EFL Teachers' integration of ICT to teach English as a Foreign Language in a private university

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ABSTRACT: *This case study aims to investigate English Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) for their daily classroom teaching practices. Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted to collect data. The data were transcribed and imported into NVivo 12 Plus software for coding and analysis. Results of the study show that EFL teachers integrate various kinds of technology in their classroom teaching practices.*
Keywords: EFL teachers, integration of ICT, English as a Foreign Language

Introduction

Nowadays, information and communication technologies (ICT) such as computers, the internet, electronic delivery systems and software, audio and video clips have potential to make contributions to improve quality of teaching and learning. The Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL), Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), Technology Enhance Language Learning (TELL) and Electronic Learning (E-learning) have seen increasingly applied in English language classroom (Holmes & Gardner, 2016). Learners now can use online chat facilities for interaction (Dalton, 2011), or social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter for writing practice (Cheng, 2012). These ICT tools provide EFL teachers opportunities to integrate in their teaching practices to enhance engagement of students and bring authentic English into EFL classroom environment and can provide rapid feedback for students and make them feel connected (Ammade et al., 2018). However, currently what kinds of technology EFL teachers often integrate in their teaching practices are still unknown. Thus, it is significant to conduct this study to understand the issue.

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Research Question

To achieve the aims, this study tries to answer the following research question: What kinds of Information and communication technologies (ICT) do EFL teachers often integrate in their daily classroom teaching practice?

Methodology

To answer the above research question, ten semi-structured interviews with ten EFL teachers were conducted. Each interview lasts about 45 to 60 minutes in length. After interviewing, the raw data were transcribed before being imported into NVivo software for coding from InT1 to InT10, analysing, and visualising.

Results and discussion

Responses from the data were coded and grouped into six categories. These categories include (i) online dictionaries and online learning environment, (ii) Digital classroom equipment, (iii) Microsoft Office programs and multimedia, (iv) social networks, (v) mobile technologies, and (vi) software for games and website for checking plagiarism. Figure below summarises these categories with quotes extracted from the data.

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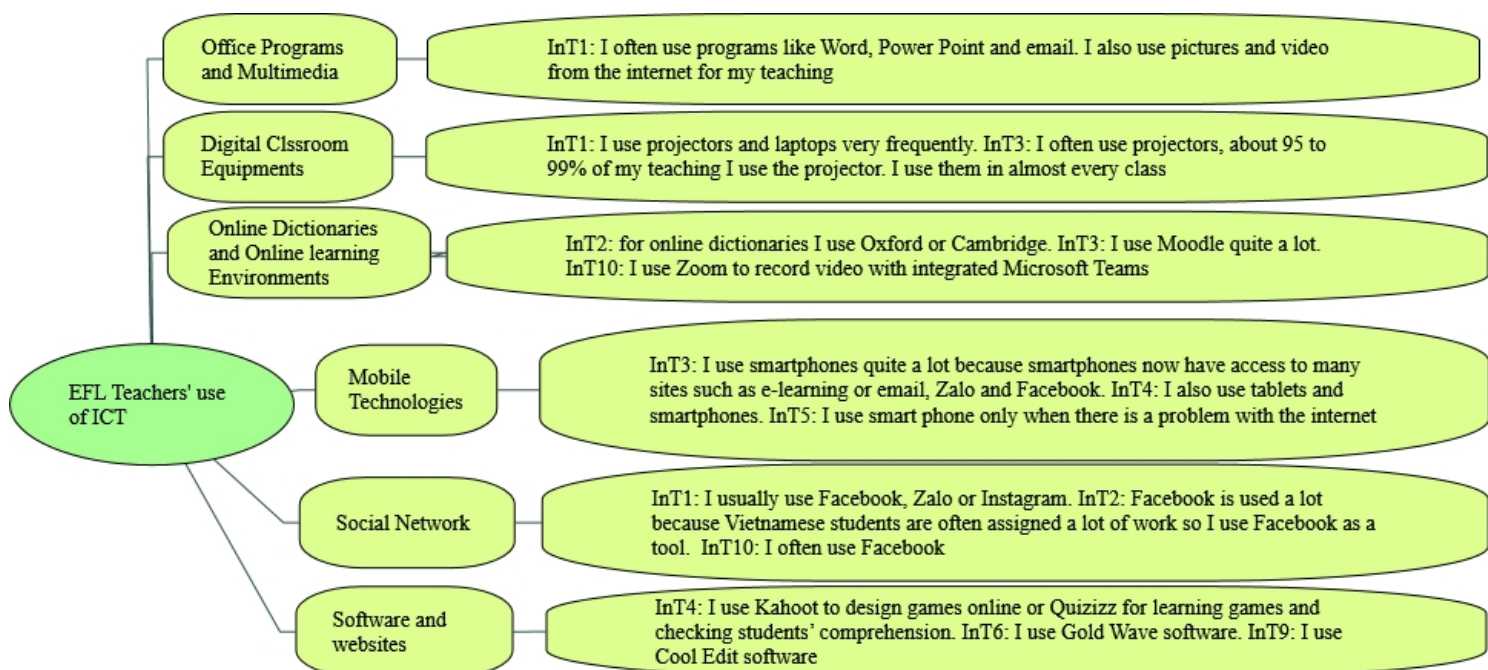
The following paragraphs explain further details of each category.

Microsoft Office programs and multimedia: The EFL teachers noted that they frequently integrated Microsoft Office programs like MS Word, PowerPoint, PDF documents. The InT1 indicated that she often integrated Microsoft Word and PowerPoint in her teaching. She also integrated animations, pictures and video from the internet in her teaching process. Similarly, the InT2 stated that "in the teaching process, I integrated PowerPoint and video".

Digital classroom equipment: Digital classroom equipment can be data projectors, computers, TV, speakers, cassettes and recorders. All ten EFL teachers confirmed that they knew a lot of digital classroom equipment and used them frequently. The InT1said that "I use projectors and laptops very frequently" while the InT3 was more specific as she affirmed that "I often use projectors, about 95 to 99% of my teaching I use the projector. I use them in almost every class".

Online dictionaries and online learning environments: The participants knew and used a variety of online dictionaries such as *Tratu.com* (InT5), *Lingoes* (InT10), *Cambridge* and *Oxford* (InT2). The InT5 explained that she used *Tratu.com* when teaching vocabulary while InT10 informed that *Lingoes* is a free, easy, and useful online dictionary so she introduced and instructed students how to use this dictionary to learn English. Among the above online dictionaries, Oxford and Cambridge dictionaries were the most commonly used by the EFL teachers. The InT2 stated that "for online dictionaries, I use *Oxford* or *Cambridge*".

Regarding the online learning environments, due to Covid-19 pandemic happening from the beginning of 2020, the university, where this study was conducted, used Moodle learning management system and Microsoft Teams for online teaching and learning. The use of these two platforms was compulsory.

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Therefore, all teachers at the university had to use these platforms to design courses for teaching and learning. In addition to the use of these two platforms, some of the EFL teachers knew Zoom and used this platform for purposes of teaching and learning. Nevertheless, Zoom is not a compulsory platform.

Mobile Technologies: Smartphones and Tablets are two popular types of mobile technologies cited by the participants. Responses to interviewed questions showed that EFL teachers had smartphones, and they used smartphones daily. The InT3 said that "I use smartphones quite a lot because smartphones now have access to many sites such as e-learning or email, Zalo and Facebook". During the interview with the InT5, she said that she used smartphone only when there was a problem with the internet. Like the InT5, the InT9 indicated that he used Smartphone, "I use smartphones, but I use smartphone unofficially".

Social Networks. Facebook and Zalo are considered the most popular social networks in Vietnam. Many EFL teacher participants therefore indicated they use these networks for daily communication with students and colleagues. The best illustrations for what EFL teachers said about this category could be seen in the following quotes. The InT1 said that "I usually use Facebook and Zalo [to post announcements to students]" while other said "social networks such as Facebook is used a lot because Vietnamese students are often assigned a lot of work, so I use Facebook as a tool" (InT2).

Software programs and websites: Interviews with EFL teachers also showed that several software programs and applications were used for purposes of teaching and learning English. For example, *Kahoot* and *Quizizz* were used for students to play games and check students' comprehension (InT4). The InT6 used *Gold Wave* software while *Cool Edit* software was used to cut and paste files for teaching and testing listening skill (InT9).

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The website named *Duplichecker.com* was used to check students' plagiarism (InT3).

Inconclusion

The EFL teachers at the research site often integrate six types of technology in their daily classroom teaching practices. Results of the study suggest that the EFL teachers at the research site possess good knowledge about information and communication technology.

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