

# TEACHING SPEAKING BY USING STORY GAME TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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## Abstract

**This paper aims to explain how to teach speaking with the use of a game called story game for kids. Teaching speaking skills for children is not an easy task because children are very easily bored during the learning process. Story Games is one of those games that can increase the motivation of students in teaching speaking skills in the classroom. This game will motivate students to speak in various situations or contexts that are close to the students, namely through the story. Teaching speaking by using story game method will facilitate and increase students interest in speaking. Students are expected to speak well.**

**Key words: Speaking, Story Game, Young Learners**

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## INTRODUCTION

English is a compulsory subject at any level of education in Indonesia. This foreign language has been taught from Elementary school until University level. It means that English is one of an important subjects that must be mastered by all language learners. As a substantial subject, English is considered to be one of the components that can lead the students to reach national objective of education.

In learning English, there are four skills to be mastered by the students, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening and speaking cannot be separated each other and neither do reading and writing. In teaching English as a foreign

language, teacher has to make the students understand and use language in communication. In other words, teaching English should make students able to communicate.

Since speaking is one of the important factors in language teaching, it needs to be mastered by all students who learn English as a foreign language (EFL), especially for young learners. However, speaking English for students is not easy for the students, especially for young learners.

In fact, most students cannot use English in daily communication. The students were not able to express their response in English when the teacher asks them. For example, teacher asked the

students with a short conversation about daily activities. They do not understand what the teacher says although they listen well and give attention to their teacher. They do not comprehend their teacher's explanation and instruction.

In addition, the teacher just asks the students to read the dialogue in their text book with proper title. Then, the students are asked to practice the dialogue with their friends in front of the class. Sometimes, the students do not know the meaning of the dialogue that they read. As a result, they feel bored in learning speaking. Another activity is the teacher asks the students to repeat the words or sentences that have pronounced by the teacher. It makes most students are passive in speaking class activity.

These problems lead to the result that the speaking skills of most students are comparatively lower than other skills such as listening, reading, and writing. So that, teacher should find the interesting ways to teach speaking in this level of students. There are many techniques that can be used in teaching speaking to encourage students' creativity to speak. One of them is learning speaking by playing or game. Most of young learners like learning while playing because when they do this activity they do not realize that they are learning process. There are so

many games that can be used by the teacher such as by kinds of game. In this paper the writer tries to describe about teaching speaking by using story game.

The purpose of writing this paper is to describe about teaching speaking by using story game to young learners.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **A. The Concept of Speaking**

Speaking is an oral language between two or more people directly that has purposes to express the ideas, thoughts, responses and some opinions. Bailey (2003:53) stated that speaking is the productive aural / oral skill that includes producing, systematic verbal utterances to convey meaning. By practicing speaking, students at any level are able to ask and answer the questions in English. It means that speaking is used to send information, news, ideas, or opinion. Therefore, developing oral skills is a real challenge for many EFL teachers since the students do not live in an English speaking environment and most of them attend school where English is taught as a compulsory subject.

Based on the experts' opinion about speaking, it can be concluded that speaking is a kind of activity that involves people to share information. During the speaking

activity, speakers transfer their idea or messages to their listeners.

## **B. Teaching Speaking to young learners**

### **Definition of young learners**

There are many definitions of young learners stated by the experts. Linse (2005:2) defines young learners as children between the ages of 5-12. In these ages, children develop emotionally, morally, physically, and cognitively. The development of one child is not same with other children. As an example, one child may not be bothered when she/he is accidentally pushed by another child, while a different child may burst into tears when children look at her/him in a mildly negative manner.

While Wright (1995:3) states the definition of young learner is children aged seven to fourteen. In language learning, he divides the level of young learners into three levels. They are beginner, elementary and pre- intermediate. Each level has different characteristics. Children with little or no knowledge of English will be included in the level of beginner. While in elementary level, children are able to use English more actively. They should be able to make simple sentences and questions. Last, in pre-intermediate level, children will be more capable of recognizing sentence pattern.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that young learners are the children between the ages of five to fourteen with the different characteristics of each age. During this period, children develop emotionally, morally, physically, and cognitively.

### **Characteristic of Young Learners**

Some young learners have their own characteristics. According to Brenda Brendon (2012) there are some of their generally characteristic that teachers and parents should know :

- a) They are very active. Try to ask them to play games , role play dialogues and involve them in competitions.
- b) They are less shy than older learners.
- c) They are imaginative.
- d) They enjoy learning through playing.
- e) They are less shy than older learners.
- f) They respond well to rewards from the teacher.
- g) They have limited writing and reading skills even in their first language.
- h) They enjoy fantasy, and imagination

Based on the explanation above, young learners have own special characteristics that differentiate them from adult learners. There should be known and understood by the teacher to give contribution to improve their quality of teaching and learning process.

## **How to teach speaking for young learners**

Klancar (2006:1) explains that young learners are like sponges, they soak up everything we say and how we say it. Thus clear and correct pronunciation is a vital important, since young learners repeat exactly what they hear. What has been learned at an early stage is difficult to change later on. One rule that applied here is slowly and steadily through constant revision and recycling. With the help of mixed activities, such as dialogues, choral revision, chants, songs, poems and rhymes, students speaking abilities, their pronunciation gets better and their awareness of the language improves. When applying the above mentioned activity into the teaching practice, what should be kept in mind is that interaction is an important way of learning. Therefore, increasing oral emphasis should be included in our teaching to give the students as much speaking time as possible.

Meanwhile, Klancar (2006:1) promotes some activities in teaching speaking for young learners. They are shadowing a tape or a CD, learning the dialogues, and using songs, poems, rhymes and chants. Each of the techniques can provide the students with some interesting activities:

Linse (2005:54) states that there are three techniques that can be used to teach young learners in the classroom. They are by using dialogues, using puppet and using fishbowl technique.

Based on the explanation above, it is clear that there are many techniques that can be used by the teacher to teach speaking to young learners. The teacher has to know the characteristics of the students before applying the technique of teaching language in the classroom. Besides, the technique should be motivating the learners to learn the language.

### **C. The concepts of game**

Naturally, game is an activity that can be used by the teacher to teach students, especially children. This activity is highly motivating because children are amusing and interesting. Based on the explanation before, children like playing during the teaching and learning process. There are some definitions of games that has stated by the experts.

According to Hadfield (1998:4), a game is an activity with rules, a goal and element of fun. Similarly, Harmer (2006:101) states that games are a vital part of a teacher's equipment, not only for language practice they provide, but also for the therapeutic effect they have. They can be used at any stage of a class to provide an

amusing and challenging respite from other classroom activity and are especially useful at the end of a long day to send students away feeling cheerful about their English class.

Moreover, Wright, Bitteridge, and Buckby (1997:1) explains that games can be found to give practice in all the skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking), and for many types of communications (e.g. encouraging, criticizing, agreeing, explaining). Last, Byrne (1980:9) gives the definition to games as a form of play governed by rules. They should be enjoyable and fun. They are not just a diversion, a break from routine activities, but a way of getting the learner to use the language in the course of the game.

Based on the experts' explanation above, it can be concluded that games are used to motivate students to speak because they are amusing and interesting. Besides, games can also make low anxiety, thus making the acquisition of input are more likely. They are highly motivating and entertaining, and they can give shy students more opportunity to express their opinions and feelings. The learners are also enable to acquire new experiences within a foreign language which are not always possible during a typical lesson.

## **Game in teaching English**

Nowadays, in teaching language, the creative teachers who like innovation use games in teaching activities. It is very useful to deviate from the routine activities and do something refreshing and different in the classroom. It does not require too much effort and the reward are plenty the joy on students face and enthusiasm generated as long as the classroom activities.

### **Types of language games**

Classifying games into categories can be difficult, because categories often overlap. Hadfield (1998) explains two ways of classifying language games. First, she divides language games into two types: linguistic games and communicative games. Linguistic games focus on accuracy, such as supplying the correct antonym. On the other hand, communicative games focus on successful exchange of information and ideas, such as two people identifying the differences between their two pictures which are similar to one another but not exactly alike. Correct language usage, though still important, is secondary to achieving the communicative goal.

The second taxonomy that Hadfield (1998) uses to classify language games has many more categories. As with the classification of games as linguistic games

or communicative games, some games will contain elements of more than one type. Here, he explained some communicative language games that can be used to teach language in the classroom. They are:

1. Sorting, ordering, or arranging games.
2. Information gap games.
3. Guessing games.
4. Search games.
5. Matching games.
6. Labeling games.
7. Exchanging games.
8. Board games.
9. Role plays games.

#### **D. Story Game**

According to Wright (1995), Story game is a kind of game which is designed as a game that used picture cards as the media. Those picture cards contain of picture and a story. In this game, students will be given some cards and they have to compile the cards into a good story in a group. He added that story game can be used for Elementary and pre-intermediate level of students. Here, the teacher should prepare a series of picture cards of the story. She/ he can copy and cut up the pictures for each of the children. As the activities in the classroom, teacher shows separate pictures from the story to the children. Then, students are asked to try to put them into the correct sequence. It can be

in group or in pairs. They have to put the picture cards in the sequence they think the story will be. Then, they listen to the story to see if they were correct.

Linse (2005) explains that story game can be used to develop some skills in learning English, especially speaking. In this game, students do not only have to sort the story but also are able to read and pronounce the story appropriately. This game can be used in elementary students' level because they really like story.

Procedures of Using Story Games in Teaching Speaking :

1. Divide the class into two teams.
2. Mix the cards and deal one card to each child. Put the remaining cards in a pile in the middle.
3. Each team looks at their cards and tries to put together a story. A story must always end with a 'The End' card.
4. One child from each team rolls the dice which team goes first. If the first team does not already have a story, they discard one card and take a new one from the pile in the centre. The second team can take either the discarded card or a new card from the pile.
5. When one team feels they have a story they call Ready! They then have five minutes to organize the story among

themselves. Note that a team may not tell their story unless they have a 'The End' card.

6. Each player on the team must tell one episode of the story. If the story is totally illogical, the other team can call out Too silly!. You decide if the story is logic or not. If it does not make any sense, the games continues.

Based on the experts' explanation of story game, it can be concluded that story game is a useful game in teaching speaking for young learners. This game uses a series of picture cards as the media. Then, students have to put the series of the picture cards together in order to make a good story. At the end of the activity, children must be able to retell the story based on the correct sequence of those picture cards.

### **Advantages of Story Games**

According to Lee Su Kim (1995:35) there are many advantages of using games in the classroom:

- a) Games are a welcome break from the usual routine of the language class.
- b) They are motivating and challenging.
- c) Learning a language requires a great deal of effort. Games help students to make and sustain the effort of learning.

- d) Games provide language practice in the various skills - speaking, writing, listening and reading.
- e) They encourage students to interact and communicate.
- f) They create a meaningful context for language use.

It is important that the language teacher be creative and innovative in teaching.

## **PROCEDURES OF TEACHING**

### **SPEAKING BY USING STORY GAME**

#### **Preparation**

A good teacher will prepare the material which is suitable to the students. It means the material depends on age and the characteristics of the students. Beside the material, the teacher has to choose the technique in teaching English, especially teaching speaking skill. One of the techniques is by using story game. For using story game in teaching speaking to the elementary school students, teacher must do the following preparation:

- a. Determining the lesson point.

There are some basic competencies to be mastered by the students under the speaking competency standard; express a very simple information and instruction in the classroom context. The use of story game in teaching speaking to elementary

school students is meant to train the students in applying daily conversation being taught. The teacher choose the material expressing of granting a favor.

b. Preparing the picture cards

Here, the teacher makes the cards that contain of a picture and a part of the story for each card. These picture cards shows actions and situations in the library. There must be two “The End” cards, “Once upon a time” cards, to help the students became easily to complete the story.

Here are the examples of Picture cards:



c. Teaching Scenario

To have a well organized class, teacher should firstly order the activities that will be used in a systematic list. The list is usually called as a lesson plan which contains the steps of teaching, material, and slice of curriculum till the examination criteria. This teaching guidance usually started with the

identity of class being taught; subject, school, class and semester, the target skill, topic and time. Before writing the teaching steps; pre teaching, whilst teaching and post teaching.

**Procedure of Teaching Speaking by Using Story Game**

There are several steps to present teaching speaking by using story game to young learners. They are included in Pre-teaching activities, Whilst-teaching activities, and Post-teaching activities.

**Pre-Teaching Activities**

As the first phase, this activity is also known as the opening activity which gives students an overview about how the lesson will look like. Since the first impression has a great effect, it is important for teacher to do it perfectly enjoyable and motivating. Started by greeting the students, teacher should make sure that the way they greet the student is encouraging the students to learn.

After greeting the students, to activate students’ background knowledge, teacher gives a video showing a girl who looks for some books in the library. Here, she asked the librarian to help her find those books. The video is originally taken from a movie or it is adapted and downloaded from the internet. From the video, teacher leads a discussion about what will they do that day.



Teacher can start to interact with students from the first time after she / he greets the students by asking a simple questions:

“Do you like reading? “

“Do you want to read a story with me?”

### **Whilst-Teaching Activities**

The teacher will apply some steps as follows:

1. Teacher divides the class into six teams; Team A, Team B, Team C, Team D, Team E, and Team F. Each team consists of three until five students. After setting the class into six groups, teacher mixes the cards and deal one card to each student and puts the remaining cards in a pile in the middle of the class.
2. Next, teacher give two cards for each group. The story has to begin with once upon a time and ends with the end card. When the students finished the story, teacher asks one student from each team to roll the dice to decide which team goes first.
3. The next step is teacher asks each team to read the story in front of the class. After reading the story, teacher asks the students to do a role play by using the expression of granting a favor in the card. Each of them chooses his/her partner. One becomes the girl who looks for some

books and the others are as the librarian. They have to choose the expression and the responses of granting a favor based on the material that has been learned in the previous meeting.

4. The last stage of whilst teaching activity is confirmation. In this step, teacher has to check students understanding by giving some tasks. One of the tasks is by complete the dialog orally. Here, teacher presents an incomplete dialog on the white board. Then, she/he asks one student to complete the dialog based on the expression that have been learned before. Someone who sits beside this student must give a response to that expression.

### **Post-Teaching Activities**

As the closing phase, teacher should make this phase as memorable as possible in order to make students remember the day's lesson and wait for the next lesson. In this phase, teacher leads the students to summarize the material that has been taught by asking some questions to recall the students' memory. Finally, the teacher shows a singing video in the library and ask the students to follow the song. They sing together.

### **Evaluation**

In this step, the teacher gives students scores based on the some aspect, there are : content, pronunciation, and choise of word.

## CONCLUSIONS

There are many techniques that can be used by the teacher in teaching speaking to elementary school students. One of them is story game. Story game is a kind of game that can be used to develop speaking skill while learning English. It is designed as a game that used cards as the media. In this game, students will be given some cards and they have to compile the cards into a good story in a group. Story game can be used to develop students' ability in many aspects of language, especially speaking.

This game will make the students enjoy while they are speaking because it will be easy and relax. Moreover, story game is interesting to use in teaching and learning process because young learners really like games and stories.

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