LETTERING AS AN ARTISTIC ACTIVITY TO INTEGRATE ENGLISH CREATIVE LEARNING WITH HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

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Abstract

The English language is challenging. Learning material is in its current state, and sometimes does not promote creativity. Students are looking for fun ways to learn the language. Lettering is one of current art activities that provides both creativity and fun. Applying lettering to the English language requires a module, to make it work.

Keyword: English creative learning

INTRODUCTION

English language is a major subject with various learning challenges. Primary schools have been taught English as a subject ranging from 1st up to 6th grade in the elementary level. Other schools have been practicing the language from kindergarten.

Teachers of young learner requires creative thinking in delivering the language learning. Being a creative professional and innovative could help teachers to teach English subject up to the most demanding aspects in the language such as oral communicative skill. In recent days English language teaching (ELT) seems to narrow down the language to be more practical. Students are accustomed to be able to express themselves and knowledge with convincing language spontaneously.

Creative intuition could also help students to be a creative person. In one of Günes’s study (2016, p.132) conveyed that creativity elements help the development of children’s creativity skills.

There are not many language learning research that putting hand-lettering into the discussion teach English language. This artistic activity had potential in utilizing interactive and creative learning.

This article constructs a discovery concerning the limitations in teaching English as a second language, and how the lettering could be added as a fresh method fused in the learning instruction. Additionally, this article may provide a useful understanding of the boundaries within traditional teaching and learning process and how creative learning may be able to uncover any hidden layers that might ignite a new approach in learning the language.

The Nature of Learning Material

Tomlinson (1998, p.2) emphasizes that materials can be anything which is used by teachers or learners to utilize language learning. To add to those findings, Richard and Renandya (2002, p.65-66) stated that teaching materials as a key component in most language programs that may in the form of (a) printed
materials, (b) non-print materials, (c) materials that comprise both print and non-print sources.

**English Creative Learning**

To understand English creative learning, one needs to know about the nature of creativity. Originally, creativity is an entity that vessels human imagination in producing an artistic work. It is an ability, transcends traditional ways of thinking or acting, and it develops new and original things.

**English Oral Communicative Skills**

In an attempt to pursue fluency in the English language, spelling is as important as speaking and other oral communicative skills. It is a skill that bridges between reading comprehension and writing skills. This supported by one of the Muslim (2014, p.107) studies where he found out that spelling is essential for communicating correct and clear meaning. Spelling is needed to enhance students’ improvement in English language. Accurate spelling reflects more advanced linguistic knowledge because it requires the integration of phonological, orthographic, and morphological knowledge (Ehri, 2000, p.19).

**Pronunciation in Oral Communicative Skills**

Pronunciation is that one of the language skills that bridges between practical learning and oral communicative skills. Purwanto (2019, p.82) describes pronunciation skill as a key element of the learning or oral skills in a second language. Studying pronunciation is equal to learning ways used to pronounce English vocabulary. The term “Pronunciation” means the way in which a word or letter is said, or said correctly, or the way in which a language is spoken.

Purwanto (2019, p.84) addressed pronunciation as an important thing in English teaching material for it has a paramount role to shape and reinforce the quality of pronunciation teaching and learning. In terms of communicative skills, in one of Gilbert's books (2005), she linked pronunciation directly to listening comprehension. Taken from Cook (1996; Gilakjani, 2016, p. 2), defined pronunciation as the production of English sounds. Pronunciation is learnt by repeating sounds and correcting them when produced inaccurately.

**Hands-On Activity**

Hands-on activity lets students grow interest in the subject and learn based on the experiences and the environment they are exposed to. Adawiyah (2014, p.9) study discovered that there are several studies regarding hands-on activity, most of them used media and techniques to enhance student's ability in language skills. To integrate hands-on activity and lettering to language-learning context, lettering offers students to practice drawing patterns and shapes of letters. In accordance with lettering, drawing shapes of letters starts with making a guideline and sketching the letter pattern before moving to the next step. It is very important to know what kind of letter one wants to draw. Guidelines in lettering assist the information of acknowledging the letter pattern and procedures to draw the object from start until finish.

Aside from principal guidelines, typography offers teachers tools to enhance a better learning experience to the students. To connect it with ELT context, art can serve as an invaluable tool for language teachers to give instructions, demonstrate a lesson plan, and explain the subject; and for learners to learn vocabulary and practice language in various contexts.

**The Origins of Lettering**
Prior to the modern era, lettering was known as one of the typography branches. In one of Cullen’s books (2012, p.12) she described typography as a process, a refined craft that makes language visible. This crafting was derived way back to the prehistoric era, when cave paintings existed. Over time, ancient cultures adapted and refined this conceptual handwork into a complex mechanism with marks, or symbols. Those mark the birth of alphabets. In recent years, typography thrives with the arts and crafts movement, through calligraphy and lettering. Lettering itself is basically an extension of the traditional typography and scribing culture; an art discipline that uses letters to form a design.

Hidayat (2017, p.7) explained in his study that lettering is the art of drawing letters that consists of particular combinations of various shapes of letters that are used to create works of art as well as to make anything more visually appealing.

“Free Hand Lettering Practice Worksheets, Free Brush Calligraphy Practice Sheets, 3+ Free Printable Modern Calligraphy Practice Sheets, etc.” are many names of obtainable lettering practice sheets freely distributed through digital download, websites, or purchasable through online publishers. (Peony, 2009; Nicole, 2019; Kelly, 2018).

In the higher academic level, lettering has been taught as the visual art and studied at specific places such as University or workshops. In accordance to the language learning however, it is not as if lettering instantly integrates into the English subject. This conversion will be explained into two; Integrating lettering into English learning material, and integrating lettering into English language learning.

**Integrating Lettering into English Learning Material**

In some collected studies and resources, lettering originated from typography; an art form of arranging letters or words. In terms of common perspective, arranging words with a means of developing a learning material can be classified into designing language material and not considered as an art or part of learning. In accordance to design language material, joint research of Hoener, Salend, & Kay (1997 p.32-35) agreed in some point that typography is one of the fundamental aspects for educators or designers of language-teaching materials. To add more about the importance of typography in designing learning material, Romney’s study (2018, p.139) pronounced that typography can enrich the way in which language is represented on the page and influences the reader’s perception of the text. With typography, educators could understand the basics of material design using principles of typography to enhance the readability and legibility of any printed learning materials; handouts, worksheets, tests, overheads, and review material.

To add the importance of lettering in the learning material, lettering can serves as an invaluable tool for language teachers to give instructions, demonstrate a lesson plan, and explain the subject; and for learners to learn vocabulary and practice language in various contexts. Aside from principal guidelines, typography offers teachers tools to enhance a better learning experience to the students.

**Integrating Lettering into English Language Learning**

In attempts to elaborate the idea of how lettering could promote the learning in the language environment, in English subject there are many ways to learn the language, and one of the learning spectrums is known as the creative learning. In
one of her books about teaching English creatively, Cremin (2009, p.7) emphasize that creative English learning is an engaging, highly participatory experience involving a degree of playfulness and the possibilities for participation in a variety of contexts.

METHODS

The researcher applied a qualitative approach in this article. Qualitative research is a positioned movement that finds the spectator in the world. It includes the quality of explanatory material that makes the creation evident. Therefore, this study employs the method of collecting data, describing, classifying and analyzing the data and then drawing conclusions to conduct the research.

Studying the problem for qualitative researchers is using an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry. This study used descriptive qualitative and narrative research to investigate the procedure as well books and additional interconnected orientations to sustenance the focus matter.

Bogdan and Taylor discovered that the qualitative method is a research procedure that obtains descriptive data written and spoken from the people and their behavior which is being observed (Bodgan, Taylor; Moleong, 2010).

Creswell (2007:54) emphasizes that narrative is “A kind of qualitative in which the investigator illustrates the lives of characters, accumulates and tells stories about individuals' lives, and writes narratives of characteristic experiences.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Lettering can act as a subtle approach in the form of hands-on activity. Hands-on activity is one of the creative learning approach that embrace creative learning by fostering a play or engagement with hands. In English language, creative learning had many possibilities to expand the language learning to be enjoyable and fun.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The research questions addressed in this study concerned about one learning method and an approach outside the language environment. In order to come up with answers to the research question of this study, first

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It can be inferred that the creative learning is more effective than the traditional method because the performance of children in speaking who received creative approach had a better language perception than the kids who received traditional learning method. To add the importance of lettering in the English creative learning, lettering can serves as an invaluable tool for language teachers to give instructions, demonstrate a lesson plan, and explain the subject; and for learners to learn vocabulary and practice language in various contexts. Aside from principal guidelines, typography offers teachers tools to enhance a better learning experience to the students. Adding another layer to the drawing letters, In connection to the language learning, drawing was observed by one of the
Mackenzie (2013) study where she emphasized that drawing can support student acquisition of the language skills.

REFERENCE


