

Teaching English in The Digital Era: A Photovoice Analysis of the Use of Technology by EFL Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the use of technology by English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in the digital era through a voice-over analysis. Photovoice is a participatory research method that combines photography and interviews to give voice to participants. In this study, several EFL teachers were asked to take photos depicting how they use technology in their teaching and then participate in semi-structured interviews to discuss the photos. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis method. The results showed that EFL teachers use a variety of technologies in their teaching, LCD (Liquid Crystal Display), computers, tablets, smartphones, as well as using power point to facilitate student learning. Teachers use technology for various purposes, including material presentation, practice, assessment, and communication with students. Teachers also report that technology has a positive impact on student learning, such as increasing motivation, participation and learning outcomes. However, this study also found some challenges in the use of technology in EFL teaching. Such challenges include lack of access to technology, lack of teacher training, and lack of technical support. Teachers also reported that they sometimes felt overwhelmed by technology and found it difficult to integrate it effectively into their teaching. The findings of this study have important implications for EFL teacher practice, teacher professional development and education policy. EFL teachers need to be encouraged to use technology effectively in their teaching, and they need to be given access to the training and support they need to do so. Education policy also needs to support the use of technology in EFL teaching and ensure that all teachers have access to the technology they need

Keywords: EFL Teaching, Technology, Photovoice, Thematic Analysis, Digital Era

INTRODUCTION

The world of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education is entering an era of inevitable transformation. The wave of digitization that has swept across all aspects of life has also brought significant changes to the EFL classroom. EFL teachers are now faced with a myriad of digital tools and resources that can be utilized to enrich the learning process. The emergence of various online platforms, interactive applications and other technology-based learning media opens up new opportunities for EFL teachers. A class that utilizes technology such as LCD and other devices to bring grammar lessons to life, or a class that uses online platforms to collaborate on projects with peers from all over the world. These possibilities are just a fraction of the potential for technology to increase student engagement and create a more thriving learning environment.

However, this digital transformation also presents challenges for EFL teachers. They are required to adapt and effectively incorporate new technological tools into their teaching methods. This requires adequate digital readiness and skills. Some teachers may need additional training to improve their digital literacy. Digital technology has become an important role in EFL teaching and learning, having a significant impact on students' motivation and engagement in learning English (Alshahran, 2017).

This photovoice research is an attempt to document and analyze EFL teachers' experiences of incorporating technology into their teaching practices. Through photographs taken and narrated by the teachers themselves, the project aims to explore the different ways technology is used in the EFL classroom, as well as the opportunities and challenges they face in implementing it. Many studies have used photovoice in EFL classrooms to provide an engaging experience while improving language skills (Drajati, 2018; Pupah et al, 2019; Ronzi et al., 2016).

This photovoice research is expected to provide a fuller picture of EFL teaching in the digital age. It allows participants to share their stories by taking photographs and involves selecting images that most accurately reflect the issues, explaining what the photographs mean and identifying emerging theories, issues and themes (Wang, 2005). The voices of EFL teachers expressed in their narratives and photographs will be a valuable source of information for understanding how technology affects EFL teaching practices, as well as how teachers adapt and respond to these changes. Furthermore, the results of this study can make an important contribution to the development of effective guidelines and strategies for integrating technology into EFL learning. By understanding the experiences and perspectives of EFL teachers, we can formulate appropriate strategies to help them make optimal use of technology in creating more meaningful and rewarding learning experiences for all students.

METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative methodology to investigate how EFL teachers use technology in their classrooms in the digital age. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005:2). The researcher used photovoice methodology to explore this topic, which allowed the teachers to express their experiences through a combination of photography and narrative. Photovoice is a visual method that has attracted the attention of researchers in the field of education and social sciences in general (Tsang, 2020). The research includes case studies, personal experiences, interviews, life stories, observations, stories, and visual texts that illustrate routine moments and meanings as well as issues in individuals' lives.

Research Participants

The participants in this study were EFL Teachers who had experience teaching English using ICT in their classroom. The technique of the sampling is used purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2013:218), purposive sampling technique is a data source sampling technique with certain considerations. The participant who met the criteria as EFL Teachers was 1-2 persons that working in different educational areas (eg. public and private schools, different grades). The participants should have at least one year of experience in the use of technology in their EFL classrooms.

Data Collection

The participant will be asked a few questions at the beginning of the interview session. The interview can be conducted if the participant is willing to be interviewed and agrees to the list of questions provided. The researcher collected data using semi-structured interviews, which is a qualitative data collection technique that allows researchers to explore information in depth and with flexibility. Drever (2003) states that semi-structured interviewing involves the creation of structure to map topics to cover, and the control of the interview to assure coverage and to explore the reasons for it. Here, the researcher interviewed participants about their experiences in teaching with the use of ICT in school, with interviews tailored to the flexibility of the participants' time to be studied. Interviews were conducted individually and lasted approximately 30 to 60 minutes for each participant. The interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. The interview guide will relate to EFL teachers' experiences of using ICT as a learning medium (e.g. challenges, teaching strategies, use of resources, student engagement). The interviews were adapted by the researcher according to the

main focus of the study, namely EFL teachers' experiences of teaching in schools using ICT. The researcher used a recording device for the interview process. The researcher used an interview guide to improve the efficiency of the interview process. The participants were asked to answer a series of questions posed in the interview guide. The questions in the interview guide were designed to provide answers to the research questions. The specifications of the questions in the interview guide are shown in the following table.

Table 1. Questions Theme

Sample of Questions
1. Can you tell us a bit about your English teaching experience?
2. What technologies are used regularly in the classroom?
3. What prompted you to use technology in teaching English?
4. Can you explain how to use technology to achieve learning objectives?
5. What are the challenges when using technology and how do you overcome them?
6. Can you tell us about specific examples where the use of technology has had a positive impact on learning?
7. What is the role of technology in the professional development of EFL teachers?

Data Analysis

For this study, the researcher used a two-pronged approach to data collection to gain a comprehensive understanding of EFL teachers' experiences with ICT in the classroom. Semi-structured interviews provided a platform for in-depth exploration of teachers' perspectives on challenges, teaching strategies, resource utilization, and student engagement. The interviews, which lasted 30-60 minutes, were audio-recorded and transcribed for further analysis. In addition, a photovoice method was applied, where participants took photos reflecting their experiences and then participated in a discussion directed by prepared questions. This method allowed for the collection of visual data alongside the interview data, thus providing a deeper understanding of the teachers' experiences.

Finding

Subject 1



Figure 1. Efl teacher teaches using a combination of LCD and Canva.

I am a teacher of English at defferent levels, from very young learners (kindergarten), to young learners (primary school), to university students. During my time as a teacher, I have used technogy (ICT) to facilitate my student' learning. The technology that I often use in general with my student include LCD projectors, here I use LCD as a tool to convey my material from a laptop to an LCD screen. In delivering my material, I usually use several applications such as Canva. The application has several features, one of which is the ability to create presentations in .ppt format that can also be accessed through Power Point. I also sometimes use Kahoot! And Quizizz to create fun and interesting quizziz



Figure 2. Efl teacher teaches using a combination of LCD and Youtube.

My experience teaching various levels, from Very Young Learner in kindergarten, Young Learner in elementary school, to university students, shows that the use of ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is very important and requires appropriate strategies. For Very Young Learner I often use LCD and Canva to make learning more interesting and interactive, helping children connect sounds with images and animations. For Young Learner, I often use technology such as songs and youtube apps to help create a supportive learning environment and build their confidence in speaking. I occasionally use Kahoot or Quizizz to make learning more fun and less boring. Then, by utilizing LCD and Canva, I can make interesting PPT and summarize the material in my own language, making it easier for students to understand. Technology can make me a creative teacher.

Subject 2



Figure 3. Teacher Efl teaches using a combination of quizizzes

I am an English teacher at the junior high school level, during my time as a teacher, I am happy to see students communicating with me in English and enthusiastically following the lessons. On the other hand, I am faced with the fact that not all students have an interest in English. This causes some students to be easily bored and lazy when learning, so the material is not absorbed optimally. However, I also utilize technology such as mobile phones/laptops by using applications such as Quizizz and Kahoot which provide quiz features that are still related to learning in order to build their enthusiasm for learning. However, this also does not always have a positive impact, because some students consider quizzes as ordinary games and do not consider them as learning tools. Secondly, they are tempted to play other games on their cell phones. Thirdly, it is difficult to control the use of their phones, as there is a possibility that they may misuse them. To overcome this challenge, I control the use of their phones with special learning apps. Secondly, I play along with them to know who is following the lesson well. Third, I use the phones for learning only during certain hours. Outside of these hours, the phones are collected and stored at the teacher's office.



Figure 4. Teacher drawing by utilizing ict by using quizizz learning

I teach English at a junior high school. On the one hand, I feel proud to see students communicate confidently and follow the lessons with enthusiasm. On the other hand, I am faced with the fact that not all students have an interest in this language. This makes some students easily bored and lazy when learning, so the material is not absorbed optimally. However, this challenge does not discourage me. I saw it as an opportunity to foster curiosity and turn potential boredom into active engagement. I utilize platforms like Quizizz and Kahoot! to make learning more interesting with interactive quizzes. This healthy “dose of fun” fosters a more positive attitude towards English, making them more open to new concepts. The potential misuse of cell phones during class sessions can also be seen as an opportunity to be responsible with technology use. By implementing clear guidelines such as designated learning apps and specific phone usage times, I believe students will learn to manage their devices and focus on the task at hand. This will foster a sense of responsibility in them. Playing along with students during quizzes is not just about monitoring their progress, it is an opportunity for me to connect with them at their level. This playful interaction will build trust and relationships, creating a more collaborative learning environment.

No	Open Coding	Axial Coding	Selective Coding
1.	- LCD projectors - Canva - Power Point - Kahoot - Quizizz	The use of ICT in English class	Benefits of using ICT in English language learning
2.	- Foster curiosity and turn potential boredom into active engagement - Positive attitude towards English - will learn to manage their devices and focus on the task at hand - Opportunity for me to connect with them at		

3.	- Not all students have an interest in English - Students to be easily bored and lazy - Some students consider quizzes as ordinary games and do not consider them as learning tools. - Difficult to control the use of their phones,		
4.	- LCD and Canva to make learning more interesting and interactive, helping children connect sounds with images and animations - use technology such as songs and youtube apps to help create a supportive learning environment and build their confidence in speaking. - Use Kahoot or Quizizz to make learning more fun and less boring. - Make interesting PPT and summarize the material	Strategies of using ICT in English class	Strategies for dealing with challenges in using ICT in English language learning

In this finding stage, the data used are visual observation data (photos) and the results of interviews with subjects one by one conducted offline and online (whatsapp application, both in the form of voice notes and chat).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The use of technology in teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) presents various opportunities and challenges. Tools such as LCD projectors, Canva, PowerPoint, Kahoot! and Quizizz help increase student engagement by making learning more interactive and visually appealing. Platforms like Kahoot! and Quizizz turn traditional assessments into interactive activities that encourage a positive attitude towards learning English. Overcoming boredom and lack of student interest is a major challenge for teachers. Strategies used include interactive quizzes and multimedia resources to spark curiosity and turn passive learning into active participation. By making lessons more interesting, teachers hope to create a conducive learning environment.

Controlling the use of technology, especially cell phones, is another challenge. Teachers implement clear guidelines for technology use, set specific times for cell phone use, and use

educational apps that match the learning objectives. This approach teaches students responsible use of technology and fosters a sense of responsibility. Participating in technology activities with students helps build stronger relationships. Participating in quizzes together allows teachers to connect with students on a personal level, encouraging trust and collaboration. These relational aspects are crucial to creating a supportive and effective learning environment.

According to Azzadeh Mehrpouyan, Google Classroom is an effective pedagogical tool for online discussions. Professors can post assignment instructions, let students post answers or upload files, read and respond to other answers, as well as receive feedback on a specified date on the Learning Management System's electronic calendar. The strategies cited above utilize ICT by using Google Classroom. However, in this article there are several other applications besides Google Classroom that are used as learning media, such as Quizizz, Kahoot!, PowerPoint, Canva, and LCD. These tools are used to make learning more interactive and engaging, aiming to increase student engagement and maximize their learning.

CONCLUSION

The use of technology in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) has brought significant changes, both in terms of opportunities and challenges. Various technological tools such as LCD, Canva, PowerPoint, Kahoot!, and Quizizz have increased student engagement by making learning more interactive and visually appealing. Platforms such as Kahoot! and Quizizz transform traditional assessments into interactive activities that encourage positive attitudes towards learning English. Nonetheless, the challenges faced by EFL teachers are many. Some of these include difficulties in controlling the use of technology, especially cell phones, as well as the need for clear guidelines for responsible technology use. Teachers also have to participate in technology activities with students to build stronger relationships and support an effective learning environment.

Strategies used to address these challenges include the use of interactive quizzes and multimedia resources to arouse students' curiosity and transform passive learning into active participation. In addition, teachers also strive to create a conducive learning environment by making lessons more engaging and interactive. Therefore, the conclusion is that technology has great potential to improve students' motivation and learning outcomes in English language learning. However, achieving these benefits requires continuous efforts in providing training and technical support to teachers, as well as educational policies that support the use of technology in EFL teaching.

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