



Teachers' Perception on Challenges and Strategies upon CALL Practice in EFL Secondary Classroom

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ABSTRACT

CALL draws attention for teachers' EFL classroom due to its captivating power for enhancing language learning. Several studies prove that CALL is extremely able to promote learners' skills, yet, there are some obscures ideal practices. The study aims at investigating teachers' perception on challenges and strategies on CALL practice in the EFL secondary classroom. This study utilises qualitative methods with oral semi-structured interview as the data collection. It involves 6 English teachers who have accustomed their teaching with CALL. They possess different teaching experiences, school infrastructures, and setting ; 2 urban public school, 1 suburban public school, 2 urban private school, and 1 suburban private school. The data are analysed through three phases for ensuring demanded results which can depict challenges and strategies on the basis of teachers' perception. It results that teachers encounter challenges on insufficient school facilities, inadequate lesson time, unfavourable instructional culture, and disproportionate technological competence. Pertaining to the strategies, they recommend the fulfilment of school facilities, plan-b design, and forum group discussion among teachers. As the summary, this study has deemed a light on how technology is integrated through CALL in EFL Secondary Classroom that eventually brings about preventive action plan for granting the desired outcome. The teachers' perception might depend on their background knowledge related to the issue, their current workplace, and teaching experiences.



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1. Introduction

Teaching English in EFL context encounters challenges in finding the effective method to implement. The motivation should be maintained for promising the learning objectives. Technology aids teacher in boosting learners' motivation and engagement in the class. The presence of technology brings about distinctive learning circumstances that prompts the contradictory perception upon the learning process. It is engaging and challenging at the same time (Kristiawan et al., 2022, p. 31). This phenomenon responds to learners' reluctance to communicate. The overrated assumption leads to the feeling of inferior. As coping mechanism, teachers need to be aware of the importance on altering learners' negative perception into grown-up mindset (Ma et al., 2019, p. 40).

The pandemic Covid-19 initiates a grand transformation, especially in education. ICT integration is recognized and demanded in language teaching and learning (Kassymova et al., 2023, p. 10). The deployment of ICT impacts on instructional strategies considering the pedagogical approach in technology environment classroom. It alters the terrifying and tedious classroom activities into engaging and learner-centred in language learning by integrating suitable digital tools (Mapisa & Makena, 2024, p. 224). The integration of ICT induces learners' interest and prompts the enhancement of speaking and writing skills as well. Nevertheless, the stakeholders are responsible to conduct practitioners' training for supplementing the demanded competence (Ndibalema & Mrosso, 2024, p. 131). The adoption meets barrier on infrastructure and resource limitation that calls out urgent solution to overcome it (Mapisa & Makena, 2024, p. 224).

Computer-assisted Language Learning (CALL) is widely utilised for aiding the technological learning contexts (Saylan et al., 2023, p. 99). CALL embodies constructivism that benefits active learning. Learners are able to associate their ideas and thoughts excitedly. Learners' perception and attitudes nurture the implementation owing to their achievement progress (Rakhmetova et al., 2023, p. 1049). Teacher as the practitioner perceives positively upon the intervention. They are quite aware of the necessity in developing cyber security provision skills owing to its data insecurity. It is crucial to maintain a secure virtual environment for education so that learners' engagement and participation towards the learning process is not impacted (Haseski, 2020, p. 493).

Many studies have explored the common advantageous outcome. Visual aids assist learners' vocabulary enrichment. The pictures and videos are displayed for enabling the cognition activation since learners grasp vivid and meaningful learning (X. Liu et al., 2020, p. 11). Within personalised instruction, the practice avoids time-consuming. Teachers are able to perform vocabulary instruction for widening the opportunity to grasp the comprehension and (Burt et al., 2020, p. 15) enhancing the learning process. In the Web 2.0 assessment tool, the computer has contributed to aid the depiction of test-takers' language proficiency. This practice considers the strategy of assessment that needs to be adaptive, dynamic, and interactive (Bahari, 2021, p. 20).

S.-C. Liu & Hung (2016) investigate the intervention of computers to foster learners' pronunciation. The enhancement is obtained by computerised speaking assessment, the administrator compares the pitch contours before and after the treatment. The flatness of pronunciation is slowly obscured. Learners learn how to apply appropriate expressions such as rising-falling intonation patterns. The computer-assisted pronunciation depicts auditory and visual feedback concerning the pitch variation and pronunciation correctness.

Turunen Kaislastenlahti et al., (2019) has participated in exploring the study pertaining to the utilisation of computers in assisting reading through writing in young learners. The intervention develops learners' competence to read and write, yet there is no significant enhancement on learners' phonological awareness. Hand-writing method promises positive outcomes on literacy growth and reading motivation, though information technology is crucial to be experienced by learners, in the digitalization era. This study possesses limitations on measuring indicators of literacy and reading motivation. The theoretical background is still few.

Shayakhmetova et al., (2020) attempt to dig deeper collaborative writing skills in CALL classroom for college learners. The study outputs a pleasant finding that the practice cognitively stimulates feedback generation in a collaborative context. They process well comprehension upon the information and significantly develop problem solving skills. It appears that the intervention leads to autonomous learning where learners have a great chance to be involved intensively. Hence, they unconsciously foster their communicative skills. Their writing skills undergo an improvement since learners comprehend learning material, especially in the systemic instruction of brainstorming, self-correction, and grammar-notice.

The previous studies primarily concern how CALL impacts learners' particular English skills. To fill the gap, this study aims at investigating teachers' perception on challenges and strategies upon CALL practice in EFL secondary classrooms. Two problem statements are formulated as follow:

1. What challenges do teachers encounter in CALL practice?
2. What strategies do teachers have to overcome the challenges?

1.1. Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL)

Online learning emphasizes CALL is considered as a language learning approach in the case when a computer aids the flow of learning process. Learners draw upon computers for enriching learning materials, preparing visual aids in presenting ideas or conducting an assessment (Abdallah, 2021, p. 11). The practice activates a virtual learning environment that encompasses the function of ICT for strengthening the embodiment of language learning quality enhancement (p. 12). The technology tool integration in language learning reduces the barriers for having limited resources or other challenges that learners encounter while processing the language learning in the classroom (Rezuanova et al., 2023, p. 938).

The presence of CALL originated in the 1960's when huge mainframe computers were demanded by universities. In the 1970's, the personal computer was invented as a technology development. The computation advancement led to publication growth. At that time, computers were limited in instructional program use which introduced the Computer Assisted Language Instruction (CALI). In a short period of time, CALL evolves in the most ordinary version in practice. Traditional CALL involves stimulus and response. In terms of responding to the stimulus presented on the screen, learners typed on keyboard. The sophisticated program assists error analysis towards the responses through performing highlighted colour in the error and guiding remedial activity (Davies, 2016).

The development of CALL is divided into three stages; behaviouristic, communicative, and integrative. In behaviourism, the dominance of drilling strategies where learners view computers as the learning assistance. It offers a convenient personal pace without feeling scared of being judged and blamed. PLATO was introduced to help drilling activity, grammar materials, and translation assessment. In the communicative stage, learners begin to practise

to use the language at a personal pace. Computer-based activity concerns more on triggering to implicitly comprehend the grammar. It offers opportunities for discovering such knowledge by discussion or other group works. The practice highlights how they solve a problem collaboratively while they work on computer, rather than only how they work on computer (Warschauer & Healey, 1998, p. 57). Integrative CALL shifts new perspectives on learning where it elicits the authentic environment. Task-based, project-based, and content-based promise the integration of English skills to be the core of learning. Learners use computers on a daily basis that drives them to an information-rich environment. The on-going process allows them to access the technology tool for facilitating language learning (p. 58).

1.1. The CALL Practice in EFL Secondary Classroom

CALL practice in EFL Secondary classroom transforms teacher-centred into explorative approach (Davies, 2016). Several studies denote the captivating influences on boosting learners' motivation, engagement, confidence, and most importantly, promoting language learning effectiveness (Shanmugam et al., 2023, p. 5). Khoshsima & Mozakka (2017) through experimental studies in the EFL classroom proves the positive results. Teachers can vary the listening material, while learners can develop real-life skills pertaining to computer use, either in individual or collaborative projects. In line, Khoiriyah (2020) proposed web-based material in which the teacher is able to conduct pre-, exercise, post-listening activities. The technology-enhanced assessment offers feasible design of a platform that can depict learners' listening competence and evaluation. The customised assessment is complemented with feedback upon inputted responses. The autonomy learning possibly occurs. The recent studies prove the powerful impacts on language skills, such as vocabulary (X. Liu et al., 2020), pronunciation S.-C. Liu & Hung, (2016), speaking (Poursalehi et al., 2014) & (Sukomardojo, 2022), reading (Bippert & Harmon, 2017) & (Ja'afar et al., 2021), and writing (Shayakhmetova et al., 2020).

Language learners attain an enchanting chance to adhere to the socio-cultural shift that occurs in the target language, thanks to the appearance of CALL. Claiming that it offers the ability for accessing massive information and real-life communication with the native, denotes that the practice is extremely worth trying (Ward, 2015, p. 552). A study reveals that CALL mediates the learning through numerous apps that have distinctive points of influences. For instance, teachers incorporate digital games, email composing, computer-mediated communication (CMC), and multimedia in their language learning classroom. Writing blogs triggers learners' discouragement, so far (Lim & Aryadoust, 2022, p. 19).

However, it is quite necessary for developing the materials to avoid learners' boredom and unpleasantness. Furthermore, the advertisements, sometimes, pop up frequently that may disturb and bother learners' concentration (Khoiriyah, 2020, p. 87). The selected technology platform to promote learners' authentic experience through CALL determines the learners' potential viewpoint on the result (Shanmugam et al., 2023, p. 6). It is, further, crucial for teachers to integrate the new technology advances, such as digital games, virtual augmentation, CMC, Digital Multimodal Composing (DMC) or wiki into CALL classroom mode. The pedagogy of blended learning with the use of those sophisticated technology tools is still scarcely discovered. Whereas, the integration definitely enables us to construct knowledge, activate critical thinking, and promote learning achievement owing to the use of AI, as well (Chen et al., 2020, p. 169).

Hedayati et al., (2018) uncovers the discrepancy upon teachers' demand for instructional design training and their responsibility for ensuring the ideal practice of CALL. Non-systematic practice of it in the classroom calls out learners' barriers for grasping the positive impacts that result from leveraging the benefits and varying experiences. Iranian teachers encounter an inertia state where they feel discouraged to employ the educational program due

to insufficient infrastructure, lack of knowledge and training. The development of CALL is undeniably determined by their perception upon classroom circumstances and narrow experiences. Identity-oriented training, established by the policy makers, is requirable to boost teachers' motivation in perpetually developing high quality of CALL (Meihami, 2021, p. 108). In addition, it is suggested for increasing open access related articles for enriching teachers' deep understanding upon the intended CALL practice (Lim & Aryadoust, 2022, p. 19).

2. Methods

This study is a qualitative study which guarantees the feasibility, reliability and information-fulfilled respondents (Mertens, 2023). It is akin conceptualised for attaining in-depth insight pertaining to teachers' perception (Mapisa & Makena, 2024, p. 217). It draws upon purposive and criterion-based sampling for ensuring the demanded data as responding to the problem statements. The participants work in urban and suburban schools that facilitate distinctive infrastructure and internet connectivity. Those teachers have experienced in designing the lesson plan upon the CALL practice and frequently integrated CALL for their language learning classroom with various digital tools and targeted skill enhancement. The classroom encompasses learners with different levels of English competence.

2.1. Data Sample

This study involves 6 (5 females, 1 male) English teachers in EFL secondary classrooms. The description of the teachers is structured in the table below.

Table 1 Population of the research

TEACHERS ' CODE	TEACHING EXPERIENCE (year)	SCHOOL SETTING (√)				TRAINING (√)	
		Public School	Private School	Urban	Sub urban	Yes	No
AT	20 years	√		√		√	
MI	4 years		√	√		√	
TI	3.5 years		√		√	√	
AL	14 years	√		√		√	
SI	1 years	√			√		√
HA	3 years		√	√		√	

The participants are coded into initials for securing the actual identity (AT, MI, TI, AL, SI, HA). They are EFL English teachers in different school settings who are varied in teaching experience that range from 1 to 20 years. 3 participants work in public school (AT, AL, SI), the rest are private school teachers (MI, TI, HA). Pertaining to the location, 4 teachers work in urban areas, while the others are in suburban areas. Teachers have participated in CALL training unless a novice teacher who only has 1 year experience in teaching. These samples depict diverse teachers' teaching background and school setting which is expected to provide profound comprehension on their perceptions of the issues.

2.2. Data Collection

The participants collect lesson plans that have been designed as their guidance for practising CALL in their classroom. The lesson plans are utilised for examining the similarities

between the planning and the real practice. They, afterwards, will conduct oral semi-structured interviews, aiming at investigating their perception towards CALL practice. It covers the challenges they have encountered and strategies that they have planned or suggested for undermining the challenges. The mode of interview is selected for considering convenient circumstances and promising high-quality responses that definitely reflect their viewpoints towards underlying issues. There is sufficient time for understanding the list of questions provided before submitting the responses. It benefits them for comprehending the issues and generating valid and required responses for each question (Roberts, 2020).

2.3. Data Analysis

The data are analysed through these three phases according to Bippert & Harmon, 2017 (pp. 11–12). Phase-1, the researcher generates a list of questions that aligns heavily on problem statements of the study. In this case, the researcher begins to explore participants' identity, teaching experiences, background of knowledge towards CALL practice, and digital tools used for the practice. Then, the question requires information about their school's infrastructure for supporting the technology intervention. The next questions are concerned on their perception upon the challenges and strategies for ensuring that the practice brings about positive results on learning achievement and language skills. In this phase, the researcher organises the lesson plan and the participants' response.

For phase-2, the researcher compiles the participants' response into files. The file is determined by the intended issues, such as CALL practice, challenges, and strategies. It eases to compare the responses towards each issue. The researcher diagnoses the correlation of the responses, either it is harmonious or even contrary. Those data are summarised and noted on the researcher's personal document.

In the final phase, the researcher draws upon the data for answering the problem statements pertaining to the challenges and strategies. The challenges are concerned on how it relates heavily on their teaching experiences and school infrastructure to support technology intervention. Whilst, the strategies may be concerned on their background knowledge in practising CALL and their competence to understand how the utilised tool is worked and handle unexpected conditions when it stops to work due to particular reasons.

3. Results and Discussion

From the one-on-one semi-structured interview with 6 diverse teachers, it discovers adequate satisfaction from the practice in the classroom. School infrastructures and facilities have supported the teaching and learning activities that are demanded in the digital era. However, they encounter challenges for endeavouring the targeted implementation. Various strategies are proposed for overcoming and minimising the challenges.

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Challenges of CALL

Insufficient School Facilities

The common challenge revealed from the interview is an insufficiency of school facilities. This issue is definitely declared by public and suburban teachers. The interview extracts strongly prove the statements:

'The school facilities are still limited in use. There is no speaker, as well.' (TI)

'My school only provides lcd/projector for supporting CALL. There is no other.' (SI)

Similarly, private boarding teachers experience the exact same thing. They struggle to use CALL in their classroom due to the technology supply. The following interview extracts convey their school facilities.

'Learners are only able to use computer in the computer libraries. I have difficulty to schedule it because it often overlaps with other classes.' (HA)

'Some classes are facilitated with LCD/projector, but not for all classes. And Chromebook are only available for public school, in my country, whereas my (private) school also needs it.' (MI)

The highlighted technological issue that is undergone by the EFL classroom is an instability of internet connectivity. Public urban teachers groan the internet connectivity troubles the CALL practice, even though the school supports the advanced technology. Unsurprisingly, the private suburban teachers view identical phenomena. They declare the issue through following interview extracts.

'I need support of internet connectivity, because they have already mastered various technology that belongs to CALL. The weather, windy makes bad connection.' (AT)

Inadequate Lesson Time

Furthermore, private teachers encounter difficulties in managing lesson time using CALL. It would be more severe if there is an unexpected technical problem either with the devices or the digital tools. The following extracts are the proof.

'There are barriers on the room, time, and connection.' (HA)

'The materials are extremely too much to deliver, if I use CALL too often, it will be impossible to deliver all materials. Sometimes, there is technical problem, like internet connectivity, and if I use computer, the web link is error. I only have 2 lesson times (90 minutes).' (TI)

Contrastingly, an urban public school states the advantage of CALL. The teacher can use it as the medium for realising a flexible learning where learners are capable of learning outside the classroom.

'Every teacher must try, or must adopt using CALL to their lesson in their classroom. By having CALL also make you don't need to go to the classroom, itself. By CALL, you can teach everywhere everytime at anytime.' (AT)

Unfavourable Institutional Culture

The institutional culture brings about rules in the school. Private teachers, especially those who worked on Islamic boarding schools, admit numerous challenging impacts resulting from the culture. The limitation of technology is programmed for cultivating the desired environment. Whilst, the teacher understands the role of CALL to enhance learners' desired competence. The actual phenomena are depicted from the extracts below.

'In (Islamic) boarding school where learners are restricted on technology use in daily basis. We depend heavily on computer lab, but the schedule of it, it often collides with other classes.' (HA)

'Our school is (Islamic) boarding school. The have not enough room to explore (the technology).' (MI)

Disproportionate Technological Competence

Pertaining to learners' digital tools, teachers utter learners' low skills in using technology. The issue impacts on their motivation and participation in the class. The extract above performs identical experience dealing with the challenge.

'So, we as teacher, has to introduce the apps that we want to use, and make sure they understand the apps and they can use it. Because they are boarding student, they might way too late from other students. The other students are faster because they use the technology every second and minute.' (MI)

'When I use Canva, there is student who can't operate it and choose to give up.' (TI)

'I am in suburban area. They are middle to low social class and their ability in using technology is also still low.' (SI)

The consequence of unsolved challenges is learners' demotivation in actively participating in the instruction. Many teachers express their frustration through these extracts.

'They are in beginner level. Their motivation is low.' (SI)

'Some students are lost interested because they find it hard to use it.' (TI)

On the other hand, some teachers flex their smoothness of using CALL due to their learners' technological expertise. It occurs in public schools in urban areas. The learners are accustomed to utilising a kind of technology in aiding their life necessities. The flexibility offers the ease in improving their competence. The presented extracts strengthen the statements above.

'They have already mastered various technologies that belongs to CALL' (AT)

'There is no challenge on their competence in using technology. They master many digital tools.' (AL)

3.1.2. Strategies for Overcoming the Challenges

The Fulfilment of School Infrastructure

Most teachers propose the fulfilment of infrastructure in their school. Since numerous schools still confront a limited access to internet connectivity and low quality of technology devices. An urban public teacher delivers her viewpoint towards the issue as follows.

'School, increasing, preparing the technical process, or technical problems about internet connection, I just need better better and better internet connection.' (AT)

The other urban public teacher demands the fulfilment of technology devices. Through this extract, she voices her request.

'Ready to use technology. So, the teacher doesn't need to bring cables.' (AL)

The urban private teacher voices the same chant as follow.

'All of classes are facilitated with lcd/projector and chromebook.' (MI)

Additionally, teachers, either in public or private school, find their own way for overcoming the challenge by preventing action. They tend to equip their class with independent devices. Hence, they attempt not to rely on the stakeholders any longer. Here are some strategies that they perceive as the most effective way.

'I will inform my students the day before I integrate CALL in my class. They should prepare enough personal data by themselves.' (AL)

A suburban public agree with the previous statement in this regard.

'I use facilities that are provided, if not, I will use mine.' (SI)

Plan-B Design

Several teachers experience undesired conditions when technology adoption doesn't go as well as they wish. An urban public teacher prefers to prepare secure alternative instruction for ensuring the learning objective is attained, whilst, a suburban private teacher concerns on how the designed instruction can be implemented. Here are the opposite strategies conducted by teachers.

'We should prepare the material earlier. We also need to prepare Plan-B if there is a technical problem. So, we don't merely depend on the material, but we also should prepare another to overcome the challenge.' (AL)

'If there is a problem with the device, I call the IT to help me.' (TI)

Forum Group Discussion among Teachers

An urban private teacher claimed the essentiality of forum group discussion where teachers can deliver, share, and discuss experiences, thought, and ideas. He states his opinion through this extract.

'We should design interesting activity. It is necessary to discuss how to design activities using CALL with other teachers.' (HA)

Several teachers are on the same boat. Maintaining learners' affective plays a significant role. Private teachers declare their consideration as follows.

'My strategy is how to design an activity for making my students interested.' (TI)

'How to make student excited, make a fun class, make a fun learning process, so that students are not bored.' (MI)

3.2. Discussion

The result of an oral semi-structured interview with 6 teachers in diverse school settings denotes mere perception of challenges and strategies. The challenges appear from these categories; insufficient school facilities, inadequate lesson time, unfavourable instructional culture, and disproportionate technological competence. In line with (Meihami, 2021, p. 108) that has highlighted the particular challenges in integrating CALL. Unsurprisingly, urban public teachers do not necessarily struggle with technology devices since they are well-fulfilled by the government. Suburban schools are poorly supported to conduct standardised CALL practice connecting to the study of Khoshima & Mozakka (2017, p. 90) that declares the rapid development of computers determines the enhancement of CALL features. It seems to be an unaccomplished task for the teachers if the computer, as the core of the device, is not properly utilised. The internet connectivity, additionally, still becomes terrifying barriers for all schools under research. Those factors are in line with the study conducted by Mapisa & Makena (2024, p. 223) which contemplates computers and the internet as fundamental elements for CALL.

The urban and suburban private teachers are bewildered by time management in adopting CALL in their classroom. They use a computer lab as the setting, yet, the CALL

practice kills the time. Teacher is ought to schedule the practice for ensuring the availability. The undesired circumstance occurs for prioritising instructional culture that restricts the technology use. It, definitely, impacts on several aspects that hinder the effectiveness of CALL. Learners attain limited opportunity for training, exploring and mastering the utilised digital tools. A study conducted by (Poursalehi et al., 2014, p. 502) shed a light that CALL should approach learners to native culture in which they have an obvious picture on how the language is used. For urban public learners, they are superior and much able to attain abundant advantages from CALL. For private school, the practice is way too far from the expected utilisation. Apparently, it occurs at suburban public schools, as well. This study also failed at proving the use of CALL for embodying flexible learning mode as Poursalehi et al. (2014) has underscored in their study.

To overcome the challenge, teachers demand technology fulfilment. Other teachers bring up their frustration through equipping the lack of devices independently. The stakeholders had better consider fulfilling the fundamental element to enhance the quality of CALL practice, even in private schools. Moreover, preventing the unexpected technical problem through designing alternative design is still preferable which the urban teachers commonly do. However, calling out for others' assistance for fixing the error is feasible. A suburban private teacher is still dependable on IT instructors. Besides, private teachers beg for forum group discussion which responds to their obscurity in finding the suitable strategies. Compared to the study of (Hedayati et al., 2018, p. 1135), EFL teachers under this study have participated in CALL training as the practice guideline.

4. Conclusion

This study attempts to investigate the challenges and strategies of CALL practice in EFL secondary classrooms according to teachers' perception. 6 teachers involved in this study encompasses; 2 urban public teachers, 1 suburban public teacher, 2 urban private teachers, and 1 suburban private teacher. They have participated in CALL training provided by the government unless a year experienced teacher who works in a suburban area. Through qualitative study with the use of interviews as the data collection technique, it has uncovered the diverse challenges that are encountered by teachers. Every teacher possesses distinctive strategies for conquering the challenges.

Since there is no definite standardised CALL practice, teachers assume the quality of the practice by the class circumstances. The challenges that they encounter are insufficient school facilities, inadequate lesson time, unfavourable instructional culture, and disproportionate technological competence. It would be pleasant for CALL practitioners if stakeholders are aware of the importance of solving technological devices as it is required.

This study also provides glance references on how to construct strategies for successful CALL in their classroom. It might rely heavily on teachers, as the main actor, yet, the responsibility and the solver are also in teachers' hands. Having perpetual discussion with other teachers is suggested since promoting self-competence, either in teaching or the technology mastery is crucial.

This study should be viewed with caution owing to the limitation of the sample. The researcher affords for providing diverse viewpoints and eventually still lacks variation. The urban and suburban area might differ in categories. There is no exact guarantee that teachers' training quality is identical. Therefore, for future research, it is necessary for giving the similar treatment and investigating their viewpoints, afterwards.

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