

Teaching english through fun activities

(A Classroom Action Research in the Second Grade Students of
SD Negeri Dadapsari No. 129, Pasar Kliwon, Surakarta
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

English has played an important role in the world as a means of international communication. Crystal (in Lee McKey.2000: 7) says that English is rapidly assuming the role of a world language, and no other language has spread around the globe so extensively, making English a truly international language. Thus, the mastery of English is a requisite for a nation to communicate with other nations.

In Indonesia, English is the first foreign language that has to be taught in many levels of education, from the Primary School to the university. In recent years, most of the Primary Schools have begun to introduce English into their curriculum as a local content. It is clearly sated in the curriculum in primary education:

“Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris tidak diwajibkan di sekolah dasar melainkan diselenggarakan sebagai muatan local. Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di sekolah Dapat di mulai di kelas IV (GBPP MI SD 1995 : P.1)

It is not easy to teach English in the primary school. Teaching English in the primary school is really different from teaching English in higher level. Primary school students, as the young learner or children, have certain characteristics and need certain treatment. Consequently, it is necessary to the teacher to know about the primary school students' characteristics as young learners and notice their needs in order to make the learning - teaching process effectively done.

A good teacher should ensure that his or her teaching methods are suited to the level of cognitive development reached by the children at their schooling stage, and thus avoid many behavior problems that occur when children become bored and unable to follow what is being taught. Routine activities in learning can make the students bored.

One of the causes of failure in teaching English at the primary school is that the teacher still teaches with the routine activities without considering that it will make the students bored and lost their attention to the learning - teaching process. As a result, the students will not be able to follow the lesson well because they lose their interest. Douglass (1987. p 48) stated “Routine activities in learning can make the students bored. As a result, their motivation and participation in learning will decrease”. Here, interest becomes a crucial factor in deciding in teaching children on classroom practice. So, the teacher should apply the right teaching technique which

can increase the students' interest to the learning process in the classroom. In other words, the technique used by the teacher in teaching English to the primary school students should be able to create an interesting atmosphere so that the students will be enthusiastic to the learning process.

At the primary school where the writer conducts the research, there is the same phenomenon in which the students face the problem in learning English. The students' motivation is still low. Most of the students are not interested in the learning – teaching process. It can be seen from their behaviors in the classroom when the learning – teaching process is in progress. They are still noisy all the time and do not pay attention to the teacher's explanation. However, when the teacher shows them some things interesting such as pictures, toys, flashcards, etc, they are little bit quiet to know what the teacher is going to do. They always want to have a joyful and interesting atmosphere in the learning – teaching process. They are really not interested in a monotonous or routine activity done by the teacher.

Based on the phenomenon found in the teaching English at primary school above, the writer wants to carry out a research about improving the students' motivation and achievement in learning English. Here, the writer uses fun creating activities as the technique in teaching English. It is also aimed to change the atmosphere in the classroom, so that the students will feel more interested in having lesson and to be easier in learning English. The writer would like to study "Teaching English through Fun Activities" (A Classroom action Research in the Second Year Students of SD Negeri Dadapsari 129 Surakarta in 2007/2008 Academic Year).

B. Formulation of the Problem

In this research, the writer wants to know whether the use of fun creating activities can improve the students' motivation and achievement in learning English at primary school. The problems can be formulated as follows:

1. Does the use of fun activities improve the students' motivation in learning English?
2. Does the use of fun activities improve the students' vocabulary mastery?
3. What are the problems in implementing fun activities in the teaching process?

C. The Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are intended to improve the students' motivation and vocabulary mastery and to know what problems that may appear during the implementation of fun activities.

D. The Benefits of the Study

The research result is expected to be able to give some benefits to the teacher who teaches English at primary school, because the teacher can get description about how to use the teaching technique in teaching English to primary school students.

Besides, it can lead the teacher to create an interesting and comfortable atmosphere in the classroom, so that the students will not feel bored with the learning process.

For the students, it can serve them a different situation inside the classroom, so that they will be more interested in following the lesson. Related to the achievement, they will make a good progress.

