

The Use of a Relay Race Game to Increase Grade V Students' Motivation in Learning English in One of Elementary Schools in Karawaci

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ABSTRACT

Through the observation done towards the fifth graders in an elementary school at Karawaci, Tangerang, it was found that the students did not show much motivation in learning English in the classroom. They did not show interest in doing their tasks and they did not show respects while doing activities with their friends during the lesson time. Motivation is important in energizing, directing, and sustaining behavior of the students during the learning process in the classroom. Therefore, the researcher decided to use a relay race game to solve the problem. It was expected that through the relay race game used, the students' motivation could be increased and to see how the steps of the game could increase the students' motivation in learning English. The method used was Classroom Action Research and data were collected by using several instruments, such as observation checklist done by mentor and researcher's partner, questionnaires done by the students, and reflective journals done by the researcher. After conducting the research, the results showed that the motivation of the students in learning English was increased using a relay race game and the steps of the game must be done consistently done to make it effective.

Keywords: *Motivation, learning, a relay race game, English*



INTRODUCTION

Motivation is one of the important things needed in doing such things in life. However, the problem that occurs among the students nowadays is that the students lack motivation in learning. It was clearly showed when the researcher did observation in the classroom. During the observation period in the English class, the researcher found that most of the students did not show much excitement during the learning; they often did not finish the tasks and they could not work in their groups well. Some of them stated that they felt bored during the learning process because they do the same activities most of the time in the English class. They were not feeling enthusiastic following those activities. Even though sometimes they did discussion, games or other activities, but still they were not feeling excited about what they were doing during those activities. It usually happened because of the activities were not interesting, not suitable or because the way the teacher conducted the games or the activities were sometimes not attractive so the atmosphere is not exciting and motivating.

Looking at these kinds of problem occurring during the learning process, it opened a thought that instead just teaching with various learning activities, it is also important to create an exciting and motivating atmosphere in the classroom. A good atmosphere is attained when the teacher has a stimulating personality; when there is good teacher-pupil relationship; when there are democratic ways of planning and doing; and when the children feel secure (Dalton, 1951 as cited in Brophy, J, 2004, p.14). When the atmosphere has been set, it will be easier for the teacher to see and identify the students' gifts, learning styles, participation in the learning, interaction between one another and the creativity during the learning process. It was important for the students to explore these things in a fun yet meaningful learning. Neal at al. (2004) as cited in O'Neil & Perez (2013) said that a fun learning could be found using games, but the game would be a good one when it helps the students to have the deeper understanding about the topic instead of just for fun (p. 337).

After looking for any kinds of games, relay race game is one of the games that are suitable to the students' condition in learning English about irregular verbs which was the topic that students were learning about. The relay race is interesting; the procedures are simple and can be modified and adjusted with the topic that the students were learning in the lesson (Filippin & Van Ours, 2012, pp. 4-5). In this lesson, the relay race could encourage the students to think and classify irregular verbs needed for the lesson they were learning. In



the relay race game, the students must play along in group to win the game. However, even though this game was played in a team, every student must be responsible in doing her or his part individually which is filling the blank column on the board without rely on other teammates' help (Richards, Barbisan, & Sandy, 2009, p. 189). The longer the first student answers the question, the longer the next students get their turn to do their part, meaning that the team will spend longer time to finish the game. Therefore, every student in the team must have a strategy whether about the speed in running to the board or the strategy in learning the word lists before playing the game. More than just planning for some strategies in playing the game, every student must be ready for his or her turn to go even since the first student starts to get his or her turn. They must be alert to the sign of the game start and to their friends' movement. Relay races are games where equal teams race to achieve a task. Relay races provide a good opportunity for teams to compete against each other. "Relay race games can be modified and be used for many different occasions" (Richards, Barbisan, & Sandy, 2009, p. 189). The relay race incorporates a combination of both individual tasks and teamwork based tasks. This way, students can work together and help each other to come up with the right answer, but it still allows individuals to practice their skills and what they have learned without always relying on the help from others. This activity tries to account for the various types of students' learning styles in the classroom as well. In the relay race game that is played in this topic, students in grade V are challenged to think in a more complex way which is being able to write V2, and V3 forms of each base word simultaneously on the board. However, the students would not just play the game for fun but it would also help the students to get the deeper understanding about the lesson. The students would understand the meaning and the difference between V1, V2, V3 forms.

Therefore, the researcher decided to use relay race game. By using the relay race game, it was expected that the purpose of the research which were to find out whether or not the relay race game could increase the students' motivation in learning English, not only as an individual student, but also as a team work and how each step of the game could be done consistently to make it effective.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method that was conducted by the researcher was Classroom Action Research (CAR). Wardhani & Wihardit, (2014, p. 4) stated that CAR is a research conducted by a teacher in his or her classroom through his or her own



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self-reflection that purposes to improve the work as a teacher so that the students' achievement improves. In this CAR, the researcher used Spiral model of action research by Kemmis and McTaggart. This model of action research however describes the action research steps in a circle of planning, action, observation, and reflection that are moving towards another circle of action research (Wiriaatmadja, 2009).

The research took place at a Christian Elementary School in Tangerang, Banten. The subject of the research was 13 students of grade 5C. The class consisted of 13 students, 6 boys and 7 girls. As the researcher observed, the students came from different background of economic, parenting style and life style yet they came from middle to high of socioeconomics background. The pre-cycle was on October 26nd & 28th 2015, Cycle I (2 sessions) was on November 2nd 2015 and Cycle II (2 sessions) was on November 5th 2015. The instruments used in this research were questionnaire, observation, reflective journal. Two teachers in the school where the researcher did the research and a lecturer at the researcher's college validated all the instruments. The data analysis technique using was triangulation. The data gathered using all instruments were analysed using descriptive statistical analysis. The results from each instrument, except the reflective journal were put into tables and descriptively analysed.

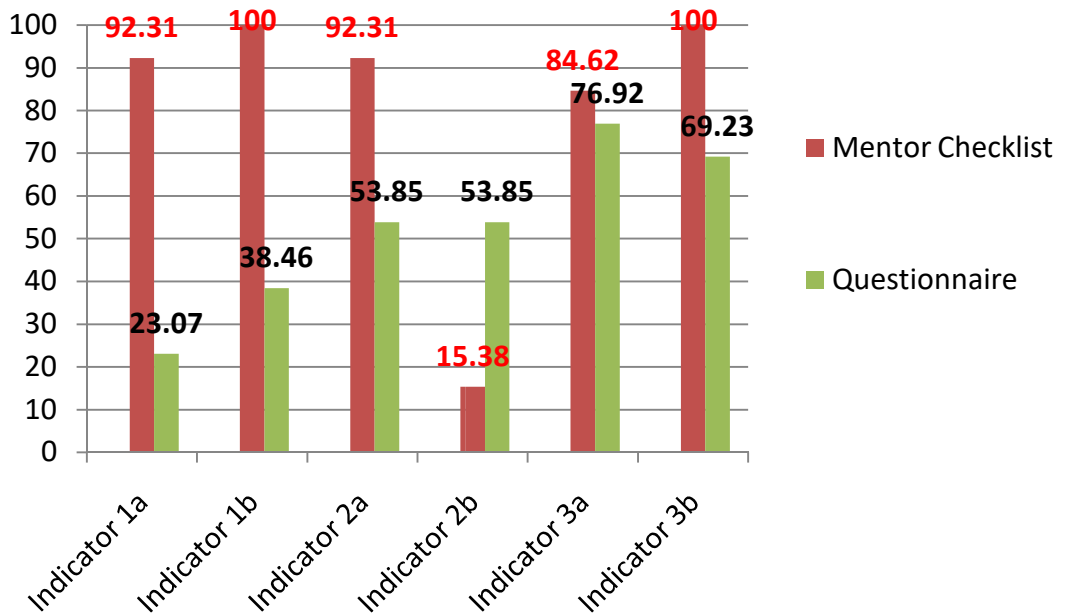
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In cycle 1, the achievement of the indicators that were expected by the researcher for the motivation in learning was not reached as the standard. The students did not show ability to do the task completely during the lesson; they could not finish the task by him and herself; they did not show interest towards the learning; and they did not show respect towards other. These meant that the students' motivation in learning was not optimally increased yet. However, in three instruments that were used by the researcher, it could be seen that the relay race game had been played according to the procedures, but it was still found that students did not show their motivation optimally increased. It was caused by many factors, such as the amount of time do the tasks was not enough; the game was quiet new for the students so it was still difficult for the students to do the procedures of the game well. It was like the theory which stated that motivation is not only about behavior, it was also related to cognition that was shown into action (Nakata, 2006, p. 25). Another cause was because of they did not have desire within to do things during the lesson.



Therefore, it was true the statement which said that the quality of experience and performance could be very different when one is behaving for intrinsic versus extrinsic reasons (Deci & Ryan, 2000, p.55). If students aren't motivated, it is difficult, if not impossible to improve their academic achievement, no matter how good the teacher, curriculum, or school are (Kober, 2012, p.2). The increasing can be seen as below:

Tabel 1. The increase of students' motivation in cycle 1



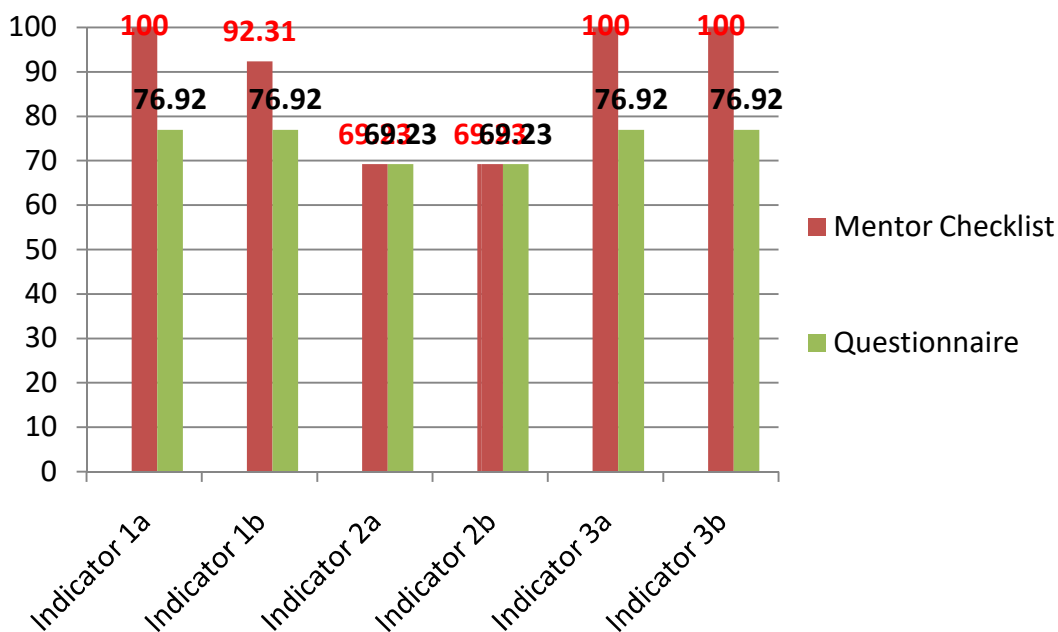
In cycle 2, the researcher learned from the weakness that was found during cycle 1. The researcher then tried to improve the way of the researcher in conducting the game by explaining the students once more about the procedures of the game and asked all students whether they understood. The researcher also directly asked some students who were often missed the procedures in cycle 1. The results that were gotten from the three instruments used by the researcher showed that the indicators of the students' motivation in learning were increased. The increasing of the motivation was because the students had been familiar with the game so they had more understanding about the game. After having good and deeper understanding about the game,



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the students' motivation in learning finally increased. Students became more engaged and committed to succeeding in the games, they become more willing to learn about the lesson (Quinn, 2011). Prensky (2011) also stated that the role of relay games in increasing motivation in learning is clearly shown because games give learners enjoyment and pleasure. The increasing can be seen as below:

Table 2. The increase of students' motivation in cycle



After analyzing the data from the instruments in both cycles, it was showed that the students' ability to complete the task increased; they were able to finish the task by him or herself; they could find the value and applied the what they learned from lesson in their daily lives; they felt enthusiastic and be more active during the lesson; they could work better in groups during the lesson; they felt respected by other friends during the lesson; and they could show respect towards friends during the lesson.

CONCLUSION



In this research, the researcher concluded that a relay race game could increase students' motivation in learning English. This conclusion is taken after the students achieved the optimal required standard of the motivation in learning. The optimal achievement standard of students' motivation can be seen in mentor's observation checklist, students' questionnaire, and in the researcher's reflective journal.

The students' motivation in learning English would increase if the procedures of the relay race game were delivered clearly to the students so the game could be implemented following the procedures as listed below.

1. Write two (or more, if you want more than two teams) columns of base verbs from the list on the board before class starts. The columns should be identical.
2. Divide the class into two (or more) teams.
3. Move desks and chairs out of the way.
4. Line students up facing the board.
5. When you yell "Go!", the first student from each team must run to the board and write the past form of any one verb next to the base form.
6. That student then races back and hands the marker or chalk to the next student in line. Continue until one team has all the verbs filled in.
7. Give each team one point for each correctly formed (and spelled) past verb (Richards, Barbisan, & Sandy, 2009, p. 189).

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Relay race games are effective games that can be used to increase students' motivation in learning English.
2. Relay race games' procedures must be followed punctually and consistently to make it effective.

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