and enjoyable for learners and useful in adding diversion to presentation techniques. By using a game, the young learners can learn through playing. A game provides context for playing, reasons for playing that develop children's language skill.

Lee (1987) asserts that a game should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and the class have nothing to do. They ought to be at the center of teaching a foreign language. A game is fun and children like to play them. Playing a game is vital and natural part of growing up and learning. Further Ur (1999:22) suggests that the game activities provide pleasurable tension and challenge through the process of attaining some fun goal. The teacher can add spice to this kind of task. All language of the games should be fun, but always keep the language component at the forefront of planning.

Since games are the appropriate one to be used in teaching to young learners, it is suggested to the teachers to use games in teaching English to the young learners. Teaching English to the young learners by using games help the teachers to accustom them in using English. To avoid the mistaken of choosing games for the young learner, the teacher should considering the material given and also the situation of the class. Moreover, Vernon (2009:168) asserts that there are many reasons why the games are so useful in the classroom: (1) the games are fun and students like to play them; (2) the games have a purpose and an outcome; (3) the games make students more motivated and optimistic, and the teacher can really make a difference in their lessons; (4) the games can foster healthy and beneficial competition in the classroom; (5) the games are excellent ways whereby children have fun and at the same time acquire a language.

From those definitions above, it can be concluded that the games take a big role in teaching young learners. It is because through playing a game, the young learners can learn without being aware they are studying and without stress. They can learn a lot and participate in the class. A game also supports young

learner's cognition and socioemotional development because it has certain rules in developing their cognition. Moreover, when the teacher integrates the game into the syllabus and lesson plan, they need to emphasize that the game is not just fun, it should increase the young learner's interest.

Therefore the teacher need to avoid using the same game from lesson to lesson. At last the game chosen has to be medium to the young learner to learn, practice and review the material given. One example of games that can be used in teaching English especially reading and writing skill is Muddle Words game. Muddle words game is a game that introduced by George O. Draper (2005). In this game, young learners are grouped into several group or based on the class situation. The young learners are given a word or phrase that has letters randomly, and then they are asked to arrange the letters be a good word or good phrase. After that, they sound out the alphabet. The winner in this game is the fastest group which can arrange the letters into a good word.

B. Discussion

1. The Implementation of Muddle Words Game in the Integration of Teaching Reading and Writing for Young Learners

a. Preparations

There are some preparation should be done by the teacher. First, the teacher should prepare lesson plan. The lesson plan use to achieve the goal of teaching and make teaching and learning process run systematically. Muddle words game is put in whilst teaching activity (elaboration) because through this game the young learners will learn the material. The next preparation is media. The media that will be used in the integration of teaching reading and writing are a card which contains random letters and the pictures the noun. It can help the student to arrange letters easily. It is better to make the card around 30*25 cm with colourful picture, because it can increase student's interest. It also needs a glue that is used to patch the cards on blackboard.

b. Procedures

In the beginning, the teacher teaches the students about letters. The teacher tells the students A, B, C, until Z. The teacher teaches the students how to sound out the letters and also how to write it. After that, the teacher teaches about nouns in the class like table, pen, pencil, book and others. The teacher also explain about the diffrences between this and these. To know the student's understanding about letters, things in the class and how to write it, the teacher involves the students in muddle words game.

The teacher divides the students into some groups. One group consists of five members. Firstly, the teacher patches one card on the table. In the card, there is a picture of noun and also the random letters below the picture. Then the teacher asks all of the students to sound out the random letters in the card. After they sound out the letters together, the teacher asks the students to discuss in their group. The students in the group should to arrange the random letters into a good word. The fastest group who can finish it, write their result

of discussion on the blackboard. The fastest group will get one point. The teacher repeats it until 10 times. The group who get many points will be the winner. For example, After 10 times or ten cards, the group one has two points, group two has three point, and group three has five points, so the winner is group three. The teacher gives a reward for the winner. After that, the teacher asks all of the students to read the word on the cards and spell the correct alphabet.

2. The Advantages of Muddle Words Game in the Integration of Teaching Reading and Writing for Young Learners

There are some advantages of using muddle words game. They are: (1) The muddle words game is purposed to train the young learner's cognition development in writing skill especially and in reading generally. Since this game is purposed to be used in the fourth grade, this game develops the young learners in arranging the letters, sound out the alphabet, and reading aloud a word, phrase or very simple sentences. (2) The muddle words game trains the young learners' socio emotional because it requires them to interact with their team and work in group. (3) Applying the muddle words game in the integration of teaching reading and writing can increase young learner's interest with the material. When the young leaners are interested in learning the material, they will give more attention to the lesson given. That condition give a good chance for both the teacher and the young learners. On the occasion the teacher can deliver the material very well and young learners can understand what they have learned on that day. (4) The muddle words game can also enhance the young learner's vocabulary about noun.

C. Conclusion and Suggestions

The process of the integration of teaching reading and writing for young learners by using muddle words game is implemented in whilst teaching activity. There are some advantages in using the muddle words game to teach integrated reading and writing for young learners. First, this game develops the young learners in writing skill especially and in reading generally. This game develops the young learners in arranging the letters, sound out the alphabet, and reading aloud a word, phrase or very simple sentences. Second, the muddle words game trains the young learners' socio emotional because it requires them to interact with their team or asks them to work in group. Third, the muddle words game in the integration of teaching reading and writing can increase the young learner's interest with the material. Last, this game can enhance the young learner's vocabulary about noun.

In order to be successful in the integration of teaching reading and writing to young learners, the writer suggests that the teacher should be creative in selecting and using an effective and appropriate game in the classroom. The teacher is suggested to use the muddle words game in the integration of teaching reading and writing in order to achieve the effectiveness of the learning. Then, before teaching, the teacher should prepare an effective lesson plan. A well-organized lesson plan will support the class and the teaching and learning process run well, especially in implement the muddle words game in the integration of

teaching reading and writing. It is also suggested to the teacher to use a media when teaching integrated reading and writing. Using the media is really helpful in teaching and learning process.

Note: This article is written based on the writer's paper whose advisor is Dr. Zul Amri, M. Ed

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