

CREATIVE AND INNOVATIVE WAYS OF TEACHING ENGLISH IN A RURAL AREA THROUGH INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, information and communication technology (ICT) has been growing rapidly. It is used widely in all sectors in the world. In education, ICT has an important role to faster the development of knowledge. But, we should realize that there are still many regions in Indonesia which the application of ICT is not available yet. This paper examines the ways of English teachers used in teaching and learning English in term of ICT implementation especially in two rural areas of Indonesia. This paper also proposes some creative and innovative ways that can be practiced in each of those areas. The applying of ICT or technology in teaching and learning English cannot be the same for all regions including urban, rural, and remote areas. It can be practiced differently based on the condition of the area. So, the teacher should know the creative and innovative ways of ICT implementation in teaching and learning English.

Keywords: ICT, Teaching English, Rural Area

ABSTRAK

Saat ini, teknologi informasi dan komunikasi (TIK) telah berkembang pesat. Ini digunakan secara luas di semua sektor di dunia. Dalam pendidikan, TIK memiliki peran penting untuk mempercepat pengembangan pengetahuan. Tetapi, kita harus menyadari bahwa masih banyak daerah di Indonesia yang penerapan TIK belum tersedia. Makalah ini membahas cara-cara guru bahasa Inggris yang digunakan dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris dalam hal implementasi TIK terutama di dua daerah pedesaan di Indonesia. Makalah ini juga mengusulkan beberapa cara kreatif dan inovatif yang dapat dipraktikkan di masing-masing bidang tersebut. Penerapan TIK atau teknologi dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris tidak bisa sama untuk semua wilayah termasuk daerah perkotaan, pedesaan, dan terpencil. Hal ini dapat dilakukan secara berbeda berdasarkan kondisi daerah. Jadi, guru harus mengetahui cara-cara kreatif dan inovatif implementasi TIK dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran bahasa Inggris.

Kata kunci: TIK, Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, Wilayah Pedesaan

INTRODUCTION

ICTs stand for information and communication technologies and are defined, for the purposes of this primer, as a “diverse set of technological tools and resources used to communicate, and to create, disseminate, store, and manage information.” These technologies include computers, the Internet, broadcasting technologies (radio and television), and telephony (en.wikibooks.org). The implementation of Information and Communication Technology in learning process is very useful and essential. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is generally defined as a tool that has the function of supporting the process of delivering messages or other things to the others. Concerning on the development of technology, ICT with the support of computer systems and networks allows people to communicate by seeing the physical and hear the voice directly even though the parties are communicating in different places (Yati S. 2010: 2). It can be said that the use of information and communication technology (ICT) is as an important aspect to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning in schools, especially in English learning. This condition requires each school to be creative and dependent in looking for solutions so

that learning in school is more effective through the use of ICT media.

Furthermore, live in global world where our existence depends solely on our felicity of using English most often. Thus, getting well versed in English has become quite mandatory. While this does not pose a problem on metropolitan cities and towns, people in rural areas lack the skills to converse in English. There is still a major chunk civilization devoid of the developments in terms of language and technology. English teachers teaching in rural areas often face the non-availability required technical support and relevant atmosphere to teach English effectively. It is here that the role of innovative teachers becomes quite essential (Mishra, 2015).

A depth investigated into the current implementation of ICT in teaching English in rural primary schools in Vietnam has been conducted by Trang (2015). He has identified and described seven distinctive rural factors shaping the achievement of policy implementation in primary English language education and ICT use. These are: policies as universal documents, provincial policy implementation decisions, school leadership in rural schools, facilities and English teaching resources in rural settings, rural teachers’ knowledge and skills, time and family responsibilities in rural

communities, and rural teachers' professional development and learning need. Once teachers are working in schools, teacher employers (state/territory governments and non-government education authorities) are responsible for setting conditions of employment, including provision of, and resourcing for, professional, Halsey (2017). Language teaching and learning is an interesting task. It is in the hands of the teachers whether to make it interesting or uninteresting, Vijayalakshmi (2017).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Creative Ways for Teaching English by Using ICT in Karang Jaya

There are still many remote areas in Indonesia. One of them is Karang jaya, a small village in the regency of Musi Rawas Utara (Muratara), South Sumatera of Indonesia. An alumna of junior high school Number 1 (SMP N 1) Karang jaya told that when she was a junior high school student; the technology did not ever used in the learning and teaching process including the English learning. The condition is not change yet. Lately, current student gave us information that there are some computers in that school but they are rarely used because the electricity power is not adequate yet. Therefore, the students have not ever

listened to the English audio material. They have no idea how the native speakers speak English. What they learn day by day is just some patterns, kinds of text, reading text, and answering the reading questions. It is not easy for the teachers to use ICT in teaching English as neither the lack of facilities at the school nor most of the junior high school students do not have smart phone yet.

To concern of this case, the English teachers should be creative in design the course materials to make the English learning more interesting. Teaching English is teaching skill, the students will feel boredom if the students do not use innovative ways in explaining the materials. Based on the condition above, we have some ideas that can be implemented by the English teachers:

Teaching English Through Advertisement

Television is one of technology tools where the villagers are most famous to. Most of the people have TV at their home. Usually, the students spend most of their free times watching TV. We can take advantage of it that it can be a media of English learning. The teachers can give the students group or individual work and ask the students to make a note of some English

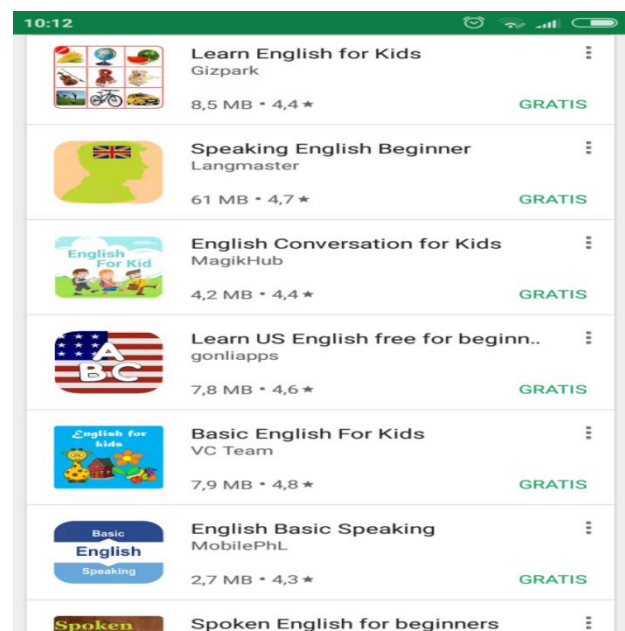
words which the words are used in the advertisements both written and spoken. Since they get the words, the students have to find the meaning of the words and report their result in the classroom. Here are some examples of commercial breaks on TV that use some English words, a) Iklan Google Appk. Cari Lirik Lagu “Thinking Out Loud”, Selalu tau music, b) Iklan rokok “Gold” – “Quality”, c) Iklan Baby Diaper MP : “X-tra” Kering, d) Iklan Chitato “Life is never flat”, e) Iklan smartphone “for beautiful natural selfie”, and there are many other commercial breaks use English in the advertisement.

After the students report their result, the teacher should explain the meaning of the words and choose some words for the students to make their own sentences using the chosen words. In addition, the teacher should also give attention to the moral trait by notice the students to only watch good TV programs especially for the teenagers. Thus, the teacher should advice the students to not be easily attracted with some product advertisements and gives them appropriate reason for that.

Teaching English Through Offline Software

Cause of the lack of internet access and other facilities, offline software or

offline application is the alternative way to use ICT in the English teaching and learning. There are many free offline English application where we can download them in the internet. The English teachers can ask for help to other partners who are able to download and install the application. The application can be installed in one or more computers at the school. If the school has a projector, then one computer with the installed application is enough. The teacher can give explanation using the application and projector.



Picture 1. Offline English Application

Furthermore, the teachers also can find the offline application in smart phone. There are so many English applications in play store where we can install them freely.

Please see the picture to see some examples of offline English learning applications. Choose the more appropriate one for our students. Thus ask some students who have smart phone to bring theirs. The teachers divide the students into some groups, then guide them how to install the application, and explain them how to use the application for their learning. One smart phone for 3 students or more, depend on how many smart phones in the class.

Teaching English Through Videos/ English Audio Conversation

There are so many English learning videos that we can find and get in YouTube. The English teachers can choose the appropriate materials for the students as well as save it. If the school has a projector, the teacher can only save it in his laptop. But, if there is no, the teacher can ask the students to collect a DVD Room individually and share the file through it. Then, the students can watch the English learning video through CD/DVD Player at their home. On the other hand, the teacher should give clear directions what to do and what must be learned from the files.

Teaching English Through Song / Audio Learning Files

We think, this is the most available ICT tool for English and learning in the classroom. The teachers can prepare the

tools by themselves. Having the file, a laptop, and a set of speakers is enough for the teachers to make the English learning more interesting. After listen to the song or audio, the teachers can ask the students to practice their pronunciation, practice their speaking in short dialogue with classmates, or remembering the song.

In conclusion, the unavailability of internet access and lack of technology facilities are not a big trouble for a creative English teacher, as long as the teacher has wide knowledge of ICT. The teachers should not rely on the school facilities. They can use data cellular to download such English materials from the internet or go to an internet spot in a city.

Innovative Ways for Teaching English by Using ICT in SMKN 7 Rejang Lebong

Relating the case about the use of information and communication technology (ICT), SMKN 7 Rejang Lebong is one of school which implements the ICT in English learning process. However, there are phenomena faced in the implementation of Information and Communication Technology SMKN 7 Rejang Lebong. From the grand tour interview which has been done, the researcher got some fact from interview form English teacher namely Tri

Hariyanto. Based on the result of interview, the teacher says that in English learning process in SMKN 7 Rejang Lebong is very difficult to implement ICT because of lack of facilities to support ICT. For example when learning using media such as projector or power point, it gets difficulty because the socket or electrical plug is not working in some classrooms. Other while, the multimedia room is infrequently to use because of the rule from head master that that room is used for “Ujian Nasional Berbasis Komputer” or computer-based of national examination so the student and the teacher can use it after the exam is done. Those things sometimes make students frustrated, get bored and have low motivation, so that they lose their attention to a lesson. In this case, the use of media in teaching- learning process is needed to attract students’ attention and motivation and to make teaching- learning activities more interesting and also effective.

Concerning about motivation, students need motivation not only in the classroom but also outside it if they want to improve their level of English. The teachers are the responsible of guessing what kind of motivation their students need because each of them has his/her own personality. In this sense, Madrid (2002) shows that the more powerful motivating strategies are the

following: 1) The use of new technologies and audiovisual resources. 2) The group work. 3) To satisfy students’ needs and interests. 4) The students’ participation in class. 5) The good marks and the fulfillment of students’ expectations of success. 6) The praises and rewards to students. As the use of ICT is in the first position, teachers have to make the most of the interrelation between motivation and ICT since it will help their students to be eager to learn the language. The media used in SMKN 7 Rejang Lebong is a text book or e-book which can be downloaded by teacher or student using mobile phone. Moreover, the teacher sometimes sends the material to WhatsApp group in mobile phone. The use of electrical book is more efficient because there is not photocopy shop around school.

Ortega (2003) includes other resources which are closely related to ICT and are demanded by both teachers and students such as Internet, videos or DVD films, which can be heard in the original version or with subtitles in order to compare them with the mother tongue. Teachers and students agree that it is necessary to have a textbook which includes the objectives of each level but other real materials (maps, menus, leaflets...) have to complement it. Cox (1997) also declares that the regular use of ICT across different curriculum subjects

can have a beneficial motivating influence on students' learning. But, these materials cannot be used just because the teacher wants to but because they are also aimed at the specific objectives of each level.

Teachers providing ICT activities offering opportunities for active, independent learning can increase students' motivation to learn (Becker, 2000). It also allows students to be more autonomous because they are able to learn on their own and to continue progressing as far as they want. Besides that, in SMKN 7 Rejang Lebong the teacher always allows the student to use offline or online dictionary from their mobile phones. The use of online or offline dictionary makes the student faster to search difficult words that conventional dictionary. It is a suitable and effective media of teaching pronunciation in order to have good pronunciation accurately. Moreover, the student can learn and practice more independently. Hartoyo (2009) argues that, one of the main problems of language learning is related to the method of learning. The search for better learning methods is always based on criticism of the lack of existing learning methods. There are several ways that teachers of SMKN 7 Rejang Lebong can change the conventional

learning model over time and migrate to learning models that use ICT media, such as:

Make "virtual class"

Virtual class means that teachers can interact with their students without having to meet face-to-face with students in the classroom. Applications that can be used like Edmodo. Through this application, teachers can provide material, task to learners without having to write on the board. Similarly, learners can communicate with their teachers through this application. This class is very effective if supported by internet facilities that quite smoothly.

Create a closed group based on-line

On-line based group here is almost the same as "virtual class" only difference this use of this application more open to all member of group incorporated in it. Applications that can be used is like facebook, whatsapp and others. Through the creation of this group teachers and learners can interact and share information with each other.

Create interactive learning modules

This module can be used on-line by learners anytime and anywhere as long as have a good internet network.

Using LCD projector, computer or other relevant technology

Presentation in the classroom with LCD projector can make it easier for teachers and learners to explain abstract things become easy for students to understand. LCD is able to help the learning process in the classroom because this tool as a medium to display something from the computer / TV that may be difficult to be seen by all learners at the same time becomes easy because it can be displayed in a larger size in front of the classroom. Through these impressions are expected interest and participation of learners to engage in learning the better. For example, the teacher exposes the material using a power point full of interesting animations or other films relating to learning materials and then learners are asked to analyze it and even if it allows teachers to ask them to present it using ICT media in their respective schools.

From the explanation above, the use of media leads students to learn by doing. In other word we can say that in learning by doing process, students improve themselves from know nothing to know something, from know something to understand the concept. When students use media in learning then they will have the experience of learning and

directly involve in the learning process. It makes what they have acquired will be saved in their long- term memory. As a result, students get good mark on certain subject and enhance their thinking skill. It is different from the result of non- media learning that leads students to get good mark and rarely enhance their thinking skill. Media can help teachers to get students' attention back and to make learning process more effective. Therefore, the use of media really helps both teachers and students in teaching- learning process.

CONCLUSION

Schools need to use maximally all the potential to apply ICT in supporting learning. The role of ICT in this era of globalization, especially in the field of education will always continue to grow and develop so that teachers who become facilitators in learning are required to always innovation in achieving the success of learning, including in utilizing media and technology in accordance with the needs of learners and specifications subjects.

Although the ICT is not available yet in all schools particularly those are in rural areas, but the teachers must be able to adapt and innovate with ICT that is developing in society. The unavailability of internet access and lack of technology facilities are not a big

trouble for a creative English teacher as long as the teacher has wide knowledge of ICT. The teachers should not rely on the school facilities.

In conclusion, the applying of ICT or technology in teaching and learning English cannot be the same for all regions including urban, rural, and remote areas. It can be practiced differently based on the condition of the area.

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