

DIGITAL JOURNEY IN ENGLISH CLASSROOM: A NARRATIVE STUDY OF TEACHER'S ICT INTEGRATION

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Abstrak

ICT is integral to modern human life. It is crucial in daily activities, particularly delivering information and facilitating communication. In education, ICT supports the learning process and assists teachers in providing material more effectively. However, ICT should be regarded as a supporting tool in the educational process, not as the primary element in the classroom that could replace the role and presence of the teacher.

The purpose of this study is to explore in depth the experience of an English teacher at a public high school in Malang regarding the use of ICT in the English teaching process and the challenges encountered in its implementation. This study employed a qualitative approach with a narrative inquiry design and involved a single participant. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis.

The results of this study indicate that experienced T's views on the use of ICT in teaching reflect that ICT is helpful for teachers, particularly in teaching English as a foreign language. The continuous development of ICT enables teachers to adapt their teaching methods to meet the evolving needs of students. However, T also faces several challenges in using ICT, such as unstable internet connections, students attempting to hack applications during assignments, limited access due to paid applications, and frequent distractions caused by mobile phones. Furthermore, T expresses concern about the rapid advancement of technology, as students tend to rely more on artificial intelligence (AI) rather than developing their critical thinking skills.

Keywords: Teacher's Integration, Teacher's Challenges, Used ICT

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the rapid progression of time has been accompanied by significant advancements in ICT. ICT plays a crucial role in various aspects of human life. Beyond simplifying work, it also has a profound impact on education, particularly in supporting teachers during teaching and learning activities. According to Gadzali (2023), the highlights of education currently are no longer an exclusive privilege for certain groups but have become an accessible opportunity for all members of society. In Indonesia, most teaching and learning activities currently rely on ICT as a pedagogical tool for teachers to deliver lessons. This reliance has developed rapidly, particularly during the pandemic, when classroom instruction transitioned to distance learning. During this period, teachers and lecturers were compelled to adapt their teaching strategies by utilizing ICT as the primary (Visser et al., 2023). According to Cahyono (2024), the term "technology" initially referred to advancements in electronics and computers, but nowadays, it refers to software rather than equipment. Numerous ICT software applications facilitate the learning process for both teachers and students. However, there are challenges faced by teachers when teaching using ICT. According to Mirfani (2019), weak socialization efforts and low ICT literacy among key education managers, particularly at the school management level, hinder its effective implementation. Furthermore, the prospect of navigating a digital classroom presents considerable challenges in terms of providing adequate support and professional development for teachers. According to Taopan et al. (2020), teachers frequently encounter limitations in their ICT

proficiency, face unreliable internet connectivity, and struggle to develop innovative ways to integrate technology into meaningful learning experiences. Beside Haryanto (2021), highlights insufficient funding and a lack of adequate government support for teacher training programs as major obstacles. Consequently, some paid applications with significant potential are often underutilized by teachers. Therefore, it is necessary to socialize the use of ICT, adequate internet access, and provide adequate facilities to access technology properly in order to create an interesting atmosphere and encourage students to play an active role in the learning process.

Research findings emphasize the importance of teacher training to enhance their ability to effectively utilize the latest technology (Jap et al., 2024; Prasetya et al., 2024). However, other studies suggest that many teachers already possess technological knowledge and have successfully integrated it into classroom instruction (Boonmoh et al., 2020; Pasaribu et al., 2023). Furthermore, other studies suggest that extensive research demonstrates a positive correlation between the effective integration of technology in the classroom and enhanced student engagement and improved learning outcomes (Amalya, 2023; Katemba, 2020). A study conducted by Zahro et al. (2024) found that the Kahoot application has significant potential for improving students' vocabulary skills while fostering healthy competition among them. These findings underscore the crucial role of AI- and technology-based learning media in the educational process, as they contribute to creating a positive learning environment and promoting healthy competition among students. These findings underscore the crucial role of AI- and technology-based learning media in the educational process, as they contribute to creating a positive learning environment and promoting healthy competition among students. However, previous studies have rarely examined teachers' integration of ICT use in English language teaching through a narrative inquiry design. Additionally, teachers face several challenges in utilizing ICT, including a lack of proper socialization and training related to technology. Based on this context, the present study focuses on exploring teacher's intergration of ICT use in English language teaching through a narrative inquiry approach, aiming to gain a deeper understanding of their personal experiences. Based on the provided information, the researcher formulated the research question: How does the teacher in a public senior high school in Malang integrate the use of ICT in teaching English? What challenges do the teacher experience in their use of ICT-based learning in teaching English?

METHOD

The researcher uses a qualitative method. This study will investigate the use of ICT in teaching English, employing a qualitative method with narrative inquiry as the research design. Narrative inquiry allows for an in-depth exploration of teachers' personal experiences in using ICT in English language teaching. According to Creswell (2013), narrative research is a qualitative approach where researchers study people's lives by asking them to share their stories.

Interviews were conducted using Semi-structured Interviews with seventeen open-ended questions to collect empirical data. Instruments were self-constructed with validity by the expert. Interviews were conducted for about 30-45 minutes each round of face-to-face interviews, with one-on-one interviews to keep participants comfortable and maintain participants' confidentiality. The interviews were performed using the native language of Bahasa Indonesia to minimize misunderstandings. The interviews were conducted using the native language of Bahasa Indonesia to minimize misunderstandings. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and translated into English for additional analysis. As part of our effort to maintain the authenticity of the quality of the translated transcripts, the researchers asked the participants to comment on the transcripts and provide suggestions for improvement.

This research uses thematic analysis to analyze the data from the interviews. According to Braun and Clarke (2014), thematic analysis has six steps to analyze. First, the researcher is to listen repeatedly to the recordings of the interviews about the efforts of lectures to improve English skills

in intensive course classes. The second is to convert the recordings into written form. The third is to read the transcripts repeatedly to understand the data taken. After gaining an understanding of the data reached, coding is carried out, and patterns that are relevant to the problem under study are found. Then grouping similar expressions were grouped to reveal emerging themes. The final step is to categorize these themes into the problem under study.

FINDINGS

The results of the interviews described in six sections: Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Past, Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Present, Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Future, Challenges teacher experienced in using ICT in English language teaching in the past, Challenges teacher experienced in using ICT in English language teaching in the present, and Challenges teacher experienced in using ICT in English language teaching in the future:

Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Past

The first data analysis is the experience of an experienced teacher using ICT in English language teaching, which has been explored in the past. The research found two findings.

- **Using Powerpoint To Teach English**

The first question is related to the use of ICT in teaching English. T's answer stated that she had used PowerPoint in delivering the material. She hopes that media students can understand the material more easily by using this. The following is her statement.

"...PowerPoint is and has been a part of ICT. Furthermore, this school is already equipped with an LCD projector in every classroom." (T, interview).

T has long used ICT in teaching English and has extensive experience integrating it into learning activities. Even when ICT was not as advanced as it is today, T was already using PowerPoint to deliver instructional material. T used PowerPoint as a learning tool to create an engaging and interactive learning environment.

- **Using Conventional Media**

The next question is related to the use of ICT in teaching English. T's answer stated that she had used conventional methods in delivering the material, such as snakes and ladders, using flash cards, and doing guessing games. The following is her statement.

"...I take the students outside and use conventional media, such as playing snakes and ladders, using flash cards, and doing guessing games. Then, if they still struggle, I give them powder as a reward ... So, we first observe each class and analyze the students' needs ... So, we first observe each class and analyze the students' needs." (T, Interview)

In teaching, T does not always use PowerPoint; sometimes, T also applies conventional methods, such as outdoor games, to prevent student boredom during the learning process. Before deciding on the method to be used, T conducts a needs analysis of the students or class to be taught, ensuring that the learning strategies are tailored to the students' conditions and needs.

Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Present

The second data analysis is the experience of an experienced teacher using ICT in English language teaching, which has been explored in the present. The research found one finding.

- ***The emergence of technologies***

The next finding is related to the use of ICT in teaching English in the present. T's answer stated that she had used several applications in the learning and teaching process. The following is her statement.

"I usually use Genially, Kahoot, Wordwall, Live Worksheet, Assemlr.edu, and Quizizz ... If the students are enthusiastic from the beginning, I can go straight into the material. However, if they still need a warm-up, I usually provide games. I often use resources from Wordwall, Genially, or Quizizz with the 'Mastery Pick' feature—just not the mountain-themed one ... If Gemini is already using AR technology, that means it's part of ICT as well. I use Assemlr to teach 'text report' material using Augmented Reality" (T, interview)

Currently, T is using various technologies to teach English. T commonly used tools include Genially, Kahoot, Wordwall, Live Worksheet, Assemlr.edu, and Quizizz. This demonstrates that T has effectively integrated ICT into teaching. Additionally, T uses applications such as Gemini and AR to create more engaging and interactive learning experiences. This demonstrates that ICT plays a significant role in helping teachers deliver material effectively, preventing students from becoming bored. Therefore, the role of ICT is essential in the teaching and learning process.

Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Future

The third data analysis is the experience of an experienced teacher using ICT in English language teaching, which has been explored in the present. The research found one finding.

- ***Will use technologies such as VR (Virtual Reality)***

The next finding concerns the use of ICT in teaching English in the future. T's answer stated that VR will be used in the learning and teaching process. The following is her statement.

"I just attended a seminar yesterday about what's its name... VR and AR. So, Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality. It was just yesterday, and only the Augmented Reality part was used to display images ... As for VR, I haven't used it yet, but I plan to try it when I teach in class." (T, interview)

T said she had attended a seminar on AR and VR. However, she also expressed a desire to implement VR in the learning process in the future. As a result, learning English as a foreign language becomes easier for students to understand.

Challenges Teacher Experienced in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Past

The fourth data analysis concerns the challenges teachers experienced in using ICT in English language teaching, which has been explored in the past. The research found two findings.

- ***Poor internet connection***

The following finding is related to the challenges faced when using ICT in English language teaching. Answer T stated that the poor internet connection. The following is her statement.

"Wi-Fi is often slow, and in some places, the internet coverage is uneven compared to other areas ... Sometimes there is a phase where they have to use ICT." (T, interview)

T shared that an unstable internet connection is one of the obstacles she has faced. These obstacles have made T rarely use technology in the learning process. However, she also realizes that there are certain situations where the use of ICT becomes a necessity.

- ***There are applications that students can program***

The following finding is related to the challenges faced when using ICT in English language teaching. Answer T stated that the students can program an application. The following is her statement.

"...For example, on the Quizizz platform, the students already knew how to hack it, so I tried to find a way to prevent them from exploiting Quizizz ... There were even students who tried to hack it. I mean, they knew how to access the answer key in Quizizz ... Instead of using Quizizz again, I prefer to replace it with other platforms such as Live Worksheets or Wordwall." (T, interview)

T recounted that a student once tried to code a website while working on a question. This challenge made her more careful in choosing technology-based learning platforms. To overcome these problems, T tries not to use Quizizz too often when giving questions to students.

Challenges Teacher Experienced in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Present

The fifth data analysis concerns the challenges teacher experience in using ICT in English language teaching, which has been explored in the present. The research found two findings.

- ***Paid Application***

The following finding relates to the challenges faced when using ICT in English language teaching. Answer T stated that several applications or websites to get premium features must be paid for. The following is her statement.

"There are several paid apps or learning media, such as Kahoot!, Wordwall, Quizizz, and Genially. Genially is similar to PowerPoint, but more interactive and equipped with a variety of features. The problem is the cost ... If possible, it would be great if schools could provide access to some paid learning apps or websites, such as Quizizz Premium, so that we as teachers don't have to pay for them out of pocket." (T, interview)

T, explained that some interactive learning platforms, such as Kahoot!, Wordwall, Quizizz, and Genially, require payment to access their premium features. According to her, these apps have great potential to enhance learning effectiveness, but the cost is often a significant obstacle. T also expressed her hope that schools could provide access to these paid applications or websites so that teachers would not have to cover the expenses themselves. This highlights that while technology can significantly support the learning process, limited access to paid platforms remains a challenge that requires further attention.

- ***Distractions from students' cell phone use***

The following finding relates to the challenges of using ICT in English language teaching. Answer T stated that the students can be distracted by their mobile phones. The following is her statement.

"Sometimes the students secretly use their cellphones. For example, even after being warned 'don't use cellphones,' such as by asking them to put their cellphones away ... Sometimes students really need to be guided and reminded not to use their phones, like asking them to put their cellphones down first ... If, for example, someone is holding a cellphone, we extend their task time by 6 or 10 minutes. If someone uses a phone for up to 6 minutes, this will help them focus." (T, interview)

Currently, cellphones and technology have become integral to our daily lives. However, this dependence on technology also presents its own challenges, particularly in education. One such challenge was shared by T that the students in schools find it challenging to disengage from cellphone use during the learning process. However, T has her own method for addressing students who violate the rules regarding cellphone use in the classroom, especially when cellphones are not yet required for learning. Through this method, students will experience a deterrent effect and learn to take responsibility for their actions.

Challenges Teacher Experienced in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Future

The sixth data analysis concerns the challenges teacher experienced in using ICT in English language teaching, which has been explored in the future. The research found one finding.

- ***Students are increasingly relying on AI for assignments***

The following finding relates to the challenges of using ICT in English language teaching. Answer T stated that the use of AI for answering the question in the future. The following is her statement.

"Children no longer rely on their brains, but rather on AI to answer all questions ... This makes it difficult for them to think critically ... It depends on the environment and the cooperation between parents and teachers ... Of course, I limit it. Otherwise, they won't be creative. Particularly in writing, I want them to produce work based on their own thoughts. For example, when I ask them about their experiences, they need to reflect on those experiences and express their ideas in English ... They are allowed to open books or ask me directly about translating a word in English. If they rely entirely on ICT, they can use Google Translate. I avoid that because the results will look different from their work ... I want to see their genuine capabilities, without relying entirely on ICT." (T, interview)

T expressed her concern about the impact of technological development on students' critical thinking skills. T emphasized the importance of the learning environment and the collaboration between parents and teachers in managing the use of ICT. As a result, she limits the use of technology and AI for students, especially when it comes to developing their writing skills. T emphasizes that she does not want students to rely solely on technology such as Google Translate in their writing assignments. She added that she wants to understand her students' true abilities without the interference of technology.

DISCUSSION

Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Past

Based on the results of this study, it was found that the teacher's experience in using ICT for English language teaching at the senior secondary school level included the use of PowerPoint to deliver learning materials. This finding is in line with the previous study by Irmawati et al. (2019) which found that the use of PowerPoint in the classroom helps teachers prepare learning materials

and media effectively and engagingly. Its available features, such as animation, images, video recordings, and audio, can be utilized to prevent student boredom during the learning process. Another study conducted by Pasaribu et al. (2023) PowerPoint can present material in the form of text, images, and videos in an engaging and entertaining way, thanks to its colorful templates. Additionally, PowerPoint is typically projected using an LCD projector, which is considered more productive and efficient than using a traditional whiteboard.

On the other hand, T also used conventional media, such as snakes and ladders, flash cards, and guessing games, to foster students' critical and creative thinking skills. This finding is in line with the previous study by Yudha and Mandasari (2021) games can contribute including to vocabulary learning by providing students with opportunities to learn and practice in an enjoyable atmosphere, as their use is highly effective and aligns with the characteristics of children as learners.

Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Present

This study revealed that T utilized several applications or websites to deliver the material. The results of the study are in line with previous research conducted by Zahro et al. (2024) which states that technology can be used by anyone to make language learning more engaging and enjoyable. For example, Kahoot offers game-based learning materials that can boost students' enthusiasm and motivation to learn English. However, the use of Kahoot also presents significant challenges for teachers, such as weak internet connectivity (Adnyani et al., 2020).

Another study focusing on the use of Quizizz in English language learning found that the application was highly beneficial for teachers in the teaching and learning process and helped increase student enthusiasm (Harahap & Kembaren, 2023). Additionally, research by Paksi et al. (2023) highlighted that Wordwall.net is an easy-to-use tool that supports teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluating instruction. The use of LiveWorksheets can increase the effectiveness of delivering learning materials practically and efficiently, thereby improving students' understanding and boosting their learning motivation (Maharani & Hamid, 2024) Therefore, certain applications or websites can support classroom learning to create an engaging learning process.

Teachers' Experience in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Future

The study revealed that future ICT tools T might utilize include VR. The results of the study are in line with previous research conducted by Putra et al. (2020) VR can have a positive impact on learning because it gives students the opportunity to explore material more clearly, allowing them to observe various elements, build a deeper understanding, and enrich their knowledge as if they were directly immersed in that world. However, there are some challenges associated with using VR in the learning process. Therefore, T would like to try using VR to teach English by integrating technology into the learning process.

Challenges Teacher Experienced in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Past

The results of this study indicate that T face various challenges in the teaching and learning process involving technology, one of which is a poor internet connection. This finding is in line with the previous studies, which revealed that an unstable internet connection is a significant obstacle in utilizing technology during instruction (Muslem et al., 2018; Syafryadin et al., 2022). This issue hinders the optimization of technology-based learning. Similarly, research by Santosa et al. (2022) confirmed that inadequate internet access and limited facilities are among teachers' common challenges when integrating technology into their teaching practices.

Challenges Teacher Experienced in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Present

This research finding indicates that applications or websites supporting ICT-based learning often require subscription fees. This finding is in line with the previous study by Hidayati (2016), who highlighted that limited access to adequate facilities and resources serves as a barrier to optimizing technology integration in education, posing a significant challenge for teachers. Similarly, a study by Fitria (2023) revealed that infrastructure issues and limited technical support in utilizing ICT contribute to the overall challenges in implementing technology within educational settings.

The analysis also highlights that students' strong attachment to mobile phones poses a significant challenge for teachers in implementing technology-based learning. This finding is in line with the previous study by Fitria (2021) which identified several student difficulties, including challenges in understanding digital learning materials, over-dependence on technology, and the potential of mobile phones to distract students during lessons. These issues indicate that students often struggle to focus and disengage from their devices during learning, particularly when technology is an integral part of the teaching process, and distractions from devices can hinder concentration. Other studies have also revealed key challenges faced by teachers, such as a lack of student motivation, excessive workloads, numerous administrative responsibilities, inappropriate use of technology by students, and high expectations from the government regarding the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Sebayang et al., 2025). These findings suggest that students' use of technology is not always optimal and can, in fact, present significant challenges for teachers in fostering an effective and engaging learning environment.

Challenges Teacher Experienced in Using ICT in English Language Teaching in the Future

The results of this study indicate that students' reliance on AI in completing assignments poses a potential challenge for teachers in the future. This finding is in line with the previous study by Rahman (2024) which raises concerns about over-reliance on AI, issues of academic integrity, and its potential to hinder the development of critical thinking and genuine learning. Similarly, Fitria (2021) highlights related obstacles, including increased distractions, the development of a passive mindset, high implementation costs, reduced social interaction, difficulty in understanding digital materials, and dependence on technology. These findings suggest that technological advancements may lead to dependency, which could weaken students' critical thinking skills. Furthermore, Rohmiyati (2025) highlighted additional challenges, including AI's difficulty understanding cultural contexts, limited access in certain areas, privacy concerns, and the risk of students relying more on technology than human interaction.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the quick advancement of technology has brought about some websites and programs that can aid in the learning process. However, as technology serves only as a facilitator and not as the principal agent in the teaching and learning process, the teacher's role is still crucial. This study offers a solid basis for future advancements in the use of technology in English language instruction. Furthermore, the results provide a basis for further investigation in the same area. Thus, it is anticipated that continued technological development, especially in education, would encourage the development of more original and imaginative educational opportunities.

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