
A NARRATIVE ANALYSIS OF AN ENGLISH TEACHER'S EXPERIENCE IN USING PREZI PRESENTATION SOFTWARE IN TEACHING VOCABULARY

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Abstract

This research investigates the use of Prezi Presentation Software incorporated by an English teacher in teaching vocabulary at elementary school level. The narrative inquiry was chosen as the research design to uncover the story of the English teacher's experience in using Prezi Presentation Software, and the students' perception towards the use of Prezi. The results of the study indicate that: 1) the reason why the teacher uses Prezi is its simplicity, interesting lay-out, and effectiveness, 2) the problem encountered by the teacher in using Prezi mainly was limited ICT facility, 3) preparing teaching materials must be done before using Prezi, and 4) students showed positive attitude towards Prezi by admitting that Prezi eased them to learn vocabulary, increased their motivation, and made vocabulary learning more enjoyable. The implication of this research is intended to contribute toward the improvement of ICT-based media integration in teaching English, especially teaching vocabulary.

Keywords: narrative research design, technology, presentation software, Prezi, teaching vocabulary, teacher's experiences.

1. Introduction

Vocabulary mastery is essential in the way students learn any language including English. As one of the language components, in addition to grammar and pronunciation, vocabulary is necessary for language mastery (Cahyono & Widiati, 2008). The students must know at least some common, useful and important vocabulary to be able to speak English fluently and accurately. Indeed, the better English proficiency will be achieved when the students have good vocabulary mastery. However, most of the students often find themselves frustrating in learning vocabulary since perhaps the teacher still use conventional technique like asking them to memorize vocabulary as much as possible. Asking students to memorize is not a bad technique, but more than that, the teachers should be more creative in setting vocabulary teaching and learning process to make the students experience such an enjoyable atmosphere in learning vocabulary.

There are some techniques that the teacher can accommodate in setting creative vocabulary teaching and learning. Scott and Ytreberg (1990: 5-6) suggest that the

teachers should conduct some activities which include movement and involve sense. Besides, the teacher can make the classroom more dynamic by playing with the language e.g. making up rhymes, singing songs, or telling stories. The teachers can also give variety in the classroom e.g. variety in activity, pace, organization, or voice. By doing those techniques, vocabulary teaching and learning will be more fruitful and meaningful.

Within the rapid development of digital technology, the teachers are now surrounded with plenty of innovative tools which can be combined with some particular techniques to set a creative vocabulary teaching and learning; one of the options is Prezi presentation software. According to Manning et.al (2011) Prezi is an interactive and visually pleasing tool that uses zooming and spatial relationships to present information. It is an internet-based presentation software that allows the users to store their presentations online (Strasser, 2014). Prezi has some innovative features such as interesting templates, zooming, storing the presentation online, allowing others to see and edit someone's presentation, and etc. In the case of teaching vocabulary, Prezi will ease the teachers in appealing the students' interest. The vocabulary presented can also be clearly seen by zooming features, so that it will be easier to recall. Some videos or pictures also can be inserted in Prezi and thus the students will learn vocabulary with pleasure.

Based on the real fact found from the field, the English teacher of one of the elementary schools in Surakarta, Central Java, has occasionally used Prezi in teaching English. With a narrative inquiry we want to uncover the English teacher's story when using Prezi in teaching English, especially vocabulary, and the students' perception towards the use of Prezi. The narrative inquiry will provide a comprehensive story of why and how the teacher incorporated Prezi into vocabulary teaching and learning, and how the students perceive learning vocabulary by using Prezi.

Defining the terminologies exist in this research will make this research clearly be understood. Afterwards, another essential reason defining some terms is to avoid a misleading. As the importance of giving the clear definition toward every terminology used in this research, we have reviewed some literatures to define all of those.

1.1. Narrative Research

In qualitative research there are several designs which are provided. One of those designs is narrative design. The term narrative comes from the verb "to narrate" or "to tell (as a story) in detail" (Ehrlich, Flexner, Carruth, & Hawkins, 1980). Afterwards, to be able to tell something, the narrators or the story tellers should understand clearly what they are going to tell about. By listening to the story told by the narrators, the audience can grab the point of the story. The more the story tellers understand the content of the story, the easier the audience grab the point of the story. Put simply, the content of the narration can be sourced from the experience of the subject.

Narrative research uses narration to interpret the data got from the subject. The researchers describe the lives of individuals, collect and tell stories about people's lives, and write narratives of individual experiences (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). The researchers of the narrative research tend to tell stories of certain thing based on the data

received. It means that the narration that is written by the researchers is based on what the subject told them.

In narrative design, when a researcher wants to reveal how a student studies at home, for instance, he can use an open ended interview to make the student narrates how he studies at home. In order to get a clearer information, the researcher can interview his parents. After getting all of the data needed, the researcher begins to interpret all of those using a narration technique.

1.2.The Nature of Vocabulary

In learning language, there are several aspects that should be considered. Those aspects involve four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). In order to be able to master all of those aspects, at the same time, a learner should be able to master the language components including grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Dealing with the focus of this research, vocabulary plays important roles in the way students learn language. Asbeck (2012, p.6) defined vocabulary as “having knowledge of words and word meanings.” Al-Hammad (2009) defined vocabulary as “the body of words used in a particular language.” It can be simply defined that vocabulary is the words and all of those meanings in a certain language.

As a foreign language learner, mastering vocabulary as much as possible will give numerous advantages. When the learners are studying how to write, for instance, they should know at least some common vocabulary as a medium to deliver their ideas. This phenomenon also happens in the speaking activity. Before speaking, the speakers should know some vocabulary to convey their ideas. From those examples, it can be concluded that vocabulary is one of the important foundations to master a certain language.

1.3.Teaching Vocabulary

In a teaching learning activity, there must be several materials that are taught. Those materials become the content of the certain subject. In an English teaching learning activity, for instance, the students are taught how to understand the content of the texts, how to write in a good way, and how to speak in a proper way. The teachers can use certain texts to teach reading, or videos to teach speaking. However, at the very first phase of language learning, teaching vocabulary is very crucial.

In the elementary school level, the teachers usually start teaching foreign language by inviting the students to understand the meaning of vocabulary. Put simply, teaching vocabulary deals with how the teachers make the students memorize the certain amount of words and their meaning. In this activity, the teachers introduce some words and their meaning as well. The students' task is to memorize them, and then understand the use of those words. There are several ways of teaching vocabulary, but the one that is most done by the teachers is by repeatedly pronouncing and writing the words to familiarize the students with either the correct pronunciation or spelling.

1.4. Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

The development of technology makes the use of a computer essential. The computer is largely used not only in industry but also education. Computer assisted language learning (CALL) involves the use of technology in the form of computers, and a transformation process in the institution where the implementation actually takes place. Therefore, CALL should be perceived as an interdisciplinary issue (Levy, 1997) entailing strategies for managing the change alongside the knowledge of the use of computers for educational purposes, and language teaching methodologies.

Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) is one of computer system which is used on language learning (Levy, 1977). Cushion (2006) gives one clear example of how CALL is being studied and developed mainly as a subset of computing science, rather than from the point of view of a second language methodological approach. He argues that CALL can be reviewed as a subset of computer software engineering. According to his theory, CALL can profit from adapting some of the recent progress in software development theory.

McAvinia (2006) distinguished between CALLers and learning technologists. The lecturers, teachers, developers and researchers working within CALL may be called CALLers. Learning technologists are a group within higher education systems who support the implementation of a virtual learning environment (the word 'support' in this context refers to technical issues, training, pedagogical approaches, etc.)

1.5. Prezi Presentation Software

In the teaching and learning activity, the teachers must deliver their materials to the students. In this case, the teachers' role is the presenter, and they can maximize presentation software to ease them in presenting the materials. Presentation software can be used to make the presentation more effective, efficient, and interesting.

There are many kinds of presentation software such as PowerPoint presentation, Mind Jet manager, and Prezi Presentation. If we want to make a more modern and dynamic presentation, Prezi is the option. Prezi is a cloud-based *presentation software* based on a software as a service model (Wikipedia). This software can be used with or without internet connection. There are two types of Prezi. The first is the desktop version and the second is online version. In the desktop version the user can create and save his or her job without internet connection. In this version, the user should download the master of the software before it can be used. In the online version, however, the user can only use this software while his or her computer is connected to internet. In this version, the user does not have to download the master of this software. More technically, before using this software, the user should create an account in the Prezi database.

1.6. Previous Study

There are two researches related with this research. The first is the research entitled *Using Prezi Presentation Software to Enhance Vocabulary Learning of EFL Secondary School Students* conducted by Wafaa Muhammad Ali Aljehani. The second is the research

entitled *Using Prezi in Higher Education* conducted by Nora Strasser. By giving those two researches, it will give an understanding that this research is an original one. It will be provided the similarity and difference between this research and those two researches. Afterwards, it will be given the result of those two previous studies as well.

The research entitled *Using Prezi Presentation Software to Enhance Vocabulary Learning of EFL Secondary School Students* conducted by Wafaa Muhammad Ali Aljehani, the researcher analyzed the use of Prezi and its effect toward vocabulary as the targeted skill which are similar with this research. Aljehani conducted his research using quantitative research in second secondary school in Saudi Arabia. Meanwhile, in this research, the researcher conducted the research using qualitative research in the elementary school in Indonesia. In the conclusion part, Aljehani stated two results. The first is that the effectiveness of using Prezi Presentation Software was evident in the improvement of the Saudi EFL second secondary school students' vocabulary learning. The second result is that the use of Prezi Presentation Software in teaching vocabulary improved student's vocabulary and it seems that Prezi is a valuable tool for enhancing vocabulary learning.

The second previous study entitled *Using Prezi in Higher Education* conducted by Nora Strasser is also analyzing the use of prezi presentation software. Strasser's research dealt with the description of the use of Prezi, while this research dealt with the use of Prezi experienced by the teacher of elementary school. The result of Strasse's research is that Prezi is one of many tools that can be used to keep the classroom an exciting and interactive place.

2. Method

In this research, we used narrative inquiry to uncover the English teacher's story in using Prezi presentation software in teaching vocabulary. Connelly & Clandinin (as cited in Creswell, 2012) point out that narrative research is a research describing the lives of individuals, collecting and telling stories about people's lives, and writing narratives of individual experiences. We purposefully selected the English teacher of Elementary School Gayam 3 since we know that the teacher has used Prezi in teaching vocabulary and thus we wanted to uncover the story of why the English teacher chose Prezi as teaching media, and how Prezi have been used in the classroom to enhance the students' vocabulary mastery. Besides, to support the data, we also selected some of the students to be interviewees to learn their perception towards the use of Prezi in vocabulary learning.

We collected the stories by using variety of data collection such as in-depth interview, observation, and audiovisual materials (photograph and videos). Then, to analyze the data, we did data organization, data reduction, data description, data interpretation, and data validation.

3. Results

The findings of this research are the narration given by the teacher and students which has been summarized by the researchers. Those narrations will be divided into three topics.

3.1. Teacher's Stories of Using Prezi

There are some findings about the teacher's story in using Prezi. Those findings are about the reason why the teacher chose Prezi, the processes in preparing the materials using Prezi, the problems while using Prezi and its solution, the comparison between Prezi and PowerPoint, and the effect of using Prezi towards the teacher and students. To make all of those clear, it will be elaborated in the narration below.

To begin with, the main reason why the teacher preferred to use Prezi was that this presentation software is seen simple, but it is very effective in boosting the mood of teaching learning activity in the classroom. To set a powerful presentation as an effective mood booster, the teacher had to do several steps. The first step was that she selected the theme in advance that later she would use it as teaching material. Then, she created the draft of the material that will be put in the Prezi. After that, she collected the pictures that related to the material, and then she put them into Prezi. Besides, to make the presentation more outstanding, she put the video into Prezi as well.

In using Prezi, she told us that she encountered a classic problem, limited facility. Due to only having one LCD projector provided by the school, she sometimes could not use this tool because of being used by another teacher. To overcome this problem, she had to book the LCD projector several days before the day of teaching. In comparison between Prezi and PowerPoint, she preferred to use Prezi since it was viewed simpler than PowerPoint. Besides, she told us that her students could easily understand the material when learning using Prezi.

Related to Prezi's lay-out, the teacher loved Prezi since it shows the broad canvas in the very first phase. By showing the whole material at once, it would help the students grab the mind map of the material. In using Prezi, there were also some effects towards the students. She told that by using Prezi, the students became more enthusiastic to study. Since English subject was considered arduous by the students, it was needed to make the teaching learning activity as interesting as possible. By using this software, the students were facilitated to learn more interestingly.

In addition, there was a strategy set by the teacher to make the utilization of Prezi become more effective. It is in the case of frequency of the use. Prezi should not be used too often since it will make the students get bored easily. Instead, it should be used interchangeably with other attractive and interesting media to prevent the students from getting bored. Here, the teacher's creativity is highly needed.

3.2. The Teacher's Way in Using Prezi in the Classroom

The way how the teacher used Prezi in the classroom is also one of the objects being studied in this research. We comprehensively observed how Prezi was incorporated into language teaching and learning process. Before using Prezi in the teaching and learning process, the teacher told us that she had to prepare several hardware such as LCD projector, laptop, and speaker active. The teacher stated that preparation was crucial to prevent the technical problems commonly happened in the implementation of digital tools. After preparing the hardware, the teacher started the teaching and learning process by firstly informing the topic being discussed, Things in My School. Then, the teacher asked the students to pay attention on the screen. With the special feature of Prezi like zooming-in and zooming-out, the students seemed more enthusiastic and concentrate on seeing the presentation. The teacher then presented a video about the things which exist in the school, and asked the students to repeat the vocabularies being listened to. After showing the video, the teacher paused the presentation and grouped the students into four.

The teacher prepared in advance four categories of vocabulary in school: teacher's office, schoolyard, classroom, and library. The grouping was done based on those categories. Each group was given a category (e.g. teacher's office) and required to discuss, mention, and write down some vocabularies related to the category. The students seemed excited either in mentioning vocabularies or in writing down each vocabulary on the paper.

While the group discussion was running, the teacher approached each group to check whether the students could do the task well or not. The teacher also assisted the students who found themselves difficult either in translating, or pronouncing the words. As soon as each group finished off their discussion, the teacher asked the representative of each group to communicate the result of the group discussion in front of the class. Each group was represented by two students. Surprisingly, each group's representative presented loudly and confidently. Even though there were some mistakes in pronouncing the words, it was normal since they are still in the process of learning. Once each group ended the presentation, the teacher and the rest of the students applauded the presenter.

After the group discussion and presentation phases were done, the teacher again asked the students to pay attention on the Prezi presentation. This time, the teacher reviewed the material being studied on that day. The teacher presented number of vocabulary of things in the school. Then, the teacher together with the students tried to pronounce each vocabulary being presented correctly. According to the teacher, this phase was crucial in familiarizing the students with the correct pronunciation.

At the end of the teaching and learning process, the teacher thanked the students for being active and cooperative. Besides, the teacher said that all of the students did a great job on that day. The teacher also informed the students that on the following meetings, the teacher will create a more interesting Prezi presentation. Once all of the teaching and learning process completed, the teacher dismissed the class.

3.3. Students' Perceptions towards the Use of Prezi

While focusing on observing how Prezi has been used in the classroom, it is also important to learn the students' perception towards the use of this advance presentation software. In this study, the majority of the students stated that Prezi made the material being presented more practical and understandable.

Comparing to the traditional media, Prezi makes the teaching and learning more fruitful. In this study, the students loved Prezi presentation since it facilitated them to learn vocabulary more interestingly. Moreover, they told us that each vocabulary being presented in Prezi was easier to recall.

One thing which makes Prezi unique and different from other presentation software is its zooming feature. With this feature, the students were able to see and read each vocabulary more clearly. Zooming feature also made the presentation more dynamic, so that the students could pay more attention to the material. They stated that zooming feature allowed them to easily recall the vocabulary, and made each vocabulary being presented more visible.

By implementing Prezi in the teaching and learning process, the students gained multiple benefits. They stated that Prezi stimulated their creativity and imagination. They also informed that Prezi could strengthen their memory in learning vocabulary. As we know that there is a great number of English vocabulary, and it is extremely difficult to recall by non-native students. Therefore, the use of Prezi can help the students to remember at least some common, useful, and important words to know.

After all, the findings of this study informed that the majority of the students agreed if their teacher used Prezi continually for the better result of teaching and learning process. They stated that Prezi eased them to learn vocabulary, increased their motivation, and made vocabulary learning more enjoyable.

4. Discussion

The finding of the research indicates that the reason why the English teacher has endeavored to maximize Prezi is its simplicity and practicality. From the lay-out, Prezi provided its users with one big canvas which is simpler than single slides provided by PowerPoint presentation. While PowerPoint is now viewed commonplace, Prezi, with visually-oriented design is one of the innovative options to capture students' interest in learning (Strasser, 2014).

Besides, using Prezi, the teacher can be more creative in designing learning activity. In this research, the teacher combined Prezi with group work activity. In the initial phase, the teacher played the video of vocabulary in the school. Meaningfully, this phase makes the students observe the vocabulary by themselves. They could watch and listen to the correct pronunciation, and they could see the picture of the things being learned as well. After watching the video, the students were asked to work in group to discuss the vocabulary in the school with the specific category. Finally, when they had to communicate the result of their discussion, they could present well with good

pronunciation and high self-confidence. After communicating the result, the students were provided with number of vocabularies presented in Prezi, and with the teacher's assistance, they practiced to pronounce each vocabulary correctly. Based on the finding, it is an evident that the use of Prezi Presentation Software in teaching vocabulary could improve students' vocabulary, and it seems that Prezi is a valuable tool for enhancing vocabulary learning (Aljehani, 2015). Eventually, using modern technology like Prezi eases teachers in engaging students in learning (Masri et al. 2015).

In addition, the students also showed positive attitude towards Prezi in learning vocabulary. They stated that Prezi made the material being learned more practical and understandable. Moreover, they argued that Prezi could stimulate their creativity and imagination. More importantly, Prezi facilitated them to learn vocabulary in an enjoyable and fruitful atmosphere. A positive attitude shown by the students will never be achieved if the teacher has no any positive attitude too towards the use of such a digital tool like Prezi. In this research, it is clearly uncovered that the teacher is passionate in incorporating technology into teaching and learning process. Undoubtedly, when teachers have a positive attitude towards technology, a more effective result of language learning will be more easily achieved (Alberth, 2013).

5. Conclusion

The use of prezi in teaching vocabulary is viewed interesting to be studied. In using Prezi, the teacher underwent a difficult situation when the supporting tool (LCD projector) was not completely provided in her school. The situation, however, did not give too much impact since the teacher was highly passionate in integrating technology into her classroom. From her perspective, she told us that by using Prezi she could make the students encouraged to learn. Another benefit to her is that she could be more creative in designing the learning activity. Further, from the students' perspective, the students admitted that by using Prezi, they could understand the material more easily. Besides, they also enjoyed the learning activity as well. Positive attitude in incorporating technology into teaching and learning activity can be seen both from the teacher and the students.

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