



Indonesian English teachers' voices on the revitalization program at vocational schools

Ahmad Kailani, Dina Rafidiyah

Universitas Muhammadiyah Banjarmasin, Indonesia

This research reports on the results of an interview study of nine English teachers at vocational schools (VS) in Indonesia. The study aimed to explore English teachers' voices of two elements of the revitalization program at VSs in Indonesia. The study shed the light on the use of specific technology in the language classroom and video mediated language learning in vocational English classroom. The results indicated that most of teachers more preferably used social media for teaching than utilizing a learning management system (LMS). Teachers have used video mediated teaching method for their English classes either self-production videos or a ready-made video from the internet. English for business was also introduced to students to equip them with basic knowledge for a job selection. The results have implications for the implementation of revitalization programs in particular the revitalization of vocational English teaching and learning at vocational schools in Indonesia.

Keywords: vocational school, case study English teachers at Vocational Schools, revitalization of vocational schools

OPEN ACCESS

ISSN 2503 3492 (online)

*Correspondence:

Ahmad Kailani

ahmadikay@gmail.com

Received: 11th October 2021

Accepted: 5th March 2022

Published: 18th March 2022

Citation:

Kailani A, Rafidiyah D, (2022).

Indonesian English Teachers' Voices on the Revitalization Program at Vocational Schools

Thesis.

JEES (Journal of English Educators Society), 7(1).

doi. [org/10.21070/jees.v7i1.1658](https://doi.org/10.21070/jees.v7i1.1658)

INTRODUCTION

The Presidential Instruction number 9 year 2016 has been issued as a regulation to ensure the implementation of revitalization program of vocational schools in Indonesia. Revitalization of vocational school is the re-orientation of vocational education goals toward industry demand driven learning goals ([Kemdikbud, 2017](#)) This is one the government efforts in tackling the issues of unemployment and poverty due to the contribution of vocational school alumni to the increasing rate of unemployment in this country. There are ten strategic programs that need to be implemented ([Hadam, Rahayu, & Ariyadi, 2017](#)). However, [Rafidiyah & Kailani \(2020\)](#) suggest that not all the strategic programs should be undertaken simultaneously, the schools need to choose the most urgent and achievable one. [Suhirman \(2019\)](#) contends that there are at least three things that need to be taken into account in order to achieve that goal: (1) vision and missions of the schools that are relevant to the industry and business needs, or, it is commonly called as link and match program; (2) Demand-driven curriculum content that meet industry and business requirement; (3) there should be a dual-based program where learning and internships can be undertaken synchronously between schools and insutries. Therefore, vocational school revitalization program is an urgent call for implementation to bridge a gap between industry and vocational education. Revitalization also helps a vocational school find its uniqueness and core strength among other schools.

The uniqueness and strengths may become distinctive feature of the school to attract more new students to enroll themselves. As the demand of workforce by industries and companies has increased rapidly, this is a momentum for vocational schools to equip their alumni with the most competitive job skills. The most competitive skills are English language and technology literacy (Rafidiyah & Kailani, 2019). In the same vein, [Lee, Wahidiat, & Khurniawan \(2017\)](#) propose seven recommendations to reorient English curriculum objectives at vocational schools: (1) setting up a more clear learning objective; (2) curriculum development (3) teacher professional development; (4) internationally recognized vocational skills; (5) the use of digital and interactive technology (6) the introduction of millenium young generation characteristics to students (7) the improvement of English teaching quality. Therefore, it is important to explore English teachers' readiness in delivering good quality of teaching and the ability of using technology for teaching.

The integration of technology into language learning has improved the effectiveness of teaching delivery ([Aflah & Yanti, 2019](#)). In the same vein, [Surjono & Susila \(2013\)](#) argue that every teacher should be technologically literate in order to optimize the learning outcomes. They proved that the use of multimedia resources has increased students' learning results by 70%. Furthermore, [Sari \(2017\)](#) and [Wichadee \(2017\)](#) state that blended learning can be an effective learning mode, in particular when it is combined a block system. However, the lack of supporting facilities has been the pitfalls. This promising potential of the use of information technology in language learning at vocational school is in line with one of the goals of the revitalization program where there are 5.5 million of vocational school alumni with IT skills in 2020 ([Kemdikbud, 2017](#)). Thus, ICT is an integral part of teaching pedagogy at vocational school which requires both students and teachers to be more technologically literate.

Although there have been a plethora of study conducted in the evaluation of the use of technology in EFL classroom, there has been no study specifically conducted to investigate the integration of ICT into vocational English in the context of revitalization program in Indonesia. To fill this void, the current study is aimed to explore English teachers' voices of two key aspects of English teaching at vocational schools, namely technology mediated language learning and video mediated language learning.

METHOD

This is an interview study to explore English teachers' Nine English teachers, comprises 5 English teachers from private vocational schools and 4 English teachers from the public ones were invited for semi structured interviews to explore their perspectives of using technology mediated language learning and video mediated language learning. The participants are English teachers from schools which have been granted a revitalization program by the Ministry of Education.

To get the access to the participant, we first sent a formal letter to the school expressing our intention of conducting a study there. Then the school principals recommended the teachers we can invite to join in the study. After this, we

invited the English teachers for semi structured interviews either face-to face meeting or through WhatsApp. In the "Result" section of this paper, each respondent is labeled according to English teacher category (private teacher = GS; public teacher = GN) e.g. GS1; GN1

Procedures of data collection

The semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain the data from the English teachers ([Qu & Dumay, 2011](#)). It was quite challenging to find the best time to interview the respondents since the data were taken during Pandemic Covid 19. The following themes were asked in Bahasa Indonesia: (1) teaching English using technology; (2) the use of videos for teaching vocational English and (3) vocational English skills being learnt. From those topics, the questions were asked to gain the information needed in this study ([Miles & Michael, 1994](#)). Some interviews were audiotaped and later transcribed for analysis; some others were using WhatsApp Texts.

Analysis

The data were analyzed thematically using [Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules \(2017\)](#)'s steps. The procedures of analysis as follow: (1)

familiarizing with the data; (2) generating initial codes; (3) searching for themes; (4) reviewing themes; (5) defining and naming themes; and (6) producing the report. Then, the report can build a valid argument for choosing the themes by referring to the literature.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Following are findings garnered from interviews with all the participants:

1. Specific technology for teaching

Social media is more preferably used than learning management system and interactive apps. The majority of respondents stated that they deployed technology in teaching delivery whereas there was only one respondent who did not use technology for teaching. Generally speaking, English teachers from private vocational schools think that the use of technology in teaching is about using social media for teaching. One of the respondents reflected as follows: I still use social media as a tool to facilitate assignment submissions and assignment uploads. For learning, the technology used is only a laptop allowed, so when teaching and learning activities take place children are allowed to use a laptop to navigate the materials and other sources with the support of WIFI from the school. At the moment, only WhatsApp and email are being used, yesterday I had an assignment to make a video, and it was uploaded on Instagram and YouTube. (GS5)

The use of social media is still inseparable from teaching and learning activities although its use is integrated with some interactive apps: Edmodo (never being used anymore, students prefer not to use it because it consumes lots of internet data). To replace it, teachers use Google Form or WhatsApp Group, Kahoot in their class. (GN1). Especially for internships, Google Classroom was used as the learning platform. (GN2).

It is no wonder that the majority of participants prefer social media to other Learning management system since it is more efficient, effective, and cost savvy for delivering learning materials. On top of that, social media is a kind of today's lifestyle among society, including academic community. As Kessler (2017) contend that social media use is part of emancipatory culture. The increasing number of social media across the globe indicates that people need to adopt this life style in order to be admitted as the community member.

In another perspective, [Reinhardt \(2020\)](#) exemplifies the use of social media in ESL/EFL domain as the "windows, mirrors, doorways, and playgrounds". As a window, learners can observe how native speakers use and express the language authentically from videos and images they share in that social networking platform. Social media can also be used to construct language learners' identities through certain idealized concept they adopted. This metaphor is called as social media as a mirror. Then, social media as a doorway would give an opportunity for language learners to participate in the target language cultural and intercultural practices. The last, social media as a play group, this metaphor indicates that learners not only learn from social media, but they also can gain fun activities there in relation to language learning.

In general, all private vocational schools have no particular Learning Management System whereas two public vocational schools have owned their Learning Management System. Unfortunately, at the moment, this learning management system is not used anymore due to the limited access of server. However, some respondents have used Moodle or Google Classroom as the alternative platforms. The Learning Management System was tried out, but, the internet server could not cover all users. Therefore, only 90 students were able to log in. (GN1)

2. Video mediated learning at vocational schools

The English teachers reported that students are able to independently search for e-books and educational video online. Regarding educational videos, all participants took the videos from the internet and used this audio visual media for teaching conversation, text genres, telephoning, or even for only entertaining students. There was no participant who was able to create and develop self creation video. This is because they are not familiar with the technology.

Especially for seventh graders, we learnt social functions, structure of texts, and linguistics feature of the text, in particular, those related to curriculum vitae and summary (GS 5). I am not a technologically literate person. I ever used videos and powerpoint slides, but, it did not spark my students' enthusiasm. Alternatively, I chose Whatsapp, e-mail, and Google Classroom as my online classroom platforms.

Usually, I gave students quizzes, then we came to the main topic. By doing so, it was easier to attract students' attention. If I am not mistaken, this is called Problem Based Learning, isn't it? Before I knew this approach, usually, I just asked students some questions and let them make inferences, then I just followed their understandings. For the video use, we learnt language features, tenses, text genres, and text structure through video mediated language learning. If I am asked why? Simply because independent learning would enable them to download any videos that suit their needs, and can be used as a topic of discussion (GN4). Apart from the frequent use of video in language classroom, not all teachers assign students to create their own video projects. However, there were three teachers who assigned their students to create videos as their school projects.

For instance, the topic about giving opinion can be discussed in the class or students were asked to create a video about the topic. (GS2). Yes, we asked students to make video about self-introduction, bargaining when shopping (GS4). For eleventh graders, we asked them to make videos about social functions of text, text structure, and language features of procedure texts, giving and accessing information regarding technology use in accordance with their majors and context of learning. (GS 5).

Comparatively speaking, the majority of English teachers at Public Vocational Schools assigned their students to make video about speaking practice. There was only one teacher who did not ask his student to do video assignment. Yes, for instance, twelfth graders created a video about "Speech" and "Asking Help" (GN1). Yep, making video about speaking (GN2). Students ever made videos about procedural text, describing dialogue, bargaining. (GN3).

In fact, video-based learning brings many benefits for students. [Yousef, Chatti, & Schroeder \(2014\)](#) conclude that video based learning would give benefits to learners if it is used appropriately. They reviewed the current research in this field and found that the use of Video Based Learning style increased students' interaction and learning satisfaction. Not only that, the findings indicate that this learning style also increased collaborative learning among students. The video created by learners can also be used as reflection tools which enable learners and teachers self-reflect on what they have gained from learning and what things need to be improved in the future.

However, based on the research findings of this study, teachers' understanding about technology enhanced language learning is still limited to the use of social media in EFL classroom and the use of video for learning. Internet connection has been still the major issue for an online learning. Blended learning would be a better alternative to address this issue in the future. As [Sukrawan, Soemarto, & Komaro \(2018\)](#) found that a hybrid class, where online and offline meeting are combined, really supports students learning achievement. Thus, government supports in providing learning facilities and training for English teachers are essential for an improvement of education quality.

3. providing students with job seeking skills

Regarding job seeking skills, the teachers have taught following materials:

a. The importance of mastering English

The majority of respondents said that they ever shared the announcement of job vacancy where English skill is one of the requirements. Yes, we were told about the opportunities of working overseas and student's exchange. During 2012-2015 there were a student exchange and teacher exchange to AMINEF and ASEAN (Korea) funded by the school. TOEIC test has been continuously undertaken, those who achieve 750 points they will be sent to Japan (GN3).

b. Writing cover letter and CV

All participants said that they taught students about writing cover letter and CV either in English or in Bahasa Indonesia. They delivered this lesson to third year students. Yes, cover letter is really important for those who want to apply for a job either in a governmental institution or a private sector (GS5). Students were asked to write CV and application letter both in English and Indonesian language. (GS2). Yes, we use video mediated learning for teaching application letter and CV (GN 1).

Usually, I took the example from the internet and we learnt the format together with the following steps: (1) follow the template; (2) edit the information on the cover letter and put each student's personal data; (3) after students are to write the letter independently, then they are asked to write their own cover letter.

c. Job interview simulation

There were two respondents who did not teach their students about job interview since they thought that this job belongs to subject specialist teachers. However, there were three other teachers who already equipped their students with this skill.: Maybe that lesson was taught by subject specialist teachers. There was no such learning content in our coursebooks (GS1). For third year students, job interview was taught, but only an introduction and a job presentation, the majority of students were not confident with their English (GS4).

On the other hand, English teachers at a pharmacy vocational school stated that they did not teach about job interview in depth. The lessons were delivered through videos and let students understand the topic. They taught students about pharmacy only. Yes, job interview lessons were taught through video. Only those who have good English skill can answer the question, while the rest of the class remained silent. (GN1). Job interview has not been taught yet to second year students. They were only taught about pharmacy. It was taught using video showing a pharmacist served customers at a dispensary.

d. Socialization of work preparation to VS's alumni Either private vocational schools or the public ones had no particular job preparation program for their alumni. Even there was no a handbook containing knowledge and skills that students need for a job application. There is no a guide book or a handbook. That should be Career and Job Centre's task or public relation division program (GN3). We only take in charge of career and job affairs (GN4).

Based on the findings, it can be inferred that work preparation program, especially those related to the improvement of vocational school students' English skill, should include training and workshops on writing job application, CV, summary, and simulation of job interview. This is very important to make students psychologically ready for a job competition. Sari (2013) suggested that without being psychologically ready, it is hard for alumni to win a job selection.

CONCLUSION

The revitalization program can be perceived as an innovative program launched by the government. However, practically speaking, its implementation should be another well-crafted plan. Many aspects may be affected by this new program. The absence of good planning and clear procedures may result in the failure of the programs. At least, four core aspects that need to be taken into account, for a successful English for Vocational Purposes lesson at VS's. First, technology enhanced language learning that meet students' needs. Second, the use of proper video mediated language learning for students. Third, sufficient English for business inputs to students. Fourth, the creation of English environment as a language exposure for students. The findings indicate that not all participants are able to fulfill the four core learning needs. Lack of facilities and human resources issues are still the major problems in today's vocational education. All in all, even though this current study quite comprehensively captured English teachers' voices of the implementation of revitalization program at their institutions, there are still more extensive studies needed in this field. Students' voices of the implementation of program would be another interesting aspect to delve into.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Thank you to the Ministry of Research and Higher Education as the main sponsor for this study. Furthermore, we also extend the gratitude to our sources for interview and research subjects, especially to the students of Nursing Bachelor Program in the University of Muhammadiyah Banjarmasin.

REFERENCES

- Aflah, M. N., & Yanti, G. S. (2019). Framework teknologi multimedia untuk pengajaran Bahasa Inggris. *Jurnal Pendidikan Edutama*, 6(2), 61. <https://doi.org/10.30734/jpe.v6i2.480>.
- Hadam, S., Rahayu, N., & Ariyadi, A. N. (2017). Strategi implementasi revitalisasi SMK. In *Buku Serial Revitalisasi SMK*. https://doi.org/10.1300/J028v11n01_10
- Kemdikbud (2017). Revitalisasi SMK untuk produktifitas dan daya saing bangsa. Retrieved from <http://www.kemdikbud.go.id/main/blog/2017/05/revitalisasi-smk-untuk-produktivitas-dan-daya-saing-bangsa>
- Kessler, G. (2018). Technology and the future of language teaching. *Foreign language annals*, 51(1), 205-218.
- Lee, J., Wahidiat, S., & Khurniawan, A. W. (2017). Strategi implementasi revitalisasi SMK melalui bilingual learning ecosystem. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00253-011-3237-z>

- Miles, B., & Michael, A. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 14(4), 336–337. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0272-4944\(05\)80231-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0272-4944(05)80231-2)
- Nowell, L. S., Norris, J. M., White, D. E., & Moules, N. J. (2017). Thematic analysis: Striving to meet the trustworthiness criteria. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 16, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>
- Qu, S. Q., & Dumay, J. (2011). The qualitative research interview. *Qualitative Research in Accounting and Management*, 8(3), 238–264. <https://doi.org/10.1108/11766091111162070>
- Rafidiyah, D., & Kailani, A. (2019). Revitalisasi pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di SMK: Solusi konkrit bagi permasalahan pengangguran di Indonesia. In *Rekomendasi kebijakan 100 hari pertama Jokowi-Ma'ruf Amin* (p. 140).
- Rafidiyah, D., & Kailani, A. (2020). Identifikasi potensi SMK Muhammadiyah sebagai lembaga pendidikan vokasi yang berkemajuan: Studi fenomenologi terhadap penerapan program revitalisasi SMK di Indonesia. *Pedagogik Jurnal Pendidikan*, 15(1), 49–66. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781107415324.004>
- Reinhardt, J. (2020). Metaphors for social media-enhanced foreign language teaching and learning. *Foreign Language Annals*, 53(2), 234–242.
- Sari, L. H. P. (2013). Persiapan siswa dalam memasuki dunia kerja dan impiasinya terhadap pelayanan bimbingan dan konseling. *KONSELOR Jurnal Ilmiah Konseling*, 2(1), 208–212.
- Sari, R. K. (2017). Persepsi pengajar dan pemelajar terhadap penggunaan teknologi dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris. *Jurnal SAP*, 1(3), 333–343.
- Suhirman. (2019). Revitalisasi pendidikan kejuruan agribisnis pengolahan hasil pertanian melalui pengembangan kurikulum berbasis industri, teaching factory dan sertifikasi kompetensi. *Jurnal Rekayasa Dan Manajemen Agroindustri*, 7(2), 279–291.
- Sukrawan, Y., Soemarto, & Komaro, M. (2018). Blended learning development for vocational education. *IOP Conference Series: Materials Science and Engineering*, 434, 012262. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1757-899X/434/1/012262>
- Surjono, H. D., & Susila, H. R. (2013). Pengembangan multimedia pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris untuk SMK. *Jurnal Pendidikan Vokasi*, 3(1), 45–52.
- Wichadee, S. (2017). A development of the blended learning model using edmodo for maximizing students' oral proficiency and motivation. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 12(2), 137–154. <https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v12i02.6324>
- Yousef, A. M. F., Chatti, M. A., & Schroeder, U. (2014). The state of video-based learning: A review and future perspectives. *International Journal on Advances in Life Sciences*, 6(3), 122–135.
- Conflict of Interest Statement: The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Copyright © 2022 Ahmad Kailani, Dina Rafidiyah. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY). The use, distribution or reproduction in other forums is permitted, provided the original author(s) and the copyright owner(s) are credited and that the original publication in this journal is cited, in accordance with accepted academic practice. No use, distribution or reproduction is permitted which does not comply with these terms.