

GAMES AS WARMING UP ACTIVITIES IN YOUNG LEARNERS' CLASSROOMS AT AN ENGLISH COURSE

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Abstract: The present research aimed at investigating types of games used by a teacher as warming-up activities in young learners' classrooms. The research involved a teacher of an English course and her young learner students. The data were collected by using observation and interview. The collected data were analyzed by using qualitative method. According to the result of data collection and data analysis, it was found that the teacher applied some types of games proposed by Hadfield (2001) and Evans (1979) as warming-up activities. It is recommended that English teachers apply games as warming-up activities in young learners' classrooms since games are fun for children and help both students and teachers in teaching learning process.

Keywords: *Young Learners, Games, Warming-Up Activities*

Introduction

Language learning is not an easy thing for children. As young language learners, they must make efforts to understand, to adapt, and to use a new language. The effort should be maintained at every moment and over a long period of time.

The fun way of teaching is needed to help children in language learning. We expect children to enjoy the learning process through play. As stated by Paul (2003), a child who encounters a new English

word, expression, or pattern through games is far motivated to learn and to internalize the new English word, expression and pattern than a child who receives the new knowledge before the game. In line with this condition, games are needed to help and encourage learners to sustain their interest and work. Games also help teachers to create contexts in which the language is useful and meaningful. It is also supported by Paul's (2003) statement that games are not simply for practicing

language targets. He also added that the most effective learning can be achieved through games.

This article presents the results of the investigation on the types of games used by teacher as warming

Literature Review

Games are often used as short warm-up activities or when there is some time left at the end of a lesson. Yet, as Lee (1979, p.3) observes, a game should not be regarded as a marginal activity filling in odd moments when the teacher and class have nothing better to do. Games ought to be at the heart of teaching foreign languages. Rixon (1981) suggests that games be used at all stages of the lesson, provided that they are suitable and carefully chosen.

Games also help learners recall material in a pleasant, entertaining way. All authors referred to in this article agree that even if games resulted only in noise and entertained students. They are still worth paying attention to and implementing in the classroom since they motivate learners, promote communicative

up activities. What is presented here is expected to give some contributions to the field of language learning, such as the use of games in learning process and the better way to learn a language through games.

competence, and generate fluency (Uberman 'Forum' Vol. 36 No 1, January - March 1998 Page 20.).

Methodology

The research used a qualitative approach and applied a case-study design. Qualitative approach was used because it allowed the researcher to study about games in a natural setting and interpret its advantages and difficulties. Furthermore, it explored the activities in a classroom without interfering the teaching process. In line with this, Creswell (2007) stated that the natural setting in collecting data is one of the characteristics of qualitative approach. Case-study was selected as the research design by investigating the types of games used by teacher as warming up activities. The research also involved multiple sources of information such as

observation and interview and reported the result in a case description.

Classroom observation and interview were used as instruments to collect the data. Classroom observation was conducted to investigate the types of games that were used by the teacher as warming-up activities in young learners' classrooms. The second instrument is interview. The interview was conducted to get more information about the types of games as warming up activities according to the teacher perception. Through the interview, the researcher can ask directly to the participant to tell the process before and after she implemented the games.

After collecting data from observation and interview, those data were analyzed in three steps, namely (1) identification, (2) categorization, and (3) interpretation. The data gained from observation sheets and observation videos were identified by identifying the characteristics of games that were used by the teacher

as warming up activities for the students. After identification step, the games that were used by the teacher were categorized based on Hadfield's theory and Evans' theory. After categorization process, the data were interpreted to answer the research question about the types of games that were used by the teacher as warming-up activities in young learners' classrooms.

Data Presentation and Discussion

- **The Types of Games Used by the Teacher as Warming Up Activities**

Based on the result of data collection and data analysis, there are six types of games used by the teacher. They are competitive game, cooperative game, individual game, communicative game, linguistic game, and skill-practiced game. The teacher usually combined those games into competitive-communicative game, competitive-linguistic game, cooperative-communicative game, cooperative-linguistic game, etc.

Here are the types of game that were implemented by the teacher as warming-up activities.

Table 1

No	Name of Game	Game Kinds (Hadfield's Theory)	Game Types Based on Goal (Hadfield's Theory)	Game Types Based on Literacy Programs (Evan's Theory)
1.	"Translating" Game	Competitive Game	Linguistic Game	Skill-practiced Game
2.	"Guessing Nationality" Game	Cooperative Game	Communicative Game	Skill-practiced Game
3.	"Singular-Plural" Game	Competitive Game	Linguistic Game	Skill-practiced Game
4.	"What are These/Those" Game	Individual Game	Linguistic Game	Skill-practiced Game
5.	"Guessing Gesture" Game	Competitive Game	Communicative Game	Skill-practiced Game
6.	Guessing word	Competitive Game	Linguistic Game	Skill-practiced Game
7.	Picture	Cooperative game	Communicative game	Skill-practiced Game
8.	Quartet	Cooperative game	Communicative game	Skill-practiced Game
9.	Arranging words	Competitive Game	Linguistic Game	Skill-practiced Game
10.	Guessing picture	Competitive Game	Linguistic Game	Skill-practiced Game

The categorizations of competitive and cooperative games above are based on Hadfield's (2001) theory about kinds of games. Meanwhile, skill-practiced game was proposed by Evans (1979). Evans (1979) categorized games into skill-

practiced game, role-play, and simulation.

In the observation session, there were five games which were included into five combinations of game types. They were translating game (competitive-linguistic game),

“guessing nationality” game (cooperative-communicative game), “singular-plural game” (competitive-linguistic game), “what are these/those?” game (individual-linguistic game), and “guessing gesture” game (competitive-communicative game).

However, in the interview session, the teacher did not mention the game in the observation session. She only mentioned some games in general, such as jumbled words, spelling game, guessing things by using keyword, and others word game.

Meanwhile, the students mentioned different games that were also mentioned by the teacher and they also did not remember the game implemented in the observation session. The students mentioned some games such as guessing words game (competitive-linguistic game), guessing pictures game (competitive-linguistic game), arranging words game (competitive-linguistic game), pictureka (cooperative-communicative game), and quartet game (cooperative-communicative game).

The first is “translating game”. In translating game, students have to say the time in English that was mentioned by the teacher in Bahasa Indonesia. In this game, students were grouped into two teams. After the students got their team, they have to compete with other group to be the fastest to say the time in English.

According to the characteristics of the game, it is a competitive game. As explained above, in this game, a group of students have to compete with another group to translate the time mentioned by teacher. Based on the goal of the game, it was included into linguistic game. It is because the focus of the game is on the students’ ability to translate the time in Bahasa Indonesia into English.

The second is “guessing nationality” game. In this game, the students learned to cooperate with each other to get some points. The teacher put a name of nationality on a student’s forehead, and then the student had to guess the nationality by asking some clues to other students on his/her group.

In guessing nationality game, the students have to cooperate with each other to guess the nationality. According to Hadfield's (2001) theory, cooperative game is a game that involves players or teams to work together towards a common goal. The goal of "guessing nationality game is to communicate with each other. It was included into communicative game.

The third is "singular-plural game". Singular-plural game was a game to make students learn to categorize things into singular or plural. In this game, the teacher put some names of things randomly, and then the students had to compete to take a name of thing and categorized it into singular or plural by putting it in the column of singular or plural.

In singular-plural game, the students have to race with each other to categorize things into singular or plural. This game was included into competitive game. The goal of the game was included into linguistic game. It was because the game emphasized on the accuracy of students ability in categorizing singular and plural things.

The fourth is "what are these/those?" game. In this game, the teacher asked the students one by one to mention the question to ask about plural things. It was the material in the previous meeting. It is not a real game, but a kind of checking student's understanding of the material.

"What are these/those?" game is an individual game. It was because the students were asked by the teacher one by one to check their understanding about the previous material. But the students still got some points for their individual reward. Based on the characteristic, the game was not included whether into competitive game or cooperative game. Meanwhile, the goal of this game was included into linguistic game.

The next game is "guessing gesture" game. In this game, students were grouped into two groups. One of the students was asked to show gesture about hobby based on the teacher's note. The one who answered would get one point. In the end, the group with the highest point became the winner.

In this game, the students have to race to guess the gesture about hobby visualized by their friend. Hadfield (2001) stated that this is the characteristic of competitive game. The goal of the game is to deliver the message through body gesture, so it can be included into communicative game.

The last five games were based on students' interview. The students said that they have to race to each other in guessing words game, guessing pictures game, and arranging words. These three games can be included into competitive game. While in pictureka and quartet game, they play card with their friends, and try to find the card that they need to have to win the game. So, they have to cooperate with each

other. It can be included into cooperative game.

Conclusions

Based on the result of data collection and analysis, it can be concluded that games were implemented as warming-up activities in young learners' classroom. The competitive games can warm-up the situation effectively before the teacher starts the main material. Meanwhile, the cooperative games can build class cohesion efficiently. The teacher also implemented linguistic games and communicative games. Since they can improve students' ability related to linguistic accuracy and communicative function.

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