

## Using Technology in Teaching English Language: Perceptions of Teachers and Students

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### ABSTRACT

The integration of technology in English language teaching has brought about a paradigm shift in educational methodologies. It offers a diverse range of tools and resources that facilitate interactive, flexible, and student-centered learning environments. This study explores the perceptions of teachers and students on the use of technology in English language education, focusing on its benefits, challenges, and overall impact. Teachers perceive technology as a valuable aid in enhancing student engagement and providing access to authentic language materials, while also expressing concerns about dependency, technical issues, and unequal access. Students, on the other hand, appreciate the interactivity and flexibility provided by technological tools but acknowledge distractions and over-reliance as potential drawbacks. The research employs qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews with teachers and focus group discussions with students, to uncover nuanced perspectives. Findings indicate that while technology enhances accessibility and personalized learning, its effectiveness depends on factors such as teacher preparedness, balanced usage, and equitable access. This study underscores the need for professional development for educators and strategic policies to address disparities in access. A balanced approach combining traditional and technological methods is recommended to optimize the potential of digital tools in English language teaching.

**Keyword :** Technology in education, English language teaching, teacher perceptions, student perspectives, digital learning tools.

### 1. Introduction

The rapid advancement of technology has transformed various sectors, including education. English language teaching (ELT) has particularly benefited from digital innovations, with technology becoming an indispensable tool in modern classrooms. Tools such as language learning apps, multimedia resources, and virtual classrooms have made learning more interactive and accessible. The rapid advancement of technology has transformed various sectors, including education. English language teaching (ELT) has particularly benefited from digital innovations, with technology becoming an indispensable tool in modern classrooms. Tools such as language learning apps, multimedia resources, and virtual classrooms have made learning more interactive and accessible. Warschauer (2020) argues that technology facilitates a student-centered approach, allowing learners to take control of their learning processes while accessing authentic language materials.

In addition to providing innovative learning opportunities, technology supports differentiation in

teaching. Tools like Duolingo and Quizlet offer adaptive learning paths tailored to individual needs, enabling students to progress at their own pace (Huang & Liaw, 2021). Moreover, platforms such as Zoom and Google Classroom have played a critical role in maintaining learning continuity during global disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite these advantages, the integration of technology in ELT has faced criticism. Lai (2019) points out that excessive reliance on technology may lead to a lack of critical thinking and diminished interpersonal communication skills. Teachers also face challenges, including limited training in using digital tools effectively and unequal access to technology among students (Rahimi & Fathi, 2022).

The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of both teachers and students regarding the use of technology in English language teaching. By understanding their experiences, this research aims to provide insights into the benefits and drawbacks of technology integration and offer practical

recommendations for enhancing its application in the classroom.

## 2. Research Methods

This qualitative study employs two primary methods for data collection:

- a. Semi-structured interviews: Conducted with 10 English language teachers. These interviews provided in-depth insights into teachers' experiences, challenges, and perspectives on technology integration.
- b. Focus group discussions: Held with 20 students aged 15–18 from diverse educational backgrounds. These discussions aimed to capture students' attitudes, preferences, and concerns regarding technology use in learning English.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure diversity in socio-economic backgrounds and access to technology. Data were transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis, focusing on recurring themes such as engagement, accessibility, challenges, and readiness.

## 3. Results and Discussions

- a. Types of Technology Used in ELT.  
Participants identified a variety of technological tools commonly used in classrooms:

- 1) Learning Management Systems (LMS): Platforms like Google Classroom and Moodle are frequently used for organizing lessons, sharing materials, and managing assignments. Learning Management Systems, such as Google Classroom and Moodle, serve as comprehensive platforms for organizing and managing educational activities. An LMS acts as a virtual classroom where teachers can upload lesson plans, distribute materials, assign homework, and track student progress. These platforms streamline the educational process by centralizing resources, facilitating communication between teachers and students, and enabling easy access to coursework. LMS tools are particularly useful in hybrid and remote learning environments, ensuring that students have consistent access to educational content regardless of their physical location.

The primary benefits of LMS include improved organization, efficient communication, and enhanced ability to monitor student engagement and performance. For instance, Google Classroom allows teachers to post announcements, set deadlines, and provide instant feedback on assignments, fostering a more interactive and responsive learning environment.

- 2) Language Learning Applications: Tools like Duolingo, Grammarly, and Memrise were highlighted for their user-friendly interfaces and gamification features. Language learning apps such as Duolingo, Grammarly, and Memrise are widely

recognized for their user-friendly interfaces and engaging, gamified learning experiences. These applications offer a variety of interactive exercises, including vocabulary drills, grammar lessons, and pronunciation practice, all designed to reinforce language skills in a fun and accessible way. The appeal of these apps lies in their ability to adapt to the user's learning pace and provide instant feedback, helping learners to identify and correct mistakes immediately. Additionally, the gamification elements, such as earning points, unlocking levels, and achieving streaks, serve to motivate learners and make the learning process more enjoyable. These tools are particularly beneficial for self-directed learning, allowing students to practice and improve their English skills outside the classroom.

- 3) Multimedia Resources: The use of multimedia resources, including videos, podcasts, and digital storytelling tools, has significantly enriched language learning by providing diverse and engaging content. Multimedia materials expose students to authentic language usage, different accents, and cultural contexts, which are crucial for developing listening comprehension and broadening vocabulary. Videos and podcasts can be used to supplement traditional teaching methods, offering visual and auditory stimuli that cater to various learning styles. Digital storytelling tools allow students to create their own stories, fostering creativity and helping them to apply language skills in a practical context. This approach not only enhances language proficiency but also encourages critical thinking and storytelling abilities.

- 4) Virtual Classrooms: Virtual classroom platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams have become essential, especially in the era of remote learning. These platforms facilitate real-time interaction between teachers and students, enabling live lessons, group discussions, and collaborative projects. Virtual classrooms mimic the dynamics of a physical classroom, with features like breakout rooms for small group work, screen sharing for presentations, and recording options for revisiting lessons.

The flexibility of virtual classrooms allows for continued learning regardless of geographical or logistical constraints. They are particularly valuable in maintaining educational continuity during disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that students can stay connected and engaged in their learning journey.

- b. Advantages of Technology Integration.
  - 1) Enhanced Engagement: One of the most notable advantages of integrating technology into ELT is the heightened engagement it fosters among students. Interactive platforms and gamified apps capture students' attention, making learning more enjoyable and motivating. The use of multimedia

- and interactive tools caters to different learning styles, keeping students actively involved in the learning process.
- 2) **Flexibility and Accessibility:** Technology provides flexibility, allowing students to access learning materials at their convenience and pace. This flexibility is particularly beneficial for students with varying schedules and learning preferences, making education more inclusive and adaptable to individual needs.
  - 3) **Global Exposure:** Digital tools offer students the opportunity to connect with native speakers and access authentic language content from around the world. This exposure enhances cultural understanding and language proficiency, as students engage with real-world language use and diverse cultural perspectives.
  - 4) **Support for Differentiated Learning:** Adaptive technologies in language learning applications offer personalized learning paths tailored to individual needs and abilities. This customization ensures that each student can progress at their own pace, receive targeted feedback, and focus on areas requiring improvement, thereby supporting diverse learning styles and needs.
- c. **Challenges and Limitations**
- 1) **Over-reliance on Technology:** While technology offers numerous benefits, there is a concern about students becoming overly dependent on digital tools. This reliance can potentially hinder the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as students may rely too heavily on technology for answers and guidance.
  - 2) **Technical Barriers:** Poor internet connectivity and lack of access to devices remain significant issues, particularly in rural or low-income communities. Technical issues, such as poor internet connectivity and lack of access to devices, remain significant obstacles, particularly in rural or low-income areas. These barriers can create disparities in learning opportunities, making it challenging for some students to fully benefit from technological advancements.
  - 3) **Digital Distractions:** Students admitted to being easily distracted by non-educational content while using devices. Students often face distractions when using digital devices, with non-educational content easily accessible. This can impact their focus and productivity, requiring teachers to find ways to manage and mitigate distractions during lessons.
  - 4) **Teacher Preparedness:** Many teachers acknowledged the need for professional development to effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices. Adequate training and support are essential to help educators leverage technology's potential and address the challenges associated with its use.
- d. **Diverging Perceptions:** The study revealed notable differences in how teachers and students perceive the role of technology in ELT:
- 1) **Teachers' Perspectives:** Teachers generally acknowledge the potential of technology to enhance teaching, citing benefits such as improved engagement and personalized learning. However, some teachers are concerned about losing control over classroom dynamics and the reduced opportunities for face-to-face interaction, which are vital for building relationships and fostering a collaborative learning environment.
  - 2) **Students' Perspectives:** Students tend to favor technology for its convenience, interactivity, and ability to make learning more engaging. However, they also recognize the need for balanced guidance to prevent overuse or misuse, emphasizing the importance of combining technological tools with traditional teaching methods to create a well-rounded learning experience.

#### 4. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the transformative potential of technology in English language teaching. Its integration has provided opportunities for enhanced engagement, accessibility, and personalized learning experiences. However, challenges such as over-reliance, technical barriers, and teacher readiness must be addressed to maximize its effectiveness.

This study underscores the importance of a balanced approach to technology integration, combining traditional teaching methods with innovative digital tools. Teachers require continuous professional development to adapt to technological advancements, while policymakers must ensure equitable access to technology for all learners. Future research could further explore the long-term impact of technology on language proficiency and its role in bridging educational disparities.

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