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ICT Integration in Teaching English to Young Learners in Remote Settings: A Teacher's Narrative Inquiry

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the lived experiences of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher in integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into English language teaching for primary school pupils in a remote area. This study employs a qualitative approach using a narrative inquiry design. The participant was an EFL teacher using the pseudonym, "Reyhan". Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and documentation, and analysed based on the dimensions of temporality, sociality, and place. The findings indicate that ICT integration is a dynamic and contextual process that develops through teaching experience, reflection, self-directed learning, professional collaboration, and adaptation to the learning context. Reyhan utilised various digital platforms and media aligned with learning objectives and pupils' characteristics to create more interactive, meaningful, and pupil-centred learning. The challenges included limited digital skills, unreliable internet access, limited technological facilities, and diverse pupils' characteristics. To address these challenges, Reyhan adopted adaptive strategies through self-directed learning, technological exploration, trial and error, collaboration with colleagues, peer tutoring, and alternative learning methods during technical difficulties. This study concludes that successful ICT integration depends on teachers' ability to continuously learn, adapt, reflect, and make pedagogical decisions appropriate to the learning context.

Keywords: ICT Integration, English Language Learning, Young Learners, Remote Areas.

1. Introduction

Advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have brought about significant changes in various aspects of life, including the education sector. In the learning process of the 21st century, ICT is no longer regarded merely as a supporting tool, but has become a key element in creating a more effective, interactive and student-centred learning experience. In the context of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), the use of ICT enables teachers to access a wide range of learning resources, develop more engaging learning materials, and provide students with opportunities to interact with authentic English-language content through various digital platforms. In line with this, [1] emphasises that technology plays a crucial role in expanding access to and improving standards of education, whilst the [2] identifies digital literacy as one of the key skills required in the digital age. Consequently, the implementation of ICT has become a vital requirement in English language teaching practices at all levels of education, including in primary schools.

Although it offers many benefits, the implementation of ICT in English language teaching does not proceed in the same way across all educational contexts. The success of ICT integration is greatly influenced by school conditions, the availability of infrastructure, teachers' capabilities, and support from educational institutions. These challenges become increasingly complex in schools located in remote areas, where teachers often face difficulties with internet access, limited technological facilities, minimal opportunities for professional development, and a lack of support in using technology for learning [3], [4]. On the other hand, various studies indicate that the use of ICT can enhance learning motivation and student participation, as well as provide broader access to English language learning resources [5], [6]. Other research also highlights that the success of ICT integration is influenced by a combination of various internal and external factors, including teacher competence, educational policies, geographical conditions, and available infrastructure [7], [8], [9]. In the face of these various challenges, teachers in remote areas have demonstrated an ability to adapt by utilising offline digital learning resources, personal devices, and self-directed learning methods to maintain the quality of teaching [10], [11]. These findings indicate that teachers do not merely function as implementers of technology, but also as key actors who actively adapt the use of ICT to the needs of their pupils and the conditions of the environment in which they teach.

Although research on ICT integration continues to evolve, much previous research has focused on the effectiveness of ICT use, teachers' perspectives, barriers to implementation, and the development of digital skills. In other words, existing research tends to focus more on the factors influencing the success of ICT integration rather than on how teachers experience, understand and implement this integration process in their day-to-day teaching activities. Yet, teachers' experiences are crucial for understanding how various policies, facility limitations and professional demands are realised in actual teaching practice, particularly in primary schools located in remote areas. Research employing a narrative inquiry approach remains relatively scarce. For example, [12] investigated the experiences of EFL teachers using a narrative inquiry approach; however, the focus of that study was directed more towards the development of teachers' digital skills than towards their experiences of integrating ICT during the learning process. Consequently, there remains a lack of research that explores in depth the lived experiences of EFL teachers in integrating ICT, particularly in the teaching of English to young learners in primary schools situated in remote areas.

In response to these shortcomings, this study aims to explore the experiences of an EFL teacher in applying ICT to English language learning for young learners at a primary school in a remote area. This study employs a narrative inquiry approach to understand how the teacher experiences the process of integrating ICT, overcomes various contextual challenges, develops adaptive strategies, and explores the meaning of these experiences within their professional practice. Unlike previous studies, which have largely focused on effectiveness, barriers, or digital competence, this study places the teacher's experience at the centre of its analysis, thereby providing more contextual, reflective and comprehensive insights into the practice of ICT integration within a resource-constrained environment. It is hoped that the findings of this study will enrich the literature on ICT integration in EFL teaching, particularly in the context of primary schools in remote areas, and provide practical implications for teachers, schools and researchers in developing technology-based teaching practices that are more adaptive and suited to local conditions.

2. Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach using a narrative inquiry design to explore the lived experiences of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher in integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into English language teaching for young learners at a remote primary school. A qualitative approach was chosen as it allows the researcher to explore the participants' perspectives and the meanings they construct from their experiences [13]. Narrative inquiry was adopted as the research design as it facilitates an in-depth understanding of participants lived experiences through the stories they recount and the meanings, they attribute to those experiences [14]. Consequently, participants' narratives were interpreted through a three-dimensional framework comprising temporality, sociality and place.

The research participant was an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher at Semampir 1 State Primary School, referred to by the pseudonym 'Reyhan' to ensure confidentiality. The participant was selected through purposive sampling based on their direct experience of integrating ICT into English language teaching for young learners at a remote primary school with limited technological infrastructure and internet access. This participant was considered a rich source of information and capable of providing a comprehensive narrative relevant to the research objectives.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant classroom observations, and documentation. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in three sessions, each lasting approximately 35–40 minutes, to explore the participants' experiences of ICT integration, the challenges faced, the adaptive strategies employed, and their reflections on their professional practice. A single non-participant classroom observation was carried out to examine the application of ICT during English language lessons, classroom interactions, pupils' responses, and the learning context. Supporting documents, including lesson plans, learning materials, photographs, and other relevant documents, were collected to supplement and enrich the interview and observation data.

Data analysis was carried out on an ongoing basis throughout the research, following the qualitative data analysis procedures proposed by [13]. Interview transcripts, observation notes and supporting documents were read repeatedly to identify meaningful experiences relating to ICT integration. The data were then coded, organised into coherent narratives, and interpreted using the three-dimensional narrative inquiry framework proposed by [14]. The temporality dimension was used to examine how participants' experiences evolved over time; sociality was used to understand the influence of personal and social factors on these experiences; whilst place was used to interpret how the characteristics of the remote school context shaped ICT integration practices.

To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, this study adopted the credibility strategies proposed by [15], including methodological triangulation and participant verification. Methodological triangulation was carried out by comparing evidence obtained from interviews, classroom observations and supporting documentation. Furthermore, member checking was carried out by confirming the interview transcripts and the researcher's preliminary interpretations with the participant to ensure that the narratives accurately represented the participant's lived experiences.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Reyhan's Experience in Integrating ICT into English Language Learning for Young Learners

Research findings indicate that Reyhan's journey in integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into English language teaching took place gradually through professional development, independent exploration and ongoing teaching practice. His initial introduction to the use of ICT came whilst he was undertaking the Teacher Professional Education Programme (PPG), particularly through learning materials relating to the 21st century which emphasised the significance of utilising technology in education. Reflecting on that initial experience, Reyhan stated:

"Specifically, regarding English language teaching, the real focus on deepening that understanding came during the professional development programme. Because that's where we studied 21st-century learners, one of which is the four 21st-century competencies, which also cover how to utilise technology."

This experience served as the initial motivation for Reyhan to explore various technologies that could be used in English language learning. As his teaching experience grew, he continued to enhance his digital competence through formal training, discussions with colleagues, webinars, social media, and self-directed learning. Regarding this process, Reyhan explained:

"Actually, most of it came from chatting with my peers at the time because we often discussed things amongst fellow PPG students. Sometimes a friend would say, 'oh, let's just try this one', and that's where we'd exchange opinions before trying it out so that what we initially didn't know became a piece of information or a platform we could use."

In addition, he added:

"Seeking information independently, whether through webinars discussing the use of a particular platform, or searching on my own via social media or exploring websites provided by the Ministry."

These findings indicate that Reyhan's improvement in ICT competence occurred through a combination of formal learning, self-directed learning, and professional collaboration.

In his teaching practice, Reyhan utilises various digital platforms and media, such as Wordwall, Educaplay, Google Translate, Gemini AI, educational videos, Chromebooks, and Interactive Flat Panels (IFPs). His selection is made selectively, taking into account teaching objectives, pupils' characteristics, and the suitability of the media for the material being taught. Before being implemented in the classroom, these platforms are first examined, studied and tested to ensure their relevance to the pupils' needs.

Research findings indicate that ICT is utilized to support various English language skills, including vocabulary acquisition, reading, writing, viewing and pronunciation. One of the most memorable experiences occurred when Reyhan presented material on the various rooms in the school to the pupils. In this activity, he combined Wordwall which features images, audio and interactive elements with hands-on exploration of the school environment and the use of artificial intelligence as an additional learning resource. Reflecting on this experience, Reyhan explained:

"One successful application of ICT, in my view, was last semester... when we discussed the different rooms in the school... it turned out that with the visualisations displayed and by encouraging the children to explore the rooms in the school themselves... they found it easier to remember... I also tried to incorporate AI into the activities... we have AI technology; I asked what the English term for this was... by the end of the lesson, they really knew that the 'teachers' room' is actually called this in English and also its function is for this... the children could also say simple sentences like 'I study in the classroom' in English."

Based on the observations, the pupils appeared to be actively exploring the school premises, discussing with their groupmates, searching for information via AI, and participating in the prepared Wordwall activities. These results indicate that the use of ICT can create a more contextual, interactive and meaningful learning experience.

Other research findings indicate that the use of ICT also plays a role in increasing pupils' engagement in the learning process. Reyhan recognised that the playful nature of primary school pupils needs to be catered for through the use of interactive digital media. Therefore, he utilised various educational games and technology-based activities that allowed pupils to learn whilst having fun.

One significant moment he experienced was when the school acquired Chromebooks and Interactive Flat Panels (IFPs), which were subsequently used in the TGT (Team Game Tournament) learning model. Regarding this experience, Reyhan explained:

"One of the things I remember most is that ICT can actually be integrated. Yesterday I received training on using the IFP or smartboard and how to optimize learning materials through it. Coincidentally, the school here has also received Chromebooks. So, we combined them. I particularly like using TGT (Team Game Tournament) as a learning model by utilising the available technology."

Furthermore, Reyhan also observed that the visual, audio, animation and interactive elements found on digital platforms are able to boost pupils' enthusiasm during lessons. He stated:

"Wordwall has animations, doesn't it? Compared to simply cutting up paper to make jumbled words, children are more interested in the version with animations and sounds; they can also touch it directly and move it around themselves."

Data from interviews and observations indicate that the integration of ICT has driven a shift from teacher-centred learning towards a more student-centred approach. Regarding this change, Reyhan explained:

"So, it has shifted from being teacher-centred to student-centred. The focus is now on the child. It is the child themselves who has the need to learn and seek out sources. And the sources available are not limited to the teacher; they can be found elsewhere."

As well as increasing student engagement in the classroom, ICT also broadens students' access to learning resources outside school. One example identified in the research is the use of the Duolingo app as a tool for independent learning, which I recommend to students. This experience demonstrates that technology not only supports learning within the classroom but also fosters the development of independent learning habits.

Generally speaking, Reyhan's experience suggests that the integration of ICT is not merely about the use of digital devices or platforms, but also encompasses professional learning processes, the creation of meaningful learning experiences, increased student participation, the development of student-centred learning approaches, and the expansion of access to learning resources. These various experiences are gradually shaping Reyhan's professional identity as an English teacher who is responsive to technological advancements.

3.1.2 Challenges in Implementing ICT in EFL Teaching in Remote Areas

The research findings indicate that Reyhan encountered various obstacles whilst attempting to integrate ICT into English language teaching at a primary school located in a remote area. These obstacles included technical issues, infrastructure, teaching methodology, the characteristics of the pupils, and the need to keep pace with rapid technological developments.

One of the difficulties that arose concerned making the most of technology in the learning process. Initially, Reyhan was sceptical about how effective technology could be, as there was a risk of distractions diverting the pupils' attention. On this point, he explained:

"At first, I was a bit sceptical about the idea that we really needed technology; wouldn't there be too many distractions? But it turns out that can be minimised; the key is knowing how to manage it and also how to optimise the technology."

These findings indicate that the use of ICT requires not only technical skills from teachers, but also the ability to manage the learning process so that pupils can remain focused whilst interacting with various digital media.

In addition to issues relating to distractions, Reyhan also faced technical and infrastructure problems that could affect the implementation of ICT-based learning. Interview findings revealed that various issues, such as device malfunctions, limited internet access and power cuts, sometimes prevent planned learning activities from being

carried out to their full potential. This indicates that the success of ICT integration depends not only on teachers' preparedness but also on the support of the facilities and infrastructure available at the school.

A further challenge relates to the selection and utilisation of learning media and platforms that are appropriate to pupils' needs. Research shows that not all technologies are relevant to pupils' characteristics or the learning objectives to be achieved. Therefore, before deciding on the media to be used, Reyhan first identifies pupils' needs and characteristics through an initial assessment.

In this regard, he explains:

"I've been mapping things from the start through an initial assessment to determine, 'Oh, this falls into this category,' or 'Oh, this one fits into that category,' whether it's regarding their learning style – is it still relevant? – or perhaps their preferences for how they'd rather learn."

As well as taking learners' characteristics into account, Reyhan also faces the challenge of selecting and making the most of the various digital platforms available to ensure they remain suited to learning needs. The sheer number of platform options forces teachers to critically evaluate which technologies are most relevant to the subject matter, learning objectives and learners' circumstances. Regarding this challenge, Reyhan explained:

"The challenge lies in how we can optimize these existing platforms or options whilst ensuring they remain aligned with or meet our needs. After all, we are not yet in a position to create our own platform tailored to the specific conditions we require."

This statement indicates that the challenge in ICT integration is not solely focused on the ability to operate technology, but also on teachers' ability to select, adapt and optimise existing platforms in line with learning needs.

On the other hand, the implementation of information and communication technology does not always go according to plan. Various factors that arise during the learning process, such as time constraints, technical issues and fluctuating classroom conditions, usually require teachers to make adjustments on the spot. Differences in pupils' ability to understand instructions and use technology also present a distinct challenge that requires extra attention during lessons. Furthermore, the rapid pace of technological advancement means that teachers need to continually update their digital knowledge and skills in order to use technology effectively in the teaching and learning process.

Overall, the research findings indicate that the integration of information and communication technology in remote areas is a complex process, as it is influenced by the interplay between technological factors, infrastructure, teaching methods, student characteristics, and the school environment. These various challenges form a key aspect of Reyhan's professional experience in developing information and communication technology-based English language learning.

3.1.3 Adaptive Strategies for Addressing the Challenges of ICT Integration

Findings from the research indicate that Reyhan has devised various adaptive methods to address the challenges arising during the process of integrating ICT into English language learning.

When faced with technical issues, Reyhan always prepares alternative learning activities that can be used if the technology does not function as expected. Some digital activities can be converted into face-to-face activities without altering the learning objectives to be achieved. Regarding this strategy, he explained: *"On some platforms, it can actually be printed. So, there's an option there to print it. The game they want to play is printed out, so the children end up using pencils."*

He also added: *"I usually combine things; it's not purely technology-only."*

This finding demonstrates that pedagogical flexibility is one of the key strategies for ensuring the learning process continues.

Research also shows that the selection of technology is carried out through a continuous process of observation, exploration and trial and error. Before utilising a platform in teaching, Reyhan first observes the practices of other teachers and explores the available features. He explained:

"Usually, I observe first via social media because there are plenty of people who have already posted their learning activities, aren't there? Then I try tinkering with the website or platform first to get an idea of what sort of design I might want for my class, given the circumstances of my students."

Furthermore, he emphasised: *“For me, it’s a matter of trial and error to find what works best, and that includes asking why we shouldn’t try using ICT for learning activities.”*

These findings indicate that the integration of ICT takes place through a process of continuous reflection and experimentation.

Social media, professional communities and colleagues also serve as important sources for developing digital skills. Through discussions and the exchange of experiences, Reyhan gained various ideas, inspiration and information regarding learning platforms that could be applied in his teaching.

Another adaptive strategy involved tailoring the use of technology to students’ abilities and needs. In some instances, Reyhan implemented a peer tutoring model by appointing more proficient students to assist their classmates who were struggling with the technology. On this point, he explains: *“I tried to implement what is known as peer tutoring. In each group, I have ‘masters’; it is these masters who will then help their other classmates.”*

Furthermore, to minimise distractions whilst using digital devices, Reyhan establishes clear rules from the very start of the lesson. As he explains: *“It is indeed necessary to set the rules at the start. What is allowed and what is not allowed during lessons. Setting those limits is important.”*

The research findings also indicate a strong element of professional autonomy in Reyhan’s journey as a teacher. He does not rely solely on formal training, but actively seeks out learning resources, explores new technologies, evaluates their suitability for pupils’ needs, and makes pedagogical decisions based on the actual conditions in the classroom.

Generally speaking, the adaptive approach designed by Reyhan is shaped by a combination of pedagogical flexibility, continuous experimentation, self-directed learning, collaboration with colleagues, reflection on teaching experiences, and adaptation to pupils’ needs. These various approaches enable the effective implementation of information and communication technology despite the various constraints present within the school environment.

3.2 Discussions

3.2.1 Reyhan’s Experience of Implementing ICT in English Language Teaching for Young Learners

The research findings indicate that Reyhan’s experience in implementing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in English language teaching did not develop instantly. Rather, it occurred through a gradual professional process, influenced by her teaching experience, reflective thinking, continuous learning, and interaction with various learning contexts. From the perspective of Teacher Professional Identity, this experience demonstrates that a teacher’s professional identity is flexible and constantly evolving through the interplay between individual experience, the working environment, and reflection on teaching practice [16], [17]. In this study, Reyhan’s experience of participating in the Teacher Professional Education Programme (PPG), adapting to the demands of 21st-century learning, and actively implementing technology in teaching illustrates a process of continuous professional identity change. This process demonstrates that changes in teaching methods are influenced not only by improvements in technical skills but also by a transformation in teachers’ perspectives regarding their role as facilitators of learning who can adapt the learning process to students’ needs. These findings are consistent with the assertion by [18] that teachers’ professional practice is shaped by their life experiences and work contexts. Furthermore, [7] emphasises that teachers’ beliefs, motivations and views regarding technology are key factors influencing the successful integration of ICT into learning.

From the perspective of Narrative Inquiry, Reyhan’s life experiences demonstrate that his interpretation of ICT use has continually evolved throughout his professional career through the dimensions of temporality, sociality and place, as described by [14]. This interpretation did not arise spontaneously but was shaped through experiences during his teacher training, interactions with colleagues, teaching practice at a primary school in a remote area, and continuous reflection on his teaching experiences. Thus, the integration of ICT in this study reflects not only technological proficiency but also a professional journey that has shaped the way Reyhan understands, interprets and applies technology in English language learning. These findings indicate that teaching experience serves as the primary foundation for developing the meaning of ICT use as part of teaching practice that is continually adapted to the learning context at hand.

This study also reveals that the improvement in Reyhan’s ICT skills was achieved through a combination of formal learning, self-directed learning and professional collaboration. These results support the concept of Self-Directed Learning proposed by [19], which explains that individuals actively take the initiative in identifying their learning

needs, seeking appropriate learning resources, applying new knowledge, and independently assessing their learning outcomes. In this study, Reyhan not only gained knowledge from formal training but also actively participated in webinars, used social media as a source of motivation for learning, independently explored various digital platforms, and interacted with colleagues to enrich his teaching practice. These findings suggest that the development of digital skills does not rely entirely on institutional training, but is also influenced by teachers' own initiative to continue learning throughout their careers. These research results are consistent with the study by [12], which showed that teachers' digital competences develop through continuous learning and independent study efforts. These findings also support the research by [11], which found that teachers working in resource-limited areas tend to enhance their professional skills through self-directed learning and collaboration with professional communities.

Furthermore, Reyhan's experience in selecting, evaluating and utilising various digital platforms demonstrates the growing development of technology integration skills, which can be explained within the framework of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) devised by [20]. The research findings indicate that the use of Wordwall, Educaplay, Gemini AI, Chromebooks, educational videos and interactive flat-panel displays was carried out with careful consideration, rather than haphazardly, taking into account the suitability of the technology used, the learning objectives, the subject matter being taught and the characteristics of the pupils. These findings indicate that the decision to use technology was not based on the novelty of the applications used, but on their relevance to the learning objectives, the pupils' characteristics, and the subject matter being taught. Thus, Reyhan's practice reflects the integration of knowledge regarding technology, pedagogy, and content, as outlined in the TPACK framework. This reaffirms that the success of ICT integration is not only measured by the ability to use technology, but also by the teacher's ability to make learning decisions that take into account the relationship between these three components in a balanced manner. This finding reinforces the results of research by [12] and [21], which show that ICT integration competence is acquired through teaching experience, reflection on educational practice, and the direct application of technology.

In addition to contributing to the enhancement of teachers' competencies, this study also reveals that information and communication technology has the potential to create more meaningful learning experiences for pupils. One example of this is the use of Wordwall combined with activities exploring the school environment and the utilisation of Gemini AI, enabling pupils to relate English language material to real-life situations they encounter in their daily lives. This experience demonstrates that technology serves not only as a tool for conveying information but also as a medium that encourages pupils to build their understanding through active engagement in the learning process. These findings are in line with [1] view that technology can open up more opportunities for learning and help create learning experiences that are more relevant, interactive and meaningful.

The research findings also indicate that the use of information and communication technology can enhance pupils' engagement in learning English. The characteristics of primary-level pupils who enjoy play-based activities, visualisation and interaction make platforms such as Wordwall more appealing to them than traditional, teacher-centred teaching methods. Through interactive activities, pupils are more motivated to participate actively throughout the learning process. These findings are consistent with research by [22], which showed that the use of ICT-based media can boost pupils' motivation and participation in learning. This study also supports the findings of [21], which demonstrated that digital platforms can help create a more engaging learning environment for young learners. Therefore, information and communication technology not only aids in achieving English language learning objectives but also enhances pupils' interest and participation throughout the learning process.

Furthermore, the research results indicate a shift from teacher-centred teaching methods towards more pupil-centred learning. In this context, teachers no longer act as the sole source of information, but rather as facilitators who assist pupils in accessing, exploring and utilising various learning resources. By using various digital platforms, including Gemini AI and self-directed learning apps such as Duolingo, pupils' access to learning resources outside the classroom is increasing, thereby providing them with opportunities to continue the learning process independently. This further reinforces the teacher's role as a facilitator who helps students actively construct knowledge. These findings support the view of [12], who state that the integration of technology drives a shift in the teacher's role from that of a content deliverer to a facilitator of the learning process who supports students' active engagement.

Overall, Reyhan's experience demonstrates that the integration of information and communication technology is not merely the application of technology in the learning process, but rather a professional process shaped by teaching experience, reflection, self-directed learning, and interaction with various learning contexts. This process contributes to the formation of teachers' professional identity, the strengthening of TPACK competencies, the creation of more meaningful learning experiences, increased student engagement, and the transformation of

teaching practices towards a more student-centred approach. Thus, the findings of this study demonstrate that the integration of information and communication technology is a dynamic, contextual and ongoing process in supporting English language learning for young students in remote areas.

3.2.2 Challenges in Implementing ICT in EFL Teaching in Remote Areas

The research findings indicate that the implementation of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in English language teaching in remote areas is a complex matter, as it is influenced by a variety of interrelated factors, including infrastructure limitations, pedagogical challenges, student characteristics, and the rapid pace of technological development. These factors do not exist in isolation but influence one another in day-to-day teaching practice; consequently, teachers need to continually adapt their teaching methods to the circumstances they face. These findings support the argument that the successful implementation of ICT is determined not only by the availability of technology but also by teachers' ability to adapt to the local environment in which teaching takes place.

One of the issues encountered in this study was the potential for disruption when technology is used in the learning process. Reyhan's experience demonstrates that the use of digital tools can distract pupils if not accompanied by effective classroom management and clear rules regarding technology use. These findings emphasise that the challenges of ICT integration relate not only to the availability of the technology itself, but also to teachers' expertise in organising learning activities so that technology continues to support the achievement of educational objectives. These findings are consistent with [7], who revealed that teachers' beliefs, experiences and readiness to manage technology use influence the successful implementation of ICT in the classroom. Thus, teachers' pedagogical competence is a key element in the successful utilisation of technology in education.

In addition to pedagogical issues, this study also indicates that a lack of infrastructure remains a major barrier to the implementation of ICT in remote areas. Problems with equipment, limited internet access and power cuts can disrupt planned learning processes. This demonstrates that the successful integration of ICT depends not only on teachers' readiness but is also influenced by the infrastructure support available within the school environment. These findings support [1] view that disparities in access to technology remain a major challenge to achieving equitable digital education. The results of this study are also consistent with those of [9] and [23], who emphasise that infrastructure and resource constraints are significant barriers for teachers in integrating ICT in remote and rural areas.

This study also identified that selecting the appropriate technology to suit learning needs presents a distinct challenge for teachers. The rapid development of various digital platforms requires them to continually evaluate the suitability of technology in relation to learning objectives, teaching materials and pupils' characteristics. These findings can be explained through the Technology Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework introduced by [20], which states that the successful use of technology depends on teachers' ability to integrate knowledge of technology, pedagogy and content in a balanced manner. In other words, the challenges faced by Reyhan are not merely about technological skills, but also about the ability to make appropriate pedagogical decisions when selecting the learning media best suited to pupils' needs and the classroom context.

Differences in pupils' ability to understand instructions and utilise technology presented a major challenge in this study. Not all pupils possess the same level of digital literacy or learning styles; therefore, it is important for teachers to adapt their teaching methods, provide additional guidance, and organise the learning process more flexibly. This finding indicates that pupils' readiness is one of the key elements influencing the effectiveness of ICT integration in education. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of [24], who highlighted that students' readiness and digital literacy are crucial aspects of successful ICT-based learning. Consequently, the success of ICT implementation depends not only on the readiness of teachers and educational institutions but also on students' ability to use technology efficiently as a learning aid.

Overall, the research findings indicate that the challenges of integrating ICT in remote areas are context-specific and multi-faceted. These various challenges indicate that the implementation of ICT must be understood within the context of the learning environment, which requires teachers to continually adapt to conditions on the ground. These findings reinforce previous research emphasising that the integration of ICT in remote areas is a dynamic process requiring ongoing adjustment so that technology can be used effectively to support the teaching of English.

3.2.3 Adaptive Strategies for Addressing the Challenges of ICT Integration

The results of this study indicate that the various obstacles faced by Reyhan when incorporating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into English language learning did not prevent him from using technology in the teaching process. On the contrary, these obstacles actually spurred the development of adaptive strategies

shaped by teaching experience, professional reflection, continuous learning, and pedagogical decision-making appropriate to real-world situations in the classroom. These findings confirm that the success of ICT integration depends not only on the availability of technology, but also on the teacher's ability to address challenges in a flexible and context-appropriate manner.

One of the most evident adaptive strategies is the ability to adapt pedagogically when faced with technological and infrastructural constraints. When there are device malfunctions, limited internet connectivity, or power cuts, Reyhan does not halt the lesson but instead prepares non-digital learning alternatives that still align with the established learning objectives. These findings indicate that technology is not regarded as the primary focus of learning, but rather as one of the tools used when appropriate to educational needs and prevailing conditions. This strategy reflects the teacher's ability to integrate technological, pedagogical and content aspects, as outlined in the Technology Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework by [20]. These findings are also consistent with the statement by [9], who emphasise that flexibility and adaptability are key to ensuring the sustainability of ICT integration in settings with limited resources.

Furthermore, this study shows that the development of ICT integration practices occurs through a continuous process of exploration, observation and trial and error. Before using digital platforms in learning, Reyhan observed the practices of other teachers, explored the various available features, and adapted them to the characteristics of the pupils and the objectives to be achieved. This process demonstrates that the development of digital skills does not proceed in a linear fashion, but rather through a series of experiences that are continually evaluated and improved based on the results obtained in the classroom. These findings reflect the nature of Self-Directed Learning as described by [19], namely the individual's ability to independently identify learning needs, seek out relevant learning resources, apply new knowledge, and reflect on learning outcomes for further competence development. The results of this study are also consistent with research conducted by [12], which showed that teachers' digital skills develop through reflection, experimentation, and continuous self-directed learning.

In addition to self-directed learning, this study found that collaboration with colleagues and professional communities is crucial for the development of ICT integration practices. Through discussions, sharing experiences, and exchanging information regarding various digital platforms and teaching strategies, Reyhan gained new insights that could be adapted to the needs of the pupils in his class. These findings suggest that the development of teachers' competences does not occur solely on an individual basis but is also influenced by collaborative learning processes within a professional context. These research results support the observations of [11], who state that teachers working in resource-constrained areas often rely on professional collaboration and teaching communities as their primary sources for learning and enhancing their competences.

Another adaptive strategy observed was the implementation of peer tutoring to address differences in pupils' abilities to utilise technology. By involving pupils with a better understanding to assist their peers during the learning process, Reyhan created a more collaborative learning experience and provided every pupil with the opportunity to engage with technology. This approach not only helps to reduce the digital skills gap amongst pupils but also fosters a more inclusive learning environment through peer interaction. These findings indicate that adaptive strategies in ICT integration do not merely focus on resolving technical issues but also take into account pupils' diverse learning needs.

The research also revealed a strong element of teacher autonomy in Reyhan's ICT integration practices. According to [25], teacher autonomy refers to a teacher's ability to make independent professional decisions based on pupils' needs, learning objectives and the learning context. In this study, Reyhan actively selected the digital platforms to be used, adapted teaching strategies to classroom conditions, evaluated the effectiveness of the technology employed, and established rules for technology use to minimise potential disruptions during lessons. These practices demonstrate that ICT integration requires not only technical skills in using technology but also the professional ability to make appropriate pedagogical decisions based on conditions in the classroom. Consequently, teacher autonomy is a crucial factor enabling the effective integration of ICT despite various constraints. Furthermore, these findings add to the evidence that teacher autonomy is a vital foundation for ensuring that the use of ICT remains aligned with pupils' needs and the learning context, rather than merely following technological developments.

Overall, the adaptive strategies implemented by Reyhan demonstrate that the success of ICT integration in remote areas depends heavily on teachers' ability to continue learning, reflect on their teaching practices, utilise professional collaboration, and make pedagogical decisions suited to pupils' characteristics and the school environment. These findings indicate that teachers function not merely as users of technology, but also as professional decision-makers who actively adapt the use of ICT to support the achievement of learning objectives. Thus, the integration of ICT in the context of primary schools in remote areas is an adaptive, reflective and ongoing

process, enabling technology to be used effectively in line with learning needs and the local context in which teachers carry out their professional practice.

4. Conclusion

This study successfully explored the experiences of an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teacher in integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into the English language learning process for young learners at a primary school located in a remote area, using a narrative inquiry approach. The findings of this study indicate that the integration of ICT is a dynamic, contextual and ongoing professional process, shaped by teaching experience, reflection, independent learning and interaction with various learning contexts. Through this process, teachers gradually enhance their ability to select and integrate various digital technologies appropriate to learning objectives, teaching materials, pupils' characteristics and school conditions, thereby creating learning experiences that are more interactive, meaningful and pupil-centred. This study also reveals that the implementation of ICT in primary schools in remote areas is influenced by various contextual challenges, such as limited technological infrastructure, inconsistent internet access, technical constraints, variations in pupils' characteristics, and the rapid pace of technological development. However, these challenges have prompted teachers to develop adaptive strategies through flexible pedagogical approaches, continuous professional development, technological exploration, professional collaboration, and decision-making tailored to pupils' needs and the classroom context. These findings indicate that the success of ICT integration depends not only on the availability of technology, but also on continuous professional development for teachers and institutional support that can meet the needs and characteristics of schools, particularly those in remote areas. Given that this study involved only one participant from a single school context, it is recommended that future research involve more teachers from various levels of education and school contexts to provide a broader understanding of teachers' experiences, adaptive strategies, and ICT integration practices across different educational contexts.

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