

English Self-Learning : Applying Interactive Multimedia for Vocabulary Building in teaching speaking for young learners

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In teaching learning process, vocabulary has an important role in progressing the student's knowledge in English language. When the students have mastered the grammar of English language, so next task is the students must have mastered the vocabulary of English language or at least have to understand the vocabulary needed. Teaching vocabulary using various instructional media will be able to help students to increase their English vocabulary. Teaching vocabulary is clearly more than just presenting new words. It also includes a decision that words should teach the basic of how frequent they are used by speaker of the language. The words most commonly used are those a teacher should teach first. But usually the way of teaching techniques makes the students lazy and bored. The teacher needs a medium for teaching English vocabulary to convey the messages or information. The media was suitable is audio visual media, because this media is trade on sense of sight. The use of media in teaching learning will help the teachers and the students engage together to get the achievements much better and also help the students to learn by themselves. Furthermore, media help the students to recognize communicative functions of the linguistic forms they use, communicate meaning in concrete situations, and use feedback to evaluate their success in conveying messages.

Keywords: teaching vocabulary, cooperative learning, interactive multimedia

Language is a device for communicating in spoken and written. With language they can express their ideas, feelings, opinions, and wishes. English like any other languages, also has this kind of role. Ever, nowadays, it has been considered as an international language which plays a major role in international communication process. Brumfit (1982:2) stated that English is an internasional language in that is the most widespread medium of internasional communication, both because of the number and geographical spread of its speakers, and because of the large number of non-native speakers, and because of the large number of non-native speakers who use it for part at least of their international contact. The explanation above shows of non-native speakers use English to establish relationship with others who are from different countries. In order to take place in international relationship, it is not surprising then; the Indonesian government has chosen English as the first foreign language to be taught in our schools, starting from the elementary schools, junior high schools up to senior high schools.

Since the goal of teaching English is to enable students to use language in ways which are communicatively effective and appropriate, the students' actual performance is needed. Brown

(1980:27) stated that performance is the overtly observable and concrete manifestation or realization of competence. It is the actual doing of something: walking, singing, dancing, speaking. In reference to language, performance is actual production (speaking, writing) or the comprehension (listening, reading) of linguistic events. From the definition mentioned, we are able to know that learning a foreign language involves listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill. One of our primary language skills that elementary students need to master as required by the School Based Curriculum is Speaking. The curriculum states that the students are supposed to be able to utter the simple information and instruction in the context of the closest self-learners. The educational institution creates a curriculum based on their vision and mission of the education. National regulation of education number 22 year 2006 states that the curriculum at all educational levels and all types of education is developed according to seven principles: (1) centered on the potential, progress, needs, and interest of the learners and their environment, (2) diverse and integrated, (3) responsive to the development of science, technology, and art, (4) relevant to the needs of life, (5) comprehensive and sustainable, (6) life long learning, and (7) balance between national interests and regional interests.

Students are unique. They have their own characteristics. It is not enough to give consideration only on their intellect, but also have understanding in their feelings, interest, and motivation to learn. It is the teachers' job to reduce learning barriers by creating a non-threatening environment, enhancing students' feelings of security in order to get students learning better. In this case, learning environment is one of factors that determines the success or failure in learning a foreign language, especially for young learners. In language learning context it is believed that young learners will learn a foreign language more effectively under certain conditions. Therefore, there are some assumptions about language learning that should be considered when teaching English as a foreign language to young learners. According to Larsen and Freeman (2000) and Richard and Rodgers (2001) the assumptions are:

1. Learning should be fun and natural for children. In order for them to be successful in learning the target language, there must be the absence of stress. Children are believed not to learn language forms directly; commands are believed to be helpful for children to interpret meanings. This activity is believed to liberate self-conscious and stressful situations.
2. The language should be first presented through sounds, not written symbols. Listening and speaking are worked on as the learners produce meaningful utterances concerning physical objects and their own experience.
3. Children are more sensitive to anything that touches the senses; they react easily to physical objects. Language is taught by having the students use their senses: touch, see, listen, smell, and even taste if necessary. This will help them relate the linguistic signs to truth that they perceive with their senses.
4. Meaning should be made perceptible through concrete objects or by the presentation of experience. When a language learner makes a mistake or misconception of something, the teacher does not correct it through translation but he/she tries to show something to make the meaning clear.
5. The idea that teaching should start from what the students already know in order to encourage association processes seems to favor children. By teaching through this way, children are expected to know what they are doing. They are not only saying something without being aware of what they are saying.

Teaching and learning Vocabulary

Teaching and learning vocabulary, especially for the elementary students is very important, because they really need the vocabularies to build the interaction among others, particularly with their friends or teachers. Though the standard competence of the vocabulary is not stated detail in the curriculum, in fact, learning vocabulary for the students plays the major role, not only for the final examination but also for the interaction of using English in both oral and written ways. Thornbury (2002: 23) stated that learning vocabulary is not only learning numbers of words, but also remembering and using them. Learning vocabulary is remembering and using them in the real life. Learning vocabulary is one of the first steps of learning a second language, yet a learner never finishes vocabulary acquisition. Whether in one's native language or a second language, the acquisition of new vocabulary is a continual process. Stahl (1999: 3) stated that the importance of learning vocabulary, are: (1) aids expressions and communication, (2) its size has been directly linked to reading comprehension and to interact among others.

According to Piaget's theory, a child at the age of 3 – 10 years is always interested in recognizing and knowing new words, they stand to repeat new words so that they will memorize them. There are essential steps of learning vocabulary (Brown, 1995: 373): (1) having source for encountering new words, (2) getting a clear image for the form of new words, (3) learning the meaning of new words, (4) making a strong memory connection between the form and the meaning of the words, and (5) using the words. In teaching children, teacher has to use performance to teach vocabulary to them, because the children in literacy level are performance. It means children learn language by accompanying action. In this level, teacher can use media. In using the media, teacher can follow these steps: using an object, using a cut-out picture, using gesture, performance action, photographs, drawing and or diagram on the board, and picture from books, TV, video or computer. In elaborating the explanation of the vocabulary meaning, teacher can use verbal explanation as: analytical definition (analysis the meaning of the words), putting in a context (based on the context a paragraph) and translating (translate the meaning of the words).

Teaching vocabulary to the children is different from teaching vocabulary to the adult. There are many techniques of teaching vocabulary. According to Ngaraj (1996:168-171), there are three techniques of teaching vocabulary, they are:

- a. Objects. It is the word we use to refer to real objects in the classroom.
- b. Pictures. It is one of other effective way of getting learners to learn words through the use of pictures. In the initial stage, pictures can be used for teaching vocabulary orally. Later, learners can be asked to match words with pictures. This technique is very effective at primary level.
- c. Vocabulary games and crosswords. These are useful for vocabulary expansion. Learners will have to think all words they know and try to complete the task. If they do not know the words they can guess and check their answers.

In teaching vocabulary for the students, teachers need certain procedures in order to make students understand and comprehend the lesson. Nations (2001: 107-108) states that there are three procedures in teaching vocabulary, as follows: *recycled words, the second-hand cloze, and the vocabulary interview*. The first procedure, vocabulary is taught from

receptive use to productive use in the real situation. It means that teachers help the students to use the vocabulary in its language function. In the second-hand cloze, vocabulary is taught in three different ways: (1) reading the vocabulary, (2) learning vocabulary, and (3) giving the cloze passages relate to the texts that they read. The last procedure is vocabulary interview. It means that the students have questions and answers to the teachers about the certain vocabulary given. In addition, Lado (1979: 121-126) mentioned several steps in teaching vocabulary: (1) listen the words, (2) pronounce the words, (3) understand the words, (4) make the sentence using the words, (5) practice the words by using some expressions, (6) pronounce the words aloud, and (7) write the words.

Classroom Interaction

Teaching and learning process is suggested not to focus only on the master of passing the knowledge. However, it must also take into consideration on the presence of appropriate classroom management. This due to the fact, that appropriate classroom management may yield student's convenience to follow the entire learning process from the beginning till the end of the learning session. Englehart (2009: 713) says that a good classroom interaction possibly determines students learning outcome. How teachers and friends interact in the classroom may describe the quality of teaching being instructed. In the era of communicative language teaching, interaction is, in act, the heart of communication is what communication is all about.

Once children begin school, they will begin the interaction with teachers and their friends in the classroom (Lehr, 2004: 14). Teachers and friends are the closest environment that they will talk to. The teacher talks and the students hear throughout the day poses opportunities to familiarize them with the kind of oral language that promotes the vocabulary growth. By asking the question of *what is your name?*, *where do you live?*, *how old are you*, *etc* will make the interaction process between teachers, students, and friends in the classroom.

The interaction of the students with their friends and teachers should make them really use English as a means of communication. It can be said that the approach is notional-functional approach. It means that language system and the forms that make it up are determined by the uses or functions they serve. Thus, to learn a language is first to learn how to use it to perform various functions in social interaction (Hu, 2001). The emphasis is on the functions of language or the communicative purpose, i.e., what the learners want to do or what they want to accomplish through the language (Finocchiaro & Brumfit, 1983).

Cooperative Learning and Interactive Multimedia

The term cooperative learning refers to students working on teams on an assignment or project under conditions in which certain criteria are satisfied including that the team members be held individually accountable for the complete content of the assignment project. Artz and Newman (1990: 448) said that cooperative learning is small groups of learners working together as a team to solve problems, complete tasks or accomplish common goals. The cooperative learning model requires student cooperation and interdependence in its task, goal and reward structure. The idea is that lessons are created in such a way that students must cooperate in order to achieve their learning objectives. In practicing the cooperative learning,

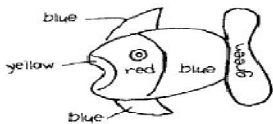


there are several basic principles that can be used, as follows: group task is designed to be suitable for group work, positive interdependence is built in-cooperative is necessary for students to succeed, attention and class time are given to interpersonal/cooperative skill building, participants learn together in small group (2-5 members), students are individually accountable for learning and participations, and the teacher's role changes from bring the 'sage on the stage' to the 'guide on the side'. Thus, cooperative learning is about moving from rote learning to learning how to think critically and in changing circumstances.

In the era of digitization, when the students enjoy studying by high-technology, the teacher should apply an alternative media to make the teaching and learning fun. The need to utilize Information and Communication (ICT) is mandated by the National Education System Act No. 20 year 2003 and the ministry of National Education Regulation no. 16 year 2007, which state that each teacher is required to familiarize himself or herself with ICT and utilize it within their teaching. One way to utilize ICT is by applying e-learning in the teaching and learning process. The teachers and the students will operate the interactive multimedia by using the computer as an assisted tool. Mayer (2003:5) states that in computer-based environment, known as multimedia, the external representations may include spoken words, which enter through the ears, and animations, which enter through the eyes. The learner must select relevant aspects of the sounds and images or further processing.

Interactive Multimedia for teaching Speaking to Young Learners

It is clear that self-learning is self-oriented in term of individual language learning activity, yet there is a challenge that induces him to adapt his behavior to social environment in language use. Therefore, language teacher should make the learners more effective for some people and also in line with Hammer (1998), give them power to take responsibility for their own learning. The concept of self-learning is not the same as learning on your own or self study (Benson, 2000 in Hazel, 2002). When the students learn by themselves, either grouping or individually, they need tools to help them to complete the student's task. The interactive multimedia, here, gives them challenge in completing the task or the assignment given. There several ways to help the students, especially young learners to improve their speaking through the interactive multimedia.

Example 1:

<p>A Colour the parts of the fish. Children read the labels and then colour the different parts of the fish with appropriate colours</p> 	<p>B Read and colour. Children read the description and then colour the parts of the fish using the appropriate colours</p> <p>Read and colour. The fish has a blue body. It has a green face and a red mouth. It has a yellow tail. Its fins are blue.</p> 
<p>C Read and colour. Children read the descriptions on their sheets and then colour the fish appropriately</p> <p>The fish has a blue body with a green zigzag. Its face is red but it has a yellow mouth and a blue eye. Its top fin is black and its bottom fin is green. Its tail is the same colour as its body.</p>	

Teacher shows the picture of a fish through the multimedia and he asks the students to pay attention to the picture. Then, the teachers asks the students to mention the color of the fish, read the color of the fish and finally the teacher asks them to work cooperatively to draw and give color to their own fish's picture.

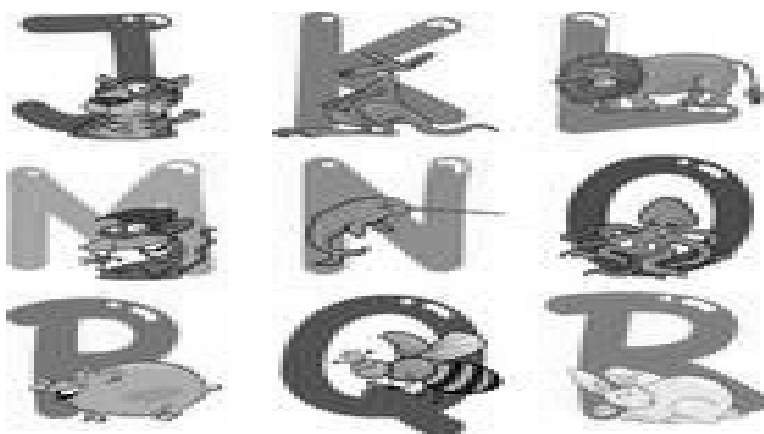
By having this activity, the students will actively speak and enlarge their vocabulary. Thus, multimedia helps them to improving their vocabulary building.

Example 2: Picture Stories



Through picture stories, students will speak more because they want to say something about the stories. They utter their own idea. The interactive multimedia created can help them in creating the stories by some clicking the correct button.

Example 3: Spelling Bee Contest



It is an activity, which asks the students to guess what the picture is about. By using this activity, the students will utter all the pictures and the teacher will ask them to describe about the pictures, so the interaction happens between the students and the teacher orally.

Example 4: Video for Kids



Conclusion

To some extent, applying interactive multimedia may also be suitable for teaching speaking for young learners. In teaching speaking for young learners we may have assumptions that language is a set of grammatical rules and language consists of language chunks and language learning is a process of habit formation. Thus, the first assumption will bring the possible techniques of uttering words should be as short as possible then combining the words into longer ones while grammar is introduced through utterances. The second assumption has possible techniques of uttering words should be repeated several times and errors will be corrected through repetition of the correct utterance.

In applying the interactive multimedia the students shows positive attitudes and opinions on several aspects, such as: (1) all of the students seriously joins the teaching and learning process, (2) most of the students are interestingly discussing the materials with their partners, (3) the students are so brave to ask to the teacher when they find some difficulties, (4) most of the students have an assumption that the materials are easy to understand, (5) most of the students thought that the instructions are easy to be understood, (6) most of the students have an opinion that the interactive multimedia help them to understand the materials and (7) the students comment that the interactive multimedia is interesting.

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