

LANGUAGE TEACHING IN THE DIGITAL AGE: TEACHERS' VIEWS AND ITS CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

The update technology usage and its changes come and give positive effects to us including the teaching and learning process in school practices. It enjoys, motivates, and facilitates the students in learning English. This qualitative research aimed at analyzing the English teachers' views on the use of the digital tools in the classroom practices and the challenges in order to face the digital teaching. The results indicated that English teachers agree and strongly agree that digital technology helps the teachers to create interesting atmosphere and technology gives positive effects to the English teaching. Moreover, The English teachers believed that digital teaching means providing digital tools including laptop, speaker, mobile phones, websites and the teacher used the downloaded materials and videos from You Tube as the digital media. Lack of training for teachers, lack of time, and lack of facilities were the challenges for the English teachers in order to apply the digital teaching efficiently and create their own digital media in the school practices. Findings suggest that English teachers should participate actively on the teacher professional developments such as group discussion, workshop, training, and seminar in order to be familiar with the evolution of the new technology.

Keywords: *digital age, English teaching, challenges, digital tools*

Sari

Pemutakhiran penggunaan teknologi dan perubahannya hadir dan memberi efek positif bagi kita terutama dalam proses belajar mengajar di sekolah. Perubahan tersebut memotivasi, dan memfasilitasi siswa dalam belajar bahasa Inggris. Penelitian kualitatif ini bertujuan menganalisis pandangan guru bahasa Inggris tentang penggunaan alat-alat digital di kelas dan tantangan untuk menghadapi pengajaran digital. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru bahasa Inggris berpendapat bahwa pembelajaran digital berarti melibatkan alat pengajaran digital termasuk laptop, speaker, ponsel, situs web dan guru menggunakan materi dan video yang diunduh dari You Tube sebagai media digital. Kurangnya pelatihan untuk guru, kurangnya waktu, dan kurangnya fasilitas menjadi

tantangan bagi para guru bahasa Inggris untuk menerapkan pengajaran digital secara efisien dan membuat media digital mereka sendiri untuk ditrepakan di sekolah. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa guru bahasa Inggris harus berpartisipasi aktif dalam pengembangan profesional guru seperti diskusi kelompok, lokakarya, pelatihan, dan seminar agar terbiasa dengan evolusi teknologi baru.

kata kunci: *era digital, pengajaran Bahasa Inggris, tantangan, alat digital*

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Introduction

Technology gives a chance to the teacher to apply the digital tools into teaching and language learning process. It facilitates and supports the educational field to face the digital teaching. In the digital era, therefore, there is a need to explore the significance of the digital age not just in terms of preparing the learners for an uncertain future, but in building their confident, safe, character as the users of digital technologies now. In the term of internet, technology as ideal tool for language teaching and learning that supports a learner-centred and functional approach to knowledge (Koua, 2013). (Richards & Smith, 2002) stated that computer in language learning is an activity which is parallel learning through other media. It uses the facilities of the computer (e.g. using the computer to present a reading text). Furthermore, (Kiliçkaya & Seferoglu, 2013) indicated that computer technology could improve the students' language skills.

It's true that technology gives effect to the teaching and learning process. (Zhytska S.A., 2012) proposed that technology had positive effect on the experiential learning, motivation, enhancing student achievement, authentic materials for learning, greater interaction, individualization, independence from a single source of information, and global understanding. Furthermore, (Sung et al., 2016);(Cong-Lem, 2018) found that technology and web devices gave effect to the students' learning and oral performance. Meanwhile, (Han, 2008) mentioned that computer can promote learning interaction between learners and teachers and it can help classroom teaching with a variety of materials and approaches. (Rahimi & Yadollahi, 2011) investigated the level of ICT in

teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) and it can be concluded that digital portable devices were used more than computer or network applications/tools in English classroom and teachers almost provided the technology in teaching oral skills. Furthermore, (Alm, 2016) mentioned that blogging made a special bond between L2 learners which allowed them to see each other as people rather than students. The use of mobile devices among students outside classroom are not something new. (Wu, 2018) mentioned that they need more guidance in order to facilitate the development of their language skills. Thus, students must be monitored and supported by their teachers to use the powerful tools for learning right now. The last, (Parvin & Salam, 2018) found that the use of audio-visual content has positive impact in improving and encouraging interactive language classes

Some studies showed that technology significantly improve the learners` language skills. The first, (Nachoua, 2012) found that computer assisted language learning is a motivating method and computers are beneficial tools to be used in foreign language classes in order to improve students` listening skill. The second, (Khoshsima & Khazayi, 2017) mentioned that chatting in cyberspaces (telegram) as one of CALL based activities promote the 20 high school students` speaking ability. The next, (Omar, 2014) found that computer-based concept maps facilitate in improving the students` reading comprehension. The last, (Pirasteh, 2014) stated that using email was effective to teach large number of the structure points.

The general research findings that showed the technology provided the capacity to afford opportunities for supporting a powerful teaching and learning atmospheres (Hermans et al., 2008) and can impact on students` learning (Concannon et al., 2005), motivation building (Mahdizadeh et al., 2008), critical thinking building (Lim et al., 2003) , and the autonomy (Claudia et al., 2004) (Baytak et al., 2011) carried out the role of technology in language learning. They found out that learners` learning was improved by integrating technology into the classroom and the use of technology increases learners` motivation, social interactions, learning and engagement. Technology in school makes learning enjoyable, interesting, interactive and helps them learn more. That is why the English teachers should be familiar with the technology tools in English teaching.

This research investigated English teachers` views on the use of the digital tools in the classroom practices and the challenges in order to face the digital teaching.

Methods

This kind of research was descriptive qualitative that described how the teachers` views on the use of the digital tools in the classroom practices and the challenges in order to face the digital teaching. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Part 1 consisted of closed ended questionnaire and the second part 2 was open ended questionnaire. The questionnaire was piloted and validated by 6 expert judgements. The final open ended questionnaire consisted of two sections (digital tools in the classroom and the challenges in apply the digital teaching efficiently and create their own digital media in the school practices). To support the data, the researcher reviewed the lesson plan. This research involved the 33 high school English teachers in three sub districts of Ogan Komering Ulu regency which were Baturaja Timur sub district, Baturaja Barat sub district, and Muara Jaya sub district from the total 76 English teachers. All of the them graduated from English education and they had teaching experience starting from 1 year to 20 years.

Results and Discussion

The Result of Closed-Ended Questionnaire

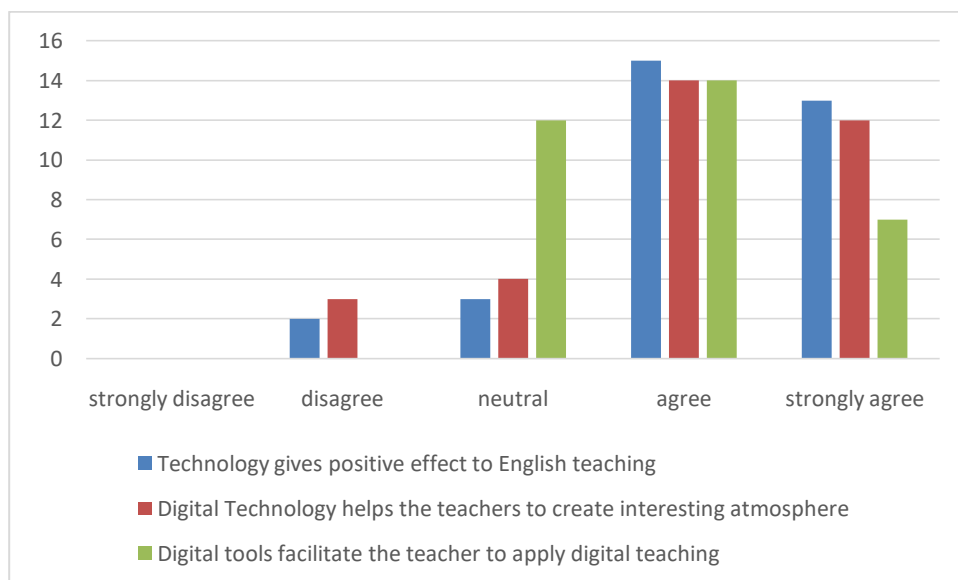


Chart 1 Technology for English teaching

Chart 1 indicated that 6 % of English teachers disagree, 8% of them were neutral, 43% of them agree, and 43 % of them strongly agree that technology gives positive effect to

English teaching. The next, 43% of English teachers agree, 12% of them were neutral, 36 % of them strongly agree that digital technology helps the teachers to create interesting atmosphere. The last, 43% of English teachers agree, 36% of them were neutral, 21 % of them strongly agree that digital tools facilitate the teacher in applying digital teaching.

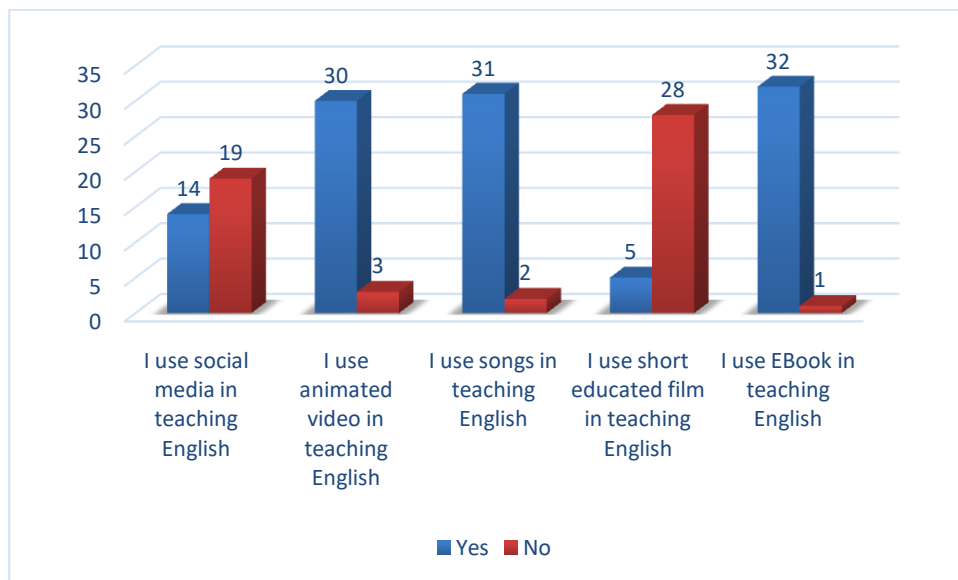


Chart 2. Digital tools in teaching English

Chart 2 indicated that 42 % of English teachers used social media in teaching English, 91 % of them used animated video in teaching English, 94% of them used songs in teaching English, 15% of them used short educated film in teaching English, and 97% of the English teachers used EBook in teaching English.

The Result of Open-Ended Questionnaire

Digital Tools in the Classroom

The participants' general digital technology using were laptop, computer, speaker, MS PowerPoint, mobile phone, and the website. The results seem similar to the results of previous research done by (Yordming, 2017), the most common uses of digital tools are the Internet, speaker, computer, and mobile phone. It indicated that the English teachers were familiar with the digital media and tools. In this research, many of the English teachers provided the video as the digital media in teaching and learning process. As Participant 2 explained,

“I used my own laptop and speaker when I taught short English conversation to my students and the students can repeat and practice the pronunciation and listening comprehension”

Participant 6

“I used the downloaded material from you tube as my teaching material and sometimes I asked my students to make a video in group and then they uploaded in the social media and discussed it in the classroom”

Participant 3

“I just provide the mobile phone and prove the download materials from you tube. My school doesn't have good facilities to provide it ”

From the lesson plan, the participants provide laptop, Ms. power point, email, LCD projector as the teaching media and downloaded materials as the sources of teaching and learning materials. Different from the research finding found by (Itani, 2018), secondary EFL student-teachers are not provided with a variety of digital technologies, they are using traditional digital devices in a simple manner, and they are facing some barriers that are preventing them from applying digital technologies at the adequate level. In research indicated that the English teachers believed that they used social media as the digital tools in teaching, the animated videos, and E-book in teaching and learning process. It is very essential for the English teachers to use various digitals tools and take the benefits of digital technology for teaching English.

Challenges for the English Teachers to Apply the Digital Teaching

The challenges for the English teachers were lack of training for teachers, lack of time, and lack facilities of in order to apply the digital teaching efficiently and create their own digital media in the school practices.

Participant 1

“The teachers need such kind of training or seminar to increase their ability in technology usage in the teaching English and the school should have good facilities such as online learning and language laboratory ”

Participant 4

“teachers have limited time to explore technology in the classroom (wasted time in the preparation) and the students should have other subjects. It should be better if there is computer laboratory”

In the digital age, the teacher has to know where to find relevant information, how to solve problems and what to keep up learning. (Amirsheibani & Iraj, 2014) found that language teachers gave positive attitude on the of computer technology in teaching. Moreover. (Anggeraini et al., 2019) found that the EFL teachers had intermediate digital literacy level. General speaking, a teacher has to improve digital technology competences teaching methods and develop professional learning continually along with new developments and to comprehend that change is flow so fast and must accept and prepare for growth. One thing that can be done is learning from networks related to professional developments or personal interests to build knowledge get information and use the technology efficiently in the teaching process.

The English teacher can develop professional deal with the technology used the classroom by downloading video teaching tutorial from You Tube and then practice it the classroom. The teacher can learn many useful things from You Tube such as how to make movie maker so that the teacher can create his/her own movie maker as the media in the teaching. This practice is one of practices based learning for professional development for English teachers. They can practice from the native speakers without meeting face to face. It can be the sources for the teacher whom taught in the rural area (in this case, lack of electricity facilities and no internet accesses). (Sung et al., 2016) indicated that the technology is not generally applied in the state schools of the south region of Ecuador. Besides that, the teacher can learn how to operate the online learning application and tools to support the teaching and learning in the digital age. In that case, the teacher should be able to use update and useful application and learning tools in digital age for example online writing applications and tools. In line with (Ozturk, 2013) mentioned about the teachers should re-evaluate their teaching and make best use of potential aids to face the digital teaching. It's true that teachers must digitally literate in order to reach the beneficial and effectiveness of digital teaching. In order to face the digital age teaching, the teachers should participate actively in such kind of professional developments such as seminar, training, workshop that deal with teaching English and technology. By joining such kinds program, the English teachers can upgrade and enlarge their knowledge and skills. The English teachers can also report their research to be presented in the seminar and write article to be published in the academic journal. By

attending such kinds of training and seminar, and workshop as the participant or presenter, the English teachers can get the latest information about English teaching nowadays and the important thing is then they can share the result of it with partners.

Conclusion & recommendation

In this digital teaching era, the English teacher believed that digital technology gives positive effect to the English teaching, it helps the English teachers to create interesting atmosphere in teaching and learning process, and the digital tools facilitate the teachers in applying digital teaching. Some challenges for teachers in the digital age are: a teacher has to improve teaching methods and develop professional learning continually along with new developments and to comprehend that change is flow so fast and must accept and prepare for growth of technology. In this case, the teacher only focused on the technology used in teaching and learning process (LCD, PPT, video, e-book) but also have technical competence to use various computer applications for educational purposes and be aware of applications that can be suitable for teaching and learning process. The researcher recommends for the other researchers to focus on the teachers` digital competences development to face the teachers` challenges in the digital teaching.

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Conflict of Interest

No potential conflict of interest is reported.

Biography

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