RCSD

Fun with English Activity for Junior High School 8 Palopo

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ABSTRACT

This research is to enhance students' communicative and English skills of students of Junior High School 8 Palopo, Indonesia. The method used is teaching and learning English with providing pre-test, applying fun with English activities, and giving post-test as the report. The procedures of applying the fun with English activity are giving ice breakers, applying games, explaining materials, grouping the students, providing practice, and evaluating the students' achievement and the process of the activity. There are several games used in the activity, such as whispering, introducing other and total physical response. It shows that students are eager and interested in learning English that can be seen in their full participation in the Fun with English activity. Also, students are eager to communicate with others by providing communicative and fun activities that is emphasized in the grouping activities. This part enables students to communicate with their peers and tutors effectively. The implication of the study can be a reference for other school to apply the same activity and to collaborate with English Education Study Program to apply the similar activity to increase students' communicative and English skills.

Keywords: *Activity; Communicative Skills; Fun with English*

1. Introduction

Teaching English in Indonesian public junior high school has been chaotic (Camargo & Bernice, 2001). Time constraints, students' silence, and the conditions of the classroom are a few of the causes. The majority of our students have an apparent lack of verbal output that is caused sometimes caused by Indonesian language is quite different with English (Nurchalis et al., 2021; Sardi et al., 2017). Also, the students do not often practice English in the class. The limited access of English is rather challenging for students to learn English (Krahenbuhl, 2021).

The most difficult skill for a foreign language teacher to teach is speaking. (Yeganehpour, 2016). Students want to communicate their feelings, goals, and reactions as well as investigate the language and make fun of it in their native tongue. They therefore anticipate doing the same in English. Also, most of students still think that English is not an important skill to master. Therefore, they have low motivation in learning English (Husnaini & Yahya, 2023). This also happened in Junior High School 8 Palopo when tutor asked several questions in English to them. When we questioned about their hobby, they would directly say that basketball could be wrong. Instead, they should say that playing basketball. They applied the same rule in their native language to English language. Furthermore, the students' interest in learning English is still low that it could be seen from students' participation in the previous

Fun with English in other school is still low, while it has been informed to all students to participate, but only several persons could fully participate.

Building community and reducing the boredom, drudgery, and anxiety that speaking frequently produces are the two goals of having fun in the English language arts classroom. (Larasaty et al., 2022). Husnaini & Yahya (2023) identify the usage of enjoyable activities will stop students from feeling anxious and uneasy in their practice and self-discovery environments. Also, technique or classroom strategy will determine how the interaction is accomplished in formal settings. It combines creative planning with student input in less formal settings. Additionally, the goal of learning through enjoyable activities can be implemented in a classroom to provide a better learning environment.

Due to the inventive linguistic skills that children bring to the classroom, teachers must provide a communicative environment where they can express themselves (Susanty et al., 2021). Also, Teachers must encourage students to actively create language for themselves because the language used in every activity is unpredictable. Games are valuable and significant because of this (Bakhsh, 2016). Games are entertaining, but they also encourage communication and predictability. Utilizing games to teach students requires qualified instructors who engage the students in playing and are fluent in the linguistic components of the language (Camargo & Bernice, 2001). Knowing how games work can enable teachers to locate and develop games that let learners learn while having fun (Ashraf et al., 2014).

Furthermore, students must participate in an activity because they find it engaging, not because their teacher asks them to, which means that activities must be student-centered, and communication must be honest. It also includes a summary of some important considerations for teachers. The teacher must prioritize social connection, collaboration, and significance while selecting communication activities. Students are encouraged to use English both inside and outside of the classroom by a great educator (Yeganehpour, 2016).

The learning activity should be changed by the teacher to be pleasant. To address issues with students' learning, such as their lack of interest in and focus on the subject, educators can think of innovative and potential teaching strategies (An-Nisa & Suwartono, 2020). However, the most crucial factor is that learners view every learning activity as something fun. It might make the students feel more at ease while they are learning.

Students' English skills will gradually improve because of engaging exercises. While making the lesson enjoyable, amusing, and helpful for the students, teachers must offer students a sense of what to expect in the course. Unconsciously, students will believe that they are amusing themselves rather than learning. This significantly lowers the pressure on pupils as they study. As a result, learning methods must be created and modified to meet the demands of students.

Therefore, to improve the communicative skills, to enhance students' English-speaking skills, and to increase students' motivation in learning English, the activity named Fun with English is applied by the study program of English Education at IAIN Palopo. Also, it is to enhance students' skills in speaking and to build their confidence in communicating with others by using English.

2. Method

The implementation of Community Service begins with the cooperation agreement with the Head of English Education Study Program with the headmaster of Junior High School Palopo in doing several English activities at school. The students of English Education Study Program would be the facilitators and the students at Junior High School as the students or participants of the Fun with English activity.

This activity was done for two days. Several students from the State Institute of Palopo were also invited to be tutors for the students. In the first day, there was an opening ceremony by the representatives from English Education Study Program and Junior High School 8 Palopo. After opening ceremony, there was an ice breaker applied by the students of IAIN Palopo. The next activity was giving a pre-test. This pre-test was applied to measure their ability in English. It is also to identify their English level in order to provide suitable material for their level.

The pre-test procedures are:

1. The main lecturer divides the students into several groups. This is to optimize the time in sharing the test and to maximize the applying of the activity.

2. Each tutor handles one group consisting of ten to eleven students.

3. The tutor leads the students to find a suitable place to sit in group.

4. The tutor invites one by one the members of the group to introduce themselves.

5. After they introduce themselves, the tutor asks several questions related to their previous performance to identify their English level.

6. After all members introduce themselves, the tutor leads students back to the meeting hall.

7. In the meeting hall, the students are given some information related to the next agenda for the next day.

After giving pre-test, the activity is continued to the main fun ways to learn English. It is the Fun with English activity. There are several activities to apply:

1. Giving ice breakers

2. Applying games related to the material.

3. Explaining materials in a big group

4. Practicing in small groups led by one tutor for each group.

5. Evaluating the achievement of the students in the group

Then, on the last day of the activity is giving post-test that is the procedure is similar with the pre-test. It is to measure the result of the activity and to report it to the head of English Education Study Program and to the headmaster of Junior High School 8 Palopo.

3. Result and Discussion

There are several activities applied at the school as the procedure of doing Fun with English activity. The first is applying fun ice breakers. Before starting to give materials, the students are provided ice breakers to make sure they relate to the tutors and the material given. Students will be more receptive to studying in English class if icebreaker exercises are carried out. Additionally, the right kinds of icebreakers will guarantee that students get the most from their lecture while also having a good time. This is supported by (Eggleston & Smith, 2004; Yeganehpour, 2016) that using ice-breakers helps learners communicate with one another and is an effective technique to get across language difficulties. By stifling the issue of silent learners' limited linguistic skills and supporting their attention, the employment of icebreakers as a communication tactic facilitates spoken communication amongst students and fosters communication between them.

The second is using some games that are relevant to the subject. Games are available to stimulate students' interest in the subject. Due to the joy of playing, learners are also

enthusiastic of this. Students might interact, learn about, and explore their surroundings through games. Games not only increase students' motivation but also act as a motivator and stimulus for language use. Games also foster a playful and laid-back environment where students can pick up information quickly and remember it better. Applying gaming can encourage pupils to work together and finish tasks in a fun setting. Also, students with low motivation in learning English will be triggered to participate in learning by applying games. This application of games is part of the fun activities that can stimulate students in learning. In addition, the application of games makes students understand the process of having rules and players and having winners or losers. Also, it helps students to be familiar with the policy and the fairness in the game.

After that, one of the tutors gives a brief description of the materials. To obtain the desired results and complete the objectives of the explanation, it is crucial to explain the subject to students. Tutors are essential in the classroom because they must provide students with clear explanations and instructions regarding the content so that they can apply and practice the list of things they are supposed to learn. In this part of explanation, the students are not forced to write. They are given handouts to master the material and to maximize the time for studying the material explained. The materials are simple materials that are related to what they learn in school. The explained material will be mastered in the grouping so that everyone can practice the materials.

Figure 1. Students get explanation from tutor and practice.

The next action is grouping the pupils after an explanation. The significance of forcing learners to sit in groups is because they like to be surrounded by their peers. The students' proximity to one another fosters collaboration. Students with the same number will assemble on the floor in the same group if teachers instruct them to count in sequence from one to two. Another strategy used by the tutor to divide them into groups is offering each group a different type of candy. Each member of the same group will receive the same candy. Grouping students will ease the tutors to identify who has been mastering the material and who has not yet. This is also to identify the level of acceptance of the materials so that the tutor can provide several activities to understand the subject given. Grouping can also make students more intimate with their tutors and friends. The more they get closed with their tutor and friends, the easiest they can understand the materials and be happy in participating in all activities.

Figure 2. Students learn in a small group.

They receive repetitive explanations about the materials and how to integrate them into communication strategies in the group. Another name for it is a practice activity. Before students can apply the subject in communication, the material is practiced in various ways. In this practice session, the students are given several activities to master the materials. They are given practice by sharing handouts so that they can practice several conversations given in the handout. They also practice the subject in pairs and are provided with games to maximize the practice session.

The activity's final phase is evaluation. To determine whether the learning goals and objectives have been met, the students are given various quizzes that are connected to the course materials, typically based on some predetermined criteria. Tutors typically anticipate that students will perform exceptionally well on these tests because they have the purpose of evaluating how well the student has met specific course objectives.

The students' engagement and awareness of studying English are indicators that they are interested in learning English after following all the steps of the Fun with English exercise. Even though they are very busy with schoolwork as well, they fully engage in the activities. These methods assist students learn English spontaneously while also increasing their interest in studying the language.

4. Conclusion

Students learn English more effectively when they apply Fun with English activity. Additionally, it enables students to completely engage in the action. There are a few fun ways to learn English. Giving icebreakers is the first step in getting students ready for class. Language difficulties can be avoided by using icebreakers, which also promote dialogue among students. By addressing the issue of silent learners' limited linguistic skills and supporting their attention, the employment of icebreakers as a communication tactic facilitates spoken communication amongst students and fosters communication between them. Next, some games that are linked to the subject matter are provided. Students that participate in games find them enjoyable. The implementation of games enables students to collaborate in an active learning activity. They could switch roles to alter the equitable and pair responsibilities. They have unintentionally acquired English through the games they play.

After that, to optimize the amount of practice of the English activity, the Fun with English activity also encourages students to work in a group and study English in a small group. The final step is to evaluate students' understanding by providing evaluation in the grouping. Short quizzes are used to measure students' readiness and understanding. Then, we also evaluate students by giving post-tests to determine the understanding of the students.

Finally, students are led to enhance their motivation to learn English not only in the Fun with English Activity but also applying the materials given in the classroom.

Based on the positive results of the use of Fun with English activities in Junior High School 8 Palopo, it would be put in forward that using the activities will facilitate communication among students and tutors and to enhance students' engagement and interest in learning English. It strongly implicates the effectiveness of Fun with English activities to be implemented in the learning process or being applied in other English activities at any other school around the world.

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