

In-service English Teachers' Barriers in Integrating Technology in EFL Classes: A Case Study at English Teachers' Forum of Majalengka

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Abstract. During the post-pandemic period triggered by COVID-19, integrating technology into English as a foreign language (EFL) classes significantly impacted the teaching and learning process. As a result, many English teachers struggle to integrate technology into their classrooms. This study examined the difficulties encountered by in-service English teachers when integrating technology into class. The participants were ten English teachers currently employed at the English teachers' forum in Majalengka. In-service English teachers' experiences integrating technology into EFL Classes are covered via the descriptive qualitative method. Questionnaires and interviews are the primary methods utilized in the data collection process. This study will overview in-service teachers' obstacles in EFL classes.

Key words: Technology-integration; EFL Classes; In-service English Teachers

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INTRODUCTION

During the era of transition that followed the pandemic caused by Covid-19, integrating technology into EFL learning had a tremendous impact on the teaching and learning processes in EFL Classes. It is necessary for the setting of the classroom. ICT integration in education is incorporating information and communication technology (ICT) into the daily activity of a learning environment. One way that technology can be observed to increase the range of languages that are taken in is as input. Because of this, it makes them more motivated and supports students' language skills. Technology, particularly the World Wide Web, can lend a hand in making language input more real and understandable to its recipients (Nim Park & Son, 2009). Technology integration is typically focused on different content and technological domains; however, the problem's technical aspect is insufficient for one to derive any value from it. When teachers lack the pedagogical understanding necessary to design a learner-centered learning environment, they cannot correctly employ the technology in the classroom.

The expanding effect of digital technologies on the content taught in classrooms and the education obtained by students has fueled concerns surrounding integrating technology into teaching and learning. (Graham, 2011; Mishra & Koehler, 2006). In addition, most programs that produce teachers offer no technology education

instruction. (Li & Ni, 2011). Utilizing technology for remote teaching and learning poses difficulties for in-service English teachers. Effective instruction must be provided to in-service teachers on how to utilize educational technology in the classroom. Nevertheless, the current training programs do not align with the requisite skills and methods. (Dudeney et al., 2007; Healey et al., 2011; Hubbard, 2008; Motteram, 2016; Uzun, 2016). In addition, Lam (2000) suggested a correlation between a teacher's prior exposure to technology when enrolled in a teacher education program and their use of technology in the classroom. According to Hubbard (2008), there are a few possible explanations for why teacher education programs do not match the prerequisites for effective technology integration. These reasons include institutional inertia and ignorance, a lack of established methodology, inadequate time for technical courses, inadequate infrastructure and guidelines, and a shortage of experienced and knowledgeable educators. Additionally, There is a lack of knowledgeable and experienced teachers in the educational system. Arnold & Ducate (2015) assert that it is very essential for language training to integrate a greater number of activities that are contextualized and relevant to the use of technology.

Many researchers have written articles on using technology in classrooms of English as a foreign language. For example, Khatoony & Nezhadmehr (2020) researched EFL teachers'

challenges in integrating technology. The research indicates that Iranian EFL teachers can efficiently use various tools and platforms. However, there are many obstacles to overcome, such as a lack of sufficient resources, a lack of attention and demotivation on the side of students toward online sessions, and a lack of funding and support for language institutes. These are only some of the issues that need to be overcome.

In contrast to these problems, a questionnaire that evaluated the efficacy of technology in Iran showed that many educators hold optimistic beliefs regarding the application of technology in Iran. The educators also mentioned that technologies could be helpful in these situations to reduce the distance that separates learners and educators. In addition, teachers, investors, decision-makers in government agencies, and institutions can benefit from the study's findings and evaluate how well they did in pandemic conditions. Li & Ni (2011) investigated research on primary EFL teachers' technology in China. They examined the trends and thoughts of primary EFL teachers in China on their use of technology. The findings imply that Chinese teachers have favorable attitudes toward the utility of technology in the classroom. They employ technology primarily for teacher-centered objectives, such as preparation and delivery of instruction, and rarely for student-centered activities. This is since Chinese English teachers have optimistic views toward the utility of technology in the classroom. However, in early English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction, teacher-centered pedagogical practices and a lack of effective professional development concentrating on instructional design and technology integration may hinder students' use of technology.

Graham (2011) researched theoretical issues for pedagogical content technical understanding (TPACK). Researchers in the field of educational technology from all over the world who are interested in questions concerning technology integration are increasingly turning to the TPACK framework. The TPACK framework has a significant amount of useful information; however, a considerable amount of theoretical work still needs to be done if TPACK research is ever going to become coherent and positively contribute to the expansion of the field of educational technology. Dooly (2009) investigated the short- and long-term effects of a teacher training course using information and communication technologies (ICTs) in a foreign

language classroom. The researchers looked at both inexperienced and seasoned educators for their study. Multiple data sources, including questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, field notes, and observations in various educational contexts, demonstrated that teachers lacked confidence in their capacity to commit sustained effort to integrate technology. Even if chances for integration existed, the situation was as described. Therefore, it may be advantageous for in-service teachers to gain experience with integrating technology earlier in their professional development training to overcome the challenges they face successfully. During their pre-service and first training, this may help them develop a favorable attitude about using technology in their future practices. (Hong, 2010).

When the research mentioned above is considered, it is possible to conclude that the technology integration issue demonstrated that many teachers have a good response toward implementing technology in EFL lessons. In addition, the research indicated that teachers of English as a foreign language had positive attitudes toward the importance of technology in education. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs, however, teacher-centered pedagogical practices and a lack of appropriate professional development focusing on instructional design and technology integration may hinder student use. Therefore, according to these findings, it is necessary to redirect its efforts toward promoting conceptual and pedagogical change among teachers to integrate technology and emphasize alignment between technology, curriculum, and pedagogy in EFL classes.

It is informative to read the literature on the incorporation of technology by in-service English instructors; nevertheless, There is no unanimity over which teacher education approaches should be incorporated into EFL classes. Nevertheless, a considerable effect can be seen in EFL classrooms due to the identification of the needs of in-service English instructors and the instruction in EFL classes regarding teacher education strategies for integrating technology. Consequently, it is essential to identify and quantify the potential challenges and opportunities associated with integrating technology in EFL classes by providing more specific recommendations regarding the use of technology in teaching and learning. This can be accomplished by providing more information regarding the use of technology in the teaching and learning process.

Considering the issue's importance, the purpose of the study was to evaluate the challenges in-service English teachers face when attempting to incorporate technology into EFL Classes. In line with the objective, this study tried to answer what In-service English teachers' barriers are in integrating technology into EFL classes. This relevance led the researchers to draw the benefit from their study. First, English teachers can be made available to continue to grow professionally. This integrating technology can also concentrate on educators' requirements, which must be researched to improve the education standard. Second, in-service English teachers have the opportunity to emphasize technology integration; nevertheless, this necessitates the presence of experienced instructors.

METHODS

This qualitative study intends to characterize the experiences that in-service English teachers have had while implementing technological integration in EFL classes. The study will focus on English teachers. The participants in this study were English teacher's forum in Majalengka. The participants were ten English teachers currently employed at the English teachers' forum in Majalengka. The information was gathered through the use of questionnaires as well as interviews. The questionnaire aimed to gather information about the challenges experienced by in-service English teachers while attempting to integrate technology into EFL classes. Specifically, the purpose was to identify the technology employed by teachers and the manner in which it is integrated into the teaching and learning process. Then, semi-structured interviews were conducted to verify and fill in any gaps in the data received from the questionnaire. (Creswell, 2013). Questions concerning incorporating technology into EFL Classes were asked throughout the interviews. First, the responses to the questionnaire were coded, then they were categorized, and last they were interpreted. After that, the outcomes of the interviews were transcribed, coded, organized into categories, and interpreted.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted to confirm and complete the data from the questionnaire. This form of interview provides the researcher full authority over the discourse (Creswell, 2013). The interviews consisted of questions about technology integration in EFL classrooms. The questionnaire responses were

initially coded, categorized, and examined. The results of the interviews were then transcribed, coded, categorized, and analyzed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study's findings and their discussion are presented in the following section. It presents and analyzes the results of the surveys and interviews. Because of the current situation, teachers are being encouraged to incorporate in-service English teachers in their efforts to integrate technology. The information found through The questionnaire and interviews found that English teachers used Edmodo, Whatsapp, and YouTube for online learning.. But on the other hand, they come up against various obstacles, such as students using unsuitable gadgets, a lack of participation and enthusiasm on the part of students, and other problems in online teaching and learning.

The transition from a physical to an online classroom presents several complex challenges. They outlined several challenges they encountered while attempting to integrate technology into EFL Classes based on their experience as in-service English teachers. Inappropriate devices, a lack of participation on the part of students in the teaching and learning process, and a lack of motivation are the obstacles that need to be addressed.

Inappropriate Device

The majority of students lack access to a laptop or desktop computer, as well as a smartphone capable of running applications such as Google Classroom or Zoom. One of the English teachers mentioned that they are forced to distribute instructional instructions and resources via other programs, such as WhatsApp, which makes this a situation that cannot be avoided. Nevertheless, even though the outcome did not turn out as planned, the teachers have done everything in their power to assist the students in accomplishing the desired levels of learning.

Insufficient student involvement in the teaching and learning process

Additional effort is required to attract the participation of students in the process of online instruction and learning. Teachers and students cannot interact in person during instruction and study. This is something that is encountered by teachers who are now employed. Students are required to participate as a result of this

predicament. When a teacher posted an instruction or a link to the materials on the WhatsApp group, only a select few students reacted the instruction. Because of this, teachers must conduct student checks to ensure that pupils have understood the content of the lessons and have gotten the intended information. In addition, the signal quality suffers whenever students engage in online education through zoom, which means they cannot contribute effectively to the classes. According to Hubbard (2008), a circumstance like this can lead to a failure to achieve the prerequisites for successful technological integration.

Lack of students' motivation

During the post-pandemic period triggered by COVID-19, the classroom activity changed to a hybrid method—some of the instructors and students no longer like this circumstance. The motivation of the students is also affected by this factor. Considering the findings, English teachers remarked that the student's lack of motivation was reflected in the assignments they completed and their level of participation. The lack of discipline shown by the majority of students in submitting their assignments and the poor quality of the work are not acceptable. The teachers have stated that they have tried to learn about the pupils' issues. However, they noticed that students in an online class did not sufficiently comprehend the material delivered. The students were given more assignments to complete during online classes, and they considered online classes tedious since they were unable to engage in direct conversations with their lecturers or peers. These contributing variables lead to a lack of motivation in students. According to Li and Ni (2011), as a result, teachers should make an effort to provide a more enjoyable teaching and learning by increasing their level of technology integration. For example, teachers could introduce simple and enjoyable applications geared toward teaching and learning.

This investigation employed Johnson's (1992) analytic framework, which conceived English language education as three distinct pedagogical orientations in the EFL field: skill-based, rule-based, and function-based. Using this framework, we could determine whether English teachers accept the incorporation of technology. In addition, this research looked at the significance of English teacher acceptance of technology in integrating it into the classroom using a content-specific perspective. According to the findings,

how educators support their English language education with the help of digital tools differs widely depending on the content-specific pedagogical assumptions they hold. For instance, virtually all of the in-service teachers who took part in this research utilized a variety of kinds of technology, such as PowerPoint, WhatsApp, and Edmodo, amongst others. On the other hand, the instructor who taught based on rules emphasized grammatical structures in PowerPoint.

In contrast, the instructor who taught based on skills described the general and Structure grammatical of recount and narrative texts. Action teaching was the primary purpose for which the YouTube video was utilized by the educator who taught based on functions. Because of their varied perspectives on the purposes of language acquisition, educators appear to have paid attention to and used the numerous opportunities afforded by technological advancements. This research has the potential to shed light on the distinctions between these two groups by utilizing a content-specific perspective. For instance, the usage of PowerPoint slides as in-service teachers' materials would have been considered an example of technology use directed by the teacher. (Liu, 2011). Nevertheless, we examined it through the prism of basic pedagogical ideas. We did so independently of the distinctions in how the tool was utilized by each of the three different linguistic belief orientations. This would have been true even if we had seen the situation from the perspective of particular pedagogical principles. To achieve this objective, we argue that content-specific pedagogical beliefs enable us to see a much stronger relationship and a more nuanced reason for instructors to integrate technology into their language training. Furthermore, the content-specific educational ideas that we have enable us to see the content-specific pedagogical beliefs that others hold. It provides a convincing rationale for future study to be conducted in order to investigate the technological practices of educators through the lens of their thoughts regarding particular subject matter areas of the curriculum. (Hennessy et al., 2005; Howard et al., 2015).

CONCLUSION

During the transitional time following the pandemic Covid-19, integrating technology into English class is vital for teaching and learning. The zoom program was applied in the teaching and learning process, according to the

experiences of currently employed English teachers. They were instructed using Edmodo and WhatsApp group discussions. During the teaching and learning process, they also utilized methodologies such as rule-based technology practice, function-based technology practice, and skill-based technology practice. When attempting to integrate technology into their lessons, in-service English teachers face a number of hurdles. Inadequate student technology, a lack of student participation in the teaching and learning process, and a lack of student enthusiasm are some of these difficulties.

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