

**ACTIVATING STUDENTS' MOTIVATION IN SPEAKING CLASS
THROUGH THE USE OF BOARD GAME AT ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT OF MULAWARMAN UNIVERSITY SAMARINDA.**

Desy Rusmawaty

desyrusmawaty@yahoo.com

Mulawarman University, Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia

Dian Anggriyani

basrah01@gmail.com

Mulawarman University, Samarinda, East Kalimantan, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study was inspired by an idea that teaching and learning should be designed in creative manner so that students are interested and motivated to learn. This study was aimed to describe how the board game could activate the motivation of students to participate and actively involved in a speaking class. This study applied the principle of Collaborative Classroom Action Research through the stages of planning, implementing, evaluating and reflecting. This study employed sets of board game, classroom observation, speaking test, and interview. The results this study revealed that students appears to be attractively involved in speaking activities. Their speaking performance shown an improvement; in cycle 1 was 70.20, in cycle 2 was 87.20. The improvement covered their fluency, vocabulary, structure, and pronunciation. The interview results indicated that students were enthusiastic and became encouraged to speak English. They thought board game is very simple and able to stimulate them to find and more vocabulary.

Key words: *Board game, collaborative classroom action research, speaking*

INTRODUCTION

Being able to communicate in English in the classroom context is not an easy task. Students often reluctant to participate actively due to their lack of vocabularies, less motivation and feeling intimidated for speaking English in front of public. In fact, it is believed that in acquiring English, motivation becomes a central issue, which can bring students grasp the skills of language (Gardner, 1994). Limited time of speaking and uninteresting way of learning contributed to unmotivated learning. In addition, it also exhausts some teachers who teach in EFL classroom, where English is not the students' mother tongue, to make students motivated and involved actively in speaking activity. This situation needs a change. The teachers should think of a teaching method or technique which gives students a broader chance to build up their motivation and interest in oral activities. Therefore, one way to stimulate and raise the unmotivated learning of speaking is by using language games.

Language games are suggested to create excitement in the classroom practice. There are many studies that state the beneficial effects that game playing can bring in the teaching and *the more people play, the more positive emotions are generated, which in turn makes play easier and thus helps to genera* (Schwartz, 2012). In this context, games are used to give practice in all language skills and they can be used to practice many types of communication (Ersoz, 2000). Besides that, games also offer some benefits in creating students' interest and active participation in oral activity as I-Jun (2005) says that the benefit of using games in language learning include that games are learner-centered, encourages creative and spontanous use of language and foster participatory attitudes of the learners. It also encourages shy learners to take part especially when games are played in small groups (Uberman, 1998). Nevertheless, there are still insufficient studies in addressing whether board games can successfully help students to explore their speaking skill and activate motivation in learning process.

Games to be used in language learning are abundant. According Gaudart (1999), there are four types of games can be used namely, card games, board games, simulation games, and party-type games. Among of which, the researchers chose to use a board game because it is considered familiar, eye-catching, and entertaining for students in the researchers' speaking class. Board games can be used and adapted for various EFL/ESL contexts, all groups of ge., proficiency levels, and content. Numerous benefits can also be taken from using the board game in the classroom as it is an effective, low-anxiety, and fun way for students to learn and practice communication skills as well as develop their own communication strategies that can be readily applied to the real world (Chang & Cogswell, 2008). Therefore, this study seeks to find whether board game is an effective teaching tool to activate students' motivation and in the same time, it improves their speaking score achievement.

The major problem encountered by the first year English Department students of Mulawarman University is the willingness to speak actively. They are reluctant to talk because they feel their vocabularies were not sufficient yet. They also said they were afraid to make mistakes and to be laughed by others. The common task is the students have to talk in front of the class to share their experiences or assigned topics. The atmosphere of classroom situation is not conducive since the students were passive when the teachers provide some topics to be discussed. The long pause when the students were assigned to talk about the topic in the classroom made the teacher had to take control and it caused the teacher dominated the classroom's discussion. The researcher believes that the use more fun approach can help students become motivating and enjoy their learning process. Therefore, this study seeks to find answers to two pertinent questions:

Does the use of board game improve the speaking achievement??

How the use of board game activate the students' motivation in learning process?

Fun language games can help students to learning while playing. In other words, if the games happened to be good, the students will be learning and playing at the same time (Vernon, 2006). In addition, the students can develop their self-confidence via games (Guerrero, 2001). Games can minimize the fear and stress because it offers fun and excitement. "*Pupils can learn to speak English twice as fast when they are excited about learning*" (Vernon, 2006). Therefore, the appropriate games will help students to improve their speaking skills ad activate their motivation to speak English for real communication uses. Learning speaking through games put less pressure on the students. When there is less pressure, this will indirectly help them to activate their motivation to speak actively in the classroom practices.

The use of board game is believed to be the subset of reality in an abstract (model) form (Yules, 2001) as it can be a way to experience facets of reality and to learn from it. A board game can be designed to sharpen the students' brain and make them easier to produce the language. Many students learn to cope with real situation based on the experiences from board game. These experiences range from social interaction, learning to deal with new situations, analyzing 'what-if' situation and/or to gain logical overview. In addition, it adds joy and fun and other social aspects with regards to the relationship with the other players.

A board game is very complete media for students to experience some aspects. This is about winning (conflicts), puzzles (knowledge and intelligence), strategy (decision making) and appeal to our basic needs of competition, exploration, self-esteem, learning and socializing. It even give the students the opportunity to step out of their current life become to whatever they wanted to be (Nunan, 2003). Wallace (2000) stated that board game is very dynamic, interaction between system/players is available. It is important to set rules so that the game will not go over boundaries. The rules should be clear and unambiguous to avoid deadlock situation. The teachers need to set up the goal. Before the game starts, players decide what rules apply. In general, a game is some ways or another confronts the player with reality-like situations, whereas these situations may be abstract.

METHODS

Collaborative classroom action research is employed for this study. The researcher was assisted with one of her colleagues as her collaborator to observe the teaching and learning process. It is important to have this assistance, so that the researcher could have more visuals on what she limited to. Thirty five Indonesian EFL students including 25 girls and 10 boys took part in the study. The sample of the study was selected through purposive sampling method. The samples were chosen based on the preliminary observation that they have lack motivation to speak in the classroom practices. Several interviews had been conducted with some students and the researchers noticed that students face grammatical understanding, limited vocabularies, poor pronunciation, and less relaxing atmosphere to practice speaking. Since this research was conducted under the design of collaborative classroom action research, there were two cycles proposed for this study. Each cycle consists of planning, implementing, observing, and reflecting. After each cycle, the students were having speaking test. At the end of cycle 2 along with the speaking test, some of the students were interviewed. The interview was conducted to have personal opinion toward the implementation of the board game in the speaking class.

There were four topics of board games used in this research, namely *East Kalimantan Heritage*, *What Someone Does*, *About Me*, and *Future Jobs*. These topics were selected based on the students' age, proficiency level, culture, content, and classroom setting. *East Kalimantan Heritage* allows students to practice speaking about tourism places in Samarinda. It is asked the students to give directions and physical descriptions. *What someone does* provides an opportunity for students to use present tense verbs to indicate a habitual action. *About me* gives students a big opportunity to practice using English to express their opinions and preferences about a number of different topics. *Future Jobs* lets students describe what they want to be in the future.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

After preliminary study had been conducted, the researchers made planned actions to identified problems. Then, the researcher conducted teaching activities by using the board game with classroom observations from the collaborator. At the end of cycle 1, the students were having speaking test. In fact, based on the result, the students' average score was still below 70. When the cycle 1 of teaching activities had done, the researcher and the collaborator discuss to reflect what had have happened during the teaching and learning process. It is noted that

It was revealed that the students' speaking skill was improved through board game technique. The improvement was shown slightly from the scores of the speaking tests in cycle 1 due to their vocabulary and pronunciation. However, the students' average score when they had a speaking test was still below 70, that is 60,20. The students still face difficulties in pronouncing the words and producing many grammar errors when speaking one to another.

Based on the observation conducted by the collaborator, it is noted that not all students understand the procedure of board game. It means the researcher was unable to give clear instruction to the students. The students seemed to imitate what have been written in the available scripts or cards. The students only told or described the picture depended on the questions which were provided as the guideline. It made most of students did not look naturally. The students seemed describing the place by answering the question one by one. It caused students did not try hard to create their words but stuck on the provided script. From the observation also noticed that the students did not maximally pay attention to the researcher's explanation. It totally needed to be revised and clarified in the next cycle.

Beside the observation, the researcher also asked some students related to what they had done in the classroom. Based on the interview, the students imitated the available script because they did not know what to do and had no enough vocabulary. Besides, they have lack ability to improvise due to their lack vocabularies.

Having reflections in cycle 1, made the researcher revised the playing procedure of board game. Instead of had one group performed in front the class while other watch them, the researcher grouped the students into 10 groups consist of 4 person each group. To do so, the researcher asked students' participation to create their own board game and bring them to be used in the classroom activities. The students seemed enjoyed the activities because they are involved in making their own learning media. The activities in cycle 2 are more challenging since the students had to read the description of the picture in limited time and then they had to tell the picture without looking at the descriptive card. In addition, the topics were broader and every student could interpret by his/herself based on his/her own experience. Every picture is completed with the descriptive card and the students had freedom to express their ideas or thoughts. However, when they faced difficulties to describe the picture, there would be short of information about the pictures so the students had ideas what to describe. At this time, once the students read the information in one minute, they had to place the cards face down and continue the description with their own words.

The students had significant improvement due to their vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and content to be shared. It happened because the students were allowed to prepare and discussed the topics before they played it. The researcher and the collaborator were more enthusiastic this time. Beside controlling and monitoring the students' discussion, they would stop to each of group to correct the pronunciation, discuss difficult words, and provide alternatives. In cycle 2, the students were playing more confidently. It is because they know what to do, they know what to be told, and they were familiar with the topics. This made them could tell the picture more naturally and spontaneously. They were very active to play and could make improvisation. The classroom's atmosphere was very relaxed because they students could even make jokes to attract each other and made the board game alive.

At the end of cycle 2, the students' speaking was measured and assessed. The students shown very significant improvement in all tested aspects namely content, fluency, pronunciation, and grammar with the average score of 82, 70. The students were also interviewed to gain more understanding what they felt with the use of board game in speaking activities. It is noted that they enjoyed and became motivated to learn new words to make the explanation better. These are some the excerpts from students.

S12 : "I like learning through board game. It is fun and challenging. It makes me searching and finding new vocabularies. Sometimes, I have difficulties to express my knowledge but I know the picture, that's why I asked the teacher or looked into the dictionary".

S8: "Not knowing what to say was really embarrassing, but I had help from my other friends since we have to discuss the topic first and tell about it later"

S26: "Talking about something that I know was very easy. When difficult words appeared, I can find the synonym of the word or I asked my teacher about it"

The finding of this study confirms similar studies by Chari (2007), Wright (2006), Richard and Renandya (2006), and Hadley (2000) that board game made students work together to decide the topic. They became more imaginative, active and critical. It is because board game stimulates real life situation and practical setting. It seemed to give multi benefit to the students because it does not only for a better speaking but also trained students to be better speakers. The board game provided the activity which is engaging and entertaining, often challenging and an activity in which the learner play and usually interact with others. By interacting and communicating each other through board games, the students can learn easily, and it can improve the students' score in speaking skill.

When students actively involved in their own learning process, they became very attentive and enthusiastic. They even asked many questions to their teacher to

ensure that they were in the right track. The feeling of boredom and shyness had been minimized. One of students said that she is no longer shy to speak. She can correct her own speaking with the help of the teacher and friends without feeling embarrassing.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Through board game the process of sharing ideas between the teacher and students happened (Harmer, 2004). Students sometimes are not aware of their speaking mistakes and teachers' comments will stimulate students' awareness of speaking (Brown, 2001). The students preferred to know their weaknesses and strength of their speaking. The most meaningful feeling appeared to students was the chance to see their weaknesses and strength in implementing the board game (Richard, 2001). The board game allows students to make interaction and negotiate their strength and weaknesses in their speaking (Savignon, 1997; Shumin, 2002; O'Malley, 2002).

It suggested that the teacher can provide a meaningful and enjoyable teaching's instruction. The games increase the flexibility to build social skills (Nicholson, 2010), so that they will be able to use in a daily bases. It is revealed from this study that the atmosphere of language learning become very conducive. The students participate actively in the learning process. By involving the students, they can build interactive activities like talking to each other by using the target language, English. Students are engaged and the native languages shifted slowly with the use of English expression during the play. Students have no reason to be bored because they learn to speak in a very relaxing situation. It is concluded, then, board games are self-motivating to stimulate learners' motivation and interest.

However, learning language through board games needs to be well prepared. The excitement and euphoria of students might over controlling. As what happened in cycle 1, the students spent so much time in preparing and talking about the topics. They tended to discuss the topic in their native language. Therefore, in cycle 2, the researchers set some rules to maintain discipline in using of English during the play.

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ISBN 979-979-8559-99-0



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FOREWORD

Today's language teaching needs creative and innovative ways to design and use language materials that learners can exploit to expand their language repertoire and develop their language ability as they engage with a myriad of texts and activities or tasks inside and outside the classroom. With this in mind, the 63rd TEFLIN Conference brings up a central issue on "*Creativity and Innovation in Language Materials Development and Language Teaching Methodology in Asia and Beyond*." Drawing on this central theme, the conference develops several sub-themes: a) the development of language materials for content-based instruction, b) the development of language materials for text-based instruction, c) the development of language materials for genre-based Instruction, d) approaches and methods in language teaching, e) techniques and procedures in language teaching, d) technology-based language instruction, f) the role of technology in innovation in ELT methodology, g) the role of technology in language materials development, h) creative writing in ELT (Literature-Based Language Instruction).

As an academic forum, the great focus is in its proceedings as the center of publication for its presenters. It is aimed at maximizing the value of the publication as the outcome of the conference. It is intended that the proceedings can be as a global publication. The quality of the proceedings as a means of publication in this year's edition should be improved. The committee has applied the system for abstract selection of which the criteria is the consistency with the conference's theme. Reviewers have the right to select the papers based on the abstract that have been submitted to the committee.

The coverage of the sub-themes for this year's conference is broadened to certain areas. Bear in mind that the main and solely theme of materials development for language teaching and methodology is not limited to certain topics. To cope with the central theme, some additional sub-themes are offered to the conference's audience to write their research findings into expected academic paper. This year's papers which are selected to be presented in the conference reach more or less than 422. There are more than 400 papers which will be published in proceedings. Other opportunities of publication are offered by TEFLIN Journal as well. For next year's edition, two papers have been selected out of the submitted papers. To add the chance of the conference's publication, some papers have been selected to be further reviewed for Scopus-Indexed publication. In addition, from papers are accepted by A Journal of Culture, English Language Teaching and Literature (Celt), Soegijapranata Catholic University Semarang to be published in the year of 2017.

The growing number of papers presented in the conference is indicating an increase in the need for publication of research findings. Therefore, TEFLIN's conference proceedings are entrusted to be an academic forum to share thoughts, reflections, experiences related to academic works for teachers, lecturers, researchers, educators who continuously write, present, and publish their academic works.

Finally, we would like deliver great appreciation to the organizers, presenters, writers, and all parties who have been contributing directly and indirectly to the publication of the proceedings.

Surabaya, September 2016

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