THE USE OF GAMES AND PICTURES AS A TECHNIQUE OF TEACHING VOCABULARY: THE CASE OF THE FIFTH YEAR STUDENTS OF SDK KANISIUS JATINGALEH SEMARANG IN TH EACADEMIC YEAR OF 2010/2011[1]

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of games for improving vocabulary acquisition of the Catholic Elementary School of Kanisius Jatingaleh, compared to pictures for improving the same subjects of study. Participants were divided into two treatments groups, and each group was assigned to do the same test, containing sections which involved vocabulary items. Pre-test was given before the experiment and post-test was held immediately after the experiment was over. The Null hypothesis of no significant differences were constructed and tested, and then one-tailed t-test was used to compare the score of the games and pictures groups and to analyze the hypothesis. The results indicated that the score of the experimental group that it was taught by using games is higher than control group. It was proved that the students did better in mastering their vocabulary when they were taught by using games rather than pictures. Both of games and pictures contribute in that way : to help the students develop their inner self, to motivate the students to know more about the new vocabulary, to train the students in creative freedom as they feel less embarrassed or afraid and become more self confident, and to give a challenge to solve problem in enjoyable situation.

Key Words: Vocabulary Acquisition, Pictures, Games

Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk mengetahui kontribusi permainan untuk meningkatkan perolehan kosa kata dari Sekolah Dasar Katolik Kanisius Jatingaleh, dibandingkan dengan gambar untuk meningkatkan subyek studi yang sama. Peserta dibagi menjadi dua kelompok perlakuan, dan masing-masing kelompok ditugaskan untuk melakukan pengujian yang sama, yang berisi bagian yang melibatkan bagian kosa kata. Pre-test diberikan sebelum eksperimen dan post-test diadakan segera setelah percobaan selesai. Hipotesis Null tidak ada perbedaan yang signifikan yang dibangun dan diuji, dan kemudian satu-ujung t-test digunakan untuk membandingkan skor dari permainan dan

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kelompok gambar dan menganalisis hipotesis. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa skor kelompok eksperimen yang diajar dengan menggunakan permainan lebih tinggi dari kelompok kontrol. Hal ini membuktikan bahwa siswa melakukan yang lebih baik dalam menguasai kosa kata mereka ketika mereka diajarkan dengan menggunakan permainan bukan gambar. Kedua permainan dan gambar berkontribusi dengan cara: membantu siswa mengembangkan diri dalam diri mereka, memotivasi para siswa untuk tahu lebih banyak tentang kosa kata baru, melatih siswa dalam kebebasan kreatif karena mereka merasa kurang malu atau takut dan menjadi lebih percaya diri dan untuk memberikan tantangan untuk memecahkan masalah dalam situasi menyenangkan.

***Kata Kunci**: Kosakata Akuisisi, Gambar, Permainan*

A. INTRODUCTION

Introducing English to young learners is arguably based on the nation and linguistics point of views. However, in the era of globalization, English is becoming important to be learned. The need of mastering English is greater and greater and therefore English should be introduced earlier. In order to be able to learn English better they need a very competent English teacher who has the ability to teach English correctly with a nice and enjoyable classroom activities.

In mastering English, a learner has to consider the language elements or components such as: structure, pronunciation, spelling, and vocabulary. Vocabulary is an essential means in conducting communication. It is a knowledge that must be learned and acquired by students to enable them to communicate in English. So, it is the basic component which the students must be familiar with.

As beginners, Elementary School students will enjoy the lesson if the teacher teaches vocabulary related to their immediate environment and their world. In other words, teaching a foreign language, in this case English, to young learners, the English teacher should be creative in developing the teaching material and the teaching technique. It is important for English teachers to study the methods and techniques of teaching a foreign language in order to help themselves to teach as effectively as possible.

Some experts argue that technique gives some contributions in the teaching learning process. The

contribution of teaching techniques is states by Gerlach and Ely (1980: 187-199). They say that techniques are the tools of teachers to direct the learners' activities in order to achieve an objective. The effective teacher has a multitude of techniques and he will select the efficient ones in leading the learners to the desired terminal behavior.

Creating an informal and friendly situations in the process of teaching learning, especially English for young learners, pictures and games may be the way out. Both of them are very useful for the teacher to achieve the instructional goals of the teaching learning process. Many teachers preferred games presentation to pictures. It was said that games make the teaching learning process fun and enjoyable. On the contrary, the majority of the students said that pictures helped them to understand much better the idea than other presentation. The research questions are

1) Is there any significant difference between the student's mastery of vocabulary who are taught by using pictures and those who are taught by using games?

2) What contribution can pictures and games give to the students' mastery of vocabulary?

1. General Concept of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is one of the components of a language besides sound system, grammar, and culture. Students who want to learn a target language, in this case English, of course, have to learn those elements. Hornby (1974 :959) states that vocabulary is:

a. a total number of words (with rules for combining them) make up a language;

b. range of words known to or used by a person in trade, profession, etc;

c. book containing list of words, list words used in a book, etc, usually with definition or translation.

Studying a language cannot be separated from studying vocabulary because vocabulary which constitutes the knowledge of meaning is one of the components of a language. Learning vocabulary is

an important and inseparable part of learning a language. Whenever we want to communicate with other people using a language, we should have mastered a stock of words (vocabulary) related to the topic spoken. So, vocabulary is one of the components which support the speaker in communication. In other words, vocabulary plays a very important role in developing the four skills.

The importance of vocabulary is stated by Allen (1983:5). He states that: In the teacher-preparation programs today, there is more attention to teach vocabulary. One reason is this : In many English Second Language classes, even where teachers have devoted much times to vocabulary teaching, the results have been disappointing. Sometimes-after months or even years of English- many of the words most needed have been learned.

2. Teaching of Vocabulary

According to Wallace (1982:29-30), there are principles on which teaching vocabulary is to be based. They are:

a. Aims

    The aims have to be clear for the teacher : how many of the things listed does the teacher expect the learner to be able to achieve the vocabulary? What kind of words?

b. Quantity

    The teacher may have to decide on the number of vocabulary items to be learned. How many new words in a lesson can the learners learn? If there are too many words, the learners may become confused, discouraged.

c. Need

    In teaching vocabulary, the teacher has to choose the words really needed by his students in communication. The students should be put in a situation where they have to communicate and get the words they need.

d. Frequent Exposure and Repetition. Frequent exposure and repetition here means that the teacher should give much practice on repetition so that his students master the target words well. He also should give

opportunity to students to use the words in writing or speaking.

e. Meaningful Presentation

In teaching vocabulary, the teacher should present target words in such a way that their meanings are perfectly clear and unambiguous.

f. Situation of Presentation

The teacher should tell students that they have to use words appropriately. The use of word depends on the situation in which they are speaking and depend on the person to who they are speaking.

It is clear that in teaching vocabulary, the teacher suggested to look at some principles. Nevertheless, often students are not given guidelines for multiplying the vocabulary they already know. Going beyond this, however the teacher may develop exercise to help students to increase their word power in English through focusing on form, focusing on meaning, expanding by association, and re circulating the vocabulary they have acquired. However, it should be noted that the words selected by the teachers may

not make the students become enthusiastic in using them.

According to Allen (1983 :8), basically, vocabulary is hard to be learnt because the students feel they do not really need to know other words for the same thing. Another reason is because the teacher still uses the same method from time to time. According to Allen's opinion, creativity is significant in teaching second language vocabulary to children. We have to make learning more interesting for the learners, considering that the learners are children who are difficult to focus and get bored easily. Without interest there is no attention, and without attention there is no learning. A variety of teaching techniques helps to stop the lesson from becoming dull and uninteresting.

Creating motivation in learners of English in Indonesia has always been a difficult task for teacher. Actually there are several techniques in teaching English as a foreign language to increase the students' motivation to pay attention to the items being taught. These techniques such as gaming, audio-

visual media, serve to increase the students' attention to instructional material, and thus produce better learning. In many cases the techniques require only a slight change in present procedures in order to function better learning. But it is better still to invent material that brings its own motivation with it. Such material is interesting and challenging and thus gains more attention of the learners. It is learner-centered requires little intervention from the teacher.

Gerlach and Elly (1980 : 16) stated that techniques are the ways and means adopted by a teacher to direct the learners' activities toward an objective. Techniques are the tools of the teacher. He added more that the effective teacher has a multitude of techniques and must be prepared to select the ones which will be most efficient in leading the learner to the desired terminal behavior. Techniques are the means for reaching an objective and can be part of expository or inquiry approaches.

3. The Use of Pictures in Language Learning

Brown et all stated that Pictures as one of the media are not new things in the instructional world. They are things that help the idea of what is presented in the mind of the students (Brown et al: 1977).

In the days before overhead projectors became widely available, pictures making was more common than it is today. Pictures are a very simple visual aids. The pictures can also be picked up from magazines or calendars. Pictures are all right for beginner and for young people and also for advanced students. According to Wright (1989), there are five criteria which provide the way for making use of pictures in the teaching learning process, they are : easy to prepare, easy to organize, interesting, meaningful and authentic, sufficient amount of language.

4. Advantages of Using Pictures in Vocabulary Teaching

It has been mentioned above that the use of media such as pictures will be very useful to achieve the

objectives of the teaching and learning process. The advantages of media in general and pictures in particular and their contributions to a language according to Kreidler (1983: 1) are :

a. Pictures are one recognized way of representing a real situation.

b. Pictures in the classroom can represent situations which would be impossible to create in any other way.

c. Pictures can help the students associate what they hear with their real experience.

5. The Use of Games in Language Learning

Some authors proposed :

a. Heinich et al. (1982) stated
" A game is an activity in which participants follow prescribed rules that differ from those of reality as they strive to attain a challenging goal."

b. Gribb (1978) in Rixon (1981:3)
" A game is an activity carried out by cooperating or competing decision makers, seeking to achieve, within a set of rules, their objectives"

c. Hadfield (1990)
"A game as an activity with rules, a goal and an element of fun."

Looking at the definitions above, we can conclude that a game is an activity within a set of rules. We can also conclude that the use of games as a technique in teaching English, it can stimulate the students to learn English better. It is clear that games in common can provide attractive and instructionally effect- tive frameworks for learning activities. They are attractive because they are fun. They can be used at any stage of a class, to provide an amusing age challenging respire from other classroom activity.

6. Language Games

According to Rixon (1981:69), there are three main stages in the process of bringing students from the state in which the new language is completely unknown to them to the ability to start using it confidently by themselves. These stages are:

a. Presentation of the new language item

b. Giving the students controlled practice in its use

c. Giving them the chance to use the language in a situation in which they have to communicate

Rixon (1981) argued that games should be integrated more closely with mainstream classroom teaching, but they do not belong only in lessons. More, he adds that students are often free to choose games they would like to try from a selection offered, either on the shelves of a students resources centre, or more simply when the teacher brings a number of different games into class. The language used in a communication game need not be restricted to a few structures, but this can be done with new language. The language functions can be performed at many different levels of linguistic complexity, so that a game which consists essentially of giving one's partner instructions can be played by elementary students or by native speakers. Students enjoy being faced with game as a challenge – to find out what they can and cannot say in the target language.

Finocchiaro (1964: 105) suggests that games should be played with three basic criteria in mind:

a. they should lend interest and variety to the lesson;

b. they should increase the children's understanding of the foreign language;

c. they should induce the children to produce the new language.

According to her, games should be played quickly. Explicit directions should be given. The key sentence should be modeled several times. If the game is to be played competitively (to score points), two or three run through should be engaged in before scoring begins. Naturally, the number of run through and the competition (if any) will depend on such factors as age and interest.

Rixon (1981) adds that when using a game as part of a lesson, it is important to make sure that the way in which it is played – the interaction among the players and the role the teacher plays in it – fits with the

stage in the lesson that has been reached.

Students need to have some abilities in using a game. They are forced to spell and memorize the word. In every game, the class has to be organized. It means that everything needed to set a game has been well prepared such as the required groups of students, all materials they need, and the process of the game. In playing a game the teacher has to know the time. If there is no more time, we can not force to hold the game. Holding game in a few minutes at the end of a lesson, or to occupy some of the faster students while the others catch up on an exercise.

7. Advantages of using games in Vocabulary teaching

Wright et al (1983:1) state that language learning is hard work. One must make an effort to understand, to repeat accurately, to manipulate newly understood language and to use the whole range of known language in conversation or written composition. Furthermore they state that effort of time.

Wright et al (1983) exemplified the advantages of using games in vocabulary teaching:

Games help and encourage many learners to sustain their interest and work. Games also help the teacher to create in which the language is useful and. The learners want to take part and in order to do so must understand what others are saying or have written, and they must speak or write in order to express their own point of view or give information.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

1. Subjects

There were some aspect needed to be considered to equate the subjects of the experiment in terms of:

a. Grade- equivalent

To arrive at the equivalent condition of the students' grades, each student from experimental was paired with the other individual student of the control group who had the same mastery of English.

b. Age-equivalent

To make it equivalent, the same grade namely the fifth grade for the study. That means they having the same age, in between ten to eleven years old.

c. Education-equivalent

Their education background was somehow similar because they had been taught the same subject at the same elementary school and based on the investigation, they were not followed the English course.

d. Sexes-equivalent

The difference of sex students were not very significant since the numbers of males are as much as females.

2. The Design of the Research

There were some steps which needed to be carried out in designing the research. First of all, it had to find the institution for the experiment, then to design the instrument for the pre-test. Before getting the pre-test, the try-out test made to get valid and reliable instrument. The validated test was used as the pre-test and was given at the beginning of September 2010, followed by the experiment, which lasted for eight weeks. After that, the post test was given to the students and compared the result of the two tests to find the significant difference between the experimental group and the control group.

3. The Time of the Experiment

In the study, The English was given to the students once a week for both group and the time lasted for forty five minutes each. The experiment lasted for eight weeks altogether. It began in the first week of September in the academic year of 2010 and ended in the last of October 2010. The preparation for the preliminary test and the experiment was made during the previous months, such as preparing the try-out tests for the instrument in order to get valid and reliable tests, carrying out the try-out test in other school and calculating the results of the test to find out the reliability and the validity of the tests, then retyping and multiplying the validated test-items which were ready for the pre-test of the experiment.

The try out test was carried out at SDK Kanisius Kobong Semarang in the middle of August 2010. 30 students were taken from the same grade. After got the valid and reliable tests, the experiment

started to be conducted. Before starting the experiment, the pre-test was given to both groups, experimental and control group, which was conducted from 3 September to 5 September 2010. Having completed all the above procedure, the experiment started to be conducted. It lasted for eight weeks, from 9th of September 2010 to the first of November. After the experiment, the post test was given to all of them to compare the results of using games and pictures in the teaching vocabulary. The post test was given in the first of November 2010.

4. The Time of the Test

In order to check the significance of using the games and the pictures in the teaching vocabulary items for the experimental group and the control group, the test material of the pretest had to be the same as the material of the post-test. To make it not too complicated, the multiple choice test was chosen. From 65 items of vocabulary test designed, only fifty

items which were valid and reliable to be used.

5. Data

After computing the standard deviation of both groups and observing the arithmetic means, the two population variance was compared. To test the homogeneity the two population variances for vocabulary test, the F distribution was used. When the two population variances were the same, T-test formula could be applied. To test normality of test, the Liliefors method was used and the result showed that the data spread normally since the result was lower than L.0.01(20)=0.231

C. RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

1. Data Description

From the computation of the mean score of the experimental group and the control group, it was found out that the mean score of the experimental group was 28,9, while the mean score of the control group was 26,6.

It was also found that the standard deviation of the vocabulary

scores of the experimental group was 4,15 and its variance was 17,30 while the standard deviation of the vocabulary scores of the control group was 3,61 and its variance was 13,04.

From the data above, it can be seen that the mean score of the experimental group was higher than the control group (28,9 > 26,6) so the standard deviation of the experimental group was also higher than the control group (4,15>3,61)

Therefore it was conclude that games can give the contribution to the students' mastery of vocabulary, since the students who taught by using games got higher scores than the students who taught by using pictures.

2. Research Finding

In this study, the number of subjects in both groups is 40 (20+20). The degree of freedom (df) is 38 (obtained by the formula N1 + N2 -2). So, the critical value at 5 per cent (.05) alpha level of significance with the degree of freedom of 38 is 1.70.

With reference to the above calculation concerning the obtained 't-test' of both groups for the students' vocabulary scores, it could be seen that t value is 1.871 while t distribution is 1.70. That means the Experimental group which was enriched with the use of games in the teaching learning process performed significantly better than the Control group in the vocabulary acquisition. The results of this study supported to the use of games as a means of increasing the students' vocabulary mastery, since the games group's scores were significantly higher than the picture group. The fact shows that the ' t-value' obtained is bigger than the significance limit (1.871 > 1.70). It can be concluded that the difference is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which says "there is no significant difference between mastery achieved by the students who are taught using pictures of teacher" is rejected.

3. Discussion

Young children, especially those up to the ages of nine or ten, learn differently from older children,

adolescents, and adults in the following ways:

a. They respond to meaning even if they do not understand individual words.

b. They often learn indirectly rather than directly, that is they take in information from all sides, learning from everything around them rather than only focusing on the precise topic they are being taught.

c. They generally display an enthusiasm for learning and a curiosity about the world around them.

d. They have a need for individual attention and approval from the teacher.

e. They are keen to talk about themselves, and respond well to learning that uses themselves and their own lives as main topics in the classroom.

f. They have a limited attention span; unless activities are extremely engaging they can easily get bored, losing interest after ten, minutes or

so. Children have an amazing ability to absorb language through play and other activities which they find enjoyable. How good they are in a foreign language is not dependent on whether they have learnt the grammar rules or not. Very few of the students will be able to cope with grammar as such, even at the age of ten or eleven. They may be very aware and clear about the foreign language, but they are not usually mature enough to talk about it.

D. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and discussion , it can be concluded that:

1) There is significant different between the student's mastery of vocabulary when they were taught by using games rather than pictures since the results indicated that the experimental group score is higher than control group.

2) Games give some contributions to the student's mastery of

vocabulary such as: to help the students develop their inner self, to help to relate to others more effectively and co – operate, to motivate the students to know more about the new vocabulary, to train the students in creative freedom as they feel embarrassed or afraid and become more self confident, to give a challenge to solve problem in enjoyable situation, to enable the students to be more active, and games can implant fun impression to the students' mind, to create an informal and friendly situations in the teaching learning process

3) Pictures as a media are valuable, too, in that they can represent situations which would be impossible to create in any other way, and they can help the idea of what is presented in the mind of the students. Pictures can also help the students associate what they hear with their real experience. The Elementary students, in spite of, sometimes get bored in the teaching learning process and to overcome this, games are the way out.

Learning a second or foreign language at an earlier age leads to better mastery of the language, especially for the skill of speaking because before the puberty the children's speech organs are still rather flexible in performing their functions. The children at this stage do not only follow what is in-structted but they search for the model that suits their own pattern. As a consequence, the teacher should be able to adjust the material found in textbook or other additional sources to suit the needs of the learners at any particular time and place, and he should also be able to create his own materials appropriate to young beginner students of English. All of this implies that the teacher who teaches English to these types of learners must be competence and creative.

As a foreign language teacher in an elementary school, the teacher needs to have more than language proficiency. He/she should be interested in children, emphatic to their words and ways of thinking, and be resourceful. The competent teacher can foster the desire to learn a new mode of communication even

in children who have no apparent interest in language study. Furthermore, she/he should posses the ability to create a friendly environment, to stimulate and maintain interest, to plan varied activities, and to give children a feeling of achievement and success which will determine whether learning will take place.

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