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Original Article

Instructors' Practice and Challenges of Integrating Digital Pedagogy in Teaching English as a Foreign Language: The Case of Ambo University Postgraduate Classes

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate practice and challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in the case of Ambo University Postgraduate Classes in the 2023 academic year. Twenty instructors filled questionnaires and 4 of them participated in the interview. To select 20 instructors from 40, quota sampling technique was employed and 4 instructors (assistant professors and above) were participated in the interview by using availability sampling techniques. Descriptive survey research type was used. Three types of data gathering tools were used: questionnaires, interview and classroom observation. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were collected in this study. To analyze quantitative data, descriptive statistics were used. The interview results were analyzed using summarization and quotations. The findings of the study showed that instructors were less proficient in basic technological literacy skills, including proficiency in using computers, operating systems, software applications, and digital tools relevant to their teaching English context. In addition to this, instructors' practice of digital content creation tools, use of virtual and augmented reality tools in the EFL classroom, instructors' use of educational apps and games in EFL classroom and the instructors' practice of online assessment tools like Google Forms, Formative, and Quizizz to create and administer assessments, and to evaluate student learning outcomes in EFL classroom were very low. Findings of this study also showed that access to technological infrastructures, digital literacy skills, technological barriers, students' lack of motivation or skills, a lack of pedagogical training and support and a lack of funding were major challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in EFL classroom. Therefore, Ambo University and other stakeholders should offer comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs for EFL instructors to enhance their digital literacy skills and pedagogical knowledge.

Keywords: digital pedagogy, integration, teaching English, investigating, digital literacy

1. INTRODUCTION

Twenty century education is expected to prepare society to meet the expectations of 21st skills (Van Laar *et al*., 2019) suck as digital technology skills. Digital pedagogy refers to the use of digital technology to transform teaching and learning practices. It includes many methods, strategies and tools for using technology to support and promote learning. Open education will also affect the use of digital resources such as digital books and multimedia content (Kivunja, 2013). The purpose of digital Pedagogy is to create collaborative, interactive and personalized learning experiences that help students develop the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to succeed in the digital age. It can also help educators reach a wider audience and provide more flexible learning opportunities that can be accessed anytime, anywhere (Dhakal, 2023). Digital pedagogy and digital technologies have the potential to enhance teaching and learning in a number of ways. For example, they can provide students with access to a wider range of resources and enable them to engage with course content in new and interactive ways. They can also facilitate communication and collaboration among students and between students and teachers, and provide opportunities for personalized and differentiated learning (Pongsakdi *et al*., 2021).

There are many other digital tools that can be used in digital pedagogy to teach English as a Foreign Language. To begin with, Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as blackboard, canvas, and Moodle, which provide a central platform for organizing course materials, assignments, discussions, and assessments. The other digital tools are video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Skype, and Google Meet, which allow for synchronous virtual meetings and lectures (Bates, 2022). Digital technologies are powerful for teaching (Griffin, 2003). Therefore, the teachers need to adopt and use technologies in their teaching classroom. However, from my experience as a student and as a teacher, the researcher of this study experienced that current practice of English teaching ignored of digital pedagogy.

Video conferencing tools, like Zoom and Google Meet, enable remote communication through video, audio, and text. Zoom offers virtual meetings, webinars, and classes, while Google Meet integrates with Google Classroom for virtual classes, meetings, and webinars. Microsoft Teams is a platform that offers video conferencing, file sharing, chat, and document collaboration. It also features online discussion forums, chat rooms, and blogs for asynchronous communication and collaboration among students and teachers (Bates, 2022). These tools help develop critical

thinking skills, encourage group discussions, and facilitate collaborative activities. Online blogs allow students to reflect on course materials and receive feedback, creating a sense of community and additional communication channels (Luo & Franklin, 2015). Additionally, digital tools like interactive whiteboards, smartboards, educational apps, games, open educational resources (OER), and social media platforms can enhance learning in teaching English as a Foreign Language. These tools provide engaging experiences, supplement traditional course materials, and facilitate communication among students and teachers. Teachers must understand how these tools enhance learning outcomes and possess the necessary skills and knowledge (Bates, 2022; Luo & Franklin, 2015).

The Ethiopian government is committed to integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into education to improve the quality and equity of education. Since teachers are the key to achieving this goal, the government has included ICT modules in teacher training to implement ICT applications in the classroom. However, implementation of the business education curriculum has fallen short of the government's expectations (Jang, 2020). The New Ethiopia Education Development Roadmap was developed in 2018 (2018-2030) (Tirussew *et al*., 2018). The document contains many revisions and suggestions for changes in education. The report states that ICT is one of the cross-cutting areas often neglected by education. The report on the use of ICT in teacher training and development shows that prospective teachers need to be trained not only in using computers but also in creating quality curriculum using technology-enhanced data. According to the New Ethiopia Education Development Roadmap, both student teachers and teachers should have access to ICT infrastructure.

Some international and local studies were conducted in digital areas. For instance, in a local context, Debela (2019) conducted a study on the challenge of ICT at Haramaya University, and he found that a lack of budget for equipping technology resources, and that teachers were reluctant to use technology. Mihireteab *et al*. (2022) also carried out a study on the effects of information communication technology-assisted teaching training on English language teachers' pedagogical knowledge and English language proficiency. They found that training in ICT had a positive effect on teachers' pedagogical knowledge and language proficiency. Jang (2020) also conducted a study on teachers' beliefs and practices of ICT use in secondary schools in Addis Ababa, and found that teachers had a positive perception about the implementation of ICT. But they could not translate into practice in the classroom. Abera (2013) also conducted a study on

plasma-based instruction in Ethiopia. His study showed that teachers' awareness of ICT needs to be prioritized before implementation of it.

International studies were also conducted. For example, Voogt and Roblin (2012) analyzed various international frameworks for 21st century competencies, providing insights into the skills and competencies teachers need to possess in the digital age. Ertmer *et al*. (2007) studied the practice and challenges of using technology, and identified that the key factors influencing successful technology integration were teacher beliefs, professional development, and classroom management strategies. In addition to this, Radianti et al., (2006) conducted on the technological pedagogical content knowledge. Their study found the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) as a framework, which emphasizes the integration of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge in teaching. Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) studied teacher technology change on how knowledge, confidence, beliefs, and culture intersect. The results of their study explored the complex relationship between teachers' knowledge, confidence, beliefs, and their willingness to adopt technology in the classroom. Archambault and Crippen (2009) also investigated the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) of K-12 online distance educators and highlighted that the unique challenges and competencies required for teaching in online environments.

The world nowadays becomes one village because of the advancement of technology. The global COVID-19 pandemic has also created interest in digital pedagogy. The increasing need for distance education is another reason (Joanna, 2023). Moreover, Ethiopian government encourages the integration technology in higher education (Adam, 2012). Ethiopian government encourages the integration of technology in education. Therefore, the study on the practices and challenges of digital pedagogy in language education should be studied. It is important to study teachers' orientation of digital pedagogy, their integration towards digital pedagogy in teaching English and their digital pedagogical competencies in teaching EFL. The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' practice and challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in the Case of Ambo University Postgraduate Classes, Oromia, Ethiopia.

1.1.Theoretical Framework of the Study

The theoretical framework in research refers to the principles or process theories that guide research design, data collection, and analysis. It provides a lens through which researchers can

interpret their findings and relate them to existing knowledge in the field (Creswell, 2012). In the context of studying the integration of digital pedagogy in an EFL classroom, the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) is a widely recognized theoretical framework that can be applied to study the integration of digital pedagogy in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom. UTAUT was developed by Venkatesh *et al*. (2003) as an extension of previous technology acceptance models, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of users' acceptance and use of technology. Another perspective used as a theoretical framework in this study is pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK). TPACK is a theoretical framework that addresses the interaction between technology, pedagogy, and content in education. It was developed by Radianti *et al*. (2006) as a concept to understand the effective use of technology in teaching. TPACK aimed at encouraging and supporting effective integration of digital technology. It also states that digital technology cannot be implemented without understanding the relationship among pedagogy, technology and content (Doering *et al*. 2009). This study concerned with instructors' competencies of technology and pedagogy. Therefore, this theory provides a lens for examining how teachers integrate digital tools in ways that align with their pedagogical goals and subject-specific content (Sarjoni *et al*., 2019).

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Research Design

Descriptive survey research was chosen because it helps the researcher to describe the current status of the study area and gather adequate information from many people. Descriptive survey research type was particularly used when one needs to understand some particular information and describe the characteristics of a particular individual, group or situations (Best & Kahn, 2006). Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used collect required in this study. The researcher believes that mixed method is appropriate to investigate teachers' pedagogical orientation and integration of digital pedagogy and their digital pedagogical competencies in teaching EFL, and the challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in teaching EFL, a mixed-methods research design could be used. Mixed method uses both quantitative and qualitative data (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, the researcher preferred to use mixed-method design so as to collect the quantitative and qualitative data during the study and integrated the information in the interpretation of the overall results.

2.2 Participants and sources of the study

The study was conducted in Ambo University postgraduate classes. The participants of the study were instructors of English language and Literature. The data were gathered from primary and secondary sources. The primary sources for the study of the teachers' integration of digital pedagogy in Teaching English as a Foreign Language were collected from teachers in the academic year 2023, whereas the secondary sources were the documents from the written sources from electronics and non-electronics. Among the total of 40, half (20) of them were selected to fill out questionnaires and four instructors participated in the interview.

2.3 Sampling and sampling techniques

Different sampling techniques were used in this study. For instance, Ambo University was selected by using convenience sampling techniques. This sampling was chosen because the researcher can easily select participants of this study based on their relative ease of access (Kumar, 1996). This means the preparatory school's geographical nearness and accessibility to the researcher was considered in choosing the study area (Dornyei, 2007). Half of instructors filled questionnaires by using quota sampling techniques and four instructors (assistant professors and above) were participated on interview by using availability sampling techniques.

2.4 Methods of data collection

To gather the necessary data from the sample participants, three types of data gathering instruments were used. These were questionnaires, interview and classroom observation because the researcher believed that data gathering using these instruments was more important to obtain valid and reliable information and to cross validate the instruments. Questionnaires are considered as quantitative data gathering tool, and classroom observation and interviews are considered as qualitative data gathering tools.

Questionnaires

Questionnaire is the heart of descriptive operation (Kothari, 2004). Questionnaires in this study were used to collect data about teachers' pedagogical orientation about digital pedagogy in teaching EFL, teachers' integration of digital pedagogical practice in teaching EFL, teachers' digital pedagogical competencies in teaching EFL, and in the challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in teaching EFL. Close-ended questions were prepared and distributed to instructors.

The open-ended enables the subjects to provide their ideas freely. By using close-ended questions, one can gather multiple data from multiple respondents in a short time. In this study, a four items Likert scale category was prepared and distributed. All types of questionnaires having related items were designed for instructors on the basis of review of literature and research problem.

Interviews

As stated earlier, interview was used to supplement the data collected using questionnaires. This means it was crosschecked the survey results of questionnaires. Semi-structured interview was employed since it is used to achieve an in-depth understanding that is best communicated through detailed examples and rich narratives employed by participants of the study (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The interview questions were used to explore in more depth teachers' practice of digital pedagogy, competencies and challenges related to integrating digital technologies in EFL teaching. The interview was conducted on a one-on-one basis. Semi-structured interviews with four instructors were conducted. Sufficient time was given for each interviewee. The interview was conducted at Ambo University English Language Laboratory. Moreover, participants were requested to provide their honest responses. Instead of using their names in interview analyses, codes were used and analyzed using the codes (I1, I2, I3 and, I4). All the interview processes were tape-recorded so that their responses were not lost for further analysis.

Classroom observations

Classroom observations were conducted with four instructors selected from those participated in the interview. Instructors' actual classroom practices to understand how they integrate digital tools and resources into their English language teaching were observed in this study. The observations were used to collect data on teachers' practice of use of digital pedagogy in EFL teaching, including the types of technologies used and the frequency and effectiveness of their use. The selected instructors were observed twice to observe their actual classroom practices to understand how they and integration of digital tools and resources into their English language teaching.

Reliability of data gathering instruments

Research validity and reliability should be the concern of the whole process of research. Reliability has to do with the test yield consistency result, while validity is whether the test measures what it designed for. Test consistency can be measured using different strategies, such as test-retest reliability, internal consistency reliability, parallel form reliability, split-half reliability, and inter-rater reliability (Green, 2016). The research instruments reliabilities were also checked for this study. Cronbach's Alpha is the most popular method of examining internal consistency reliability. If an instrument has little errors, it is reliable and if it has a great amount of errors, it is unreliable (Cohen *et al*., 2007). The reliability coefficient ranges from .00 to .99 for a completely unreliable test (although technically it can dip below 0), and 1 for a completely reliable test. Alpha coefficient values above 0.7 are considered acceptable, and values above 0.8 are considered to reflect good test reliability (Cohen *et al*., 2007). The reliability coefficient of the survey in this study was 0.72, which indicated that the tools were reliable to measure the intended objectives.

Validity of data gathering instruments

The whole research validity can be research soundness (internal validity), and the findings' generalizability beyond the samples of the study or external validity (Dorneyei, 2007). Efforts were made to produce both valid and reliable quantitative data collection instruments. For instance, in order to ensure practice of digital pedagogy, competencies and challenges questionnaires face and content validities, the questions were checked by instructors at Ambo University who were offering major English courses. Thus, the validity of the instrument was ensured by using judgmental validation by a committee of experts that was made by the researcher. They agreed that the questions were suitable to evaluate the integration of digital Pedagogy in teaching English language.

For pilot testing, the research instruments were administrated among the subjects other than the samples of the study. The judgmental validation committee were specifically asked to comment on aspects of any question/s were/was in any way unclear or misleading. All of the research instruments were refined in the light in the results of the pilot testing. The piloting included technical matters like clarity, layout, and appearance, timing, length, ease/difficulty, questions, identifying redundancies (Cohen *et al*., 2007). In conducting an interview, the researcher's personality, tone of voice, or emphasis within a sentence can influence the participants'

responses (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). In this study, therefore, interview questions were carefully piloted. The interview questions were given to the experts in order to determine the extent to which they suit the targeted skills, duration, and difficulty level of the interview. Then, some modifications were made on a few of the items based on feedback from the experts, before administering the interview. According to Wellington (2000), before constructing the interview to gather data for the problem under investigation, the researcher needs to check its protocol.

Methods of data analyses

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected to achieve the objectives of the study. Questionnaires were main tool for gathering data for the study. It used to achieve all objectives of the study, and interview was used to supplement the data collected through the questionnaires. To analyze quantitative data, descriptive statistics are used. Descriptive statistics helps us to describe, classify and summarize numerical data in a meaningful way. It does not allow us to make conclusions beyond the data regarding any hypotheses we might have (Cooksey, 2020). They allow us to observe the distribution of our data or the spread of the marks. We use both measures of central tendency and measures of spread to describe data. Central tendency measures (are mode, median, and mean) describes the central position of a frequency distribution for a group of data. The interview results were analyzed using summarization and quotation. Important ideas were selected based on the purpose of the study. Oral responses of all of the interviewees were transcribed word to word deductively.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Background information of the respondents

Among the 20 instructors participated in the study, 90% of the respondents are male and 10% are female. Corning their teaching experiences, 40% of them taught English 8 years, and 35% of them had 7-year experience of teaching English. However, 25 of them taught English for 5 years. This implies that the instructors had enough teaching experiences to integrate digital pedagogy in EFL classroom. When it comes to their educational qualifications, 80% of them were MA holders, whereas 20% of them had PhD in teaching English as a Foreign Language (see Table 1).

Table 1. Gender, experiences and educational qualifications of the respondents

Background information			**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**
Sex		Male	18	90	90
		Female	2	10	10
		Total	20	100.0	100.0
Experience	5-10	8	40	40	
	10-15	7	35	35	
	15-20	5	25	25	
	Total	20	100	100	
Educational qualifications		MA	16	80	80
		PhD	4	20	20
		Total	20	100	100

3.2 Challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in EFL classroom

As it can be seen Table 2, access to technological infrastructures (mean of 3.44), digital Literacy Skills (3.48) and technological barriers (3.43) were the major challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in EFL classroom. Students' lack of motivation or skills, with the mean of 3.24 and lack of pedagogical training and support, with the mean of 3.28 and lack of funding, with mean of 3.11 can be considered as the challenges. However, Cultural and linguistic barriers (mean of 1.91), resistance to change (1.83) and time constraints (1.79) were considered as less challenges in integrating digital pedagogy in EFL classroom. Therefore, it can be interpreted that digital literacy skills, access to technological infrastructures, technological barriers, students' lack of skills, and a lack of pedagogical training and support were challenges that hindered the practice of integrating digital pedagogy in the EFL.

3.3 Analyses of instructors' digital pedagogical competencies

Instructors' digital pedagogical competencies refer to their knowledge and skills related to effectively integrating digital technologies into teaching and learning processes (From, 2017). Instructors' digital competencies were measured using I could not do this (1), I would struggle to do this on my own (2), I could do this with a bit of effort (3) and I could do this easily (4).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics on the challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in EFL classroom

	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Technological barriers	3.43	0.93
2	Time constraints	1.79	0.64
3	Resistance to change	1.83	0.64
4	Lack of pedagogical training and support	3.28	0.87
5	Cultural and linguistic barriers	1.91	1.07
6	Students' lack of skills	3.24	0.83
7	Digital Literacy Skills	3.48	0.70
8	Access to technological infrastructures	3.44	0.86
9	Lack of funding and resources	3.11	0.81

Digital pedagogical competence (DPC) is a skill helps teachers to integrate digital technologies into teaching. According Kiryakova and Kozhuharova (2024), such competencies should be integrated into the regular practice of teaching. As it can be seen in Table 3, instructors' digital pedagogical competency was in online communication and collaboration, with the mean score of 3.87. Instructors are expected to be proficient in using digital platforms and tools for collaboration and communication, which includes facilitating online discussions, group projects, and virtual collaborations. Next to this, pedagogical knowledge (mean of 3.79), digital assessment and feedback (mean of 3.24) and curriculum integration (mean score of 3.13). Digital assessment is ability to use digital tools and platforms to design and administer assessments, provide timely feedback, and track student progress. However, instructors were less competent in technological proficiency (mean score of 2.29), digital content creation (mean score of 2.94), pedagogical innovation (mean score of 2.35), digital citizenship and online safety (mean score of 2.14), technological literacy (mean score of 2.44). The findings of the study showed that instructors were less proficient in basic technological literacy skills, including proficiency in using computers, operating systems, software applications, and digital tools relevant to their teaching English context. In addition to this, they were not able to promote responsible digital citizenship among their students, including ethical and safe use of technology, digital etiquette, and awareness of online risks and privacy concerns. Nevertheless, instructors could easily

integrate digital technologies into the curriculum, aligning digital activities and resources with learning outcomes and subject-specific goals.

Table 3. Instructors' digital pedagogical competencies

	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Technological proficiency	2.29	2.86
2	Digital content creation	2.94	4.12
3	Online communication and collaboration	3.89	4.02
4	Pedagogical innovation	2.35	3.73
5	Digital Citizenship and Online Safety	2.14	4.02
6	Technological Literacy	2.44	3.89
7	Pedagogical Knowledge	3.79	3.69
8	Curriculum Integration	3.13	2.73
9	Digital Assessment and Feedback	3.24	3.62

3.4 Instructors' practices of digital pedagogy

Some digital tools and platforms that instructors can use to enhance their teaching practices are presented in Table 4. Accordingly, instructors' practice of digital pedagogy was very low. However, in the first and second items, their use of system learning management was mean of 3.01, and their use a video conferencing tool was 3.41. This means the instructors sometimes practices a learning management system was with a mean score of 3.01 and a video conferencing as digital tools and platforms. Learning management systems is platforms like Blackboard, Canvas, and Moodle which allow instructors to manage and deliver course content, communicate with students, and administer assessments and assignments. 2. Video conferencing tools such as Zoom, Google Meet, and Microsoft Teams allow for synchronous virtual instruction and facilitate communication and collaboration among students and teachers (Alias & Zainuddin, 2005).

Table 4 also showed that instructors nearly practice interactive learning activities, with the mean value of 2.99. This is incorporating interactive learning activities, such as quizzes, simulations, and virtual labs, to promote active learning and engagement in language. This can also provide opportunities for immediate feedback to students. As stated in Table 4, the instructors rarely practiced collaboration by using digital tools and platforms to facilitate collaboration and

teamwork among students. This can include group projects, online discussion forums, and virtual study groups.

The mean value of using social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram was 2.01. This implies that the instructors rarely used social media platforms. However, instructors can use them to promote communication and collaboration among students and to learn language and share educational resources and updates. Additionally, incorporate multimedia contents like videos, images, and an audio recording is important to make learning more language engaging and interactive. The result of this study showed that instructors integrate these contents sometimes, with the mean value of 3.03. In item No.4, instructors' practice of digital content creation tools was very low, with a mean score of 1.46. Digital content creation tools like screencast-O-Matic, Canva, and Audacity allow instructors to create and curate multimedia content that can be used to supplement and enhance course materials for learning English.

Instructors' use of virtual and augmented reality tools in the EFL classroom was very low (mean score of 1.73). Virtual and augmented reality tools like Google Expeditions, Nearpod, and Merge Cube creates immersive and interactive learning experiences that can enhance students' understanding and engagement with course materials in learning English language. In as similar way, instructors' use of educational apps and games in EFL classroom, with the mean score of 1.64 was very low. This implies that Quizlet and Kahoot as educational and game application were not applied in EFL classrooms. However, they can be used as assessment and reporting tools to create interactive and educational experiences in language teaching. Finally, in the item 8 in table 4, the instructors' practice of online assessment tools like Google Forms, Formative, and Quizizz to create and administer assessments, and to evaluate student learning outcomes in EFL classroom (mean score of 1.80) was very low.

3.5 Analyses of interview

An interview was conducted with instructors to gather in-depth information about their practices, and strategies related to digital pedagogy integration. Four instructors who teach postgraduate TEFL classes were interviewed in order to collect data about instructors' practices of digital pedagogical, their competencies of digital pedagogy and challenges they face when practices digital pedagogy in EFL classroom.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics of instructors' practices of digital Pedagogy

	Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I use Learning Management Systems platforms in EFL classroom	3.01	.69
2	I use video conferencing tools in EFL classroom	3.47	.57
3	I use educational apps and games in EFL classroom	1.64	.63
4	I use digital content creation tools in EFL classroom	1.46	.64
5	I use social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram	2.01	.82
6	I use virtual and augmented reality tools in EFL classroom	1.73	.60
7	I encourage collaboration to use digital tools and platforms to facilitate collaboration and teamwork among students in EFL classroom	1.58	.60
8	I use Online assessment tools in EFL classroom	1.80	.76
9	Use interactive learning activities in EFL classroom	2.99	.63

The interview results indicated that a lack of appropriate digital technology for schools and a lack of commitment from educational officials and schools were challenges hindering the integration of digital pedagogy in language education. All of them complained about lack of resources, infrastructures, high quality hardware and software. For instance, I3 said, ''*There is limited technological infrastructures that hinder integration of digital pedagogy in teaching English*.'' In a similar way, I4 reported as, ''*Integrating digital pedagogy often requires additional, preparation and time*. In addition to this, *time is needed to familiarize ourselves with new technologies, design digital learning activities, and provide ongoing support to students*.'' According to another instructor, I1, one of the challenges of integrating digital pedagogy is that all students do not have equal opportunities to benefit from digital learning experiences since all of them cannot buy new technologies.

The interview result indicated that a lack of appropriate digital technology for school and a lack of commitment from educational officials and school were challenges hindered tee integration of digital pedagogy in language education. This finding is in line with local previous studies that found there was lacks of coordination among education officials to fulfill infrastructure of technologies (Gizealew & Sisay, 2019). Moreover, the result obtained through the interview also showed that there was lack of policy that guide the implementation of digital pedagogy in higher education.

All interviewed teachers argued that they did not attend any digital pedagogy in their previous studies as students and as instructors. However, instructors' pedagogical orientation towards digital pedagogy can influence the type and extent of professional development they require. Conversely, teachers with limited orientation may require foundational training to build their confidence and competence in incorporating digital pedagogy into their teaching practice.

3.6 Analyses of Classroom Observation

All instructors used traditional ways of teaching English. None of teachers practiced interactive multimedia materials like videos, audio recordings, and online simulations, to provide authentic language input and engage students in meaningful language activities. Observation checklist showed that most of the instructors used LCD Projectors during their lectures. Some of them used email to send their students. The result obtained from questionnaires indicated that instructors sometimes use digital pedagogy in classroom. However, none of them practiced online digital platforms. The researcher observed some students use mobile and tablets dictionaries. Online quizzes, digital portfolios, and automated assessment tools were not practiced by the instructors.

As was observed, there were no digital learning activities are accessible to all students, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. Instructors may include designing activities that are responsive to different learning styles and preferences. Moreover, postgraduate instructors can foster a sense of community among students and teachers in virtual learning environments. None of the observed instructors did not include using social media platforms to promote communication and collaboration, as well as providing opportunities for virtual office hours and one-on-one meetings in their EFL classroom.

4. DISCUSSIONS

Technology has the potential to transform learning and provide new ways for students to immerse themselves in learning and engage with the curriculum (Guray & Kısmet, 2023). This study investigated Instructors' practice and challenges of integrating of digital pedagogy in Teaching English as a Foreign Language in the Case of Ambo University Postgraduate Classes. Digital tools and platforms can enhance teaching practices by providing new opportunities for communication, collaboration, and engagement with course materials. It is important for educators to select tools and platforms that align with their teaching goals and objectives, and

that support the needs and abilities of their students. The finding of this study indicated that digital pedagogy was less integrated into EFL classroom in Ambo University. The previous studies also supported that digital pedagogy was less integrated into EFL classroom (e.g. Radianti et al., 2006). In a similar way, teachers' practice of ICT in education was unsatisfactory (Antene & Tesfaye, 2020).

The findings of this study indicated lack of instructors' access to technology, lack of training in practice of digital pedagogy; digital literacy, lack of funding for technology barriers and students' skills of using technology were challenges hindered that practice of integrating digital pedagogy in the EFL classroom. This study identified that lack of resources was one challenge ta affect the practice of digital pedagogy. Becta (2004) also found that lack of access to ICT resources such as poor quality hardware and software were challenges in integration of digital pedagogy in classroom. Similar to current study, previous studies found that instructors' lack of training, access to technological infrastructures and technological barriers were challenges in integration of digital pedagogy in teaching English Language as a Foreign Language al college levels (Lawerence et.,2020). Similar to current study, previous international studies identified that lack of skills in technology affected the integration of digital pedagogy (Toprakci, 2006). According to Padmavathi (2017), the success of digital pedagogy integration depends on the instructors' competences in digital pedagogy

Instructors' digital pedagogical competency was in online communication and collaboration, with the mean score of 3.87. Teachers should be proficient in using digital platforms and tools for collaboration, communication, and fostering interaction among students. This includes facilitating online discussions, group projects, and virtual collaborations.

Components of active and interactive learning through learning by doing and social learning (group learning/discussion in learning groups). Quizlet and Kahoot allow students to learn through experience and group discussions. Previous study explained the advantages of Quizlet and Kahoot applications in enabling dialogue and discussion through learning by doing and learning by organizing (E.g. Graham, 2015). The result of this study also similar with previous local and international studies. For instance, lack of internet (Temtim, 2017), limited access to the internet and ICT by teachers (Hussein, 2018), low proficiency in the use of ICT (Temechegn, 2011), general lack of knowledge about technology in teaching and learning,

inadequate training curriculum that include digital technologies (Berhanu, 2016) as challenges of digital pedagogy implementation.

Interview result indicated that lack of appropriate digital technology for school and lack of commitment from educational officials and school were challenges hindered tee integration of digital pedagogy in language education. This result is similar with Kim and Gebeyehu's (2014) study. Previous study also supported that low level of literacy of teachers, school directors and education offices (e.g. Teshome, 2017). According to Gizealew and Sisay (2019), digital literacy composed of use, digital media production, processing of information, creating and sharing of knowledge through digital technologies. The finding of this study is similar with previous study in that instructors did not have enough training about digital technology during the in-service or pre-service training. For example, Jang (2020) found that in teachers were not satisfied with their teachers' teaching methods as a result of lack courses about digital pedagogy when they were students or after they joined their career. Participants felt that assessment and implementation as part of teacher training was not designed to support digital pedagogy applications. This led them that their low practices of digital pedagogy are affected by the acquisition of digital pedagogy knowledge.

5. CONCLUSION

The study indicated that instructors' digital pedagogical competency was in online communication and collaboration, pedagogical knowledge, digital assessment and feedback, and curriculum integration was good. However, instructors were less competent in technological proficiency, digital content creation, pedagogical innovation, digital citizenship and online safety and technological literacy. The findings of the study showed that instructors were less proficient in basic technological literacy skills, including proficiency in using computers, operating systems, software applications, and digital tools relevant to their teaching English context. In addition to this, they were not able to promote responsible digital citizenship among their students, including ethical and safe use of technology, digital etiquette, and awareness of online risks and privacy concerns. Nevertheless, instructors could easily integrate digital technologies into the curriculum, aligning digital activities and resources with learning outcomes and subject-specific goals.

Instructors' practice of digital content creation tools, the use of virtual and augmented reality tools in the EFL classroom, the instructors' use of educational apps and games in the EFL

classroom and the instructors' practice of online assessment tools like Google Forms, Formative, and Quizizz to create and administer assessments, and evaluate student learning outcomes in EFL classroom were very low. Findings of this study also showed that access to technological infrastructures, digital Literacy Skills, technological barriers, students' lack of motivation or skills, a lack of pedagogical training and support and a lack of funding were major challenges of integrating digital pedagogy in EFL classroom. Conversely, teachers with limited orientation may require foundational training to build their confidence and competence in incorporating digital pedagogy into their teaching practice.

The results of this study showed that there was lack of technologies to practice digital pedagogy in English Language classroom. Ambo University and educational institutions should strive to provide adequate access to technology, including computers, tablets, and internet connectivity. This may involve securing funding, seeking partnerships with technology providers, or exploring community resources. The university should also offer comprehensive and ongoing professional development programs for EFL instructors to enhance their digital literacy skills and pedagogical knowledge. Training should focus on effective integration strategies, selecting appropriate digital tools, and addressing potential challenges.

In this study, it was found that lack of resource was one the main challenges that hinders the digital pedagogy integration into EFL classroom. Therefore, education institutions and educational policymakers can utilize the findings to allocate resources for the development and acquisition of digital tools and resources that are most relevant and beneficial to English language instruction.

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