

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FUN BRAIN WORDS GAME IN IMPROVING STUDENTS' READING COMPREHENSION IN TEACHING DESCRIPTIVE TEXT

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ABSTRACT

This study reported the investigation of Fun Brain Words Game in improving students' reading comprehension in teaching descriptive text. Its purpose is to find out the teacher's strategy to implement Fun Brain Words Game in enhancing students' ability in reading descriptive text and the students' responses on the implementation of Fun Brain Words Game in improving students' reading descriptive text. Moreover, this study used qualitative research under case study approach and the data were employed from participants that was an English teacher who taught descriptive text by using Fun Brain Words Game. In addition, classroom observation, questionnaire, and interview were used as the instruments in collecting the data. The data obtained from those instruments were proceeded qualitatively into the analysis. The research findings concluded that teacher's strategy in implementing Fun Brain was in line with the theory from Vogt (2009, p.1). First, list some familiar words which your students know. Connect it with the learning process, in this matter in reading descriptive text. The teacher links it with the learning process, in this matter in reading descriptive text. The teacher is likely to provide the game in session 2 or 3 in teaching learning process. The conclusion showed that student engagement is important for the students to achieve educational purposes. Hence, Fun Brain Words Game is one of the various techniques in teaching descriptive text. furthermore, the teacher is recommended to keep improving student reading comprehension with various ways in the teaching-learning process.

Keywords: *CALL, Descriptive text, Fun Brain Words, Reading comprehension*

INTRODUCTION

Reading is widely taught as one of the basic skills in teaching process in diverse methods. This concept of reading comprehension employs reading plays important role as learner media to absorb any inputs. Reading comprehension, as a reading skill, should be mastered by learners. Learners who are good at reading comprehension might have better achievement than those who are not good. Connor, Morrison, and Petrella

(2004) proclaims that reading comprehension skill is a fluency to interpret written text and understand it. Understanding may be defined as the meaning of reading comprehension and interpreting the written text, for example descriptive text.

Descriptive text is text or speech that provides a verbal picture of an object, character, location, or event. It is also considered to be one of the four traditional forms of composition (along with exposition, narration, and persuasion) (Cooper, 2004, p. 3). It is aimed to describe and reveal a particular person, place, or thing.

In reality, there are some problems found in learning reading skill especially in reading comprehension that the students encounter. Lamy and Klarskov (2011, p. 3) recommend that reading is the most essential skill for children in secondary schools. Schools actually give the chance of improving reading skills to a very little extent despite of a current study. The application of technology in language education might solve this situation. Meanwhile, internet for educational purpose had not been fully revealed yet and the average school still had limited computer use, which is called Computer- assisted Language Learning (CALL), in particular in teaching reading.

Over the past few years, the use of CALL had increased. Egbert (2005, p. 4) states that CALL is learners' learning language in any context with, though, and around computer technologies. In addition, Jarvis (2004, p. 116) establishes these broad definitions to characterize the software applications as which language specific as well as more generic Information Technology (IT) programmers. It's obvious that we have entered a new information age which has been established. It means, CALL can be implemented in every language learning as the supporting tool for learning English.

The use of the computer in and of itself does not underpin a teaching method, but rather the computer makes pedagogy to think in new ways to exploit the computers benefits and work around its limitations. We need language teaching specialists who can promote a complementary relationship between computer technology and appropriate pedagogic programs to explore computers potential (King, 2003, p. 2). In other words, CALL is the search for and study of applications on the computer in language teaching and learning (Fotos & Browne, 2004, p. 6). So, CALL is generally used as the cover term for language learning based on multimedia, internet, and other technologies related to the computer.

Gunduz (2005, p. 3) stated that the advantages of CALL can be subjected to every aspect, especially in teaching English. Fun Brain is an online game including the first type which is CALL-specific software that is designed to build and facilitate language learning. According to Vogt (2009, p.1), “Fun Brain is an educational browser game website for children and adults.”

Demaiziere (1982) clarified that there are four types of CALL among others are: CALL specific software, generic software, Web-based learning program, Computer-mediated communication (CMC) programs. The current study uses CALL-specific software because the fun brain games have web-based interactive language learning exercises/quizzes in the internet. Hence, fun brain game is one of CALL-specific software types.

Game, as a method, can lead students enjoy learning and it is one of the solutions to overcome students’ reading difficulties, in particular, pronunciation, word spelling, and using strategies in reading descriptive text. The students can do both of learning new material and playing game. In addition, games are helpful because they can make students consider certain words important and necessary (Njoroge, Ndung’u and Gathigia, 2013). This displays that game in teaching is one of methods which can make students enjoy and cooperative because the students can both learn new material and play game.

There are related studies dealing with CALL in improving students’ vocabulary mastery carried out by Bhatti (2013), Khoshima (2014) and Vogt (2009) investigating about the use of Fun Brain Words Game which helps to select suitable game for the classroom. Meanwhile, there hasn’t related studies focusing on teaching reading descriptive text by using Fun Brain Words Game. However, this current study wants to investigate the teacher in implementing Fun Brain Words Game in improving students’ reading comprehension in teaching descriptive text and to figure out the students’ responses on the implementation of Fun Brain Words Game in improving students’ reading comprehension in teaching descriptive text.

METHOD

This study employed qualitative design in which case study was applied to collect the data of this study. According to Gerring (2004, p. 1), a case study is an empirical

analysis that investigates a contemporary phenomenon and context are not evident, and in which many sources of evidence are used. In addition, the research itself highlighted on single phenomenon which becomes one of the characteristics of a case study.

It is the analysis of the implementation of Fun Brain Words Game in improving students' reading descriptive text. The writer adopted three instruments in data collection. They were classroom observation that functions to obtain the data from the teacher when implementing Fun Brain Words Game in improving students' reading descriptive text, interview that functions to get the data from the teacher concerning teacher's ways in implementing Fun Brain Words Game, and questionnaire that functions to obtain the data about students' perception on the use of Fun Brain Words Game in teaching reading descriptive text.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the research questions, the writer found some relevant data from classroom observation, interview, and questionnaire. The data found by the writer answered the research questions on teacher's ways in implementing Fun Brain Words Game. They will be elaborated as follows:

The writer answer the first research question from classroom observation and interview.

The non-participant observation was conducted in four sessions in order to investigate teacher's ways in implementing Fun Brain Words Game. The result of classroom observation is strengthened by the theory from Vogt (2009, p.1). The activities could be seen in the following descriptions:

The activities began after the teacher entering the classroom and checking students' attendance. After checking students' attendance, the writer observed that the students were asked about the previous lesson dealing with procedure text. The observation showed that the teacher asked the students about the procedure text from the previous lesson. Subsequently, the teacher entered to the next session in which the teacher built students' knowledge about descriptive text. The teacher also remind the students about what is descriptive text, descriptive text function and the language features of descriptive text. A student answered that descriptive text is the text that talk about the characteristics of something.

After reminding the students about the descriptive text, the teacher went to the activities of Fun Brain Words Game. In this case, the writer observed that the teacher use the projector in helping the students to understand the topic. There were some activities of the teacher when conducting Fun Brain Words Game activities which is an educational browser game website for children and adults . First, the teacher explained the theme of the lesson that was reading descriptive text with Fun Brain Words Game. The teacher stated that before entering the teaching learning process, the teacher will conduct Fun Brain Words Game to support students' skill in mastering reading descriptive text and students' vocabulary mastery. The teacher explained the role of the game and started play the game with the students individually and make the list of vocabulary that were familiar with the students as suggested by Vogt (2009, p.1). Based on the observation, the activities could be seen in the following descriptions:

Teacher: Now, I'd like to show you a list of pictures related to the topic of descriptive text. Then, you determine those picture with the appropriate word. For example, I'll show one of the animal picture, then I'll give you the list of words. You may determine which word is appropriate to the picture. (Translated vesion)

Furthermore, the writer observed that the teacher continued the game until five pictures. The writer observed that the teacher used projector to conduct the activities. After finishing the game, the writer observed that the teacher continued the teaching learning process by providing the students with reading descriptive text and conducting teaching learning process with question and answer. To emphasize, the results of classroom observation was relevant with teacher's statement in interview when the teacher asked about the ways of the teacher in implementing Fun Brain. In this case, the teacher stated that:

“Generally, the implementation of Fun Brain was conducted in some steps. Firstly, I reminded the students about the previous lesson. Furthermore, before entering the game that was Fun Brain Words, I explained the students about what is descriptive text. After the students understood the material, I conducted Fun Brain Words to the students. I used internet access, computer, and projector in presenting the data. Furthermore, I gave the students about list the word that have connection with the picture. I asked the students to be able to choose the correct words in the game with the real answer. In this case, I did the activities individually before presenting the game in

groups. After conducting the Fun Brain, I conducted the activities with reading descriptive text and conducting the test.” (Translated version)

Compared to the data obtained from observation concluding that teacher’s ways in implementing Fun Brain Words Game which was in line with the theory from Vogt (2009, p.1) that Fun Brain is an educational browser game website for children and adults. First, make a word list which your students are familiar with. The teacher connected it with the learning process, in this matter in reading descriptive text. Then, teacher provided the game in session 2 or 3 in teaching learning process. Therefore, the result of classroom observation was in line with teacher’s statement in the interview about the ways of the teacher in implementing Fun Brain.

In the investigation of students’ responses, the data were obtained from students’ answer in the results of questionnaire. There were ten questionnaire items dealing with students’ perceptions on the implementation of Fun Brain Words Game in improving students’ reading comprehension. They were managed to 30 students as the sample of this study.

Based on students’ answer in questionnaire item, the writer presented students’ choice in the diagram in order to give more comprehension about the results of questionnaire item. The Figure 1 was the representation of students’ choices:

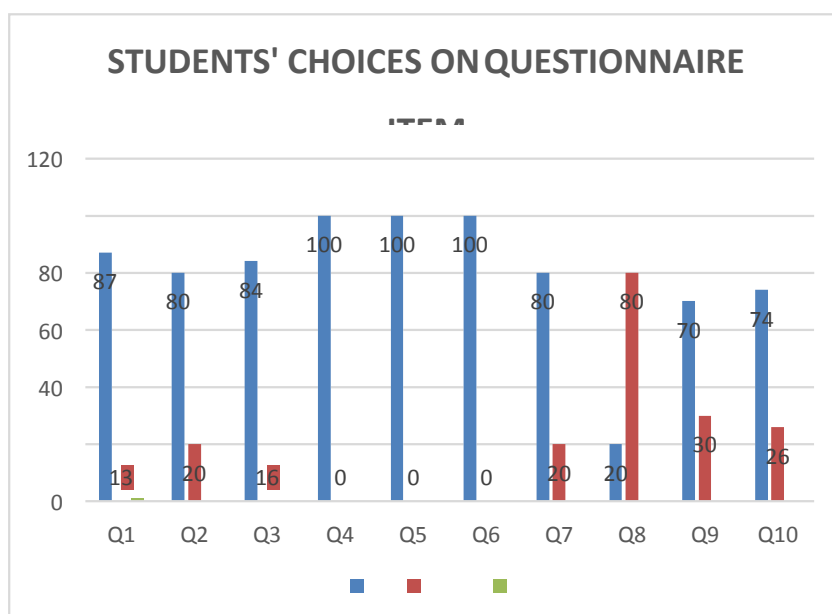


Figure 1 The students’ choice on questionnaire item

There were ten questions item presented by the writer in the form of chart followed by students' answer in questionnaire because the type of questionnaire item was the combination of open and close ended. In responding the first question, the majority of the students that consisted of 26 students (87%) stated that they like reading descriptive text. They stated that reading comprehension is one of the interesting teaching material that provided the activities in which the students are demanded to find the main information from the text of reading descriptive text. On the other hand, there were 4 students (13%) of the students who disagree with this statement. They stated that reading comprehension is one of the difficult subject to be learnt. They added that it was hard to find the information from reading text.

In responding the second, 24 students (80%) stated that the use of Fun Brain was the activities that make the students feel enjoy, curious, and interest in joining teaching learning process. They stated that the steps in Fun Brain were able to stimulate the students to be able to focus on teaching material given in each step because they felt that the use of technology when implementing Fun Brain make the students more understand about teaching material especially about reading descriptive text. On the other hand, there were 6 students (20%) who did not agree with this statement. They stated that they could not understand the material presented by the teacher in fun brain. They argued that it was difficult to understand the material presented by the teacher in the activities of Fun Brain.

In responding the third question, the majority of the students consisting of 25 students (84%) stated that they like the activities in teaching reading descriptive text through Fun Brain technique. They added that the implementation of Fun Brain enable the students to be able to active in joining teaching learning process and engage the students to be active learner because it used media as the ways in teaching reading descriptive text. Meanwhile, there was 5 students (16%) who was disagree with this statement. He stated that he did not like the teaching learning process through Fun Brain activities. He stated that sometimes he was bored when Fun Brain was implementing in teaching reading descriptive text.

In responding the fourth question, all of the students consisting of 30 students (100%) stated that they English vocabulary increased after the students learnt the reading material through the use of Fun Brain game. It meant that the use of Fun Brain was completely success in increasing students' vocabulary in reading comprehension.

They stated that the steps in fun game taught the students the list of vocabulary that needed by the students in reading process.

In responding the fifth question, all of the students (100%) stated that the use of Fun Brain was easy to play. They stated that besides it was easy to be played, it also help the students in understanding the list of vocabulary and help the students in learning reading descriptive text.

“Is Fun Brain interesting to be learnt?” was the sixth question in questionnaire item. In this regard, all of the students (100%) stated that the use of Fun Brain was the enjoy activities that easier the students to understand teaching material especially in reading descriptive text.

Regarding the seventh questions, the majority of the students consisting of 24 students (80%) stated that they want to learn English through Fun Brain continuously because it help the students in understanding reading descriptive text. Meanwhile, 6 students (20%) stated that did not learn English through the use of Fun Brain. They stated that it was bored when they learn English especially reading descriptive text through Fun Brain.

The result of eighth question in questionnaire item was that 6 students (20%) stated that they have difficulties in conducting Fun Brain. They stated that it was hard to be played and it was hard to be understand. On the other hand, 24 students (80%) stated that they did not have any difficulties in conducting Fun Brain. They stated that it was easy to be followed.

Then, in responding ninth question, the majority of the students consisting of 21 students (70%) stated that they were easier in understanding reading descriptive text. They emphasized that the use of Fun Brain was able to give real simulation on the real descriptive text that make the students easier in understanding reading descriptive text. In contrast, 9 students (30%) stated that the use of Fun Brain activities did not make the students more easier in understanding reading descriptive text.

Finally, the result of tenth questionnaire item revealed that the majority of the students consisting of 22 students (74%) found the use of Fun Brain able to improve students' reading descriptive text. They stated that the use of vocabulary in Fun Brain has correlation with the reading text presented by the teacher in reading material and also reading test. Therefore, it could help the students to improve their reading skill through the use of list vocabulary in Fun Brain activities. On the other hand, there were 8 students (26%) who disagree with this statement. They stated that the use of Fun

Brain was not able to help the students in understanding the reading descriptive text. They stated that it was difficult for the students in understanding the reading material and reading test.

The students' choice in questionnaire showed that the majority of the students considered that Fun Brain was the game that improve students' vocabulary and improve their reading comprehension skill. Furthermore, the students also enjoy joining the teaching learning process of Fun Brain in reading descriptive text.

The current study result was related with the study conducted by Bhatti (2013) and Khoshima (2014). The teaching and learning process of reading may improve by means of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), helped in improving the literal, inferential, and evaluative levels of reading skills.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings concluded that Fun Brain Words Game improves students' reading descriptive text. It was beneficial to improve new strategy in teaching descriptive text in different way. Moreover, Fun Brain Words Game, as also a technique, can support the teachers to improve knowledge in this area among students.

This current study is expected to be a new strategy for the English teacher in providing the condusive situation to reduce the students' boredom in the classroom. The result of this study showed that most students enjoyed joining the teaching and learning process regarding learning reading descriptive text by means of fun brain games. Therefore, this study is expected to become a good new for the students to enjoy their atmosphere teaching and learning activity in the class. For further researchers, this study also can be adopted as the reference to be compared with the future study. In fact, there are still some weaknesses in this study that need to be repaired. Therefore, it gives a good opportunity for the other researchers to make this study more complete in the same field with the different interest.

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