

Media in EFL Classroom

Song Vs. Picture

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Abstract: Since both visual and auditory media can bring both negative and positive impacts on English language teaching and learning process, an issue of the effectiveness of a song and a picture as a teaching media arises. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the Indonesian EFL teachers' preferences in using auditory media, i.e. song, and visual media, i.e. picture. By conducting a qualitative research study, the researchers administered a questionnaire to 30 English teachers in Bandung, Indonesia. The result revealed that these teachers prefer to use the picture than using the song. Even though the picture is mostly used in the classroom, the existence of song in the classroom is more beneficial for the teacher. Reflecting up on the teachers' responses, mostly these teachers prefer to provide the song as teaching media, while the picture is served as supportive media. Each media has a different role in teaching and learning process, whether as a teaching media or a supportive media. Further research in comparing the effectiveness of both media is necessary.

1 INTRODUCTION

In this modern era, the need for technology in an English as foreign language (henceforth EFL) teaching and learning process is increasing. It happens due to the positive impact given by the technology-based media which can help the teacher in delivering the learning material effectively (Syafii 2016). Then, from the students' view, their motivation and interest are enhanced in participating in the learning process, especially for the application of song (Rafiee, Kassaian, and Dastjerdi 2010) and picture (Wu 2008). Therefore, the use of technology-based media in language teaching and learning process is viewed as an effective tool in language teaching.

Similar view has also been concerned by the Indonesian government. The Indonesia Ministry of Education and Culture has regulated the technology to be integrated into teaching and learning activities in the classroom. As mandated in Ministry of Education and Culture Regulations, r. 22 on Learning Principles Section, it is believed that the teaching and learning process can be more effective and efficient with the integration of technology in the classroom (Ministry of Education and Culture,

2016). With the technology integration, it is expected that the classroom becomes more conducive and the learning activities becomes more focus. Thus, the English teachers in Indonesia are required to provide technology-based media in delivering the learning material in the classroom.

As a teaching tool, the effectiveness of technology-based media utilization in EFL classroom has been proven by several scholars. For example, song, as an auditory media, is identified to be able in serving an enjoyable learning environment which can reduce the students' anxiety and stress (Debreceeny 2015; Rafiee et al. 2010), providing the students with repetitions of the authentic target language (Şevik 2011), and enhancing the students' target language reproduction creatively (Yarmakeev et al. 2016). Another example is picture, as a visual media, which is believed in helping the students in understanding the context of learning by having a real visualization (Wu 2008), stimulating their idea (Syafii 2016), and helping them in remembering (Alhamami 2016) and noticing (Mohammadnia and Khalili 2014) the target language vocabulary. However, other studies also found the negative views of both applications of song and picture as a teaching media. The use of a song is viewed as a distraction in the learning process (Şevik 2011). On

the other hand, the use of picture can hinder the information received by the students since it divides the students' focus into their ears and eyes in the classroom (Kiany and Jalali 2008). As the result, the issue of the effectiveness of a song, an auditory media, and a picture, a visual media, as a teaching media needs to be investigated especially from teachers' view.

Thus, the current study aimed to explore the utilization of both song and picture in EFL classroom. Indifferent to previous studies which only focus on one media in a single study, the current study investigated the use of both media by exploring the English teachers' preferences in using song and picture in teaching. Taking the English teachers' opinion and experiences as the main data, the result of this data is expected to contribute for other English teachers; these teachers' views on both media can be a reflection for utilizing the media in the classroom and also help them in deciding the appropriate media for teaching

2 METHODS

The study was conducted using a qualitative approach. In this study, 50 English teachers teaching in Bandung, West Java, Indonesia were contacted to participate in the study. These teachers are selected since they have implemented technology-based media in teaching in the classroom. However, only 30 English teachers agreed to participate in this study which consists of 16 Senior High School (ST) English teachers and 14 Junior High School English teachers. A questionnaire was used in collecting the data. This questionnaire consisted of four questions, including two yes/no questions related to the media utilization and two open-ended questions related to the English teachers' reasons for using the media. These English teachers' answers were then analyzed and interpreted qualitatively.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Media Usage Preference

From the two yes/no questions provided in the questionnaire, the finding related to utilization of both media are identified. All of these English teachers have provided a picture in the classroom, but, not all teachers provide song in the classroom; there are four English teachers who have not

provided song in the classroom and interestingly, all of these four English teachers are Junior High School teachers. What Şevik's study (2011) revealed may also become one reason for not applying the song in the classroom since the students are in Junior High School level in which these students can be distracted easily. Therefore, the result indicates that these English teachers prefer to provide a picture in the classroom rather than a song, with the total number of teachers who have provided picture is 30 teachers and 26 teachers who have provided song. Further views on these media are discussed in the following section.

3.2 English Teachers' View on Media

In line with their utilization of the media, the teachers' views on these media were investigated by revealing their reason for using the media in the classroom. From the English teachers' answers to two open-ended questions, various reasons for utilizing the media are identified. It is interesting to note that these teachers' reasons for having the media depend on the purpose of the media itself. To make it clear, the English teachers' views are described on the following sub-sections.

3.2.1 English Teachers' View on Picture

Picture as a visual media in the classroom is viewed to be beneficial for the teachers. Different teachers have different experiences in utilizing this technology-based media in the classroom. From their answers, there are six reasons of providing picture in the classroom, including the use of picture for supporting learning material, building background knowledge, storytelling, providing visual example, enhancing students' memory, and raising students' interest.

Mostly, thirteen teachers viewed it supporting the learning material given in the classroom. Four examples of their answers can be shown as follows:

(JT-8) *"It can make the students be more focus and concentrate more on learning material."*

(JT-12) *"It helps me to explain the learning material easier."*

(ST-7) *"I can describe the learning context easier and the students can see the picture and they can understand what is being discussed in the classroom."*

(ST-8) *"It is easier to describe the abstract concept of learning using picture."*

These teachers' answers are in line with Wu's finding (2008) which the English teachers believe

that giving a visualization through a picture can enhance students' understanding of the lesson and thus, it can help the students having a better comprehension of learning.

Moreover, three other teachers mentioned that they used it for brainstorming and building their background knowledge. This activity can recall the students' background knowledge and the students wanted to use it before starting the lesson. The teachers provided the picture as a hook to stimulate students' learning and guide them to the learning topic.

(ST-1) *"I want to warm up the students' knowledge"*

(ST-9) *"Picture is served as the brainstorming in introductory of the lesson."*

(ST-14) *"Picture can stimulate the students in brainstorming activities."*

Besides, four teachers also served the picture in storytelling. Sometimes, the description of the character is needed and picture helps the teacher in describing the character easier. Moreover, the visualization of the setting of the story can be shown clearer for the students to enhance their understanding on the story plot.

(JT-4) *"I want to introduce the character in the story."*

(JT-10) *"The picture can foster the students' imagination in storytelling in the classroom."*

(ST-10) *"I want to give real visualization in storytelling."*

(ST-16) *"Picture is used in teaching narrative, so the students can know the character and setting of the story."*

On the other hand, four teachers mentioned that they want to give examples through a picture. Giving a visual example is also viewed as a positive reason for having this media in the classroom. These teachers mostly provided the picture for showing certain activities in the learning material learned to the students to enhance their understanding.

(JT-2) *"The picture makes the students observe the example at once."*

(JT-3) *"I can provide examples for students."*

(JT-6) *"I want to give examples, so I use pictures."*

(ST-4) *"I use a picture to give some examples of the learning material."*

These three reasons mentioned by the teachers, i.e. brainstorming, storytelling, and giving a visual example, are in line with the result of Mohammadnia and Khalili's study (2014) who revealed that the students can notice the lesson and what has been discussed in the classroom since the picture can help the students noticing the vocabulary used and make

them understand the lesson easier. Thus, providing a picture as a teaching media can enhance the students' learning process.

Meanwhile, two other teachers stated that they used a picture to help the students in memorizing the learning material. These teachers believe that the existence of picture can lengthen the students' memory on the learning material. They view it as an effective way to memorize certain learning material through the picture.

(JT-9) *"Picture can help the students in memorizing the learning material faster."*

(ST-12) *"It supports the learning material and helps the students easier in memorizing the learning material."*

As Alhamami (2016) has revealed before that picture can foster students' ability in memorizing what they have learned. These students will store the picture in their memory and it can help them when they re-call certain learning material. Thus, providing a picture can help them recalling the learning material easier.

Other two teachers also mentioned that picture can increase the students' interest in learning. Providing interesting picture which is related to the learning topic can gain students' attention to be more focus on learning. Moreover, one teacher even added that the use of picture can avoid the boredom in the classroom since the picture is interesting for the students.

(JT-1) *"It can increase students' interest in learning."*

(JT-14) *"Picture raises students' interest in taking participation in teaching and learning activities in the classroom. So the students can be more active and enthusiasm."*

(ST-12) *"It also avoids the boredom in the classroom sometimes."*

Interestingly, one English teacher even wrote that the easy access to get any picture as the reason for using the picture in the classroom. With the easy access, this teacher can use many pictures in the classroom to help the students in learning. This teacher mentioned that the picture becomes the easiest technology-based media to be taken from the internet.

(JT-5) *"It is the easiest media to be taken on the internet."*

From these teachers' answers, the picture is utilized in various ways in the classroom. It can be used at the beginning of the lesson, as building background knowledge. Then, it can also be provided in the learning activities, as supporting learning material, supporting media for storytelling,

providing visual example, and raising students' interest. Even, it can also be served as learning to enhance students' memory. Thus, the use of picture in the classroom can be considered as a supportive media.

3.2.2 English Teachers' View on Song

Song, as an auditory media, is also chosen as a preferable media for English teaching and learning process by the teachers. Different teachers have different ways in utilizing the song in the classroom. From their answers, there are eight reasons of providing a song in the classroom, including the use of song for practicing listening comprehension, teaching grammar and tenses, teaching pronunciation, teaching vocabulary, brainstorming activity, providing authentic example, enhancing students' feeling, avoiding learning boredom, and being a positive learning reinforcement.

Most of these teachers used the song not only for delivering learning material, but also for teaching a certain skill. Eleven teachers wrote that the reason for using a song in the classroom because they want to practice students' listening comprehension. Four of their answers can be shown as follows:

(JT-1) *"Song can make improvement in learning and teaching activities, especially in listening comprehension."*

(JT-10) *"I want to improve students' listening comprehension."*

(ST-4) *"It can gain the students' attention, and relaxation activities, and also for listening practice especially."*

(ST-5) *"Songs can practice the student' listening skill."*

Meanwhile, two other teachers used the song in teaching grammar and tenses. Some of the structure of the sentence in a song is sometimes different with traditional grammar and thus, the teacher can show it to the students and clarify on how a sentence is structured.

(ST-6) *"Some songs have different sentence structure and tenses and I want to show it to the students."*

(ST-14) *"Song can be the real grammar practice for the students."*

It was also identified by Yarmakeev et al. (2016) who revealed that a song can help the students in dealing with verbal clichés and colloquial expression which is closely related to grammar pattern and thus, through a song, the students can enhance their grammar comprehension.

Then, three other teachers mentioned that they can teach pronunciation with a song. Some songs they select pronounce the words in a correct way and the students can learn how to pronounce the words from the song provided.

(JT-9) *"Song can empower the students' pronunciation."*

(ST-7) *"The students can practice their pronunciation by listening to the singer."*

(ST-10) *"I want to improve their pronunciation."*

In line with what Yarmakeev et al.'s findings (2016) revealed, a song also can be used for enhancing productive skill, like speaking and practicing their pronunciation. By providing a song, it is viewed that the students can learn how to pronounce words better.

Meanwhile, another teacher stated that a song is used for teaching vocabulary. Some songs use words which are rarely used and heard by the students. Thus, by providing a song in teaching, it is viewed that it can enrich students' vocabulary mastery.

(ST-16) *"It can give new vocabulary for the students and it can raise their vocabulary mastery."*

On the other hand, two other teachers mentioned that the song was applied in starting the lesson as a brainstorming activity.

(JT-4) *"I used to start the lesson, but sometimes it is not really related to the subject lesson."*

(JT-11) *"It is for warming up or brainstorming."*

A song can turn down the tension and makes the students feel relax in teaching and learning activities (Debreceeny 2015) and thus, by putting the song at the beginning of the lesson, the teacher can warm up their students and can check their readiness toward the lesson.

Besides, three other teachers stated that they can give real examples of language expression through song. Since a song is an authentic material, these Indonesian English teachers seek the benefits of the song by having a real and factual example of how language is expressed through a song.

(JT-2) *"I want to provide the factual example of the lesson that I teach."*

(JT-12) *"I use it to help the students by providing authentic learning material."*

(JT-15) *"Song can give the real example of sentences or language expression."*

Moreover, four teachers also considered students' feeling in the classroom. These teachers believe that using a media in the classroom also need to consider students' feelings. Thus, these teachers provided song as a media since it is appealing to the students.

(JT-8) *“Song fosters students' interest especially auditory learners.”*

(JT-13) *“Students love songs and It can also raise their motivation in learning”*

(ST-3) *“Song consists of art and aesthetics and appealing to learners.”*

(ST-11) *“The students like to sing a song.”*

On the other hand, two teachers also mentioned that the song they used can avoid the learning boredom. One teacher added that the special purpose of having a song is to use it as an ice breaker.

(ST-1) *“It makes less boring activities in the classroom.”*

(ST-5) *“Songs can be an icebreaker in the middle of learning to avoid learning boredom in the middle of teaching and learning practices.”*

As what has been mentioned by Debrecey (2015), using a song can turn down the tension and makes the students feel relax in teaching and learning activities. Thus, the use of song can make the students release their tension in learning and not getting bored with the lesson.

Interestingly, one English teacher wrote that song is used as reinforcement in the classroom. Since it can gain students' interest, it can be a positive reinforcement for the students in learning.

(JT-6) *“The students love music, particularly for familiar and popular songs, and it can also be used as reinforcement sometimes.”*

These last three reasons mentioned by the teachers are in line with Rafiee et al.'s finding (2010) who revealed that a song can serve an enjoyable learning environment. Thus, the song provided can reduce students' anxiety, make them enjoy the teaching and learning activities, and avoid the learning boredom in the classroom.

From the teachers' responses, the song has been utilized in various ways in the classroom. It can be used at the beginning of the lesson, such as brainstorming activity. Then, it can also be provided in the learning activities, such as practicing listening comprehension, teaching grammar and tenses, teaching pronunciation, teaching vocabulary, and providing authentic example. Even, it can also be served as a positive reinforcement to enhance students' feelings and to avoid the learning boredom. Thus, the use of song in the classroom can be considered as a teaching media.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The utilization of both visual and auditory media in English teaching and learning process is served for

different purposes. These Indonesian EFL teachers viewed these media are beneficial and it also has its own functions and applications in teaching and learning process.

Even though the picture is mostly used in the classroom, but the existence of song in the classroom is more beneficial for the teacher. It can be seen from the teachers' responses that the song provides more benefits than the picture. A song can provide eight benefits, including the use of song for practicing listening comprehension, teaching grammar and tenses, teaching pronunciation, teaching vocabulary, brainstorming activity, providing authentic example, enhancing students' feeling, avoiding learning boredom, and being a positive learning reinforcement. On the other hand, a picture can provide six benefits, including the use of picture for supporting learning material, building background knowledge, supporting media for storytelling, providing visual example, enhancing students' memory, and raising students' interest.

It is interesting to note that each media has its own function in the classroom. Mostly the teachers prefer to provide the song as a teaching media, as it is mentioned that they use the song for teaching listening, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Meanwhile, the picture is served as a supportive media, especially in storytelling and explaining the learning concept. As a supportive media, the use of picture is limited. The picture is only provided to support the learning material, i.e. example and visualization and is not served as the main activity of learning or the main sources of learning material. Indifferent from picture, the song is provided in the classroom as the main sources of learning and, even, as the tool in practicing language ability.

Although each media can bring benefits for English teaching, their existence in the classroom also needs to be reconsidered, whether the media can enhance the effectiveness of learning or, in the opposite, it becomes the learning distraction in the classroom. Therefore, further research in investigating the effectiveness of both media is needed to be conducted by other researchers.

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