INVESTIGATING THE ICT TOOLS AND PLATFORMS USED BY THE ENGLISH TEACHERS IN EFL CLASSROOMS

Syifa Islamiati[1], Mustasyfa Thabib Kariadi[2*], Dian Adiarti[3]

[1,2,3]Language Education Study Program, Faculty of Humanities, Jenderal Soedirman University, Purwokerto, Central Java, Indonesia

Syifasyif1809@gmail.com, mtkariadi_pbi@unsoed.ac.id*, dian.adiarti@unsoed.ac.id

Abstract

ICT (Information and Communication Technology) development significantly influences educational landscape. In post-pandemic setting, integration of ICT becomes essential in supporting the effectiveness of teaching and learning. This research aimed to: (1) identify ICT tools and platforms used by English teachers; (2) investigate challenges faced by teachers; and (3) explore teachers' responses to the use of ICT tools and platforms in EFL classrooms. The research employed a descriptive-qualitative method, through non-participant classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with three English teachers. The findings revealed that: (1) the ICT tools and platforms used by the English teachers included laptops, LCD projectors, speakers, PowerPoint, Wordwall, Liveworksheet, Quizizz, Kahoot, Canva, and Learn English Kids; (2) Less confidence and limited experience in using specific platforms are challenges for the teachers, while the school level challenges included limited facilities, technical issues, electricity problems, and time constraints; (3) Teachers suggest to bring personal equipment, use a whiteboard as a projector screen, conduct ice-breaking activities during technical delays, and participate in training or self-learning to improve their ICT skills. Thus, the effective use of ICT in EFL instruction relies on adequate infrastructure, teacher readiness, and a supportive learning environment for developing more effective and contextually appropriate ICT integration strategies.

Keywords: *ICT tools, English teachers, EFL classrooms, ICT platforms*

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted education systems worldwide, including Indonesia. The shift from traditional face-to-face learning to online and blended learning has necessitated rapid adaptation by educators and learners (Arizona et al., 2020). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become a crucial tool in maintaining educational activities during the pandemic, both in online and face-to-face settings. As Tafonao (2018) highlights, engaging learning media can enhance student motivation and improve educational quality.

In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classroom, ICT offers various functions such as knowledge repository, learning aid, and administrative support (Indrajut, 2004, as cited in Faridi, 2009). Despite its potential benefits, integrating ICT in EFL teaching remains complex due to pedagogical, contextual, and user-related factors (Granger et al., 2002, as cited in Nurhaliza, 2019). ICT tools like computers, smart boards, and mobile devices can increase students' motivation and facilitate interactive learning (Altun, 2015).

This study focuses on English teachers at SMP Istiqomah Sambas Purbalingga, a boarding school with unique restrictions on mobile phone use among students. This situation raises questions about how teachers utilize ICT tools and platforms under such constraints. Based on preliminary interviews, teachers acknowledge the benefits of ICT but face technical challenges such as equipment connectivity issues and limitations due to students' restricted access to mobile phones. Therefore, this research aims to explore the types of ICT tools and platforms used by English teachers in junior high school EFL classrooms, identify challenges they encounter, and investigate the strategies employed to overcome these challenges.

EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Classroom refers to learning environments in countries where English is not the main language and has limited or no role in daily communication. Gebhard (2006) as cited in Lenggono (2019) defines EFL as the study of English by learners who do not speak it as their first language, noting that students in such settings have few opportunities to use English outside the Classrooms.

Similarly, Camenson (2007) as cited in Aini et al. (2023) explains that EFL learners usually live in contexts where their native language dominates daily communication. These learners study English for academic, travel, or business purposes, with limited weekly instructional hours and minimal exposure or practice opportunities beyond the classrooms. Thus, the EFL Classroom is characterized by restricted English use outside formal education.

Effective language teaching depends largely on the teachers' knowledge of language and pedagogy. EFL teachers facilitate learners' development in reading,

writing, and speaking skills. Celik et al. (2013) as cited in Restu et al. (2018) highlight that proficient foreign language teachers demonstrate correct pronunciation, extensive vocabulary, and the ability to clarify concepts using students' mother tongue when needed. Correct pronunciation by teachers is critical as students tend to mimic their teachers. The teachers' roles are pivotal to achieving successful language learning outcomes.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

ICT refers to technologies that facilitate access to information and communication, including devices such as radios, televisions, computers, mobile phones, and services like video conferencing and distance learning (Khan et al. cited in Akarowhe, 2017). In education, ICT has become a vital tool for enhancing teaching and learning processes, especially in language learning. Azmi (2017) states that ICT use increases interactivity and engagement in EFL classrooms. ICT tools frequently used by teachers include laptops, projectors, digital cameras, and televisions (Bruntha et al., 2024).

The advancement of ICT influences language teaching methodology significantly (Çakici, 2016). ICT facilitates collaborative learning, immediate access to digital content, and dynamic educational experiences (Apriani et al., 2022; Adu & Olatundum, 2013). ICT divides into two categories: non web-based tools (e.g., computers, LCDs, speakers) and web-based platforms (e.g., Google classroom, Zoom, WhatsApp, YouTube) (Alkamel & Choouthaiwale, 2018; Apriani & Hidayah, 2019). These tools and platforms broaden access and enrich the learning environment.

METHOD

This research employed a descriptive-qualitative approach to explore the types of ICT tools and platforms used by English teachers in EFL classrooms, the challenges faced, and the strategies applied to overcome these challenges. The study was conducted at SMP Istiqomah Sambas Purbalingga, where ICT integration in teaching, especially English, is actively practiced. The population consisted of five English teachers, and purposive sampling was used to select three teachers as

participants based on their active use of ICT. Data collection involved non-participant classrooms observations conducted twice for each teacher and semi-structured interviews held after observations to gain deeper insights.

Data from observations and interviews were analyzed thematically following the steps of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, as outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Flick (2015). Data reduction involved filtering and coding relevant information, while data presentation organized findings into thematic summaries and quotes to help identify patterns related to ICT tools, challenges, and strategies. This thematic analysis enabled a clear understanding of the teachers' experiences and responses to ICT use in the classrooms.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, the study applied methodological triangulation by combining observation and interview data. This approach allowed the researcher to cross-verify the consistency of information, with observations providing direct evidence of classrooms practices and interviews revealing teachers' perspectives and experiences. Overall, this method provided a comprehensive and trustworthy description of ICT use and its challenges in the English teaching context at SMP Istiqomah Sambas.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study investigated the ICT tools and platforms used by English teachers at SMP Istiqomah Sambas Purbalingga, along with the challenges they faced and the strategies they employed to overcome them. Based on observations and interviews with three English teachers—Teacher A, B, and C—it was found that all teachers made efforts to integrate ICT into their Classroom practices, although the tools and platforms varied. Teacher A used laptops, LCD projectors, speakers, PowerPoint, audio graphics, videos, and interactive platforms such as Liveworksheets, Quizizz, Wordwall, and YouTube. Teacher B also utilized laptops, projectors, PowerPoint, Microsoft Word, and images, and integrated Canva and Kahoot as evaluation tools. Meanwhile, Teacher C combined ICT tools like laptops and projectors with platforms such as Wordwall and Learn English Kids. These

findings align with Alkamel and Chouthaiwale (2018), who argue that various multimedia platforms support language skills development by providing audio-visual and interactive content.

Despite the active use of ICT tools and platforms, all three teachers encountered several challenges that could be categorized into teacher-level and school-level obstacles (Bingimlas, 2009). At the school level, Teacher A faced limited facilities such as the absence of adequate speakers and projector screens, while Teacher C experienced frequent projector disconnections and missing remotes. Teacher B reported technical difficulties including slow devices and unstable projector connections. These problems reflect the infrastructural and technical support issues discussed by Unal and Ozturk (2012), who emphasize the need for reliable ICT infrastructure to ensure smooth integration. At the teacher level, low student participation during ICT-based learning was a common issue for all three teachers. This indicates negative student attitudes toward ICT integration, which may reduce class engagement. Teachers B and C also reported a lack of confidence in using ICT, especially in managing classes and maximizing the use of digital tools. This supports Tong and Trinidad's (2005) observation that low confidence and limited training can hinder teachers from fully adopting ICT in their teaching practices.

To address these challenges, the teachers applied a range of adaptive strategies. Teacher A brought a personal speaker and used a whiteboard as a substitute projector screen, while also managing time more effectively to fit ICT use within limited class periods. Teacher B responded with technical solutions like regular laptop maintenance and using school-provided devices, while also conducting ice-breaking activities to improve student participation. Teacher C empowered students by involving them in ICT setup tasks and actively encouraging passive students to participate, thereby promoting engagement. These adaptive responses reflect Bingimlas' (2009) framework on supporting ICT implementation, particularly in terms of enhancing resources, training, and promoting positive attitudes. Furthermore, the strategies used also reflect the Modification stage of the

SAMR model (Khaerunnisa et al., 2023), where teachers adapted learning activities and Classroom dynamics with the help of technology to meet educational goals.

Interviews also revealed that the teachers held positive perceptions of ICT's impact on teaching and learning, despite facing technical and time-related constraints. All three agreed that ICT made learning more interactive, efficient, and enjoyable for students. Teachers B and C emphasized the importance of planning to maximize ICT benefits, especially when time is limited. Teacher C also noted that mental preparedness and professional development were crucial in maintaining effective ICT integration. These findings support Bingimlas' (2009) recommendation for continuous teacher training and building positive attitudes to foster ICT adoption. Overall, the teachers demonstrated open-mindedness and adaptability, which are essential for navigating technological challenges and sustaining ICT-based instruction in the classrooms.

CONCLUSION

This research investigated the ICT tools and platforms used by English teachers in the EFL classrooms at SMP Istiqomah Sambas Purbalingga. It also explored the challenges they faced in integrating ICT into teaching and the strategies they employed to overcome those challenges. Based on the findings from classroom observations and interviews, several conclusions can be drawn.

First, the three English teachers utilized a variety of ICT tools and platforms to enhance the teaching and learning process. Common tools included laptops, LCD projectors, speakers, PowerPoint, as well as visual media such as images and videos. In terms of platforms, Wordwall, Canva, Kahoot, Quizizz, YouTube, and Liveworksheet were frequently used. These resources supported the delivery of materials and provided interactive ways to assess students' understanding.

Second, the challenges encountered in ICT integration were both at the teacher and school levels. At the teacher level, difficulties included limited confidence and insufficient experience in operating specific platforms. At the school level, issues such as inadequate facilities, technical disruptions, power

outages, and limited time for lesson implementation were common barriers that hindered effective ICT use.

Finally, the teachers demonstrated a proactive and adaptive attitude in addressing these challenges. Strategies included bringing personal equipment, conducting regular maintenance, engaging students through ice-breaking activities, and participating in training or independent learning to improve ICT skills. These efforts reflect the teachers' commitment to overcoming limitations and optimizing the use of ICT to support effective and engaging English language teaching.

REFERENCES

Adu, E. O., & Olatundun, S. A. (2013). The Use and Management of ICT In Schools: Strategies For School Leaders. *European journal of computer science and information technology*, *1*(2), 13. https://eajournals.org/ejcsit/vol-1-issue-2-september-2013/use-management-ict-schools-strategies-school-leaders/

Akarowhe K (2017) Information Communication Technology (Ict) in the Educational System of the Third World Countries as a Pivotal to Meet Global Best Practice in Teaching and Development. In *Am J Compt Sci Inform Technol* 5:2. https://doi.org/10.21767/2349-3917.100010

Alkamel, M. A. A., & Chouthaiwale, S. S. (2018). The Use Of ICT Tools In English Language Teaching And Learning: A Literature Review. In *Veda's journal of english language and literature-JOELL*,*5*(2),31-31. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330986788_The_Use_of_ICT_Tools_in_English_Language_Teaching_and_Learning_A_Literature_Review .

Altun, M. (2015). The Integration Of Technology Into Foreign Language Teaching. In *International Journal on New Trends in Education and Their Implications*, 6(1), 23. https://eprints.tiu.edu.iq/id/eprint/770

Apriani, E., & Hidayah, J. (2019). The ICT Used by The English Lecturers for Non English Study Program Students At STAIN Curup. In *Vision: Journal of*

Language and Foreign Language Learning, 8(01), 26-37. http://dx.doi.org/10.21580/vjv8i13280

Apriani, E., Arsyad, S., Syafryadin, S., Supardan, D., Gusmuliana, P., & Santiana, S. (2022). ICT Platforms for Indonesian EFL Students Viewed From Gender During The COVID-19 Pandemic. In *Studies in English Language and Education*, 9(1), 187–202. https://doi.org/10.24815/siele.v9i1.21089

Arizona, K., Abidin, Z., & Rumansyah, R. (2020). Pembelajaran Online Berbasis Proyek Salah Satu Solusi Kegiatan Belajar Mengajar Di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19. In *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, *5*(1), 65. https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v5i1.111

Azmi, N. (2017). The Benefits of Using ICT in the EFL lassrooms: From Perceived Utility to Potential Challenges. In *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 7*, 111. http://dx.doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2017.v7n1p111

Bingimlas, K. A. (2009). Barriers to The Successful Integration of ICT In Teaching and Learning Environments: A Review of The Literature. In *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, science and technology education*, 5(3), 239-240. https://doi.org/10.12973/ejmste/75275Çakıcı, D. (2016). The Use of ICT In Teaching English As A Foreign Language. In *Participatory Educational Research (PER)*, 74. http://www.partedres.com

Khaerunnisa, S. S., Faryanis, I., Aisy, A. R., & Charisma, D. (2023). Efl Teachers'obstacles Towards Ict Integration In Efl Classroom Context. In *Indonesian EFL Journal*, 9(1), 70. https://doi.org/10.25134/ieflj.v9i1.7110

Lenggono, B. (2019). Teachers'questioning Techniques in EFL Classes. In *Doctoral Dissertation, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.* https://repository.ump.ac.id/10245/

Restu, Dian W., et al. (2018). The Profile of Effective EFL Teachers: a Descriptive Study at Senior High Schools in Gowa. In *ELT Worldwide*, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 16, https://doi.org/10.26858/eltww.v5i1.5799.

Nurhaliza, N. (2019). Investigating the Use of ICT In EFL Class. In *Doctoral Dissertation, Universitas Muhammadiyah Purwokerto.* https://repository.ump.ac.id:80/id/eprint/11054

Unal, S., & Ozturk, I. H. (2012). Barriers to ITC Integration into Teachers' Classroom Practices: Lessons from A Case Study on Social Studies Teachers In Turkey. In *World Applied Sciences Journal*, *18*(7), 939-944. https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:16799919