ENABLING ACTIVITIES FACILITATING EFL STUDENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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Abstract

Teacher needs to think how to engage students to have participation in learning English. This article consists of brief about activities facilitating EFL students to participate in learning English. It is to identify and explain the activities: group work, song, chant, poem, finger plays, story telling on tablet PCs, using drama, project work, games and other activities outside of the classroom. These activities can be used by the teacher to help the students to engaged and encourage the students to study more about English.

Keywords : *teacher, classroom and outdoor activities, EFL students*

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Bustanto (2007) EFL students sometimes face difficulties in learning the language. Teachers recognize that their students are inattentive, restless, not engaged with learning activities in class, and not committed to doing work outside the classroom. Therefore, it is needed to engage our students to participate in learning English by doing some activities inside and outside the classroom.

Teacher has an important role here to make classroom more dynamic and attractive (Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment: 2007). The students will get bored when the teacher just doing lecture. The communication just in one way, only for teacher as a center of the learning process and the students' activity is not concerned. Here is the grid showing the role of the teacher in creating an active classroom environment *(North Ireland Curriculum:2007).*

From:	To:
Teacher-centred classroom	Learner-centred classroom
Product-centred learning	Process-centred learning

Teacher as a 'transmitter of knowledge'	Teacher as an organizer of knowledge
Teacher as a 'doer' for children	Teachers as an 'enabler', facilitating pupils in their learning
Subject-specific focus	Holistic learning focus

Many studies relate to language learning that follow their teacher using different activities in the classroom. For example, Franklin, (1990); Macaro, (1997); Dickson, (1996); Swain and Lapkin, (2000); Scott and de la Fuente, (2008) believe using L1 in the classroom in order to make teaching and learning in a natural context by applying positive learning strategy through activities.

Not only activities in the classroom but also the activities outside the classroom also can improve students' English skills (Shen,et.all :2005). Freeman (1999) suggested that teachers spend some time to ensure their students' use of time wisely, EFL students spend more time outside of the English classroom. So, teacher needs to think the kind of activities can be done to facilitate EFL

students to participate in learning. This paper will explain more about the kinds of activities facilitating EFL students to participate in learning.

1. Kinds of Activities
a. Group Work

Group work, one of the most important class activities for developing students' communicative ability, is gradually being applied to teach English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Group work refers to any classroom activity in which the whole class is divided up into pairs or larger groups. Research revealed that group work technique is helpful in TEFL classroom, since it contribute helping students get involved into various interaction types. According to Berens (2008) there are four types of interaction patterns:

1. Chart- the- Course

The theme is having a course of action to follow. People of this style focus on knowing what to do and keeping themselves, the group or the project on track. They prefer to enter situation having an idea of what is to happen. They identify a process to accomplish a goal and have a somewhat contained tension as they work to create and monitor a plan. The aim is not the plan itself, but to use it as a guide to move things along toward the goal. Their informed and deliberate decisions are based in analyzing, outlining, conceptualizing or foreseeing what needs to be done.

2. Behind-the- Scene

The theme is getting the result possible. People of this style focus on understanding and working with the process to create a positive outcome. They see value in many contributions and consult outside inputs to make an informed decisions. They aim to integrate various information sources and accommodate differing points of view. They approach others with a quiet, calm style that may not show their strong convictions. Producing, sustaining, defining, and clarifying are all ways they support a group process. They typically have

more patience than most with the time it takes to gain support through consensus for a project or to refine the result.

3. In-Charge

The theme is getting things accomplish through people. People of this style are focused on results, often taking action quickly. They often have a driving energy with an intention to lead a group to the goal. They make decisions quickly to keep themselves and others on task, on target and on time. They hate wasting of time and having to back track. Mentoring, executing actions, supervising, and mobilizing resources are all ways they get things accomplished. They notice right away what is not working in a situation and become painfully aware of what needs to be fixed, healed, or corrected.

4. Get-Things-Going

The theme is persuading and involving others. They thrive the facilitator or catalyst roles and aim to inspire others to move to action, facilitating the process. Their focus is on interaction, often with an expressive style. They Ger-Things-Going with upbeat energy, enthusiasm, or excitement, which can be contagious. Exploring options and possibilities, making preparation, discovering new ideas, and sharing insights are all ways they get people moving along. They want decisions to be participative and enthusiastic, with everyone involved and engaged.

Group work also supports a more conducive and cooperative class. Brown (1992) noted that „"group work provides a context in which individuals help each other; it is a method of helping groups as well as helping individuals; and it can enable individuals and groups to influence and change personal, group, organizational and community problems"". Group work could be classified into two types: heterogeneous grouping and homogenous grouping. Heterogeneous means grouping students of different ability levels together while homogenous grouping means grouping together students that are similar. Some

examples of Group Works are: TPS, Jigsaw, STAD.

b. Song, Chant, Poem

Many teachers like to use music and song in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. Good motivational tools, music and song are fun and relaxing, and they provide a class with variety and a break from textbook study. Particularly with younger learners, songs and chants are often used to teach new vocabulary in a nonthreatening, naturalistic manner. Murphey (1992) said that older students and advanced learners can analyze lyrics and explore a songwriter's language choice and usage, along with cultural elements such as social values, human relationships, spirituality, patriotism, and dissent. As Lorenzutti (2014) "Yet songs can be utilized in more variable and stimulating ways to challenge students to learn and think about language, and songs can provide opportunities for integrated skills practice as well as cultural and intercultural analysis"

Despite the rich potential of songs as authentic and stimulating texts, when it comes to designing a listening activity for a song, teachers tend to rely upon the Gap Fill as the sole activity: "Listen and fill in the blanks … listen again … check and move on to the next activity" is almost a mantra. It also the same for chant and poem that teacher can provide the Gap Fill. It will motivate students more to know more about vocabulary.

It's also the same for chant and poem, the teacher can provide fill the blanks then the student fill the gap with the appropriate word. Example : fill the blanks with the appropriate word in the box below :

Is	you	are

roses ….. red
The violet …blue
and so are …

c. Finger Plays

According to Shin (2014) Finger Plays is using the part of the body to sing (TPR), means while singing the students touch their pair of the body. Example: head & shoulder, knees and toes song. While the learners say "head" they will touch of their heads, as well as for their shoulders, knees and toes.

The young learners will like this activity because they can memorize the words by singing and touch of their bodies. It will make class more active. The students will have more fun and It will decrease their anxiety and they will know more about vocabulary. The weakness of this activity is that not all the activities in English can be made in singing and use the part of the body as the learning media.

d. Storytelling

Shin (2014) said that Children love stories! It gives the rationale for using stories as a meaningful context in which new language can be taught and as a source for cultural content. Demonstrations of storytelling techniques and activities for young learners will be given in order to show participants how to integrate skills and teach vocabulary and grammar in fun and interesting contexts.

This activity will practice students' listening comprehension and speaking skill. The learners listen to the story and practice their understanding about what they hear. After that the learners tell their other friends about what they have heard. For example: the students will hear the story ad retell the story in their own words without misleading the content of the story.

Not just the storytelling, but to hear the story itself from their parents the little girl or boy love to hear the story before going to bed. They will listen careful and hear the sound and formulate it in their mind for what sound they heard. The children can do this both. After hearing the story in the evening and the next morning when they get up and go outside the house, they will meet their friends and tell them about the story they heard last night.

e. Storytelling on Tablet PCs

This activity is combination between storytelling with drawing. The learners are in charge to determine the narration of the story.

It's really fun for learners because it will increase their creativity. Here is the example of storytelling by tablet PCs by:

Step 1
Figure 1

The students provide the platform. It's like a Microsoft Draw.

Figure 2

The text below the drawing is verbatim transcription of student's voice narration. The focus was that the audio comic books were totally created by participants themselves. In other words, participants were in charge of their stories and participants played both roles such as screenplay and director. To sum up, the storytelling platform is designed to foster and encourage playful narrative activity and help students enjoy the creation and telling of stories with digital elements.
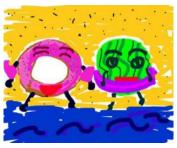
No.1

B&H: Hello.
B: Hello everybody, my name is Becky. I am a donut. This is my friend.
B: Happy, say hello.
H: Hello, my name is Happy. I am a watermelon.

No.2

B: Wow! Happy, you see. We are at the beach.
H: Yes. I am like a beach.
B: Were you at the beach last week?
H: No, I wasn't.
B: Where were you last week?
H: I was by the sea.
B: Oh.

No.3

H: Hi, Lucky (Becky), were you at the beach last week?
B: No, I wasn't.
H: Where were you last week?
B: I was by the lake.
H: Why?
B: Because I can go fishing.
H: Oh.

No.4

(narration) In the afternoon, Happy and Becky go home.
B: It is nine o'clock pm.
H: Oh yes. Becky good bye.
B&H: Good bye.

Before conducting the digital storytelling, the teacher introduced the interface and operation of storytelling platform. Then the teacher introduced the process of how to create English. The process begins with topic selection and the narration process (Ohler :2008).

Here are the steps to conduct the story telling by tablet Pcs:

a. Select topic: Participants are free to select the story topic that they want to share. In particular, participants are encouraged to create stories about their real life situations and experience. For participants who have no ideas of selecting a topic, they may use the similar topic of text book.

b. Write a Script: every participant needs to develop a story line and write out a script. Hence, when writing the script, they will have to bear in mind that they are writing a text to be read out loud. For participants who do not know how to develop the story line, they are allowed to copy and edit the lessons story that they just learned. In other words, they can modify the characters, dialogues and story line according to the lesson story. Besides, in order to enable participants to practice what they learned in the previous two weeks, participants are asked to implement at least four words and two sentence patterns from the lesson. Hence, participants can practically practice and apply their English competency they learned during the storytelling creation process. In addition to written script, participants have to add drawing and painting in their story. However, they are advised to focus on the how to give their meaning across with the oral narratives instead of drawing and painting.

c. Record: With ipad and platform, participants record their oral narratives with microphone.

d. Listen: Participants listen to their narrative, and redo either the script or the recording if necessary.

Review: Participants evaluate their created stories by themselves. If they are not satisfied with their stories, they need to revise their process to refine their stories. If yes, they can upload and share their artifacts on the website. The self-evaluation can be taken as a good opportunity to demand from participants a thorough review of spoken and written discourse features.

Although this activity fun and increase the students' creativity also improve their writing and reading skill, the students can more busy in drawing the picture. So, it is needed a time management by the teacher. Further, it will be difficult for the students who live in rural area.

e. Using Drama

According to Zyoud:2014 Drama is an appealing teaching strategy which promotes cooperation, collaboration, self-control, goal-oriented learning as well as emotional intelligence skills Drama bridges the gap between course-book dialogues and natural usage, and can also help to bridge a similar gap between the classroom and real life situations by providing insights into how to handle tricky situations. It is true to say that drama strengthens the bond between thought and expression in language, provides practice of supra-segmental and Para-language, and offers good listening practice. If drama is considered as a teaching method in the sense of being part of the eclectic approach to language teaching, then it can become a main aid in the acquisition of communicative competence. Drama activities facilitate the type of language behaviour that should lead to fluency, and if it is accepted that the learners want to learn a language in order to make themselves understood in the target language, then drama does indeed further this end.

One of the greatest advantages to be gained from the use of drama is that students become more confident in their use of English by experiencing the language in operation. Drama in the English language classroom is ultimately indispensable because it gives

learners the chance to use their own personalities. It draws upon students' natural abilities to imitate and express themselves, and if well-handled should arouse interest and imagination.

Drama encourages adaptability, fluency, and communicative competence. It puts language into context, and by giving learners experience of success in real-life situations it should arm them with confidence for tackling the world outside the classroom. The example of drama is comedy drama, tragedy drama and romantic drama.

f. Project Work

Project work in second and foreign language instruction has perceived benefits related to the notion of usability given to the target language in students' lives. Fried-Booth (1993:7) considers that this methodology can help students find the usefulness of English in diverse contexts, and reports that it "helps to bridge the gap between language study and language use". Project work has also been linked to encouraging meaningful learning as students can learn about topics of interest to them. In addition, students can participate in real-world activities beyond the classroom (Intel Corporation, 2006) such as: exploring topics of interest, gathering and sharing information, and working collaboratively in groups, which are all recognized as stages of project work. The project is theirs. They themselves decide (in consultation with the teacher) what they will do and how they will do it, and this includes not only the content of the project, but also the language requirements.

The collaborative nature of project work is well recognized in educational paradigms where students construct learning together. Law and Eckes (2000), report that students can become more responsible and autonomous while engaging in cooperative work, as opposed to working alone. They perceive that learning involves sharing, discussing concerns, and reflecting on what we learn, which leads to new knowledge. It is notable that students build new knowledge based on the prior knowledge that they have.

Scaffolding that is a concept that can help teachers and students work more successfully during project work. Lipscomb, Swanson, and West (2004) define the term 'scaffolding' as "the type of assistance offered by a teacher or peer to support learning." One important characteristic of scaffolding is the teacher as an expert model (Lipscomb, Swanson, and West, 2004) demonstrating what students are expected to do. In other words, students can observe the teacher modeling the activity and then imitate the teacher and model the scaffold, which can be directed towards students' language development at the grammar level, sentence level, etc. This instructional support enables students to become slightly more independent and capable of completing the tasks by themselves without the aid of the teacher, this being the principal goal of the scaffolding process.

The project work needs time and energy. It will influence physically and mentally process for the learner. It needs a good communication and understanding between the teacher and the students. So, they goal of the project can be succeed. The example of project work is the students are given some chances to discover the problem and solve by themselves and still assisting by the teacher to achieve the goal. E.g: An Art students are asked by their lecturer to make a poster with the comments on it that it relates to social issue; to make puppets as a tool in learning , or sculpture with different themes.

g. Games

Games are also seen as a time-filling activity in most English classrooms. It is believed that games are just for fun and they have very little effect in teaching and learning (Azhar:2012). According to his finding games bring in relaxation and fun for students, thus help them learn and retain new words more easily. Second, games usually involve friendly competition and they keep learners interested. These create the motivation for learners of English to get involved and participate actively in the learning activities. Third, vocabulary

games bring real world context into the classroom, and enhance students' use of English in a flexible, communicative way.

Therefore, the role of games in teaching and learning vocabulary cannot be denied. However, in order to achieve the most from vocabulary games, it is essential that suitable games are chosen. Whenever a game is to be conducted, the number of students, proficiency level, cultural context, timing, learning topic, and the classroom settings are factors that should be taken into account.

Using games in the classroom sometimes fails due to the lack of cooperation among members of the class. Games require all students' involvement; therefore, it is very important that students have a cooperative attitude. It is hoped that this activity is conducted by concern on the goal of the subject not playing while learning, but playing to learn. For example: puzzle, scrabble, hide and seek.

h.   Other Activities Outside of the Classroom

Benson (2001) classified out-of-class learning into three categories:

1. self-instruction. For example: students' locating resources to help them improve the target language.
2. naturalistic language learning for example: students' learning to communicate and interact with the target language group unintentionally.
3. self-directed naturalistic language learning, for example students' creating or searching out a language learning situation.

Pickard (1996) indicated that listening to the radio, reading newspapers, and novels outside of the classroom appear to rank highest in students' learning activities; however, students made little use of the facilities in out-of-class English learning, such as English newspapers, satellite TV, and self-study materials in the library. However, some leisure activities are useful in the development of students' English conversation skills. They advised ESL instructors to help students identify appropriate leisure activities and provide sufficient guidance to students to prevent the fossilization of bad language habits. Moreover, both Pickard (1996) and Yap (1998) agreed that students tend to choose activities involving receptive skills, such as reading and listening, rather than the productive skills, such as speaking and writing. Spratt, Humphreys, and Chan (2002) discovered that most activities adult learners engaged in are related to communication and entertainment, such as watching movies and television in English and using the internet.

Additionally, Hyland (2004) noted that the activities students do in English are speaking with family members, talking to people in the stores, talking on the phone, speaking with friends, listening to the radio, attending meetings, reading novels, speaking with colleagues, listening to songs, reading newspapers and magazines, watching TV programs, watching videos, surfing the internet, reading academic books, and writing e-mails in ranking order.

The difficulties will be faced by the learners if their environment doesn't support them, like their parents and their friends don't speak English. No English program from TV or radio, also if there is English newspaper, even no internet. Furthermore, the productive skills cannot be practiced because no one to talk to in English and no one can understand for the learners' writing.

CONCLUSION

There are some activities that teacher can do to facilitate EFL students to engage them in learning process. Teacher can give some classroom activities even outside activities in other to the EFL students more familiar with English. They can be used as group as well as individual activities. Not only cognitive aspect but psychomotor and interpersonal skills will be used by the students during the activities.

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