

ICT Integration Trends in EFL (English as Foreign Language) Classrooms

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Abstract: Since the integration of ICT in education has been widely implemented in the classrooms, hence this study is focused on studying the ICT trends in English as Foreign Language Classrooms and EFL students' perspectives to the ICT integration. This study worked on descriptive research design by applying both quantitative and qualitative methods. Thirty-three undergraduate students in English Department of Education Faculty were involved, they were voluntary invited to fill out online questionnaire for this research purposes. The findings reveal that smartphone is the most preferable device used by the students, they conveyed that Smartphone's simplicity and portability are two main reasons for using it to support their learning experiences. In addition, the students aware that the integration of technology in English language teaching brings good values to improve their English skills. They also added that the teacher's roles are interchangeable, no matter how advance the technology is, the teacher's existence in the class is still highly required. However, the students said that teachers need to be creative in deploying the technology devices because the core point of utilizing technology devices in learning is not simply about using the technology as media, but it should empower the students to have better learning experiences and skills.

1 INTRODUCTION

Integration of Information and Communication Technology has been implemented by numerous teachers in their teaching and learning contexts, (Yogi, 2013; Ganapathy, 2015; Zhang and Zhang, 2015; Nicolas and El-Aly, 2018). This condition depicts that ICT has essential contributions towards the teaching and learning process as teachers can employ it to enhance their students' performances. The ICT can also be a tool to motivate students in their learning experiences because its integration can benefit them through different learning experiences, (Yogi, 2013).

In 1960s, computers were introduced in language learning context through CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning) which present benefits for both language learners and teachers in teaching and learning process, (Al-Mahrooqi & Troudi, 2014). Afterwards, in 1990, the appearance of internet in education brought significant change in language education, such as transforming textbooks into e-books, face-to-face to online or blended learning, paper-based exam to online-based exam, and also reducing some barriers about time and space, (Farooq

and Soomro, 2018).

In technology era nowadays, teachers in EFL classrooms are highly required to be skillful with "cutting edge" technology in order to facilitate their students with better learning experiences which will simultaneously affect their English proficiency. However, the use of technology in the classrooms is not an easy way to engage into reality as some constraints can be encountered by both teachers and students, for example; paucity skill of ICT, financial and technical supports, time, lack of teachers' professional development program, and eligible classrooms for ICT integration, (Alwani and Soomro, 2010), (Liu and Pange, 2015), (Elemam, 2016), and (Hsu, 2016). In this case, teachers and students need to be prepared to work with ICT in order to maximize the roles of ICT integration in learning.

Influential factors of ICT integration can be categorized into two different categories; students level and university level. In students level relates to students' characteristics, ICT home access, and ICT skills and use, meanwhile in university level involves University ICT infrastructure, teacher characteristics, (Chiraz, 2016). In a review study about global

experience of technology integration in EFL contexts, there are eight-main factors of the integration which appeared in several countries;

- Teachers’ competence (Turkey, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia)
- Accessibility(Saudi,Malaysia,Indonesia).
- Lack of training on technology use (Saudi Arabia, Bangladesh, Malaysia).
- School Necessity (Iran).
- Space an resources (Saudi Arabia).
- Budget (United State of America)
- Perceived Usefulness, (North America).
- Academic workload (Australia), (Ammade et al., 2018).

Based on the previous study, Indonesia faced two main problems which relate to teachers’ competence and technology accessibility which still limited. Some efforts need to be taken to figure the barriers of the ICT integration in education, as stated by (Aslan and Zhu, 2016), facilitating the teachers to receive professional development program should be considered as an effort to enable the deployment of ICT more confidently in teaching and learning contexts. Regular training of ICT integration program has to be set by government or other parties who concern of the teachers’ quality in integrating ICT, (Hadijah and Shalawati, 2017). In addition, the professional development program should also be focused on improving the teachers’ self-esteem and providing more specific content of particular field, and developing high level learning, (Hsu, 2016).

Some strategies can also be taken by teachers to affect the effectiveness of the ICT integration; technology plans, in-service training, strong infrastructures, technical supports, and role models, (Goktas et al., 2009). It means that teachers should prepare and implement technology plans by providing time for preparing the implementation of the ICT in their teaching and increase the quality and quantity of service training in ICT. Moreover, increasing the number of devices to enhance learning through technology which should be supported by some technical supports. Lastly, teachers should be role models for prospective teachers in teaching through technology.

In a study done by (Elemam, 2016), there are some sorts of technology applications used by 40 teachers in their teaching programs, they refer to word processing, power point presentation, data base (access), spread sheet (excel), internet, and email. Working with digital story telling can also be another

way that can be employed by teachers in teaching through the integration of multimedia technology into the classrooms, (Heo, 2009).

Digital story telling is a part of storytelling that uses digital media, for example; art, oral history, creative writing, speaking, photographs, music, news clippings, digital videos, the web, graphic design, sound engineering, or animation. Digital story telling also brings benefits in relation to improve students’ interest in exploring new ideas, facilitate discussion, promote the 21st century skills and multiple literacy skills. (Hsu, 2016).

Since the integration of ICT in education has been widely implemented in the classrooms, hence this study is focused on studying the ICT trends in English as Foreign Language Classrooms and EFL students’ perspectives to the ICT integration are two points which are elaborated in this study.

2 METHOD

This study involved 33 undergraduate students in English Department of Education Faculty, they were invited to voluntary fill out online questionnaire for this research purposes. The participants were in 16 up to 25 years old students who mostly had started learning English when they were at 6 up to 10 years old. The participants were chosen to involve in this study because they were assumed to have adequate learning experiences to work with technology devices in their language learning process.

This study worked on descriptive research design in order to describe ICT trends in EFL classroom. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were applied by distributing questionnaire to the participants. According to (Jhonson and Cristensen, 2014) in (Elemam, 2016), questionnaire is an instrument to collect personal data of research participants by completing any information needed. The questionnaire was constructed based on the indicators in table 1:

Table 1: Questionnaire’s Indicators.

| No | Indicators | Number of questions |
|----|--|---------------------|
| 1 | Personal Experience of using technology in English learning | 2 |
| 2 | Sorts of technology devices used in learning English | 13 |
| 3 | Students’ perspectives towards ICT integration in EFL context. | 3 |

The participants were encouraged to fill out the forms by selecting some options and writing detail

information based on the tasks in the form. List of the questions in the questionnaire sheet are provided in the table 2 below:

Table 2: List of Questions in Questionnaire.

| No. | Questions |
|-----|--|
| 1 | How old are you now? |
| 2 | How old were you when you firstly studied English? |
| 3 | Do you use technology devices when learning English ? |
| 4 | What are the learning media that you used to use when learning English? |
| 5 | How long have you been learning English ? |
| 6 | What are the tools that you love to use when learning English in the classroom? |
| 7 | Among Computer, Laptop, and Smartphone, what is the most favorite device that you use in learning English both inside and outside the classrooms? Why? |
| 8 | What are technology devices that you love to use when learning English in the classroom? |
| 9 | Do you think using laptop or computer in learning English both inside and outside the classroom is very helpful? |
| 10 | How do you use laptop or computer in learning English in the classroom? |
| 11 | How do you use laptop or computer in learning English out of the classroom? |
| 12 | Do you think that using smartphone in learning English both inside and outside the classroom is very helpful?. |
| 13 | How do you use your smartphone in learning English in the classroom? |
| 14 | How do you use your smartphone in learning English out of the classroom? |
| 15 | How do you use your most favorite technology device (computer or laptop, or smartphone) to improve your listening, reading, writing and speaking skills? |
| 16 | What do you think about integration of technology in English Language teaching? |
| 17 | Do you still need your teacher's guidance on how to use your favorite device(computer or laptop or smartphone) to improve your English Skill ? Why? |
| 18 | What should English teachers do when teaching by using technology? |

The questionnaires were distributed to the targeted participants by using Google form. In this phase, the link of the questionnaire form was copied and shared to the participants. They were assigned to submit their answers by twenty-four hours and provide the information individually based on their personal experiences and perspectives. Each participant was only allowed to give their responses in the questionnaire once only.

The collected data were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The quantitative data were organised in terms of sort of devices

deployed by the students in EFL context, and the students' perspective towards the ICT integration, based on their learning experiences were analysed by on students' responses on essay questions. Beforehand, the process of data organisation had been categorised in the Google form in answers report sheet. Hence, the data could be read and implied properly.

3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 ICT Trends in EFL Classroom

The following chart depicts the students' trends in using technology to support their English learning process. Most of them use smartphone in their learning, it is also supported by the use of laptop which is in less percentage, compared to smartphone uses. The students do not use computer any more in their learning, but their preferences in using printed sources, such as books and magazines are still in average number. The detail description about the students' trends can be seen in figure 1 below:

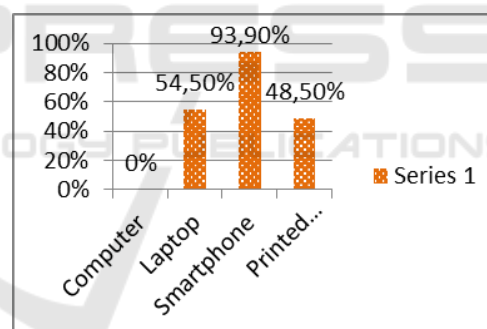


Figure 1: Students' Trends in Learning English.

The figure above clearly presents that smartphone is the most preferable device used by the students. When they were asked to select one of their most favourite devices among computer, laptop, and Smartphone in learning English, most of the students selected Smartphone as their favourite one. They conveyed that Smartphone's simplicity and portability are two main reasons for using it. As stated by some students in the following statements:

I prefer to use Smartphone, because it is easy to bring everywhere I go

Smartphone. It is easier. Laptop is too heavy to bring. Plus, smartphone can access internet same like laptop. So I'd prefer to use smartphone.

Smartphone, it's simpler to find English sources or e-books.

I prefer to use smartphone in learning English because it's simple and useful

The easiness offered by Smartphone can facilitate the students in their learning process, they enjoy using smartphone whether in or out of the class. In more specific, some students said that using smartphone can help them when facing some problems with unfamiliar vocabulary. They can straight away open their Smartphone applications, such as online dictionary or other English learning applications in their phones to consult meaning of unfamiliar words. Besides that, they could easily open videos in YouTube which can be very helpful for them in enhancing their listening and speaking skills. In addition, some students also said that they could improve their pronunciation by learning from you tube in their smartphone. In other words, the use of smartphone help the students better to solve their learning problems and support their learning process to get more authentic learning sources.

Furthermore, the following figure presents the percentage of the students who prefer to use Smartphone in their learning:

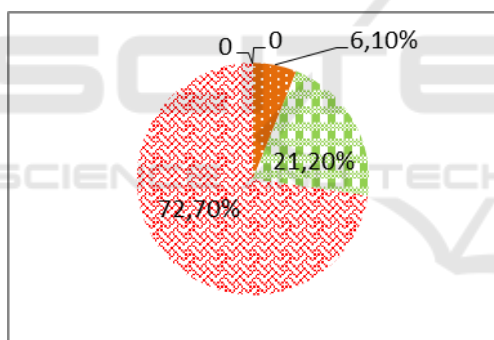


Figure 2: Students' Responses toward Smartphone Use.

Based on the chart above, almost 75% students were strongly agree that using smartphone is very helpful for their language learning experiences. None of them denied about the benefits of using the device, but there are still less than 10% of them are in neutral option which means that they still find some other devices that resemble the benefits of Smartphone. The following statements present how Smartphone contributes towards the students' learning process both in and outside of the classrooms:

I can chat with my lecturer through my phone on WhatsApp. I usually ask some lessons that I still don't understand

I use my smartphone to watch videos in English, learn from online tutor, and do some online quiz(toefl/ielts)

I use my smartphone to study in Youtube, read comics, watch anime with english subtitles ,and study for exam.

Sometimes, I am stuck to translate or say something in English. Directly, I open online dictionary in my smartphone.

Smartphone is very helpful for me because I can watch and learn any things about English in one hand. And it is clear enough for me to study.

I usually open twitter application in my hand phone because i have a group chat that consists of some members from various countries, so I use English for communication. It really helps me to improve my English.

However, for some students, using laptop can be beneficial as well, particularly when they are working on presentation projects, they usually create their presentation slides and present it by using laptop. Some other students also use laptop to increase their vocabulary mastery by setting English as the language used in the laptop, so they can learn some vocabularies every time they open their laptop. Besides that, some other students prefer to use laptop for browsing and reading some articles instead of using Smartphone. The following information provides the students' statements:

I use laptop to make PPT presentation, search meaning of words or sentence that I found unfamiliar for me during in the classroom.

The setting of my laptop is in English, so i can increase my vocabulary, also when I am studying English, I can open links or internet about what my teacher teaches, so I can read and get more information about that.

I downloaded some applications that related to English and it's fun. I use it by my laptop such as kahoot and Google classroom.

Making Power point And word for assignments, I usually use laptop.

Sometimes I use laptop if I did my presentation or using kahoot.

I do my powerpoint presentation, I do my task, read online materials.

From the above statements, the students admitted that the use of laptop cannot be ignored in their learning process since it highly contributes to help them in creating presentation slides. In addition, they could work more effectively when using laptop, particularly when they have to utilize certain applications, such as Google Classroom and Kahoot.

Moreover, when using smartphone or laptop in the students' learning activities, they usually use some

applications to enhance their learning. Actually, nowadays, there are a large number of applications that can be deployed by the students to improve their English learning, but there are only few applications that the students are familiar with. The following figure shows sorts of devices are usually used by the students in their language learning process:

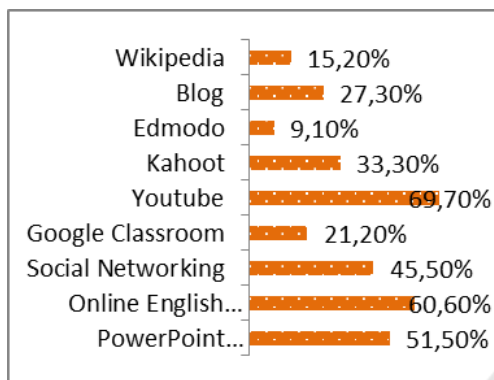


Figure 3: Sort of Devices Used in learning English.

The figure 3 listed some devices which are frequently deployed by the students, they are Youtube, Online English Dictionary, and PowerPoint Program for presentation with over than 50% of the students work with them. Interestingly Social media appeared in the second category of applications used by the students with approximately 50% and Kahoot followed the social media with about 33% users. Meanwhile Google Classroom, Edmodo, Blog, and Wikipedia were only used by less than 12% of the students. A large number of the students work with Youtube that they access from their smartphone, they use this application to practice listening, reading and speaking skills, while for writing skill, some students use social media, such as Instagram or other applications, such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, Blog, and Wikipedia.

3.2 Students' Perspectives to the ICT Integration in EFL Classroom

In relation to the students' perspectives towards ICT integration in English language teaching context, three questions were delivered to the participants;

- What do you think about the integration of technology in English Language teaching?
- Do you still need your teacher's guidance on how to use your favorite device(computer or laptop or smartphone) to improve your English Skill ? Why?

- What should English teachers do when teaching by using technology?

For the first question, all of the students aware that the integration of technology in English language teaching brings good values to improve their English skills. In addition, as prospective English teachers, the students believe that technology can help them a lot in teaching English in the future since there many choices of applications that they can bring into the classrooms. Moreover, the integration of technology provides different learning atmosphere that can stimulate the students in learning the language better. They can be independent learners in figuring out some problems in their learning or practicing the language skills that they want to develop. In other words, the existence of the technology can kill the students' boredom and motivate them to always make innovation in their learning process. Some of the students' statements about the first question can be seen in following:

Question : *What do you think about integration of technology in English Language teaching?*

Responses : *In technology era, it's okay for using technology for learning. because it's simpler.*

In this modern era, I think integrating the technology with English language teaching can help teachers to guide the students to learn English better.

Using technology, learning and teaching process about English can give positive impact and has strongly influence the students, for example we can converse with native speakers and search for scholarship information overseas.

It's very good, because it makes easier to learn english in many conditions and everywhere. The benefit of this integration in teacher side is to make teacher more creative to teach in the classroom.

Furthermore, based on the second question, most of the students still require the teacher's guidance in using technology in their learning process. In this case, the students stated that the teacher's roles are interchangeable, no matter how advance the technology is, the teacher's existence in the class is still highly required. Eventhough technology can facilitates the students to find information, they still believe that their teacher can provide more information as well. On the other hand, there are only a few students who claimed that they can independently work with technology to find out any information that they need. Some lists of the students' statements regarding to the second question are presented below:

Question : *Do you still need your teacher's guidance on how to use your favorite device(computer or laptop or smartphone) to improve your English Skill ?*

Responses : *Yes of course, because i believe that teacher knows more about how to use it in the more effective way. I just do what i think it's good for my English. I do it just because i like it. I don't know whether it's effective for my English or not.(Agreed)*

Yes because I still need guidance for fix my English, give TMI about English and make it better. If I have no teacher to guide me, I might be in a doubt or sometime, I'll be confused of something I learn and I don't have someone professional to ask.(Agreed)

I think no, because I already being adult. Hehe, and I know how to use my smartphone to learn English. (Disagreed)

I guess i can do it on my own, but if someone tell me about some new app that can become really handy for me, i will probably use it. (Disagreed)

In the last question, when the students were asked about what English teachers should do when teaching by using technology, mostly the student said that the teachers need to be creative in deploying the technology devices because the core point of utilizing technology devices in learning is not simply about using technology as learning media, but it should empower the students to have better learning experiences and skills. Here are some students' views about what teachers have to do when deploying technology in teaching:

Question : *What should English teachers do when teaching by using technology?*

Responses : *They should be creative when they're creating the media by using technology. Also they have to teach the students by interesting way to catch their attention to study English.*

Provide English lesson with fun activities using technology wisely.

If the teachers can't join the class because urgent reason, they can send some homework or giving link about the English topic so the class didn't cancelled. By using technology teachers can give learning games simple so the students understand easily.

In my perspective, the teacher should be creative in teaching by using technology. They cannot just ask the students to understand the lesson by showing them power point, video or pictures by

explaining nothing. If the media is interesting enough, the teachers' way of teaching should be attractive too. Because, no matter how great the media used in teaching, it means nothing when the teacher cannot use it properly.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The purposes of this study were to describe ICT trends in EFL context and the EFL students' perspectives to the ICT integration. The findings depict that smartphone is the most favourite device used by the students, they conveyed that its simplicity and portability are two main considerations for using it to support their learning experiences. In addition, the students aware that the integration of technology in English language teaching brings good values to improve their English skills. The technology can facilitate them better in finding more information to improve their English skills. The advancement of technology to support the students in English language learning does not affect the importance roles of teachers as facilitators in learning. The teachers are still highly required by the students to guide them in their learning process. However, the teachers need to be creative in deploying the technology devices because the core point of utilizing technology devices in learning is not simply about using the technology as media, but it should empower the students to have better learning experiences and skills.

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