

Hands-on Training: Improving Speaking Skills through Games for Students and Care Takers of Panti Asuhan Sentosa, Belitung Darat, Banjarmasin

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ABSTRACT

Speaking is one of the four macro skills of English. It is also a productive skill that requires language learners to gain much exposure to use it. Accuracy and fluency are two elements to be used as parameters of speaking ability for foreign language learners. Apart from this, language learners still find it hard to express out their speaking ability in front of classroom as well as outside the class. Lack of self confidence, limited vocabulary acquisition, and English grammar have become obstacles for learners to develop their speaking ability. Through this hands-on workshop, we introduced three educational games, namely, *hot seat*, *comic strip*, and *that's an unusual view to students and teachers at panti Asuhan Sentosa Banjarmasin*. These games are intended to make learning english more fun, to help students gain self confidence to use the language, and to boost cooperative work between students and teachers. The participants responded positively to the ideas and they would use those games as learning media.

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INTRODUCTION

Methodologically speaking, an English teacher should be able to creatively motivate students to use the language as much as possible. Despite that, the exposure to the target language is really important for teaching speaking. Khatimah (2016) argues that speaking is one of the productive skills where the speaker needs to use it orally.

However, speaking skill in learning English has been an obstacle for language learners. There are several factors that influence this situation, such as lack of self-confidence, stress, lack of vocabulary, and so on. Therefore, there is an urgency for more creative and engaging teaching methods in order to help students gain their self-confidence.

Harmer (2004) contends that appropriate learning materials and supportive teaching media may help learners feel motivated and engaged. One of the ways is that the use of games for teaching English. Rules, activities, and the objectives need to be designed for a fun learning (Hadfield, 1996).

thus, even though the learning atmosphere would be more relax and fun, but teachers implicitly teach students new target language through games the class play.

Furthermore, Byrne (as cited in Sukma, 2016) also argues that the use of game in teachign practice is an effective way for learning. This is because the learners are encouraged to actively participate in the game. In fact, they do not realise that they are practicing the target language.

Based on this idea, the team of community service of English Department, Universitas Muhammadiyah Banjarmasin is interested to undertake a practical training on the use of games to improve speaking skills for students and care takers of Panti Asuhan Sentosa, Belitung Darat, Banjarmasin. It is expected that the participants would feel motivated, engaged and happy in learning English. There are three games introduced to the participants; *Hot Seat*, *Comic Strip* and *That's an Unusual View*.

METHOD

The training was held in two days with the following stages: Day 1: Introduction to the games *Hot Seat*, *Comic Strip* and *That's an Unusual View*. The participants were introduced to play these games under the supervision from the community service team. The community service team consist of three English lecturers: Ms. Tenny, Mr. Kailani, and Mr. Rezqan. Ms. Tenny introduced about *Comic Strip*, Mr. Kailani taught about *Hot Seat*, and Mr. Rezqan modelled *That's an Unusual View* game.

Below is the procedure of the games:

Hot Seat

This is like a word guessing game. The numbers of player are 3. The equipment: 1 chair, whiteboard, marker, paper. How to play: Player A sits on a chair, while player B stands behind player A with a list of keywords. Player C stands in front of Player A. His task is to give a very short clue of the keywords shown by Player B. He is not allowed to explain it in detail. Player A makes a guess of the word. The correct answers are counted. This game can be used as a class competition where students are grouped. The group with high number of correct answers is the winner.

Comic Strip

This is a story telling game where students should narrate a story using pieces of comic strip. Usually, the strips are not arranged in order.

This game need 1 player for each session. The procedures are as follow:

- The teacher gives jumbled comic strip to the student.
- Next, The student is asked to arrange it accordingly.
- Then, the student has to make a story based on the storyline he has made.
- Finally, The teacher gives feedback on the story.

That's an Unusual View

This is a game where a teacher draws something an usual on the board and students should make a guess on it. This game only needs a marker and a board. Here are the procedures.

The teacher draws something on the board. Students are invited to guess. When none of the students is able to make a correct guess. The teacher makes a cleared drawing until students are able to make a correct guess.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Hot Seat

Students and teachers were happy with this media. They can use and exploit their vocabulary mastery through word guessing game. Students were not allowed to used their local language. They must speak English to explain and describe the words. With this rule, everyone were encouraged to use their English. There was no correction for grammar. What they have to do was just to try to guess and explain the words in English and even a mixed up language; Bahasa Indonesia and English. After playing the games, all the participants felt happy and they would plan to play the game again with another context of learning. For instance, they would use this game to gain new vocabulary about classroom equipment.

This game has also helped low achiever and shy students to speak up. They do not worry about grammar. They learn each other with their peers with a minimum intervention of the teacher.

Comic Strip

Furthermore, another educational game is Comic strip. This is an interesting media used in teaching speaking. As we know the comic strip has some beautiful picture so it can drive the learner to know more about the story which tells in it. Sometimes, the comic strip is also shown in colourful. It makes the learner falling in love for the first sight and interested in reading the comic strip.

It happened also in this practical training. When the teacher showed the comic strip for them. They looked so surprised. The picture and the colourful comic strip may drive them to get closer in the activity.

They are so motivated to discuss the story line in the comic strip. Next, they tried to arrange the comic strip. Finally they can arrange the comic strip well and it was true in a minute. It was fantastic.

After that the teacher asked them to tell what the comic strip tell about in a group. Here, the problem came. Firstly, they seemed lack of vocabulary to talk about the story. They had a problem to produce the sentences because lack of vocabulary. To solve the problem, the teacher told them some vocabularies that they didn't get. So, it helped them to tell the story according to the comic strip.

Secondly, they didn't have good grammar to develop the sentences. But in this case, it can be tolerated so far. Because speaking should be communicative and not merely about correct grammar. In this case the teacher just focused on the idea that they had when they told the story.

Briefly, comic strip can improve the student's speaking skill. It can motivate them to speak up in English.

That's an Unusual View

This game has attracted students with good skill in drawing to contribute more to this activity. Students who are dominantly able to express themselves can be a guesser while those who prefer talk less and good at drawing may become an expert for this game. In this game, everyone of student has their own role and capacity. This game helped students to learn collaboratively in a mixed ability class.

CONCLUSION

This training gain positive evaluation from the participants. They feel the games we introduce would help them to improve their speaking skill. The use of games may become one alternative teaching method in order to make learning English more motivating, interesting, and engaging. It also may help language learners gain their self-confidence in using the target language. The game, like *hot seat* may contribute to vocabulary building as well as stimulate students to speak up in the classroom.

This community service would give maximum benefit if there were a dissemination in the form of research findings on the impacts of games on EFL class performance. The investigation on this game mediated teaching methodology is needed in the future. Thus, other EFL practitioners may teach each other through best practices shared.

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