

## THE USE OF PLAYING MAGIC TRICKS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

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### ABSTRACT

Playing Magic Tricks is a 'real life' activity which can be integrated and brought into the classroom. It has sometimes been defined as a natural language activity in which the students are involved in the teaching and learning process. That is one way of being entertaining to motivate the students to speak and pay attention to the teacher. It can take place everywhere and at any time. Most children and adults like playing magic. This is mainly because they regard playing magic tricks as communicative games. The writer does agree that it was also stated that one of the most characteristic features of communicative language teaching is that it pays systematic attention to functional activities. (Richard. 1986:66)

**Key words: entertaining, educating, advice, suggestion, creativity, motivation, discussion**

#### *Reasons for playing magic tricks in English Lessons:*

1. Adding variety not only to the learning process but also to the students' experience of learning English. It is welcome
2. Being fun and interesting. It is like playing language games or doing crossword puzzles in that it offers enjoyable and interesting language practice.
3. Giving motivation since it is a student-centered activity.
4. Promoting maximum participation as it involves the whole class. Reinforcement of language taught and learned in class. It provides valuable
5. Being a useful and positive aid in the learning of vocabulary, and help learning.
6. Helping to consolidate the teacher's teaching in an interesting manner.
7. Making the students creative, smart and intelligent
8. Motivating the students to speak
9. Encouraging the students curiosity and response

#### *The need for specially playing magic tricks:*

Not all magic tricks can be played for the students because of certain inappropriate features of magic. We have to discriminate the kind of magic tricks whether they are dangerous or not.

#### *Criteria for choosing magic:*

Choose magic trick which have story- line, describing something or making something appear and disappear can motivate the students to respond and wonder.

*When to use magic tricks and how to present and practice them:*

The use of magic tricks inside outside the classroom is basically concerned with the skill of listening and speaking, both intensive and extensive. However, other skills such as listening, reading, and writing can also be practiced.

***Follow up activities:***

1. Playing magic tricks can be used as a discussion how it happens, how it works, where it is from, how it appears and disappears, etc.
2. A lot of discussion can often arise.
3. Magic tricks can be used receptively for listening comprehension and prediction skills for listening practice.
4. Magic tricks can be used actively for speaking, such as asking the students to respond.

**Introduction**

A very long time ago, before pyramid was built, magic was supposed to be a piece of a nice art in Egypt and magic came from this country. When the human beings were able to fly to the moon and the progress of technology is amazing, nowadays, people believe that nothing is impossible. Something miracle is merely from the result of the technology progress.

A magic trick creates an uncommon effect and can drive beyond its environment. Thousand years ago, the conjurer was supposed to be the powerful man. But nowadays, one of the goals of magic is to entertain with various tools. With different kinds of equipments, the conjurer is able to make a little thing mysterious, but where it is really from?. The magic trick which was played by the conjurer was actually often played since pre-historic from generation to generation.

In 1823, an archeologist, Henry Westcar found a scroll in Egypt, a scroll told about the conjurer of the Khufu Kingdom. Firaun Egypt who built Gizeh Pyramid, about 4000 years ago. One of the magic tricks who had ever practiced the magic tricks on the goose's head chopped off then it could be alive after the body's goose and the head were attached.

In 1350, Marco Polo came to see the magic tricks in China. This news spread all over the world and the magic tricks began to perform everywhere all corners of the world. In 1584 Reginald Scot, a local judge, wrote a book on the detailed magic tricks explaining the methods of magic tricks. This was the first magic tricks history. By doing so, Reginald Scot succeeded to differentiate between the magic tricks and the black magic.

In the beginning of 18 century Issacc Fawkes held an art performance in London. The art performance of magic was aimed at the high social stratification for some certain purposes. Fawkes and the other magicians succeeded to promote the magic on the performance arts. Gustavus Katterfelto and Philip Berslaw were Prussian and German. The magic began to grow up in the Eastern and the Western Countries.

Modern magic performance on a stage became popular in the early 1700. Pinetti, Balsamo (The Great Cagliastro). Pilferer and Decremps put a strong foundation magic in order to be followed by the other magicians. Just at that moment, these magicians were more famous than that of the pioneers. The famous magicians were Robert Houdini, Hermann, Maskelyne, Kellar, Maskelyne, Kellar, Thurston, Houdini, Nelson Downs, Malini, Frakson, Amedeo, Jarrow, Dante, Flosso, Keating, Ducrot, Drny, Dunninger and Black-stone.

## Definition of Magic

These days, lots of people have misunderstood against the magic tricks. Magic tricks are one of art performances in which people all over the world are interested in. Magic tricks presentation can make people amazed. Magic trick is the blend of the existing arts, such as, dance, music, painting, etc. The blends of these existing arts are into the others, such as, physics, biology, chemistry, psychology and the like. Magic art performances are not secret mystical or magical practices of questionable nature because these magic tricks can be explained. Magic is just a sleight of hand, manipulation, a work of equipment or an effect of chemical work. One can train magic tricks as well as possible before having entertainment in front of the public. Therefore, magic tricks can be learnt by anyone for those who want to practice well. **Forexample**, magic tricks of Cups and Ball. Cups and balls is often supposed to be one of the oldest magic tricks. Egyptologist or anthropologists of Egypt wrote on cemetery wall of Beni Hasan about 2200 – 2500 BC. This painting described the two people who were playing with two cups. It showed that this game was the oldest magic trick. Lots of various tricks can be shown such as a ball can move from one cup to another one, and it can appear and disappear in a mysterious way according to the magician's way. This trick is often completed with the appearing big things under the cup. It sometimes appears a chick or a mouse. Charles, the princes, became one of the magicians associations, the Magic Circle in London in 1975.

## How to astonish the students

The success of the ideas in this paper depends on several things: your creativity, your imagination, your personality, the personality of the other person (students), the occasion and the place where the students are. The writer hopes that you will find some interesting and useful ideas in this paper.

## Magic Tricks

If you like, we can do tricks indoors or outdoors. The best time to entertain students with tricks is when they are not expecting it. The writer is sure you know those times when you ask the students to practice English outside the classroom or to do outdoor activities for the morning, afternoon, perhaps to an interesting place which is suitable for learning English, or when every student wants a bit of fun but nothing really happens. That is the moment to start one of these tricks. You don't have to need any special materials for these tricks, nor will you need to practice them very much.

### 1. Cups and Balls

### 2. Money

### 3. Ropes

### 4. Reading Menu

### 5. Pan produces a bowl of 'bakso'

### 6. Balloon to Bird

- 7. Balloon changes its color**
- 8. Coin and a Piece of Paper**
- 9. Coin and two saucers**
- 10. Trick with coin.**
- 11. Balloon changes its color**
- 12. Universal bag**
- 13. Tea to Water**

### **1. Cups and Balls**

Prepare three cups and three balls. Let the students know that you put the balls through the cup one after the other. The ball can jump and move from one place to another. The ball can change its color. While the teacher is playing this game, he can ask the students some questions which have something to do with these cups and balls, for example, how many balls are there in the cup? What color is it? Is the ball in the cup? Where is the ball? Does the ball disappear? Does the ball appear? These questions can be used by the students and the teacher.

### **2. Paper to Money**

**(To make money becomes multiplied)**

The teacher borrows student's money (Rp.1000 or Rp.2000). The teacher puts Rp.1000,- inside the palm of the hands. Then in a few seconds, Rp.1000 becomes multiplied. While the teacher is doing these tricks, he can speak English and asks the students to respond. Can I borrow your money? How much money does he / she have? How much money do I have? Does One Thousand rupiahs become multiplied, Etc. These questions can be used by the students and the teacher.

### **3. Ropes**

There are three red, blue, yellow ropes. The teacher let the students know that the three ropes are separated. Then, the teacher makes a rope become a ring. So, there are three ropes in the form of rings. After that the teacher throws them into the air. As soon as the teacher throws them, they become intertwined. While doing this trick, the teacher can explain and tell the students that people should live in harmony and act with one another in a spirit of brotherhood, without discriminating against ethnic, religious, and racial relation.

### **4. Reading Menu ( a list of dishes in a meal or to be ordered as separate meal )**

A teacher asks the student to choose which meal they want to, and make a group of two or four (each group may write it on a piece of paper without being known by the teacher).

A Group of Menu:

- \* - Pangsit goreng
- Kuah bayam
- Kangkung Hot Plate
- Telur Balado

- Nasi Goreng
  - Sate Kambing
  - Udang Goreng Mentega
  - Udang Goreng Tepung
  - Opor Daging
  - Gado-Gado
- \* - Lontong Cap Go Meh
- Gudeg
  - Nasi Rawon
  - Gurame Kuah
  - Soup Kambing
  - Nasi Ulam
  - Udang Pepes
  - Rendang
  - Soto Ayam
  - Bakso Goreng
- \* - Udang Saos Padang
- Semur Ayam
  - Tahu Goreng Isi
  - Bihun Goreng
  - Pete Bakar
  - Nasi Campur
  - Ayam Rica-Rica
  - Cap Cay Goreng
  - Bakso Ayam Kuah
  - Hati Sapi Cah Brokoli
- \* **Etc.**

They can discuss and communicate by using the following questions in each group:

- What is your favorite food?
- What would you like to eat?
- Do you like to eat ...
- Why do you like it?
- Etc.

After the students discuss the menu they like, they write it on a separate piece of paper. In order that the teacher can guess the students favorite meal, he uses interrogative questions but the students just answer: yes or no. They do not tell the menu they have written on separate piece of paper. This activity can also be carried out by one of the students as the magician.

After a few minutes, the teacher can guess what meals he has just written on the paper.

### **5. Pan produces a bowl of Bakso (meat ball)**

The teacher puts a pan on the table. He opens the pan. Then, he lets the students see that the pan is empty as well as the cover of the pan. He sets fire in the pan by using tissue. He immediately closes the pan with the cover. Then, he opens the pan, and lets the students see that there is a bowl of bakso inside the pan. While the teacher is doing this trick, he can communicate with the students by using the following questions:

- What am I doing?
- What will happen?
- What am I carrying?
- What am I eating?
- Do you like it?
- Why do you like?
- Etc.

The student can ask some questions by using the following questions:

- What is he doing?
- What will happen?
- What is he carrying?
- What is he eating?
- Does he like it?
- Why does he like it?
- Etc.

### **6. Balloon to Dove**

The teacher brings balloon in front of the students. He lets a balloon blow up, all of a sudden; a bird appears and flies out of the balloon. While the bird is flying, he is asking the students: Where is the bird flying? What is this bird's name? Have you ever seen this kind of bird? Will this bird become extinct? What will you do?

### **7. Balloon changes its color**

The teacher brings a red balloon in front of the students. He makes a red balloon blow up, all of a sudden; this red balloon changes its color. It becomes the white one. While the teacher is doing this trick, the teacher asks the students by the following questions

- Where does the white balloon come from?
- Where is the red balloon going? Is the red balloon inside the box?
- What is the meaning of red?
- What is the meaning of white?
- Which country has the same flag color with Indonesia?

After doing this activity, the teacher takes the red balloon in the box, then he makes the red balloon blow up again, then suddenly, it appears the red and white cloths.

### **8. Coin and a Piece of Paper (interesting Total Physical Response)**

Put the coin under the piece of paper and say, 'I am going to pick up the coin but I am not going to pick up the piece of paper!'

Point all your fingers at the paper and say, 'Bim Salabim Abra Kadabra! Then ask someone to help you. Say to them,' Have a look! And point at the paper. They will probably pick up the paper or at least, raise it a little. Pick up the coin, and say, 'I pick up the coin but I didn't pick up the paper!.

### **9. Coin and two Saucers**

Turn the saucers upside down. Put the coin beneath one of the saucers. Say to your friends, ; I am going to make the coin go from beneath that saucer to beneath that saucer. 'Hold out your hands and make them shake as if magic is coming out of them. Point them at the saucer with the coin beneath it. Then move your hands across to the other saucer.

Look under the other saucer and show astonishment that the coin is not there! Look under the first saucer and see the coin. Frown! Do the magic again. And once more, find that the coin hasn't moved. Do the magic again. But this time, when you pick up the second saucer to see if the coin has arrived don't let other people see!

Show relief and triumph as if it has arrived and then say, with triumph, Yes , and add with great seriousness, Now, ladies and gentlemen, for the first time in ... I am going to make it go back again'

Rapidly, do your magic action as everyone laughs and then lift the first saucer and find the coin. Hold it up, and shout,' I've done it' (Wright. 1986: 3-4)

### **10. Tricks with coins.**

Say to one of your friends, 'I am going to put this coin where everybody can see it except you' put it on his or her head.

#### **A coin, a handkerchief and a student**

Put the coin on your palm. Cover the coin with the handkerchief. Ask several students to put their hand beneath the handkerchief and feel the coin, to make sure that it is still there. Then take the corner of the handkerchief and pull it rapidly off your hand. The coin has gone! How? You must make sure the last student knows the tricks! Your last student removes the coin when he or she seems to be just feeling it. And nobody knows where it has gone!

### **11. Balloon changes its color**

A teacher flies a blue balloon. As soon as the blue balloon is flying, the teacher catches it, then immediately its color can turn blue.

### **12. Universal Bag**

The teacher puts a universal bag on the table. He opens the universal bag to show the students if there are not any items inside the universal bag. After being checked by the students if there are not any items inside, the teacher asks the students to predict what items there are in the bag and what will happen next. Before predicting the items, the students ask the teacher some questions. Here are the following questions the students use:

- Do you have some bread inside the bag?
- Do you have some money?

- Is there an egg?
- Is there a doll?
- Is there a bird?
- Etc.

The teacher may answer yes or no, and explain it if it is necessary by describing the items which are inside the universal bag. If the students' prediction is wrong, the teacher can make a hint. In order that their answer is right, the teacher can describe this item.

(A universal bag is a mysterious bag which can produce and carry some different items, such as a hand phone, some candies, a rabbit, a pencil case, some fruits, etc.)  
The universal bag can be opened outside and inside to make sure if there are not any items.

### **13. Tea to Water**

Before doing this trick, the teacher puts a glass of tea on the table. He lets the students see that the glass is full of tea. Then, the teacher asks one of the students:

Example: Which one do you like better, tea or water?

I like water better than tea.

While the student answers this question, the teacher closes a glass of tea with a piece of paper in a minute. Then, he opens the paper; and lets the students know that a glass of tea turns a glass of water. A glass of water is gone.

### **CONCLUSION**

The writer would like to conclude that teaching is an art. That is one way of being entertaining to motivate the students to speak, to communicate, to feel curious to respond and to pay attention to the teacher. Doing magic tricks is one of the efforts to avoid the teaching and learning process monotonous and boring. It is regarded that playing magic tricks is as communicative games. It is not only communicative games but also it includes something knowledgeable, scientific, because it is the blend of the existing arts, such as, dance, music, painting, physics, biology, chemistry, psychology and the like. Last but not least, the writer feels happy and self-confident to write this simple paper to contribute something useful and creative for the teacher and the readers. The writer realizes that no one is perfect, and criticism is easier than creating. He would like to open his doors to a sweet advice and to appreciate your thought and creativity.

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