

## TEACHING SPEAKING THROUGH GAMES

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## Abstrak

Mengajar keterampilan berbicara melalui Game sangat menyenangkan peserta didik, karena mereka tidak hanya belajar, akan tetapi mereka juga bisa bermain. Game-game yang dipilih dalam tulisan ini adalah game yang mengantar peserta didik untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris. Tetapi ini tidak berarti bahwa game ini hanya cocok untuk keterampilan berbicara saja, akan tetapi guru bisa memodifikasi pada ketrampilan lain seperti menulis.

Keywords: Teaching, Speaking, Game

## I. INTRODUCTION

## A. Background

If you have learned a language other than your own, which of the four skills—listening, speaking, reading or writing—did you find to be hardest? Many people feel that speaking in a new language is harder than reading, writing or listening for two reasons. First, unlike reading or writing, speaking happens in real time; usually the person you are talking to is waiting for you to speak right then. Second, when you speak, you cannot edit and revise what you wish to say, as you can if you are writing (Nunan, 2003:48).

Furthermore, he explains that teaching speaking is sometimes considered a simple process, commercial language schools around the world hire people with no training to teach conversation. Although speaking is totally natural, speaking in a language other than our own is anything but simple.

The problematic matter is what method, technique or strategy suitable used in teaching speaking, the problem occurred in the previous ago until today which cannot be solved in how to teach speaking effectively.

If you had grown up a century ago, you should be able to answer “what is an effective teachers?” very simply. A good teacher was a good person—a role model who met the community ideal for a good citizen, good parent, and good employee. At that time, teachers were judged primarily on their goodness as people and only secondarily on their behavior in the classroom. They were expected to be honest, hardworking, generous, friendly, and considerate, and to demonstrate those qualities in their classroom by being authoritative, organized, disciplined, insightful, and dedicated. Practically speaking this meant that to be selective, all a beginning teacher needed was King Solomon’s wisdom, Sigmund Freud’s insight, Albert Einstein’s knowledge, and Florence Nightingale’s dedication.

It soon became evident that this definition of an ideal teacher lacked clear, objective standard of performance that could be consistently applied to all teachers and that could be used to train future teachers. (Borich, 1996:2).

In line with Richards and Renadya, (2002:5) state that the notion of teaching method has had a long history in language teaching, as in witnesses by the rise and fall off a variety of method throughout the recent history of language teaching. Some such as audio-linguicism became the orthodox teaching methods of the 1970s in many parts of the world. Other teacher led methods such the Silent Way attracted small but devoted followers in the 1980s and beyond, but attract little attention today. Many teachers have found the notion of methods attractive over the last one hundred or so years, since they offer apparently foolproof system for classroom interaction and are hence sometimes embraced enthusiastically as a panacea for the "language teaching problem. The 1970s and 1980s were perhaps the years of greatest enthusiasm for methods. In what has been called the "post-methods era" attention has shifted to teaching and learning process and the contribution of the individual teacher to language teaching pedagogy.

Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that teaching and learning process have changed from year to year. The teachers try to find innovative and effective way in teaching and learning process. The aim is to find a new method, techniques strategy or approach in teaching in order to make the learners easy to understand the speaking subject.

It cannot be argued that a method, technique, strategy, or approach used in teaching speaking. Someone may use the same way in teaching the same object, but the result may be different. Therefore, in this writing, the writer tries to choose game as alternative way to be used in teaching speaking in the classroom interaction.

Learning a new language can be a different journey. However, the reward is being able to communicate with a whole new country or culture of people. The process of learning a new language takes time. It is a challenge. In the past, many new languages were taught in a traditional, direct translation, lecture format. Now new theories, methods, strategies are being adopted into language learning program.

Learning a new language should be fun, interactive, and exciting. The use of games in a learning environment will not only change the dynamic of the class, but it will also rejuvenate students and help the brain to learn more effectively. The brain is a muscle just like any other. It needs to be worked out, tested, and put in the comparative situation. the more exciting and interactive a teacher can make the learning environment, the more a teacher tries to introduce games and activities, the more a teacher changes shapes and manipulates both the language and environment, the better the circumstance games allow students to work cooperatively, compete each other, strategize, think in a different way, compare and share knowledge, learn from the other, learn from mistakes, work in a less stressful and more productive environment, and allow people to have fun (Agoestyowati, 2007:xiii).

The word games in individual sections are sequentially arranged in terms of graduated levels of difficulty and labeled beginning, intermediate, and advanced. Though there is a general progression from less difficult to more difficult, the designations are really only advisory as, of course, only you know what is suitable for your students. Structure has only to beginning activities because the word game that follow presuppose familiarity with verb tenses often not taught until intermediate ESL. However, your beginning students may be able to use easier activities that are labeled intermediate (Hutchison, 1997: vi).

There are some games are suitable to be used in teaching speaking, but in this case, the writer chooses A to Z game is considered very interesting game to increase the students' speaking ability.

## II. DISCUSSION

### A. Speaking Skill

The ability to speak in a foreign language is at the very heart of what it means to be able to use foreign language. Our personality, our self-image, our knowledge of the world and our ability to reason and express our thoughts are all reflected in or spoken performance in a foreign language (Anderson & Bachman, 2004:ix).

Speaking skill is an important part of the curriculum in language teaching, and this makes it an important object of assessment as well. Assessing speaking is challenging, however, because there so many factors that influence our impression of how well someone can speak a language, and because we expect test scores to be accurate, just and appropriate for our purpose (Anderson & Bachman, 2004:1).

Speaking is one of the skills in learning English which produce the language, especially for English. This skill is as the application of the knowledge of language after studying about the language. Wallace (1989:10) states that students improve their formal speech when teachers provide insights on how to organize their ideas for presentation. Students can give better speeches when they can organize their presentation in a variety of different ways, including sequentially, chronologically and thematically. They need practice in organizing their speech around problems and solutions, causes and results, and similarities and differences. After deciding about the best means of organization, they can practice speeches with another student or with the whole class.

Unlike Wallace, Shumin in Richards & Renandya, 2002:204) states that learning to speak a foreign language requires more than knowing its grammar and semantic rules. Learners must also acquire the knowledge of how native speakers use the language in the context of structured interpersonal exchange, in which many factors interact. Therefore, it is difficult for EFL learners, especially adult to speak the target language fluently and appropriately. in order to provide effective guidance in developing competent speakers of English, it is necessary to examine the factors affecting adult learners " oral communication, component underlying speaking proficiency, and specific skills or strategies used in communication.

#### 1. The Elements of Speaking

The ability to speak fluently presupposes not only knowledge of language features, but also the ability to process information and language 'on the spot'

##### a. Language features

Among the elements necessary for spoken production (as opposed to the production of practice examples in language drills, for examples) are the following:

##### 1). Connected speech

Effective speakers of English need to be able not only to produce the individual phonemes of English but also to use fluent connected speech. In connected speech sounds are modified (assimilation), omitted (elision), added (linking), or weaken (through constructions and stress (patterning).

##### 2). Expressive devices

Native speakers of English change the pitch and stress of particular parts of utterances, vary volume and speed, and show by other physical and no-verbal (paralinguistic) means how they are feeling (especially in face to face interaction).

The use of these devices contributes to the ability to convey meanings. They allow the extra expression of emotion and intensity. Students should be able to deploy at least some of such supra segmental features and devices in the same way if they are to be fully effective communication.

### 3). Lexis and grammar

Spontaneous speech is marked by the use of a number of common lexical phrases, especially in the performance of certain language function. Teachers should therefore supply a variety of phrases for different functions such as agreeing or disagreeing, expression surprise, shock, or approval. Where students are involved in specific speaking context such as a job interview, we can prime them, in the same way with certain useful phrases which they can produce at various stages of an interaction.

### 4). Negotiation language

Effective speaking benefits from negotiator language we use to seek clarification and to show the structure of what we are saying. We need to ask for clarification when we listening to someone else talk. For students this is special. A useful thing teachers can do, therefore, is to offer them phrases such as the following:

I am sorry I didn't quite catch that.

I am sorry I don't understand.

What exactly does X mean?

Could you explain that again, please!, etc (Harmer, 2001:271).

## 2. Game

Games are frequently used in the classroom to provide a light-hearted form of language practice, either with relatively free use of language, or where a particular structure is being repeated. In either case the emphasis is on playing the game and there is a little room for correction during the activity.

In the games presented here, learners are involved not only in the playing, but also in the preparation of the games. It is in the preparation stage that the focus can be on form. This is the time for peer negotiation or consultation with the teacher. The learners thus have meaningful language practice before they play the game. This can be seen clearly, for example, where the learners are writing instruction for other on how to play a game. The instruction must be clear and comprehensive and easy to follow, or the game will fail (Campbell & Kryszewska, 1992:89). Why do you prepare the material or equipment for the games? Of course, every teacher should prepare the games of activities before the class start, but for students' activities they need nothing to prepare because by reading the example they then can do whatever they want based on the examples and instruction written. Occasionally the activity demands a little planning before the lesson, where, for example A to Z game (Agoestyowati, 2007:xv). Game is alternative way to teach speaking in order to make the learners feel fun, interested, and enjoyable to learn speaking. Game can make the class situation dynamic, life, interactive and exciting. In this part, the writer discusses A to Z game can be used in teaching speaking in the classroom. These games can be used in beginning and intermediate level.

### a. A to Z Game

There are many possible answers, but only one is the right one. Those which have the same answer as you have are right.

#### 1) Activities for students

1. Answer the following questions!

- What begins with A? Can you think of a red sweet fruit?  
 What begins with B? Can you think of a very romantic color?  
 What begins with C? Can you think of a piece of furniture for sitting?  
 What begins with D? Can you think of a pet with 4 legs and a tail?  
 What begins with E? Can you think of a part of the body for seeing?  
 What begins with F? Can you think of a musical instrument?  
 What begins with G? Can you think of an animal with long neck?  
 What begins with H? Can you think of a part you body?  
 What begins with I? Can you think of a country in the world?  
 What begins with J? Can you think of a verb that means take part?  
 What begins with K? Can you think of a famous Australian Animal?  
 What begins with L? Can you think of an adjective that means big?  
 What begins with M? Can you think of a big number?  
 What begins with N? Can you think of a negative answer?  
 What begins with O? Can you think of an answer that means agree?  
 What begins with P? Can you think of an airline job?  
 What begins with Q? Can you think of a person who lives in a palace?  
 What begins with R? Can you think of a lovely flower?  
 What begins with S? Can you think of something hot in the sky?  
 What begins with T? Can you think of a man clothing?  
 What begins with U? Can you think of a thing used on a rainy day?  
 What begins with V? Can you think of another musical instrument?  
 What begins with W? Can you think of an adjective with three syllables?  
 What begins with X? Can you think of any word start with X?  
 What begins with Y? Can you think of a very bright color?  
 What begins with Z? Can you think of a place with many animals?

2. Create five questions for other members of the class and make sure that you yourself as the quiz presenter know the correct answer!

1. -----
2. -----
3. -----
4. -----
5. -----

(Agoestyowati, 2007:92-94)

3. Journalist Game

The activities:

- a) Choose of your better students to be interview, and imagine that she/he is at a press conference.
- b) Other students are the journalists who must be very active while asking questions to a famous person.
- c) The teacher chooses the famous person or the teacher can be the famous person.
- d) Then the journalist can ask questions about anything to the famous person such as his/her interesting hobbies, boyfriend/ girlfriend, favorite food, experiences, ambitions, personal data, pet, favorite actors, movies singers, dancers, movie stars, etc.
- e) At the end of the game ask all students to write a brief report from interview.

- 4. Note: The teacher may invite other students from other classes. It is also possible for the teacher to invite his/her friends to be interviewed.

Teacher's note:

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Activities for students

- a. Having heard the interview done by your classmates. Write a brief report about your friends that have been interviewed.

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- b. Imagine that you are real journalist: please write about your idol!

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- c. Write down what you know, or some interesting facts about the following (famous) people:

For examples:

Jokowi, Barack Obama, etc (Agoestyowati, 2007:121-122).

- 5. How long will you manage?

Activity: Answering questions

- a. Learner get into pairs
- b. Students A asks students B questions in the native language such as; how old are you? What size shoes do you take? What is your mother's name? And the students B answer them in English.

- c. Students A can challenge the answer when it is grammatically incorrect.
- d. This activity is a game and if students B mistakenly answers in the native language student A takes over answering questions and student B must ask them. When student A then answers in the wrong language the pair stops. The winning pair is the one that keeps going longest.

Variation 1: the whole class can ask one person questions and check the correctness of the answer. When the student makes mistake, the person whi asked the question takes her/his place.

Variation 2: the activity can also be done in writing but then element of competition is lost. Once a certain number of questions have been answered, another pair takes the sheet of paper and checks the answers. You may some mistakes to discuss with the whole group.

Variation 3: the topic can be varied ((Campbell & Kryszewska, 1992:81).

### III. CLOSING

After reading the content of this paper, it can be concluded that speaking can be interesting if the teacher uses game in the classroom. Game can make the learners enjoy studying speaking, because, it makes them fun, attractive and exciting they are playing while learning. The writer chooses the three games because he thinks that these games are suitable to be used in teaching speaking. Basically, these games have some procedures to use them, and the teachers may modify based on their need in teaching and learning process. These games seem suitable with speaking skill, but it doesn't mean they cannot be used in teaching another skill, such as writing. It is hoped that teaching speaking through games can motivate the learners to practice their speaking, because speaking is very important skill among the three skills, listening, reading and writing.

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