



THE USE OF “STORY STARTER HOT POTATO” GAME IN TEACHING SPEAKING FOR SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

Elza Netri¹, An Fauzia Syafei²

English Department
Faculty of Languages and Arts
State University of Padang
email: Elzanetri@yahoo.co.id

Abstract

One of important skills in learning English is speaking ability. By speaking, the students can communicate what they are thinking. However, most of students have difficulties in speaking since they learn English as a foreign language. Therefore, a good and interesting way is needed to attract the students in learning speaking. Story Starter Hot Potato Game is a good and interesting activity that can be used in teaching English to improve the students' speaking ability. In playing Story Starter Hot Potato Game, the students are grouped into circles. The teacher then play a music and read a sentence to a student. Each of the students should continue the sentence in turn. Here, the students are practicing speaking because each of the students should say a sentence to build the story based on the sentence given by the previous person. When the music stops, the student that has not finished his sentence yet will be lost so the last survivor of this game will be the winner. In playing this game, the students should be able to think critically and fastly. This way would be able to motivate the students to speak in the class, so the students' speaking ability would be improved and be better.

Key words: Story Starter Hot Potato Game, teaching speaking, Story Starter Hot Potato Game in teaching speaking

A. INTRODUCTION

Speaking skill is one of the four important skills that should be mastered by students to be good at English. No one can deny the importance of speaking skill in foreign language learning since speaking is the most vital part of communication. When the communication takes place, a person will be a speaker to convey her idea, and will be a listener to accept the information. The speaker needs to be able to deliver the idea or the information that she wants to tell to the listener, so the listener could catch the point of what has been said. As the result, the listener could give appropriate responses and good communication will take place as well.

¹ English ELTSP of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang graduated on September 2016

² Lecturer of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang



There are many definitions about speaking stated by several experts. Lindsay and Knight (2006:57) states that speaking is a productive skill includes putting, communicating and interacting the message to others. Brown & Priyanvada (2010:183) wrote that speaking is a productive skill which involves oral production task that can be empirically and directly observed. The speaking processes involve the participation of an interlocutor and only in limited context do not need the interlocutor (e.g. monologues, speeches, etc.) It can be concluded that speaking is one way of oral communications (where the speaker constructs the messages) which obviously can be seen and need an interlocutor as the one who is involved in a conversation.

Indonesian learns English as a foreign language (EFL). It is not an easy thing to teach Indonesian about English language. In fact, the ability to speak English well has become a need nowadays. For that reason, Indonesian has been including English as one of compulsory subjects. Luoma (2004:1) wrote in her book that “speaking skill is an important part of curriculum in language teaching.” Many countries that learn English as a foreign language or second language have been involving speaking skill as one of important part in their curriculum; include Indonesia. Speaking skill as one of the English skills has been taught with various techniques to the students, but it seems that the students always find difficulties and obstacles in learning it

Lack of motivation to speak seems to be the most common problem that is often faced by the students. They often worry about making mistakes and tend to have no idea about what to say and how to say it. Brown (2000:269) states that most of the learners have obstacles in learning how to speak. They often worry about saying something which is wrong, silly, and difficult to be understood. Therefore, most of the learners lose their motivation to speak and prefer to keep their mouth closed.

The sense of urgency and spontaneity to speak is important to make the students become the autonomous user of English (Toowomba Catholic Education). However, based on the writer’s experience during teaching practice, the ways that are often used in teaching speaking at senior high school nowadays do not include the sense of urgency and spontaneity to speak. The common ways which are often applied in teaching speaking are writing, memorizing, and performing the materials. When the students are taught about speaking skills, they are often asked to write a conversation related to the topic being learned. They write a conversation which consists of several sentences for each person, memorize it, and then perform it in front of the class. It can be seen that there is no sense of urgency and spontaneity that the students feel. The students have time to get well prepared before they perform it. In fact, in real life the students would not have time to write about what they are going to say first. Thus, the sense of urgency and spontaneity are needed to be included in the teaching and learning processes.

The students’ speaking ability should be helped. They need to be taught about what to say and how to say something in English without should write it first. They need to practice to speak without worrying about making many mistakes. A teacher should be able to create a fun way and a conducive situation

in teaching speaking. The teacher should present the material that will be learned in the interesting way which can attract the students' attention and also can invite the students to be active in speaking. For that reason, the teacher must use an appropriate activity.

One activity that can be used to make it real is by using game. One of some research related to the teaching speaking by using game is the research conducted by Kasri and Ardi (2013). There are many advantages that can be gained by using game in the teaching and learning process. McGoninal (2011:28) states that one of those advantages is that games provoke emotion. Besides, McGoninal (2011:28) also states that "A game is an opportunity to focus our energy, with relentless optimism, at something we are good at and enjoy." Furthermore, McGoninal (2011:33) states that a good game is a good media that have a great power to make someone feel that they want to do and can do the game. This condition can be used as a way in learning speaking. Putting the learning process into a game would make the learning process become as interesting as games.

Story Starter Hot Potato Game is one of the games that would improve the students speaking skill. This game is an interesting game that can invite the students to speak actively with the sense of urgency. The students can speak freely and also develop their creativity in saying the sentences to make up a story. This game is also accompanied by music, so the learning process will not be boring.

Story starter hot potato game is a game which is inspired from the hot potato game. The thing that will be the hot potato here is the story. The students are grouped into circles consist of four or five students. Then the teacher points one of each group to be the first speaker to start the game. Next, the teacher plays the music and says a sentence as the story starter to open the story to the entire group. Then, the entire first speaker in each group continues the story by adding a sentence. After the first speaker finishes her sentence, the second student adds another sentence, and so forth. When the music stops, the student who is in the middle of the sentence or who is struggling to say the sentence is out. Then the students play the second round to continue the story. Play the game until it left one person as the winner.

Chou (2015) in her website wrote that hot potato game is one of the games in teaching English that can decrease the pressure and stress in the learning process. It can also push the students to speak up and interact with others, making the language come alive while giving opportunity to the students to learn. She also added that this game gives the students great chances to learn, use, and understand how English words work.

Story starter hot potato game uses the hot potato strategy. Hot potato is a fast-paced cooperative learning structure that promotes the contribution of a range of ideas. It encourages the students to think deeper and differently to create ideas (Toowoomba Catholic Education). It can be seen that this game could promote the students' critical thinking. By applying this game, the students will also be getting used to the spontaneity of speaking because they have to give quick responses to continue the story.

B. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, it will be discussed about the implementation of story starter hot potato game in teaching speaking in order to improve the senior high school students' speaking ability.

1. Preparations

a. Preparing the Material by Selecting the Topic

Topic is the subject or theme of discourse that will be being talked during the game being played. The topic should relate to the materials being learned and also known well by the students, so the students can develop their idea based on the topic. The topic can be in the form of:

1) Narrative Text

Narrative is kind of text which talk about a story (usually fiction). Here are several examples of the topic in the form of narrative text.

- a) Cinderella
- b) Pinocchio

2) Recount Text

Recount is kind of text that talks about what happened in the past. Here are several examples of the topic in the form of recount text.

- a) The experience in Kuta Beach.
- b) The experience about climbing Mount Merapi

3) Descriptive Text

Descriptive text is kind of text that is used to describe a particular person, place or thing. Here are several examples of the topic in the form of descriptive text.

- a) My Beautiful Mother
- b) My Best Friend

b. Preparing the Media

The media that will be used in this game is the music that will accompany the game. Choose music that can make the students enjoy the game. The music which only consists of the instrument is a good choice. For example: Fur Elise by Ludwig Van Beethoven, Cellogic by Kim Young Min, etc.

c. Preparing a Story Starter

After selecting the topic, the teacher needs to prepare a story starter to open the story. The teacher just needs to create one sentence that will be given to the students. Here are several examples of the story starter.

1) Narrative

- a) A story starter for *Cinderella* story
 - "Once upon a time, lived a beautiful girl named *Cinderella*"
- b) A story starter for *Malin Kundang* story
 - "Thousands years ago, an old lady lived with her son in a small village near the beach in west Sumatera."

2) Recount

- a) A story starter to tell an experience in Kuta Beach.
 - “A month ago, my family and I went to Kuta Beach in Bali.”
- b) A story starter to tell an experience about climbing Mount Merapi
 - “When I was in Junior high school, my uncle invited me to climb a mountain”

3) Descriptive

- a) A story starter to describe My Beautiful Mother
 - “My mother is the most beautiful mother in the world.”
- b) A story starter to describe My Best Friend
 - “I have a best friend.”

d. Preparing the Students

The teacher groups the students into circles consist of four or five students. Arrange the space between groups well. The teacher also prepares the students to give themselves motivation and self confidence to speak. Tell the students that they can use their native language if they do not know how to call something in English.

Next, the students need to know the topic that will be made as the story, so they will get the description of what they are going to say in the game. Let us say that the students will be learning about narrative text. Then, the topic can be *Cinderella*. The teacher needs to warm the students up by digging the students' knowledge about the *Cinderella* story. The teacher can:

- 1) Ask the students who *Cinderella* was.
- 2) Ask the students what happened to *Cinderella*.
- 3) Ask the students how the story ends.

e. Explaining the Rules of the Game

The teacher tells the students about the rules of the game. The teacher explains how they can lose or win the game. Tell the students to make up the story with things that are logic and keep the story as what it is supposed to be as the real story.

2. Procedures of Using Story Starter Hot Potato Game

There are some procedures of teaching speaking by using story starter hot potato game. Those procedures are:

a. Choosing a student in each of groups to be the first speaker

First, the teacher chooses a student from each group to be the first speaker.

b. Playing the music that will accompany the game

In this stage, the teacher plays the music that will accompany the game and set the volume.

c. Telling the students the story starter

Now it is the time when the teacher tells the story starter. The teacher needs to ask the students to listen carefully to her first. Then the

teacher says the first sentence to open the story. For example, “Once upon a time, lived a beautiful girl named Cinderella.”

d. The student continues the sentence given by the teacher.

After the teacher saying the story starter, the first speaker (student 1) continues the story given by adding one more sentence. For example:

Student 1: “She lived with her step mother and two steps sisters”

After that, the student who is sitting next to her (student 2) continues the story by adding one sentence based on the sentence of the student 1.

Student 2: “Her step mother’s name was Maria”

In the case of student 2, she intentionally said that the *Cinderella*’s step mother’s name is *Maria*. It is ok because the student 2 do not know the real name of *Cinderella*’s mother, so here the student 2 just shown her creativity.

Student 3: “Her step sisters’ name were Selena Gomes and Taylor Swift”

Student 4: “They lived in a very big house”

Student 5: “Everyday, Cinderella had to do pekerjaan rumah”

Student 1: “Cinderella had to clean the house, prepare food, wash the plate,

Student 2: “Cinderella, hmm, Cinderella was very suffering”

Student 3: “She...” (The music stop)

In the case of student 3, the music stops so she is out of the game. The teacher can use this pause time to correct the students’ sentences as what just said by the student 5. She said *pekerjaan rumah* instead of saying *the chores*. The teacher also needs to correct the words chosen by student 1. She said *wash the plate* instead of *do the dishes*. If there is a student who pronounce the word incorrectly, the teacher can fix it here. After the student 3 is out, the players left are the student 1, 2, 4, and 5. The students left then continue the story by adding a sentence until it left one survivor. The last survivor is the winner of the game.

e. Evaluating the learning process

Evaluating the learning process is the activity conducted at the end of the class. Here, the teacher evaluates the students’ development in speaking and give conclusion about what they just learned. The teacher leads the students’ attention to what they just did and corrects the mistakes from the sentence they said while playing the game.

f. Giving Reward

At the end of the lesson, the teacher can give a reward to the students who become the winner of the game. It is used to keep motivating the students to speak. The teacher should also encourage the students who did not win the game to keep practicing and be better.

3. Solving Students’ Problem through Story Starter Hot Potato Game

a. Lack of motivation to speak

Story starter hot potato game invites the students to speak. In the beginning of the game, may be some students would mind to speak. Here,

the teacher can give each of the students a responsibility to continue the story. Each of the students has to say a sentence. The students have to continue the sentence given by the previous person. If they keep trying to practice speaking (by continuing the story) they will be getting used to the English language as what Harmer (2007:123) said in his book that if the students keep practicing the language, they will be getting used to the English language. If the students have been becoming getting used to the English language, they would have no burden anymore to speak.

Story starter hot potato game is a fun activity that makes the students would not feel the pressure of learning. As what Chou (2015) wrote in his website that this game can decrease the pressure and stress in the learning process. This game pushes the students to speak up and interact with others. This game is a fun activity that gets the students to speak up while having a good time in practicing English. It can be seen that the students would have a willingness to speak if the learning process is enjoyable and fun.

b. Story starter hot potato game invites the students to speak spontaneously

In applying the story starter hot potato game, the students do not need to write what they are going to say first. They can get the description about what they are going to say in the stage where the teacher digs their background knowledge. The teacher will also write some points as the clues that the students can use to continue the story. Here, they just need to deliver what in their mind without taking a long time before saying the sentence.

Story starter hot potato game is a fast-paced cooperative learning structure that promotes the contribution of a range of ideas. It encourages the students to think deeper and differently to create ideas (Toowoomba Catholic Education). The students have to give quick responses to continue the story. Here, the students would feel the sense of urgency and spontaneity to speak. By applying this game, the students will be getting used to speak without taking a long time to think. If the students keep practicing speaking with the sense of urgency and spontaneity they will be able to use English spontaneously and then become the autonomous user of English (Toowoomba Catholic Education).

4. The Advantages that Can be Gained and the Possible Obstacles in Implementing the Story Starter Hot Potato Game

a. The Advantages that Can be Gained

There are some advantages that can be gained in teaching speaking by using story starter hot potato game. First, this game can invite the students to practice to speak. They have to say a sentence to continue the story given. If the students keep practicing to say the sentences in playing the game, the students speaking ability will be able to be improved. This is in accordance with Harmer (2007:123) that the students should practice speaking often in the class to make the students be better at English.

Second, story starter hot potato game can build competitive environment for the students, so they would be actively involved in the speaking activity of the game. As what McGoninal (2011:28) wrote in his book that one of advantages of using game in teaching is that games provoke emotion. Everybody will try to be the winner of the game.

Third, story starter hot potato game can reduce the boredom in learning speaking because this game will be accompanied by music. They would also enjoy the game because they are learning without any feeling of pressure caused by the lesson. McGoninal (2011:33) states that a good game have a great power to make someone feel that they want to do and can do the game. They would play the game based on their own will without feeling bored.

Fourth, story starter hot potato game promotes the students' critical thinking. This game stimulates the students to think deeper and differently to express their idea in continuing the sentence to build the story (Toowoomba Catholic Education). They would think what possibilities of words and sentences they can say to make up the story.

The last one, story starter hot potato game can stimulate the students to speak spontaneously with the sense of urgency. They would feel that they have to say a sentence in continuing the story before the music stops. By applying this game, the students will also be getting used to the spontaneity of speaking because they have to give quick responses to continue the story (Toowoomba Catholic Education). Then, they will speak often and be getting used to the English language that will make the students to be autonomous language users.

b. The Possible Obstacles

Even though the story starter hot potato game gives many advantages, this game still has several obstacles that make it becomes hard to be applied. The obstacles hinder the teacher to apply it well. Here are several possible obstacles in implementing this game.

The first obstacle comes from the students side itself. Not all of the students have good enough speaking ability to play the story starter hot potato game. To play this game, at least the students should have basic ability to speak in English. In fact, not all of the students can make a sentence because of the limitation of vocabulary items that the students have. Some of them also do not know about grammar in making a sentence. As the result, the sentence that goes out from their mouth may be disorganized.

Second, this game will be difficult to be implemented in the class which consists of too many students. The maximum numbers of students involved in the class to play this game is 30 students. Having too many students in the class room will not make the game can be played effectively. Even the class will just be noisy.

Third, this game needs to be played in a wide enough room, so the distance between groups to another group will not too close. Having too close space among the group would disturb the students' concentration.

Fourth, this game needs a good sound system to play the background music. Therefore, it will be difficult to be implemented if the classroom is not supported well with a good sound system.

The last one, it will be difficult for the teacher to notice the mistakes made by all of the students. In a round, one member of each group would speak in the same time. There is always a possibility that more than one student would make mistakes in the same time.

C. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

a. Conclusion

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that speaking skill is much needed nowadays. The students need to develop their speaking skill by practicing it often. The teacher is expected to be a smart teacher who can design a good learning activity to improve the students speaking ability. Therefore, a good activity is needed to facilitate the learning process. Story starter hot potato game is an effective way to improve the senior high school students' speaking ability.

Story starter hot potato game is an alternative way that can be used by the teacher in teaching speaking. This game requires the students to sit in circle consist of four or five students. The teacher then says a sentence to start the game. The student who is pointed to be the first speaker continues the story by adds one more sentence, and then the story is continued by the student next to her and so forth. Each of the students should continue the sentence to build a story related to the topic. Besides, this game also gets the students to speak spontaneously with the sense of urgency which stimulates the student to think creatively.

In addition, the teaching and learning process is enjoyable and interesting because the lesson is inserted in the game. No one knows what a student would say in continuing the story, and everybody is also excited to express the idea. By using this game, the students can practice speaking with a fun and interesting activity, so it can improve the students speaking ability. As the result, the students will be motivated and have more self confidence to speak.

b. Suggestions

Here are some suggestions for the English teacher in using story starter hot potato game. First, in selecting the background music, choose the music that can stimulate the students to think quickly and can feel the beat of urgency in playing the game. Second, choose the music that does not contain lyrics (instrumental music) because the lyrics would disturb the student concentration. Third, do not play the music too loud because it will be noisy and also disturb the student concentration. Moreover, in selecting the topic, choose topic which is familiar to the students. Next, encourage the students to express their idea, and when the students do not know how to say something in English, allow them to use their native language. It is the teacher responsible to explain that words in the end of the lesson. The last one, the teachers should keep motivating the students so they could have self confidence to speak.

For the students, here are some suggestions. First, the students are expected not to be shy to express their idea. Second, the students are expected to actively and creatively get involved in the game. Third, the students are expected

to use the English in the appropriate way, but when the students do not know how to say something in English, they can use their native language. The last one, the students are expected to ask the teacher if there is something that they do not understand about the game.

Here the suggestion for researchers who works in this field. Considering to the teaching speaking by using story starter hot potato game, the writer hopes that researchers could continue this paper in to a research to find another fact that can support this paper. It is hoped that this paper would inspire the related research.

Note: This article was written based on Suci Ayu Andari's paper under the supervision of Dra. An fauzia Syafei, M.A.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Brown. H. Douglas & Priyanvada Abeywickarma. 2010. *Language Assessment: Principles and Classroom Practice*. New York: Longman
- Brown. H. Douglas. 1994. *Teaching by Priciples: An Interactive approach to Language Pedadogy*. New York: Practice Hall Regents
- Chaves, Carla et al. 2009. *Fun and Games in English*. Buckinghamshire: DELTA Publishing
- Chou, Elena. 2015. *5 Quick and Fun Verb Games to Liven Up Your ESL Classroom*. (online) <<http://www.fluentu.com/english/educator/blog/esl-verbs-tenses-games-for-the-classroom>> (Retrieved on Desember 4, 2015)
- Kasri, H & Havid, A. 2013. Using Crazy Story Game in Teaching Speaking to Junior High School Students. *Journal of English Language Teaching*, 2 (1) Serie B.
- Lindsay, Cora and Paul Knight. 2006. *Learning and Teaching English: A Course for Teacher*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Luoma, Sari. 2004. *Assessing Speaking*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McGonigal, Jane. 2011. *Reality Is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World*. New York: The Penguin Press
- Toowoomba Catholic Education. ----. *A-Z Learning Strategies*. (online), <www.twb.catholic.edu.au/> (Retrieved on Desember 4, 2015)