

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES: INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY INTO ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND CURRICULUM DESIGN

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Abstract

The motivation behind choosing this topic stems from the increasing importance of technology in education, particularly in teaching English as a foreign language. The researcher aims to explore the various instructional technology tools and resources used by English teachers. The objective of this research is to identify and understand the different types of technology employed in English language teaching and their effectiveness. This qualitative study focuses on two main concepts: the types of instructional technology tools and resources available, and their application in English language teaching. The subjects of the study are two English teachers from SMA Negeri 4 Bandar Lampung. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which allowed for in-depth insights into the teachers' experiences and practices. The data collection involved recording and transcribing the interviews, followed by a thematic analysis. This method helped in identifying recurring themes and patterns in the data, which were then systematically organized and analyzed. The findings reveal that English teachers use a variety of technological tools such as projectors, laptops, sound systems, digital textbooks, and online platforms like YouTube and Instagram. These tools not only enhance teaching effectiveness but also increase student engagement and learning outcomes.

Keywords: *curriculum; lesson plan; technology*

INTRODUCTION

Technology is now a fundamental part of daily life, widely used across various professions, not just for personal purposes. One common practice is the integration of technology in teaching English. There are many ways to incorporate technology into curriculum development and lesson planning for English teaching. People are currently experiencing a new phase of the industrial revolution, driven by advancements and the widespread acceptance of digital technology. This emerging technology has sparked new economies in both developed and developing countries. The development of digital technology has changed how they understand and define literacy, producing new forms of literacy (Oktarin & Hastomo, 2024).

One of the most significant recent innovations in the field of education is the use of technology in lesson preparation and curriculum development. Technology can be especially helpful for teaching English as it provides more opportunities for students to practice and improve their language skills (Kimm et al., 2020). Digital tools like Edmodo, Schoology, and Google Classroom enable students to participate in class discussions (Istiara & Hastomo, 2023)

However, teaching English in the digital age presents some challenges. Teachers may lag behind and face difficulties in learning new digital literacies (Novokreshchennykh et al., 2022). Therefore, teachers need to be more technologically proficient, as integrating digital media into the teaching and learning process is essential for helping modern students. Classrooms need to

offer an environment where students can build their knowledge, share it, and collaborate with classmates from around the world (Nedungadi et al., 2018). Teachers are incorporating technology into lesson plans, curriculum, and classrooms to meet these needs and benefit from the advantages it offers.

Certain courses are designed to meet the demands of both students and the market, particularly by providing student instructors with sufficient technological literacy. There is a critical need for teachers and aspiring teachers to receive training in integrating new technologies into language curricula (Hastomo et al., 2024). By offering interactive media and multimedia resources, facilitating student communication and collaboration, and providing a customized and adaptive learning experience, technology can strengthen language teaching and learning (Sohn & Kwon, 2020). It also helps transcend conventional language barriers and provides access to real language materials and interactions with native speakers (Hastomo & Septiyana, 2022). However, it is crucial for teachers to use technology effectively and guide their students in its responsible use. Proficiency in digital technology is necessary for students' success in both academic and professional endeavors (Nugroho & Mutiaraningrum, 2020).

Instructors can utilize technology in their classes, especially in lesson planning. Integrating technology into lesson plans can make it easier for teachers to obtain information that supports the learning process, making teaching more practical and interesting for both teachers and students. This active engagement fosters a dynamic learning environment where students are motivated to contribute and interact meaningfully with course material, enhancing overall educational outcomes (Shah & Barkas, 2018).

Teachers can incorporate technology into the curriculum by initiating activities and choosing the right technology. Techniques for integrating technology into the curriculum, especially in the language learning process or in scientific subjects, can be implemented. External events that support the student's internal learning process should be created to facilitate, support, and maintain internal processes (Carless, 2022). Teacher proficiency in using educational technology is essential for several educational reform initiatives in the digital age (Raygan & Moradkhani, 2022). Such proficiency can improve the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes (Solano et al., 2017). Although the effects of technology on student outcomes in ELT are not always clear, appropriate and effective technology integration can increase students' motivation and engagement in their language studies (Carstens et al., 2021). Curriculum designers should identify essential outcomes and work backward to discover instructional strategies that enable students to achieve those outcomes (Niess, 2011). Additionally, the success of technology integration into the curriculum is greatly influenced by teachers' attitudes toward its use in language classrooms.

This study reviews two past studies related to the current topic. The first study, conducted by Tarigan & Liana (2018), titled "Improving Students' Writing Descriptive Text Through Digital Storytelling Technique," used classroom action research (CAR) (Erikson Tarigan & Liana, 2018). The research included both quantitative and qualitative data to find out whether digital storytelling improves students' writing skills. The findings revealed that students' writing ability significantly improved through digital storytelling, concluding that this technique is highly recommended for teaching writing skills. The results imply that using technology in teaching can be beneficial, thus enhancing students' abilities. The second study by Istiara & Hastomo (2023) examined the strategies used by college professors and administrators to enhance the digital literacy abilities of EFL students. The results showed that strategies like conducting training workshops, improving classroom digital environments, motivating learners, employing digital technology in the classroom, enhancing parental awareness, and revising the curriculum are effective. However, this study does not explain how to integrate digital technology into lesson plans or curricula.

From these two studies, it is clear that integrating technology into lesson planning and curricula is essential for improving students' skills. Since there is limited research on this topic, the current study aims to explore how EFL teachers incorporate technology into lesson planning

and the development of English language education curricula. This research can significantly contribute to the field by promoting digital literacy and technology-based learning techniques in the context of the fourth industrial revolution. Thus, the goal of this study is to investigate how EFL teachers incorporate technology into the planning and development of an English language education curriculum. The research question is:

1. What strategies do EFL teachers use to integrate technology into lesson plan and curriculum design for English language teaching?

METHOD

Research Design

Researchers employed qualitative research in this current study. In this research, the method used is standard thematic analysis. This research method is used to analyze and identify patterns of themes in qualitative data. Thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into patterns of meaning across a dataset (Braun et al., 2014). Researchers follow a coding process, which includes initial coding, connecting codes, determining themes, and identifying and evaluating themes. The goal of standard thematic analysis is to provide a transparent and systematic approach to analyzing qualitative data. This helps researchers maintain credibility and produce solid results. The researchers chose qualitative research because it is flexible and can deeply reflect participants' opinions, subjective evaluations, and detailed descriptions of the research goals.

Population

This study was conducted at SMPN 35 Bandar Lampung. The researchers used purposive sampling techniques because they decided to choose the English teacher as the subject of the research. Purposive sampling was used because it allows researchers to target a specific subgroup within a population related to their research question, or because they lacked time and resources. Researchers also used convenience sampling to specify the sample used for the research.

Table 1. The Demographic Information of the Subjects

No	Respondents	Gender	Age	Qualifications	Experience in teaching
1.	Respondents 1	Female	43	S.pd	5 years
2.	Respondents 2	Female	31	M.pd	4 years

This research involves people as the main subjects. To preserve participants' privacy and avoid potential harm, the study gathered information with the participants' consent.

Data Collection

For this research, the main instrument used by the researchers was an interview. The interview procedures and guidelines were constructed based on reliable and relevant sources (Cahyono et al., 2016; Eshet & Eshet, 2004; Istiara & Hastomo, 2023; Syamdianita & Cahyono, 2021). To ensure credibility in the data collection process, the researchers asked a panel of experts to validate the interview protocol. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with two English teachers from SMPN 35 Bandar Lampung in May 2024. Each interview lasted 25 minutes and took place at SMPN 35 Bandar Lampung. The researchers prepared 15 questions for the subjects. Additionally, the instrument used in this research underwent reliability and validity tests before being used to collect data. The researchers also sought expert suggestions to enhance the credibility of the results.

Data Analysis

In this procedure, the researchers analyzed the data using the recorded answers from the participants in the interviews and then transcribed the conversations. The next step is coding, where the researchers label the text and categorize it to identify themes. The data analysis technique used in this research is thematic analysis. The steps of the thematic method are as follows: (1) Familiarising, (2) Generating initial codes, (3) Searching for themes, (4) Reviewing potential themes, (5) Defining and naming themes, and (6) Producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

In examining the data, the researchers used references to help investigate the emerging patterns. Once patterns were identified, they were systematically noted in the coded data. Three themes emerged from the interviews with the respondents. The respondents' strategies included two types of methods for integrating technology into lesson plans and curriculum design. Additionally, the researchers cited previous studies related to the findings to support the results, enhance the analytical perspective, and provide research-supporting information.

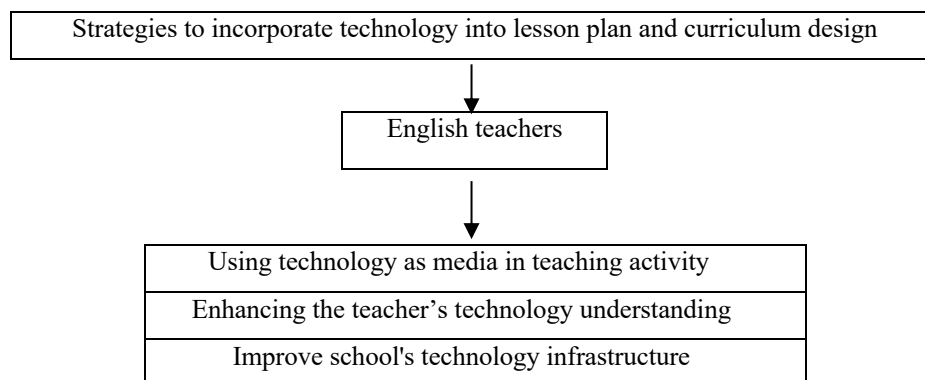


Figure 1. Strategies for Incorporating lesson plan and curriculum design

In this research, the researchers identified strategies used by EFL teachers to integrate technology into lesson plans and curriculum design. They discovered and reported two sub-themes based on the investigation of the interviews. The reports, as stated below, are linked to the strategies adopted by the EFL teachers.

Using technology as media in teaching activity

One of the most apparent methods to integrate technology into the classroom, lesson planning, and curriculum is through the use of digital media in teaching and learning activities, as stated by respondent 1.

“One effective method to integrate technology in learning is through digital tools like software (e.g., Google Classroom for materials and assignments, PowerPoint for presentations). Additionally, hardware such as projectors enhances teaching by presenting visual content, and speakers aid in developing listening skills among students.”

Based on the interview, researchers found that English teachers have integrated various types of media to support their teaching. They mentioned using several digital technologies like Google Classroom, Google Docs, Zoom, and Microsoft PowerPoint. In terms of hardware, projectors and sound speakers were employed to assist in teaching language skills such as listening comprehension. The teachers emphasized that these digital tools were particularly invaluable during the pandemic when government restrictions limited in-person gatherings. Furthermore, the teachers highlighted the efficiency of using media for quizzes and assignments, as these tools

automate scoring and provide instant feedback to students, benefiting both teachers and learners. Even outside of pandemic conditions, these technologies continue to enhance classroom experiences by capturing students' attention through visual aids and facilitating activities like group discussions and presentations using projectors and Google Classroom, thus promoting collaborative and remote learning methods. Additionally, the teachers noted that utilizing software helps students become more comfortable with English and enhances their digital literacy skills, which are increasingly vital in today's world. They observed a significant positive impact of digital media on students' learning processes, prompting consideration of integrating technology more deeply into future curriculum designs to enhance teaching quality and academic outcomes.

Enhancing the teachers' technology understanding

Respondent 2 highlighted that having a grasp of current educational technology is a strategic approach to integrating technology into teaching and learning activities. This understanding serves as a pathway to effectively incorporating technology into lesson plans and curriculum designs.

“Teachers need to stay updated on educational technology through offline or online training like webinars. This helps EFL educators expand their understanding. With this knowledge, teachers can effectively choose and integrate suitable media in their teaching, ensuring alignment with learning objectives, curriculum, and student engagement.”

Additionally, fellow English educators also concur on the necessity of equipping teachers with technological skills in education. It is crucial to acquaint them with innovative teaching methods, media tools, and instructional techniques that harness technology, ensuring that classroom activities remain engaging for students. Moreover, integrating technology into the classroom environment benefits teachers by enhancing student motivation and facilitating effective content delivery. Therefore, organizing workshops on technological tools for English teachers could significantly aid in integrating contemporary technology into lesson plans and curriculum development.

Improving school's technology infrastructure

Another effective approach to integrating technology into teachers' lesson plans and curriculum design is ensuring the availability of a robust and supportive technological infrastructure to enhance the learning experience. Both respondents emphasized that

“For effective integration of technology in teaching, schools need essential digital infrastructure such as projectors, computers, and WiFi. These tools are vital for using digital media like PowerPoint for presentations. Without them, connectivity issues or limited data can hinder learning. Therefore, schools must prioritize providing these technological resources to support teaching and learning activities effectively.”

According to the respondents, enhancing school facilities, particularly in terms of technological resources, is crucial. In today's era, where most students own and spend significant time on smartphones, they often bring these devices to school. Therefore, teachers must creatively integrate digital media into their lessons to capture students' attention. One effective method is using a projector, which allows students to clearly view visuals and text, thereby enhancing engagement with the material presented. Additionally, employing audio speakers enables teachers to deliver audiovisual content for teaching listening skills, drawing students' focus away from their mobile devices and improving their learning experience.

Furthermore, integrating applications and internet resources into lesson plans and classroom activities is essential. Teachers need to understand how to effectively utilize digital media such as websites and social media for educational purposes. This approach encourages students to use their devices for studying, leveraging the vast resources available online for learning and research. Ultimately, integrating technology into the learning process empowers

teachers and stakeholders to redesign curricula and incorporate digital media effectively.

Discussion

In terms of educational technology, various tools can effectively support teaching practices, as revealed by recent research. These tools, such as PowerPoint, social media platforms, Google Classroom, Google Docs, and Zoom, are frequently integrated into lesson planning and curriculum design, particularly for language learning (Alakrash & Abdul Razak, 2021). They not only facilitate instruction but also promote active student engagement. Nevertheless, further investigation is needed to determine their efficacy in enhancing other language skills, like reading and speaking, through platforms such as WhatsApp and mobile learning.

Teachers have embraced these technologies to enhance their teaching activities and support educational goals, as observed through interviews with English teachers at SMPN 35 Bandar Lampung. The study highlights strategies for integrating technology into lesson plans, emphasizing its role as a teaching medium and the importance of educators' technological proficiency. This approach aims to elevate educational standards, underscoring the pivotal role of technology in modern classrooms.

The findings resonate with previous research by Salasiah Ammade, Murni Mahmud, Baso Jabu, and Suradi Tahmir, who explored technology integration in education, albeit using different methodologies (Ammade et al., 2020). This current study, based on direct teacher interviews, aligns with their conclusion that technology can significantly enhance language learning experiences for both teachers and students.

In conclusion, the integration of technology in language teaching proves beneficial, facilitating tasks such as assessment via platforms like Google Classroom at SMPN 35 Bandar Lampung. Moving forward, educators are encouraged to explore and further research the diverse technological tools available to optimize language teaching methodologies, thus enriching the learning process. This review underscores the importance of selecting appropriate technologies to support effective pedagogy in language education.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings discussed above, this study identified two primary strategies adopted by English teachers at SMPN 35 Bandar Lampung for integrating technology into lesson plans and curriculum design: using technology as a teaching medium and enhancing teachers' technological proficiency. Additionally, respondents acknowledged the validity of strategies reported by other participants, highlighting the diverse approaches employed by educators in the school.

However, several limitations were noted during the course of this research. These include the limited number of respondents, focusing exclusively on EFL teachers, and the narrow scope of institutions studied. To guide future researchers, it is recommended to broaden the participant pool to encompass a larger sample size and include diverse educational roles such as administrative staff or college students. Furthermore, this study primarily analyzed strategies for integrating technology into lesson plans and curriculum design. Future research could explore the broader impact of technology integration on educational outcomes, providing valuable insights into its influence across various teaching contexts. These recommendations aim to encourage further exploration and understanding of how technology can optimally support teaching and learning practices in language education and beyond.

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