

EFL Teachers' Perception of the Effectiveness of ICT-ELT Integration During the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The transformation from face-to-face teaching to online teaching in this COVID-19 pandemic makes teachers have no excuse to integrate ICT in their teaching. Thus, ICT becomes the most important tool in educational setting currently. However, only 10% is known about how EFL teachers perceived the effectiveness of ICT integration in their teaching during this pandemic in Indonesia. Therefore, this study aims to investigate how they perceive ICT-ELT integration in terms of effectiveness and barriers of incorporating ICT. Guided by a descriptive quantitative research design, the empirical data were collected through distributing an online questionnaire to 126 primary and secondary EFL teachers. The results revealed that the majority of EFL teachers had positive perception in integrating ICT due to its effectiveness. However, it was also reported that lack of internet access, few technical supports from schools, and limited knowledge and training of ICT discouraged them in using ICT. This study indicated the importance of stakeholders and government supports to promote ICT-based teaching and learning by providing adequate technology access and technical supports for EFL teachers.

Keywords: COVID-19, EFL, ICT-ELT integration, Teachers' perceptions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The emergence of COVID-19 has strongly affected human life and all sectors including educational sector. This leads to a condition where EFL teachers in Indonesia have no excuse to integrate ICT in their teaching. It is because all of teaching and learning activities which previously carried out through face-to-face meeting need to be switched into online teaching which fully covered by the help of technology. Thus, ICT becomes the most important tool in educational setting particularly in ELT during this pandemic. It expands access to education in which teaching and learning processes can be conducted anytime and anywhere [1]. Without ICT both teachers and students won't be able to have an online English class during this pandemic. Therefore, ICT-ELT integration is considered critical during this pandemic.

Realizing the potentials of ICT, a number of studies had been conducted by some scholars [2]–[5]. They reported that ICT offers boundless learning resources and materials for language learners, creates an enjoyable learning climate, and provides authentic materials. Further, ICT changes the way to access, organize, and obtain knowledge and information [6]. Also, it offers the language learners the ease to access different people, languages, cultures, and social practices [7]. Thus, ICT plays significant roles to improve educational and

pedagogical outcomes as well as the quality of English teaching and learning.

However, the integration of ICT in ELT has placed new challenges for the teachers. As the main component in education, they are expected to be able to develop their students' technological literacy to prepare them for working and learning in the 21st century. To do so, they should firstly embed themselves with adequate ICT skills because integrating ICT in English teaching and learning processes is not a piece of cake. One among factors which affects teachers to use ICT is their perception about the effectiveness of ICT itself. It is in accordance with some recent studies carried out by previous researchers [8]–[10]. They found that teachers' perceptions of ICT effectiveness and usefulness are significant factors to determine their intentions to use ICT into their classroom practice. Those who perceived ICT positively will likely to use ICT in their teaching practice than those who have not.

Moreover, in Indonesia context, the study on how EFL teachers perceived the effectiveness of integrating ICT in their teaching during this COVID-19 pandemic has not been investigated in the literature. What factors discourage them to use ICT during this pandemic should also be explored as a reflection for them and Indonesian government policy makers to provide alternatives to make online teaching in Indonesia successfully implemented. Therefore, the author is motivated to

investigate how they perceive the effectiveness of ICT during this pandemic and what factors discourage them in integrating ICT in their teaching practice during the pandemic of COVID-19 guided by these following questions:

1. What are EFL teachers' perspectives toward the effectiveness of ICT-ELT integration during the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. What factors discourage them in integrating ICT-ELT during the COVID-19 pandemic?

2. METHOD

This study employed a descriptive quantitative research design. Due to this pandemic, the data were obtained by distributing an online questionnaire through Google form to EFL teachers in both primary and secondary schools.

2.1 Participants

The population of this study involved EFL teachers from primary school and secondary school. However, only 126 of them were able to complete the questionnaire. They were 22 EFL teachers from primary school, 31 of junior high school, 35 of senior high school, and 38 of vocational high school involved different genders (male and female). It should be noted that all the participants in this study were voluntary agreed to participate in this study. In terms of age, the participants' age ranged from 21-57 years old and their experience in teaching English ranged from <1 year to >10 years. Meanwhile, it was found that their experiences in applying ICT for teaching-related

2.2 Research Instrument

In this study, the author adapted and modified two questionnaires from different sources as the instrument to collect the data from the participants. The first questionnaire was adapted and modified from Silviyanti & Yusuf [11]. It was used to know the EFL teachers' perception of the effectiveness of ICT integration during the COVID-19 pandemic. The second questionnaire was adapted and modified from (Salehi & Salehi, 2012) to know what factors discouraged teachers to use ICT [12]. These questionnaires were adapted since the author needed to change the wording to make the statement fit with the context of the present study. They were designed to be closed-ended questions where the participants could select the most appropriate option with their real condition. In both questionnaires, the author used a-four point of Likert scales ranged from (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, and (4) Strongly Agree.

2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Conducting an online survey is commonly used by the researchers in this situation of COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, in this study the author employed online survey to collect the data from the respondents. They were asked to fill out the questionnaire through Google Form

purposes mostly ranged from 1-10 years. Also, their skill of ICT use is medium. The following table 1 is presented to show the demographic information of the participants.

Table 1. Demographic information of the participants

Demographic variables	Categorical groups	N	(%)
Gender	Female	82	65.1%
	Male	44	34.9%
Institution	Primary school	22	26.4%
	Junior High School	31	39.1%
	Senior High School	35	44.1%
	Vocational School	38	47.8%
Teaching Experience	<1 year	1	0.8%
	1-5 years	51	40.5%
	6-10 years	38	30.2%
	>10 years	36	28.6%
ICT Skills	High	7	5.6%
	Medium	106	84.1%
	Low	13	10.3%

prepared by the author. They needed to complete 24 items provided in the questionnaire. It took time for about 10-15 minutes. Finally, the responses given by them were analyzed using SPSS which contained frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation to represent the frequency of the data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained based on this study were broken down into two subsections, namely EFL teachers' perceptions toward effectiveness of ICT during the COVID-19 pandemic and factors discouraging EFL teachers to integrate ICT. Those are presented as follows:

3.1 Teachers' Perceived the Effectiveness of ICT during COVID-19 Pandemic

Based on the table 1, the results indicated that the majority of EFL teachers (87.3%) strongly agreed that the integration of ICT is important in ELT during this pandemic of COVID-19. The data on the table also showed that more than 80% EFL teachers agreed and strongly agreed with each statement provided in the questionnaire. It implied that they perceived the

effectiveness of ICT during this pandemic positively. They recognized the use of ICT during this pandemic

have placed great impacts for both students and themselves.

Table 2. EFL teachers' perception of ICT-ELT integration

No	Statement	Frequency (%)				Mean	SD
		SA	A	D	SD		
1.	The use of ICT is important in language teaching, especially during COVID-19 pandemic.	87.3	12.7	-	-	3.87	.334
2.	The use of ICT during pandemic makes learning more enjoyable.	57.1	35.7	7.1		3.50	.629
3.	The use of ICT during pandemic makes learning processes more effective and easier.	48.4	42.1	8.7	0.8	3.40	.647
4.	The use of ICT during pandemic improves my teaching with more updated materials.	42.1	54.8	3.2	-	3.39	.537
5.	The use of ICT during pandemic improves my teaching quality and performance.	28.6	65.1	6.3	-	3.22	.549
6.	The use of ICT during pandemic helps me to create various learning activities.	34.1	59.5	6.3	-	3.27	.574
7.	The use of ICT during pandemic helps me to expand various learning resources.	50.8	48.4	0.8	-	3.51	.517
8.	The use of ICT during pandemic helps me to prepare the learning materials easily.	27.0	66.7	6.3	-	3.21	.530
9.	The use of ICT during pandemic helps my students to understand the materials in more effective ways.	22.2	65.1	10.3	2.4	3.07	.647
10.	The use of ICT during pandemic encourages the students to be more active and involves their engagement.	13.5	70.6	14.3	1.6	2.93	.616
11.	The use of ICT during the pandemic provides convenience in assessing the students' progress.	9.5	74.6	15.1	0.8	2.92	.524
12.	The use of ICT during the pandemic provides convenience in monitoring the students' progress.	7.9	73	16.7	2.4	2.86	.570
13.	The use of ICT during the pandemic increases students' interest and motivation toward learning English.	11.1	74.6	11.1	3.2	2.93	.589
14.	The use of ICT during the pandemic facilitates my students to find information, knowledge, and other learning resources.	28.6	69	2.4	-	3.26	.492

15.	The use of ICT during the pandemic enhances collaborative learning among learners and me.	8.7	77.8	13.5	-	2.95	.470
16.	The use of ICT during the pandemic enables me to interact effectively with my students.	8.7	69.8	20.6	0.8	2.86	.556
17.	The use of ICT during the pandemic makes me more productive.	28.6	63.5	7.1	0.8	3.19	.593

In general, based on the result, it can be seen that EFL teachers perceived ICT-ELT integration during this COVID-19 pandemic positively. This positive perception occurs since they have felt lots of impacts, benefits, and the effectiveness of using ICT in their teaching during this pandemic. For instance, they can make teaching and learning activities during this pandemic more effective, easier, and enjoyable. It exists because ICT provides them a wide range access to various learning resources and activities. Therefore, with the help of ICT, they can prepare their materials easily which result their students understand those materials in more effective ways. This finding is supported by the previous researcher [13] who argued that the implement of ICT make the classroom more interesting since the utilization of ICT built the learning process more attractive.

Besides, the results also showed that ICT provides convenience for teachers to asses and monitor their students' progress in learning English during this pandemic. This appears as ICT provides useful software or programs for the teachers to check their students' assignments which can save their time and energy rather than check them manually one by one. This finding is supported by previous studies which revealed the use of ICT can facilitate teachers to assess and monitor their students' progress easier than before [14] [15].

Further, the integration of ICT in ELT during this pandemic also enables teachers and students to interact effectively. With various supported applications or platforms offered during this COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. Zoom, Google-meet, Google-classroom, WhatsApp, and other platforms), both teachers and students can communicate through effectively. For example, teachers can interact with their students through WhatsApp group. Even though they cannot meet face-to-face

during this pandemic, they can virtually meet through those platforms. It strongly proves that the use of ICT during this pandemic can be a bridge for both teachers and students to have an English class virtually. This finding is inconsonance with [16] who report that ICT tools influence effective interaction and communication between students and teachers.

Not only offering the ease for teachers, the use of ICT during this pandemic also simplifies EFL students to obtain rich information, knowledge, and other additional learning resources through diverse websites. This will be an alternative for them to maximize the potentials of ICT for their learning improvement. By doing so, they will be more motivated in learning English because what they want to know is available in the internet. If they feel motivated, they will become more responsible learners during this pandemic. This finding is in agreement with [17], [18] who found out that the use of ICT could increase the students' motivation to learn better. Previous studies also revealed that ICT not only increasing students' motivation but also engaging them in learning [19].

Overall, the results of this study revealed similar results to the earlier studies [3], [13], [17], [18] who pointed out that the effectiveness of ICT lead teachers to perceived ICT positively and used it as tools to improve their teaching practice. They agree that the utilization of ICT in ELT brings tremendously impacts to their teaching. With the help of technology, English teaching and learning during this pandemic can take place anywhere and anytime.

3.2 Factors discouraging EFL teachers to integrate ICT

The second question in this study is aimed to explore what factors hinder the EFL teachers to integrate ICT in their teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic. The result is presented in the following table:

Table 3. Factors discouraging EFL teachers to integrate ICT

No	Statement	Frequencies (%)				Mean	SD
		SA	A	D	SD		
1.	Little internet access prevents me to use ICT.	56.3	36.5	7.1	-	3.49	.629

2.	Few ICT technical supports at school discourage me to use ICT in the classroom.	36.5	46	16.7	0.8	3.18	.731
3.	Colleagues' negative views about ICT hinder me to use ICT in the class.	10.3	38.9	42.9	7.9	2.51	.787
4.	Time needed to learn and prepare ICT prevents me to use ICT.	16.7	60.3	20.6	2.4	2.91	.681
5.	Lack knowledge and training of ICT discourages me to use ICT.	22.2	58.7	16.7	2.4	3.00	.698
6.	Lack of interest and motivation to use ICT makes me rarely use ICT.	12.7	67.5	15.9	4.0	2.90	.625
7.	Lack of school support hinders me to use ICT.	10.3	71.4	15.9	2.4	2.90	.585

The results on table 2 revealed that there were many factors discouraging EFL teachers to integrate ICT in their teaching during this pandemic. Surprisingly, (50.8%) of them agreed that negative views from colleagues about ICT did not interrupt them to use ICT in the class. Among those factors, by looking at the mean score, limited internet access was the major factor intimidated teachers to use ICT ($M=3.49$) followed by few ICT technical supports at schools ($M=3.18$), and lack of knowledge and training of ICT ($M= 3.00$). This result implied that government should look at the current situation of the implementation of ICT-ELT integration in order to be able to provide alternative ways to overcome those problems.

Integrating ICT into ELT raises new challenges for the teachers. The reality in the field shows that positive perception cannot guarantee ICT-ELT integration as expected in the curriculum runs smoothly. Based on the results, most of EFL teachers confess that they encountered technical problems such as little internet connections. It was found that poor internet connection was the major barriers faced by the teachers. In Indonesia context, it should be admitted that there are many places whose internet connection is unstable. There is no guarantee that the location in the central city has stable internet connection. This fact is in line with the findings of the previous research [18], [20] who found that lack of internet connection discourage teachers to utilize ICT in their classroom. Not only in Indonesia, but also other countries have the same problems. For instance, [21] also found that the limited internet access and facilities became the main barriers to implement ICT-based learning in Turkish context. This problem needs to be taken into account by the government how to make internet connection in Indonesia becomes better.

Few ICT technical supports from school also hindered the EFL teachers to use ICT. The absence of technical supports from schools affects their willingness to integrate ICT in their teaching. This findings is supported by [12] pointed out that insufficient technical

supports at school discourage them to integrate ICT in their teaching. Furthermore, [22] stress out the teachers' ability toward technology is a key factor to determine teachers use ICT effectively. This is in agreement with the results of this study in which EFL teachers confess that lack of knowledge and training of ICT use became obstacles for them to utilize the potential of ICT during this pandemic. Previous studies from [3], [12] also indicated the same results in which teachers have lack of ICT skills. Therefore, they voiced out the needs of appropriate knowledge of ICT-ELT integration. Thus, to achieve the goals set by Indonesian curriculum makers, the government had better provide EFL teachers sufficient training on ICT because teachers' professional development can be a key point to achieve successful ICT-ELT integration [23].

4. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to investigate how EFL teachers in both primary and secondary schools perceived the effectiveness of ICT-ELT integration during the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the results revealed that they have positive perception on integrating ICT in ELT even though many factors discouraged them in utilizing ICT. The emergence of ICT in English teaching and learning processes cannot be denied. Therefore, EFL teachers should be adaptive with this pandemic situation by integrating ICT in their teaching in order not to be left behind.

Several factual recommendations concerning the results of this study should be highlighted. Firstly, it is noticeable that EFL teachers still need training on how to integrate various ICT tools to improve their teaching in line with what expected in the curriculum. Finally, teachers' positive perceptions should be supported by technical and instructional equipment in the schools. Each school had better provide technical supports to help the teachers to overcome their problems in integrating ICT.

Some limitations of this study involve the participants were not too large and the data of this study

did not include teachers' knowledge of computer software, their attitudes toward ICT, and their self-efficacy and confidence in integrating ICT to teaching and learning English during this pandemic. Therefore, further research should enrich the participants in larger scale and focus on other unnoticeable factors that affect teachers' perceptions toward the integration of ICT during this COVID-19 pandemic.

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