



REVIEWING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' VOCABULARY THROUGH PAPER AIRPLANE GAME

Mutia Okselina¹ and Desvalini Anwar²

English Department

Faculty of Languages and Arts

State University of Padang

email: mutiaokselina@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper's aim is to explain how to use paper airplane game in reviewing students' vocabulary. Elementary school students' vocabulary (in knowing and understanding the vocabulary) relatively average because of some factors that are lacks of motivation and the use of inappropriate way of teaching in the classroom. Paper airplane game is one of the way of teaching that can be used by the teacher to overcome the problems. Paper airplane game helps students to improve their vocabulary comprehension that have been learned before. The steps in using paper airplane game are brainstorming, discussing about the material, and playing the paper airplane game. In brainstorming, teacher shows several pictures related to the material along with general questions about the pictures after that. The next step is discussing about the material, teacher will put the students in-group and they will discuss about the material guide by the questions given by the teacher. The next step is playing paper airplane game, teacher will guide the students in playing this game that will help them in improving the vocabulary that has been taught. And the last steps is concluding. In this step, the teacher make the conclusion about the material.

Key words: Paper Airplane Game, Vocabulary

A. INTRODUCTION

In learning language including English, vocabulary is one of the essential aspects that should be considered before learning the other skills like listening, speaking, reading, and writing. According to Wilkins in Thornburry (2002: 13) "Without grammar very little can be conveyed, without vocabulary nothing can be conveyed". It can be said that vocabulary is the most important thing when learning a language. Without having sufficient amount of vocabulary it is unlikely that one can communicate fluently for verbal and written communication.

In Indonesia, the new national curriculum does not included English as a compulsory subject to be taught in both kindergarten and elementary schools. However, each school is free to decide to include English lesson as a local content or called *Mulok* or Muatan Lokal. Thus, the goal of the learning English in this early education is not to master the four language skills namely listening,

¹English ELTSP of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang graduated on....

²Lecturer of English Department of FBS Universitas Negeri Padang



speaking, reading, and writing, but to enable the students to know and understand certain words or vocabulary in English related to their surroundings.

Unfortunately, lots of elementary students face some difficulties in learning new vocabulary. The factors that caused the difficulties may come from both the teacher and the students themselves. From the students' side they find difficulties in memorizing the words and they also lack of motivation to learn it. Meanwhile from the teacher's side the problem may lay on the teaching techniques that the teachers apply in the classroom. The combination of these problems cause the students unable to acquire English vocabulary.

The first difficulty faced by the students is the difficulties in memorizing the words and its meaning. In learning vocabulary, the goal is to have the students getting familiar with the words and its meanings and then to use them in the proper context. In addition, later on, they can memorize the words because they have already been familiar with the words. However, most of the students find it difficult to memorize them because it is not their native language. In addition, the students also do not get enough exposure of the words being taught. Meanwhile, the acquirement of vocabulary should be during the process of language acquisition as they learn their first language, but in the classroom usually the students learn the language in the process of language learning, which includes instruction to memorize list of vocabulary. For the students, remembering the vocabulary has become so difficult so if they also need to memorize the meaning, it will be more difficult especially because they do not get enough exposure of the language.

The second factor that contributes to the lack of vocabulary acquirement is the students' lack of motivation to learn English in the classroom. It is indicated by some students who do not pay attention during the lesson in the classroom. Even though most of the students at the beginning of the lesson pay attention to the teacher, they later lose their interest on the lesson. In addition, it cannot be avoided that one or two students in the classroom do not pay attention since the very beginning of the lesson. These students can make other students' attention distracted from the teacher as well. This difficulty occurs because English is a foreign language that is needed to be learned by them. English is not familiar to the students so that they do not have enough motivation since they never have been exposure about it before.

The last reason why the students have difficulties in learning vocabulary is that the teacher usually use the inappropriate way in teaching vocabulary in the classroom. In the learning process, the teacher usually lists set of vocabulary and their meanings, then read how to pronounce the words correctly and the students are asked to repeat after the teacher. After that the students need to memorize the list of vocabulary. This process of teaching makes the students lost their attention to the teacher since the process is difficult and not interesting for them. Because of this reason the goal of the lesson that is to make the students understand and familiar with the words cannot be achieved. Instead of using this way to teach, the teacher can use other techniques that can interest the students so the goal of the learning can be achieved.

There are several ways for the teacher to make the lesson become more interesting for the students, for instance by using more pictures that describe the words or by using videos related to the words so the students can understand more about the words that have been taught. In addition, there are also many game activities that can be used as one of the teaching techniques in the classroom. The teacher can use game as an activity in the classroom to make class more interesting because each game has their own advantages to attract the students' attention during the learning process in the classroom. It can be concluded that Paper Airplane Game is one of the ways that can be used by the teacher as the teaching technique to review the vocabulary mastery in the elementary school. The reason is because it will make the class more interesting and the use of this game can make the teacher review the material taught easily.

Paper Airplane game is the type of game that uses some questions based on the material taught in the classroom. It can be question related to the vocabulary, a story, or some grammar. According to British Council (2012), the children make paper airplanes before the game begin. They then answer questions and if they get the right answers, they have the opportunity to throw their airplanes at 'targets' in the room to score points for their team.

According to Human System Dynamic System (2016), there are two kinds of game: finite game and infinite game. Paper Airplane game is included in the finite game. Paper Airplane Game has the same goal that is by getting the higher score from one group by throwing the airplane to the targets that have been chosen in the classroom. In addition, the rules of Paper Airplane are set by teacher such as the students must stand in line in their teams, then answer the question given by the teacher so they can throw the paper airplane to get the score. The teacher decides the targets' score that will be the target of the airplane thrown by the students.

Applying Paper Airplane Game in the classroom can be done to increase the interest of the students to learn about the vocabulary. It is believed that this game is effective to help the students learn vocabulary words as well as reviewing new words. Therefore, through Paper Airplane Game the teacher can see clearly whether the students have learned the new words or not. Through this game, the teacher not only can review the vocabulary mastery of the students but also make the students feel relax in the classroom. Therefore, the students will find interest in learning English and fell free from learning pressure in the classroom. In addition, the teacher will avoid the cause of the difficulties of the students in the classroom such as difficulties in memorizing the vocabulary words, the lack of motivation and the boredom in the classroom..

B. DISCUSSION

Paper Airplane Game is a group game that requires the students to answer the question based on the material given by the teacher and then they get the chance to throw the paper airplane to the target score if they get the answer right. This game makes the students have the need and motivation to memorize the material they have learnt before the game is played in order to be the winner and get some prizes given by the teacher. In addition, this game is appropriate to the

students in the elementary school because the game quite simple and only needs simple material to remember and simple command to do.

There are some procedures in using Paper Airplane game to improve vocabulary mastery of the elementary school students, namely: preparation of the material, preparation of media, and the procedure of using Paper Airplane game.

1. Teaching preparation

The first thing that teacher should prepare before teaching in the classroom is preparing the material that is based on the curriculum. The chosen of the appropriate material is very important before teaching. The reason is if the teacher does not prepare the material of the activity in the classroom hardly to run well since there is no preparation to arrange the material into activities in the classroom. For the elementary school students usually the material related to the thing around them. In addition, the vocabulary taught is in theme, for example the vegetables, animal, things on the classroom, etc. After choosing the material, the teacher also needs to organize the material like how the material is taught to the students, especially if the teacher uses additional activities to present the material.

The second thing that teacher should prepare before teaching is the media used. If the teacher use the Paper Airplane Game in the classroom the media needed is the flashcards that contain several pictures of material, for example the pictures of animals. The teacher will show video or several pictures to the students and describe the pictures or teacher can ask the students to discuss about the pictures with their friends in group. For instance, the teacher shows the picture of tiger, she/he will describe the physical appearances, the food, and the living habitat of the tiger.

In addition, because of the used of Paper Airplane Game the teacher needs to prepare the paper to make the paper airplane. The paper used should be appropriate like origami paper so that the teacher can make sure that the paper airplane can fly to the target. Teacher also can prepare some coloring pen so that the students can decorate their paper airplane and make it more interesting. Teacher also needs to prepare the object that can be target score in the classroom.

2. Teaching procedure

There are some stages that should be followed by the teacher in implementing Paper Airplane game to improve elementary school students' vocabulary. These stages should be done systematically in order to make the learning process run well and to get a good result of students speaking ability.

a. Brainstorming

The goal of this stage is to introduce the students to the new material. In this stage, the teacher guides the students to the material that will be taught. The teacher can use video to show the material or use some flashcards that contain the pictures of the material. After the students see the picture of the animal and repeat the name of the animal with the teacher, teacher asks the students several questions related to the picture.

b. Discussing

After asking the questions related to the pictures given, teacher divides the students into several groups. One group consists of four to five students. Teacher

will give each group two flashcards that have been shown before and ask the group to describe the physical appearances of the animal, the food of the animal and the living habitat of the animal. In this stage, teacher will guide the group that have problem with their cards. This stage can last for ten to fifteen minutes.

After that, teacher collects students groups' work and presents it in the front of the classroom. Teacher will present the groups' work so that every students in the class know the description of each animal. In this stage, teacher gives the information that the students have not mentioned in their discussion so the students can get enough information about the animal. In addition, the teacher will give five or ten minute to the students to ask question about the animal to teacher. Then, the teacher makes the conclusion of the description of the animal with the students. .

c. Playing the Paper Airplane Game

After that, the teacher puts the students in group again. This group consist around four to five students in each group. The group can be the same with the previous group or the teacher can form a new group. Because the goal of this group is to have each group compete against the other group to get the higher score and be the winner, teacher needs to consider the ability of the students so that the students who has the higher ability is not in the same group.

After grouping the students, teacher gives each students a paper to make a paper airplane. Then the teacher gives demonstration on how to make the paper airplane. The teacher also can give each group a coloring pen so that the students can decorating the paper airplane and make it more interesting.

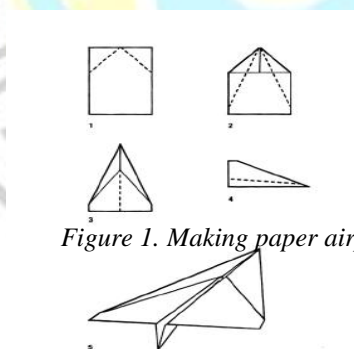


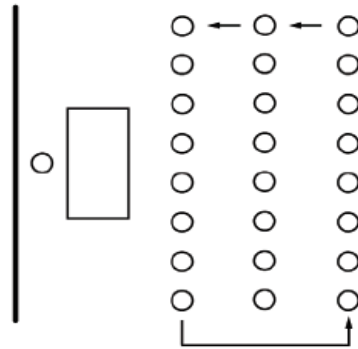
Figure 1. Making paper airplane

The next stage is describing the target's score to the students. The teacher should assign a number to each target. Easy targets will have a low number, for example, the table could be worth 5 points. Difficult targets will have a high number, for example, the trash can might be worth 20 points. The most difficult target should be worth a good lot, for example, 50 points for the clock.

The next stage is to make the students stand in line according to their group and to give questions to the students. The teacher will stand in front of the students that have already stand in line because he/she will give the questions to the students. Ask the first question to the front row of students. The first student to raise their hand has to answer. If the answer is right, they get the chance to throw the airplane at a target of choice. If the airplane hits the target, the student

gets the points. If the answer is wrong, another students can try to answer. All the first row must then go to the back of their lines so the next set of children can have a turn. In addition, as a note for the teacher, it will be better to make the students who have the similar ability in the same row.

Figure 2. Forming the line



d. Concluding

After getting the winner of the game, the teacher should make the conclusion about the material they have learned. In making the conclusion of the material, the teacher can show again the pictures of the material that had been shown at the beginning of the lesson and asking some question that have been answer in game before. After the students answer the questions, the teacher can make short descriptions based on the answer that the students have given as the conclusion of the lesson.

C. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

In order to teach vocabulary effectively to the students, teacher should use effective teaching techniques in the classroom and one of them is by using Paper Airplane Game. By using this game, the teacher will be helped in the term of creating fun learning in the classroom and for the students it will help them to recollect their memory about the material that have been learned before in a fun activity. Moreover, there are some advantages in using Paper Airplane game as teaching technique in the classroom. The first one is the students will have a fun learning. By using the boredom will be avoided and the students can have activity that is much related to their nature that is to play game. It will make the learning process run well and the goal of the learning can be achieved since the students have learning in the environment that makes them comfortable and the learning activity they prefer. The second one is this game will give motivation to the students in learning and acquiring vocabulary words. The teacher will say in the beginning of the learning that they will play a game related to the material they will learn that day.

It is suggested that the teachers to use the teaching technique that is interesting and effective like paper airplane game. So the teaching and learning process in the classroom can run well and the students can learn in comfortable atmosphere. In addition, it is important for the teacher consider the important

aspect in choosing the material and organizing the activity in the classroom. Therefore, the teacher should put more effort in the preparation before teaching.

Note: This article was written based on writer's paper that is supervised by Desvalini Anwar, S.S., M.Hum, Ph.D.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Copland, F., Garton, S. & Davis, M. (2012) *Crazy Animals and Other Activities for Teaching English to Young Learners*. London: British Council. Available at: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/sites/teacheng/files/B369-Young-Learners-Activity-Book_v10.pdf.

Human SystemsDynamics Institute. (2016, May 14). *Finite and Infinite Game*. Retrieved from Human Systems Dynamics Institute website: <http://www.hsdinstitute.org/assets/documents>.

Thornburry, S. (2002). *How to teach Vocabulary*. Longman

