

## **USING CAPTIONED VIDEOS IN TEACHING ENGLISH VOCABULARY: A CASE STUDY ON A PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER**

Nur Syairah Rahim  
[syairahrahim@gmail.com](mailto:syairahrahim@gmail.com)  
*International Islamic University Malaysia*

Afina Nazira Afnezul  
[afinanazira@unisel.edu.my](mailto:afinanazira@unisel.edu.my)  
*Faculty of Education and Social Sciences, University Selangor*

### **ABSTRACT**

Videos are regarded as one of the audio-visual materials that can be used in the teaching and learning of English language. Videos provide different elements that can provide exposure and practice on various language skills which include vocabulary mastery. Therefore, this study sought to find out how a teacher can use captioned videos to teach vocabulary in the primary school setting. The respondent was a practicing English teacher in a primary school in Pahang and he was chosen using purposive sampling. The data was collected using a semi-structured interview and then analyzed using thematic analysis. There were four themes emerged based on the data analysis which were Intrinsic Motivation, Planning, Implementation and Teacher's Role. The findings are in hope to give light to ESL teachers on how to use captioned videos in teaching vocabulary.

**Keywords:** *captioned videos, vocabulary, teaching method, Mayer's theory, multimedia.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Using technology has been widely used in the teaching and learning of a language. This method can also be known as Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). There were several stages of this method since the past years. The stages have their own theoretical framework related to language learning. The first stage was the behaviouristic phase of CALL where learners learned grammar explicitly and used drilling exercises most of the time (Tafazoli & Golshan, 2014). However, this stage was criticised for not giving the learners opportunities to learn through authentic-based activities and did not value communicative activities (Kazemi & Narafshan, 2014).

Due to the criticism, another stage emerged which was Communicative CALL. Gandhi (2014) claims that this stage provided different approaches to language learning using computers to create solutions for meaningful learning as some of the activities were project-based and content-based. Nevertheless, Communicative CALL was also criticized for not being able to connect the usage of computers to language learning as the computer is only there for ad-hoc functions (Tafazoli & Golshan, 2014).

Therefore, the last stage and the current stage of CALL was introduced which was termed as Integrative CALL. Integrative CALL focuses more on incorporating the different skills of

language learning while at the same time integrating technology as a whole instead of just visiting computer labs for isolated exercises (Barani, 2013). Integrative CALL is the phase whereby multimedia is known as one of the tools of technology to be incorporated in the teaching and learning of a language. Videos, which mainly consist of moving graphics, sounds and at times can also include texts, are also included in the components of multimedia.

Videos or for the purpose of this study, captioned videos, are being widely used in teaching English language. There were researchers who investigated the effect using captioned videos to teach English and most of the results were positive (Etemadi, 2012; Hsu et al, 2012; Karakaş & Sarıçoban, 2012; Lin & Tseng, 2012; Bavaharji et al, 2014; Chan et al, 2014; Mousavi & Gholami, 2014). Hence, for this study, the use of captioned videos is considered as one of the ways to help improve learners' English language particularly in vocabulary.

## **BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

Even after almost 11 years of learning English in schools, Malaysian students' English proficiency level still needs to be improved (Yunus, 2017). It is found that, even at tertiary level, Malaysian students were still struggling in mastering English language skills (Kadir & Noor, 2015; Harji et al, 2015). One of these studies argued that this problem started from learning in schools and that their proficiency level was already inhibited. This has been an ongoing issue despite having English as the second language in the Malaysian context (Thirusanku & Yunus, 2014).

There are various factors that could contribute to the students' low proficiency level in Malaysia. According to Kaur (2013), One of the reasons was the low vocabulary attainment during school years. This matter could be hindering the students to master other main language skills which are reading, listening, writing and speaking (Kaur, 2012). When students have little vocabulary known to them then they are not able to use them or even manage to understand the meaning conveyed (Varatharajoo et al., 2015). Kaur (2013) also mentioned that lacking in vocabulary resulted in students' low achievement in different stages.

Hence, teachers play a major role in addressing the students' inadequacy of vocabulary knowledge and consider various ways for the students to gain and enhance their vocabulary (Bavaharji et al., 2014). Based on this particular research, one of the ways to teach vocabulary is using captioned videos. Therefore, this research was conducted to give light on other teachers to consider applying this technique in developing their students' vocabulary to aid for better proficiency level in English language

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **Mayer's Cognitive Multimedia Learning Theory**

This study used Mayer's Cognitive Multimedia Learning Theory as the theoretical Framework as it is related to using captioned videos in learning English vocabularies. In Cognitive Multimedia Learning Theory, Mayer (2005) argues that words complemented with media such as pictures and videos would be better understood than words presented on their own. He added that learning is harboured by the combination of words and media as the messages intended could be better communicated and delivered. He elaborated that words can be represented as texts or spoken words and pictures can be represented as any graphical medium including videos. From the presented

materials, learners need to make sense of the relationship between the “words” and “pictures” in order to create a new knowledge as the outcome.

In *The Cambridge Handbook of Multimedia Learning*, Mayer (2005) claims that his theory was designed by three types of assumptions in which each assumption is influenced by different theories in cognitive psychology. The first one is the Dual-Channel Assumption in which he explains that a human brain processes information by the means of two channels which are visual and auditory. The visual channel and the auditory channel process different information presented to the eyes and to the ears respectively. The eyes are exposed to graphic materials and the ears are exposed to verbal or auditory materials. These two channels serve to complement each other in order to comprehend the messages presented.

Another said assumption is the Limited Capacity Assumption. Mayer elaborated that as much information presented to the stimulus, the human brain can only hold a few information in the working memory but the information is enhanced by the help of visuals. There have been studies that show humans can take in more information using the help of visuals (Vazquez & Chiang, 2014; Yun et al, 2014). Therefore, the assumption expresses the limit of the working memory but can be extended by the use of visuals. The last assumption would be the Active Processing Assumption. In this theory, it is assumed that learning through multimedia means learners are cognitively active in processing not only by the information presented but the existing information in their memory. It is labelled as active when the two mentioned information are processed together to connect with each other.

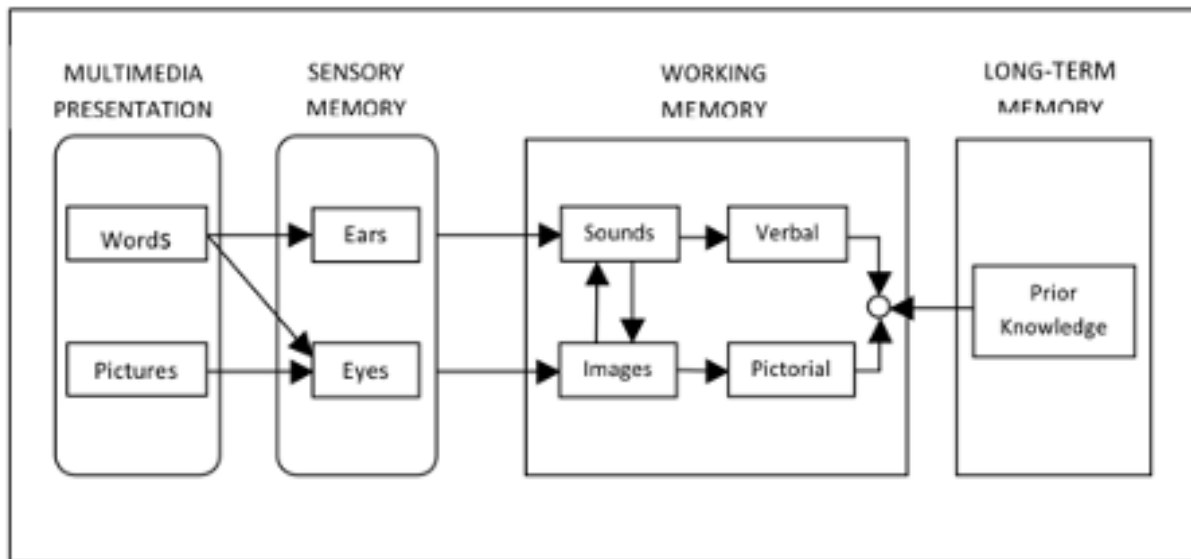


Figure 1. Visual Representation of the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. Adapted from “Influence of Professional Learning Community (PLC) on secondary science teachers’ culture of professional practice: The case of Bangladesh,” S. M. Rahman, 2011, *Asia-Pacific Forum on Science Learning and Teaching*, 12(1), Article 6.

Based on Figure 1, the white circle is the product of the connections made between the different components. The Verbal and Pictorial elements come from Multimedia Presentation in which they come through the dual channels in the Sensory Memory. Also, another important

component is the existing prior knowledge from the Long-Term Memory in order to support the new knowledge retrieved.

Based on this theory, it is assumed that using videos with target vocabularies included could aid learners in understanding them. Therefore, this study seeks the experience of a teacher who incorporates and integrates captioned videos to teach vocabulary. To achieve the objective of the study, the following questions were formulated:

- What is your perception on using captioned videos to teach vocabulary?
- How do you use captioned videos to teach vocabulary?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This research employs the case study design as it only aims to explore the experience of *one* teacher who has been using captioned videos in teaching vocabulary. Any findings established in this research is based on this particular teacher himself and none other.

### **Respondent's Description**

The respondent was a practicing teacher who has been teaching for 6 years in primary schools and has been using captioned videos in teaching vocabulary. The respondent was chosen using purposive sampling. He regularly uses captioned videos in vocabulary instruction and has a lot of experience using it. Therefore, he was chosen for a more substantial and in-depth data in using the particular technique in teaching vocabulary.

### **Data Collection**

In order to answer both research questions, A semi-structured interview was conducted to be able to gather as much information on the perception and also the procedures of using captioned videos for vocabulary instruction. The interview was conducted by asking open-ended questions. The questions were as follows:

#### **RQ1: What is your perception on using captioned videos to teach vocabulary?**

- q1. Why do you use captioned videos to teach vocabulary?
- q2. What motivated you to do so?

#### **RQ2: How do you use captioned videos to teach vocabulary?**

- q1. What type of captioned videos do you use?
- q2. Do you have a set of criteria in choosing the videos?
- q3. Which part of the lesson do you use the captioned videos?
- q4. What kinds of activities do you conduct when using captioned videos to teach vocabulary? Could you explain in detail?
- q5. Do you teach vocabulary separately or integrate with other skills?

Probing method was used when necessary for better clarification. The medium of communication was code-mixed between Bahasa Malaysia and English language during the interview to create a more comfortable atmosphere for the respondent and conducted the interview in a somewhat

sharing session. This is for the respondent to be more at ease to give and share his experiences. In addition, this is also to allow the respondent to be able to explain more confidently and substantially. The whole interview was audio-recorded.

### **Data Analysis**

Data from the interview and lesson materials were analyzed using the thematic analysis method. The audio-recorded interview was first manually transcribed as verbatims. The transcription was then read and reread before continuing to coding based on the aim of the study. Later, the emerged categories were labelled into larger themes. The following section will be explaining the findings according to the themes.

## **DISCUSSION**

Several themes were found from the data collection. One theme is found for the first research question and three themes for the second research question. Each theme will be explained in detail in the following sections.

### **RQ1: Why do you use captioned videos to teach vocabulary?**

#### **a) Motivations**

Despite the fact that there were difficulties faced by the respondent in using the captioned videos, the respondent still managed to continue using them to teach English to his students. When asked what motivated him, he mentioned that it was the students themselves. He added that as a teacher, it is supposed to be the main priority to help students. He further elaborated that in his experience of teaching all levels of primary school students, year 1 to year 3 students (7-9 years old) are more excited to see something interactive and engaging for them. He added that the recent generations are already equipped with technology in their surroundings and that is one of the reasons that makes them intrigued whenever he uses captioned videos in teaching vocabulary rather than only drawing or printing out the pictures. That is why he opted more on using captioned videos to teach vocabulary.

### **RQ2: How do you use captioned videos to teach vocabulary?**

There was a system that the respondent employed which includes 3 components; Planning, Implementation and Teacher's Role. These parts were the emerging themes from the data analysis. The process is illustrated by the figure below.

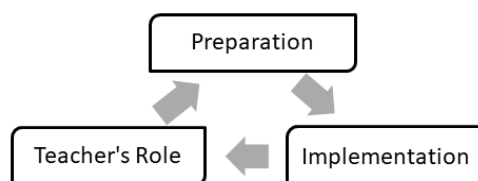


Figure 2: Process of using captioned videos in teaching vocabulary

### **a) Preparation**

At first, the respondent would figure out which objectives are suitable to integrate captioned videos in teaching vocabulary. After figuring out the objectives for the lesson, he would start selecting suitable videos to be used. The next step is the editing part. He would omit the unnecessary and inappropriate parts of the video. Most of the time he used only a small part of one video. He would rewind the video or play the video again for the students to be able to watch and listen better. So this indicates that time would be optimally used when using short captioned videos. He would also combine videos from different sources because sometimes one video is not sufficient enough to reach the objective or suitable for the lessons. Some videos provide captions and for those that do not have captions, the respondent would add it by himself. He would add closed-captions or subtitles to the video and also add annotations for the objects in the videos. In learning objects, he would label the objects respectively in a big font so that the students can read clearly. He shared that instead of *pausing* the video and adding annotations in videos, he would also screenshot that particular scene and just add the text using PowerPoint. After showing the whole video to the students, he would later just use the screenshot during activity.

### **b) Implementation**

#### **Topics**

During the interview, the respondent mentioned several recurring topics that he has used for captioned video clips. The topics are parts of houses, free time, family, body parts, transportation, and at the beach. For example for the topic houses, sometimes the teacher shows different parts of a house and at times he focuses on only one part of the house. He would use 360 degrees videos on YouTube and also some cartoons that show the said places. He has also used one song to teach two topics. The song is actually a nursery rhyme and is called The Family Finger song in which he specifically mentioned it during the interview. He used this video to teach family members and also the different fingers.

#### **Activities**

The respondent used his own creativity to design the activity appropriate with the objective of the lesson. The type of activities done were attracting attention, extracting objects, labelling objects, higher order thinking activities, recapping lessons and engaging on their own. In attracting the attention of the students, the respondent would normally use the captioned video during set induction. He introduces the students with input for them to understand a glimpse of the whole lesson for the day or as transition for the next activity.

For the developmental activities, he would let the students watch the captioned videos first which worked as a content presentation for the students. The teacher would stop the video at a certain scene for the students to extract certain elements related to the objective of the lesson. The respondent also took the screenshot and printed it out as a worksheet for the students to label the objects or persons based on the captioned video that they have watched.

There are also interactive videos available that do not require the teacher to conduct the whole activity but the teacher would facilitate and evaluate them based on their responses to the video. One example of interactive video that the teacher used was Dora the Explorer.

### **Platform**

The teacher utilizes several platforms to operate or use captioned videos to teach vocabulary. He shows them using LCD in the classroom using the school's resources or his own equipment. Moreover, he would also take his students to the lab and use the computers provided by uploading the captions videos on Frog-VLE. Frog-VLE is the learning management system used in public schools which is funded by the ministry itself.

### **Materials**

The materials consist of examples of videos that the teacher has used in his lessons before. Each can serve more than one objective depending on how the teacher plans the lesson. Below is a list of the videos with the respective purpose that the teacher has used on.

1. Dora the Explorer (Interactive)
2. 360 videos (part of a house)
3. Tom and Jerry (kitchen setting)
4. Oggy and the Cockroaches (kitchen setting)
5. Movies (social expressions)
6. Read Easy (phonics)
7. Baby Shark Doo Doo (family)
8. Hi Five (pronunciation)
9. Nursery Rhymes (different topics)
10. Disney cartoons (objects)
11. Muzzy English (time and social expressions)

### **c) Teacher's Role**

As videos are readily edited and suited for the particular activity by the teacher himself, at times the students can actually watch the captioned videos on their own and do the necessary exercises after. For example, interactive videos like Dora the Explorer which interacts with the audience by asking questions and repeating statements by the characters from the video. Nevertheless, the teacher pointed out that his presence is important for two main reasons which are for assistance and clarification.

### **Assistance**

The teacher gave an example of when he showed Dora the Explorer and his role when using the interactive video is to encourage and assist the students to engage with the video. Sometimes the students are shy to follow the instructions or answer questions from the video so the teacher becomes the mediator.

*“Facilitate them. sometimes we tell.. “Okay, follow Dora!” for example.”*

### **Clarifications**

The respondent explained that sometimes students would encounter the use of slangs or different spellings for American English and British English. Hence, he would clarify with the students if any confusion arises or when needed. The context or function of the word were also clarified.

### **CONCLUSION**

It can be seen that the respondent's way of using captioned videos in teaching vocabulary adheres to Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. There are three assumptions highlighted by Mayer. Using the captioned videos in teaching vocabulary itself is already in line with the first assumption of Mayer's theory which is the Dual-Channel Assumption whereby the two channels of cognitive processing, visual and auditory, complements each other. The second assumption of the theory explains that a person's working memory has a short retention span (Ma et al., 2014). The respondent reported that it is faster and better to show captioned videos for the students to learn English vocabulary. Therefore, as agreed to other research (Vazquez & Chiang, 2014; Yun et al, 2014) it is better to make full use of the memory by supporting the vocabulary with visuals. Not only that, the respondent also specified that using videos would actually help the students to acquire vocabulary better as the students already have the knowledge of certain matters or objects that they see from the video. This is closely related to the third assumption of Mayer's Cognitive Theory; Active-Processing Assumption.

There are various and creative ways that a teacher can do with just using captioned videos to teach vocabulary. Based on the findings, there were three aspects that needed to be considered in using the captioned videos which are objectives, materials and teacher's roles in lessons. All of those aspects need to be in harmony with each other in order to achieve the main objective(s) of the lesson. This research hopes to enlighten other teachers in applying this method of teaching to help the students, especially in Malaysia, in developing their vocabulary. Consequently, this hopes to provide smoother development of their language proficiency level altogether as vocabulary is fundamental in learning a language (Naemi & Foo, 2015).

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