UNCOVERING RESISTANCE TO ICT USE IN LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

Nur Kamilah, Mirjam Anugerahwati, Sintha Tresnadewi
Pendidikan Bahasa Inggris Pascasarjana-Universitas Negeri Malang
Jalan Semarang 5 Malang. E-mail: k4m1lah@gmail.com

Abstract*:* This article reports a case study that explored a teacher of a high school in Situbondo who is resistant to ICT integration in language instruction. The study started from the concern of a teacher who chose to resist ICT despite the importance and potentials of it in improving learner's language skill. The study found that the variable of age has influenced other variables like the motivation to learn and the capability to operate ICT for teaching which lead to the preference of resisting and thus he keeps using the conventional teaching method. This variable is not thought to be the only influence to the resistance because it was further found that the teacher's failure to fulfill the demand of his profession becomes more contributing to it. Therefore, it is suggested that English teachers are aware of the demands of their profession in order to stay on the track of professional teachers.

Keywords: resistant teachers, ICT integration, language instruction, variable of age, professional demand of English teachers

Abstrak: Penelitian ini memaparkan hasil studi kasus terhadap seorang guru bahasa Inggris SMA di Situbondo yang resistan untuk menggunakan TIK di kelas. Berawal dari keprihatinan terhadap guru yang memilih untuk abai terhadap penggunaan TIK, terlepas dari penting dan berpotensinya TIK tersebut dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbahasa siswa. Ditemukan bahwa variabel usia yang lanjut menjadi penyebab munculnya variabel lain seperti kurangnya motivasi belajar TIK dan rendahnya kemampuan menggunakannya yang berujung pada pilihannya untuk tidak menggunakan TIK di kelas sehingga tetap menggunakan metode mengajar konvensional. Variabel usia tersebut ternyata bukanlah pemicu utama sikap resistan tersebut, melainkan lemahnya kemampuan guru dalam memahami dan memenuhi tuntutan profesinya sebagai guru bahasa Inggris. Oleh karenanya, saran penelitian ditujukan pada guru agar lebih siap terhadap tuntutan dan tantangan lain dalam profesinya sehingga menjadi guru profesional.

Kata kunci: guru resistan, penggunaan TIK, pengajaran bahasa, variabel usia lanjut, tuntutan profesional guru Bahasa Inggris

Evaluating teacher's belief in teaching has been what Williams and Burden (1997) suggest for creating an effective language classroom. Teacher's belief is what the teacher brings to teaching. This kind of belief, according to Williams and Burden, includes the belief about learners, belief about learning, and belief about themselves. Belief about learners may include how the teacher believes a learner should become in her or his class, which Meighan in Williams and Burden have suggested seven metaphors for learners in the class. The metaphors are learners as resisters, receptacles, raw material, clients, partners, individual explorers, and democratic explorers. The order of the metaphors is meant to reflect as a continuum of 'nature of teacher-learner power relationship'. It is indicated that the first three are more teacher dominated, while the latter four require more learner active participation. In the teaching practice, language teacher may only hold one type of learner throughout her or his teaching career. A teacher, for example, may hold the belief that learners are partners for her or him. This makes his teaching practice more flexible, especially that the teacher positions her or himself as a friend of the learners'. The teacher tends to be more open to the learner's idea for the learning activity thus more negotiation happens in this kind of language classroom. To be compared to a teacher who holds the belief that learners are receptacles. This teacher would tend to consider her or himself as the only source of knowledge and the learners are there to accept it. Due to the high domination of the teacher role in the class, the learning activities in this teacher's class will lack of negotiation and interaction.

Besides the belief about learners, a language teacher's belief about learning is also present within the complex construct of the teacher's belief. The belief about learning deals with what the teacher thinks learning should take place at the first time. Conditions may vary due to varied beliefs about learning, for instance, learning which is meant for preparing examination will contain more tests compared to the one which becomes the vehicle for learners to understand the environment and culture. This belief can emerge because of the syllabus employed or the teacher's own thought. Finally, belief about the teachers themselves has something to do with how the teacher takes stances. According to Williams and Burden (Williams & Burden), the teachers' beliefs about themselves are construed as the belief about them as persons. How they can be confident as

the role models for learners within the process of language learning is mostly what this kind of belief is about. This will lead to the need of the teacher to behave well in the class because she or he is, indeed, observed by learners, like how they react to something and value the surroundings.

What the teacher brings to the language classroom, including her or his belief, are categorized as the presage variables (Stern, 1983). The presage variables are a group of variables characterized in the language teacher as distinguished from the context variables; these two groups of variables – presage and context – determine another group of variables which is process variables or the learning process. The context variables deal with the context where the teacher is teaching, like the class, school, curriculum, and the surroundings, as well as the learners whom the teacher teaches. Whether the school facilitates the learning process well or not contributes to construct of the learning activities. In fact, the learners as individuals also have their own variables, such as the learner differences. The process variables as determined by the preceding two variables will later determine the product variables, which is the learning outcome.

The context of ELT in Indonesia has recently recognized the presence of ICT. Many of schools in Indonesia have been equipped with ICT technologies, like LCD projectors, internet connection, computers, audio visual technologies, and are available for teachers and students. Specifically for language learning, the presence of ICT has been marked by the emergence of CALL, Computer-Assisted Language Learning. According to Chapelle as cited in Brown (Brown), CALL is defined as 'the broad range of activities associated with technology and language learning' and it covers both computer and non-computer technology uses in the language classrooms. Its presence is accompanied by the expectations of English language teaching.

Many studies have ascertained that ICT can be favorable for ELT in many ways. Several of which, discovered by Demo (2001), Blake (2008), and Larsen-Freeman and Anderson (2011), are that ICT deals with the issues of time and space in teaching, enables English teachers to give more exposures of authentic language uses and contexts, as well as helps improve communication skills. These advantages for language teaching when integrating ICT should be supported by the teachers as the front liners in education. The computers or ICT technologies will not bring meaningful changes in language classrooms unless the language teachers attempt to do so Davis (2006).

Moreover, nowadays the advancement of ICT technologies has made learners more advanced in some ways than their teachers. Berk (2009) has listed 10 namings in total for learners who grow up and live with the technology, for example Millenials, Generation Y, Echo Boomers, Net Generation, Trophy Generation, to just name a few. Berk has also synthesized 20 educational implications of the characteristics, several of which are technology savvy, relying on search engine for information, interested in multimedia, learning by trial and error, and multitasking on everything. These characteristics are vital for teachers to know in order to find learning activities which best suit the context, as well as they should attempt to synchronize their attributes with the context where and whom they teach. This happens to be a demand the language teachers should fulfill in order to keep up with the standard of education in this age of ICT.

Despite the importance of integrating ICT in ELT, there are teachers who deliberately resist this. Their resistance is not only a matter of personal preference but more like the ignorance to the demand in their profession as teachers. Resistance, according to Knight (2009) resistance is the thought that one will not succeed or go smoothly of doing something, or it can be said that one is not cooperating. Knight has analyzed the occurrence of such attitude towards the implementation of new teaching practices to teachers and found some reasons; 1) whether the new teaching practices will be powerful when implemented, 2) whether they are easy to implement, 3) whether they are experienced to do so, 4) whether they are treated with respect, 5) whether the teachers do the thinking of the practices, and 6) whether the teachers' experiences towards changes were fine in the past. Specifically to English teaching, there are several underlying factors which may cause a teacher to resist a change in the language instruction. Harendita (2013) and Orlando (2014) have studied the attitude of teachers towards the use of ICT technologies in instruction and have found that the teacher's dilemma on their role during the teaching and learning activity becomes the most influential factor in their attitude. It implies that the teachers are not ready with the teacher-centered being shifted away by the learner-centered. Although it is not explained in both studies that the dilemma of the teachers' role has caused them to keep referring to teacher-centered learning, this is quite clear that the teachers are doubtful whether they could integrate ICT smoothly in their instruction. Understanding this kind of attitude, therefore, could become the concern of schools and educational authorities before expanding the forces for ICT-based education. Concerning the need of understanding the resistance, the present study aimed at exploring a teacher being resistant to ICT integration in ELT in order to discover factors causing this attitude to emerge. The findings of the study will yield practical significances for EFL teachers and school authorities as well as theoretical significances to understanding the ICT integration in ELT.

METHOD

This study was conducted on the basis of qualitative approach and employed a case study design. The subject of the study was an English teacher in one of high schools in Situbondo, East Java. This subject was obtained based on the observation and interview with the school staff and his other colleagues that he was resistant to ICT use both in teaching English and daily use.

The school where the subject teaches has been equipped with ICT technologies, for example, every class has been installed with LCD projector and Internet connection is available for all students and teachers. The school is located not far from the town which ensures that the teachers and students can access ICT technologies easily for their daily lives. This

characteristic of the school has been considered by the researcher in order to delimit the observation to the subject within a well-equipped ICT technologies environment.

The data were collected by the researcher alone by employing some other secondary instruments, like interview and observation to teaching circumstance and daily life. While the interview covered the questions regarding the subject's personal belief towards ICT integration in ELT, the observation was conducted to confirm and strengthen the data obtained from the interview. All the data were kept in field notes and audio and video recordings.

FINDINGS

The study has revealed the factors which contributed to the subject's resistance to ICT integration in ELT. This has started from his belief towards ICT especially in its use for teaching English which was obtained from an interview. It started from how he perceives the coming wave of ICT to English teaching practices. The researcher sensed positive but doubtful thought in his saying, as he said that ICT could bring good atmosphere to the class, but not likely to happen in his class. The good atmosphere, according to the subject, comes from the students' good feeling to study because of the presence of ICT technologies, like LCD projector, laptops, and smartphones. This feeling boosts their motivation to learn and participate in the activities. Not only the student is more motivated, the teacher also is more encouraged to creatively design the language classroom with more sophisticated technologies, like games and eye-catching PowerPoint presentation. Still, he was certain that such thing would not likely happen in his class.

As the study went on, the researcher found that the subject's doubt comes from his experience of failing in using ICT for daily use. He had failed several times when typing in his PC, for instance, he failed in saving the file in Ms. Word®. He learned using the technology for the first time from his colleagues and kids. He had not participated in trainings or sort so he did all as an autodidact. Such effort, however, did not help him much because he believed that it was hard for him to keep up with the complicated digital skill. He said that if only he started using ICT when he was younger, he could learn using ICT better, thus he frankly said that his age, almost 60, has dominated his resistance to ICT use in his language instruction. Being aged has limited the capacity to learn digital knowledge and skill.

Actually, the subject has been familiar with ICT use for daily purposes. He has been using a smartphone for communication, but limited to only call and short message services and hardly uses it beyond. He is aware of the presence of the Internet; nevertheless, he cannot use it and still needs other people to help him. Besides, he has a PC and sometimes uses it for inputting students' evaluation for school report. Rarely does he use it for teaching although he knows several uses of it, like displaying relevant images and playing songs or videos. His familiarity towards ICT both for daily purposes and teaching.

In his teaching practices, the subject admitted of not using ICT at all. For him, preparing teaching materials using computers and the Internet would not be of help because he could not do well to only type on Word, even less to make a PowerPoint presentation. At this point, he recognizes the benefits of using ICT for preparing teaching materials, but they are not for him who is a tech-illiterate. His recognition of the benefits is also implied in his sayings about how convenient his colleagues have been when they evaluate and score their students' work. This, however, does not push him forward to try learning again. The only thing he is aware of is that he will not succeed using ICT again. This is depicted in his teaching practice when observed by the researcher. The subject looked convenient using the conventional teaching method, which mostly used whiteboard and textbook for teaching. He reasoned that this method of teaching is what he has used in most of his teaching career. Even so, he allowed his students to use their gadgets to complete the task in the class. He argued that although he might not be able to use the technology, he should not constrict his students' will to use it in the class for enhancing their learning.

DISCUSSION

The attitude of resisting to ICT use in the language teaching practices seems complex because variables that occur are systemic. First, the study found that age becomes influential to the subject's motivation to learn. He believes that learning technology in his age will result nothing but failure since it requires much practice and astuteness. Secondly, this variable of age has influenced the variable of motivation to learn, whereas the motivation to learn is crucial for teachers in this era as the force for them to be better teachers. The motivation can lit up their desire to start and keep learning the technology. Moreover, as mentioned that the motivation to learn is not high which causes him to be discouraged to learn the technology, it results in his not being able to operate ICT technologies. What needs to be concerned is that when teachers are not able to operate ICT technologies, in which being able to operate it is the core element in this practice, they may not be able to use ICT in the language instruction. Therefore, when they cannot operate it well, they are not likely to use it in their language instruction.

Resisting to ICT Use in Language Instruction

The observation has yielded a temporary conclusion that the age of the teacher influences his or her attitude towards ICT in the language instruction. The older the teacher, the lesser they use ICT in the language instruction. However, this is still put in question whether age can be very determining. In fact, a study in 2012 by Nair et al. has supported the findings of this study, which finds that the older teachers perform less ICT in the class than the younger ones. However, as they suggest that this finding should not become an excuse for the older teachers to stay in their comfort teaching zone. As teachers, they should be ready with the demands in the curriculum. Kumaravadivelu (2003) has posited about the demand for teachers to understand

their language class holistically by proposing ten macrostrategies for teaching language, such like; 1) maximizing learning opportunities, 2) minimizing perceptual mismatches, 3) facilitating negotiated interaction, 4) promoting learner autonomy, 5) fostering language awareness, 6) activating intuitive heuristics, 7) contextualizing linguistic input, 8) integrating language skills, 9) ensuring social relevance, and 10) raising cultural consciousness. These macrostrategies are recommended for teachers to cope in the context where they are teaching.

As regards the importance of using ICT in the language instruction, a teacher is supposed to creatively design the language classroom in a way that it best meets the learners' needs using ICT. Instead of resisting it, a teacher is expected to keep being informed about the latest technology for teaching. Moreover, knowing that the learners might have found it before their teacher, the teacher should catch up with them and direct them to the use of the technology which can enhance their language learning. Unless doing so, the teacher may find learners being a tech-savvy without actually relating their digital knowledge to the language. Whereas, many websites or kinds of software that allow learners to be autonomous learners, they are not actually aware of them.

Since the teachers are supposed to keep updated instead of resisting ICT use in the language instruction, taking age as an excuse implies a less professional attitude. Every language teacher should be aware of the continuously changing needs of learning and be prepared with them. Although one might find it hard to deal with the technologies, this should not be taken as buts. The concerns that something might fail – in this case is using ICT in the class – is a negative attitude which every teacher should wipe away so that they can make the language classroom as effective as it could be. In fact, this concern and the decision made to resist ICT reflects their failure to understand their profession as a language teacher.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
Conclusions

A teacher's belief towards learners, learning, and themselves, contribute to the process of learning in the language classroom. Besides, there are context variables that the teacher should be aware of, which involve the school or environment where he or she teaches, and learners whom he or she teaches. In fact, within the context there are other complex variables which the teacher should not ignore, like the presence of ICT. This circumstance has manifested not only in the school support but also in the learners' characteristics, and it has been proven to be important for improving language teaching. The importance of ICT use in language instruction, especially in creating an effective teaching and learning activities, should have become the push for teachers in order to make themselves ready and capable of operating the technologies. However, not every teacher has such positive attitude; some decide to resist. Therefore, this study attempted to explore a resistant teacher to find out the influential variables to his resistance.

The study findings revealed that the variables are interrelated. It starts from the age of the teacher, that being aged hinders him from mastering ICT use for teaching English. This variable of age has also led to him being discouraged to start learning. For sure, without learning one would be hard to know the how to of operating ICT. Therefore, when the subject finds out that he is incapable, he decides to employ what is convenient to him; the conventional teaching method.

The variable of age has also been studied previously and found to be influential, indeed. However, a point to ponder is the professional demand for teachers should be taken into consideration beyond their age. Therefore, when age is used as an excuse will reflect poor understanding of the profession. The study concludes that the most influential factor of resistance to ICT integration in language instruction is the teachers' failure to understand their profession despite their age.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the study findings, the study has points of contribution to teaching practices and theory of ICT use in language instruction. Practically, the findings suggest teachers to be aware of demands of teaching and learning and deal with them professionally. The findings can also be used for school authorities to maintain the teachers' quality by providing trainings and adequate supports. Finally, prospective researchers can benefit from the findings the comprehensive explanation of a resistant English teacher to ICT integration. However, this study is delimited to an aged teacher which makes the variable of age salient. Further observation on other younger teachers are needed to complete the theory of ICT use in language instruction.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Berk, R. A. 2009. Teaching Strategies for the Net Generation. *Transformative Dialogues: Teaching & Learning Journal, 3*(2).

Blake, R. J. 2008. *Brave New Digital Classroom: Technology and Foreign Language Learning*. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press.

Brown, H. D. 2007. *Teaching by Principles: An Interactive Approach to Language Pedagogy* (3rd ed.). White Plains, New York: Pearson Education, Inc.

Davis, R. 2006. Utopia or Chaos? The Impact of Technology on Language Teaching. *The Internet TESL Journal, 12*(11).

Demo, D. A. 2001. Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers *ERIC Digest* (Vol. ED456672, pp. 1-7): ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics Washington DC.

Harendita, M. E. 2013. Why Resist? A Closer Look at Indonesian Teachers' Resistance to ICT. *International Journal of Indonesian Studies, 1*, 41-57.

Knight, J. 2009. What Can We Do About Teacher Resistance? *Phi Delta Kappan, 90*(07), 508-513.

Kumaravadivelu, B. 2003. *Beyond Methods: Macrostrategies for Language Teaching*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Larsen-Freeman, D., & Anderson, M. (2011). *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching* (3rd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nair, G. K. S., Rahim, R. A., Setia, R., Husin, N., Sabapathy, E., Mohamad, R., . . . Jalil, N. A. A. (2012). ICT and teachers' attitude in English language teaching. *Asian Social Science, 8* (11), 8-12.

Orlando, J. 2014. Veteran Teachers and Technology: Change Fatigue And Knowledge Insecurity Influence Practice. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 20*(4), 427-439.

Stern, H. H. 1983. *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Williams, M., & Burden, R. L. 1997. *Psychology for Language Teachers: a Social Constructivist Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.