LLT Journal, e-ISSN 2579-9533, p-ISSN 1410-7201, Vol. 24, No. 1, October 2021

LLT Journal: A Journal on Language and Language Teaching
http://e-journal.usd.ac.id/index.php/LLT
Sanata Dharma University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

THE USE OF E-RESOURCES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS ENGLISH TEACHING MATERIALS

Diah Royani Meisani
Universitas Brawijaya, Indonesia
correspondence: meisani_diah.r@ub.ac.id
DOI: 10.24071/llt.v24i1.3080
received 4 February 2021; accepted 31 October 2021

Abstract
As internet technology has become more influential and cultured, online or e-resources are nowadays present as alternatives for teaching materials. The resources themselves play an important role in lesson planning, instruction delivery, and take a part in determining the learning achievement. This study was conducted to investigate the forces that drive elementary school English teachers (N = 178) in utilizing online teaching materials together with the benefits and challenges they faced in using them. From the questionnaire, it was revealed that almost all respondents used and benefited from online resources taken from Google, YouTube, and other search engines. Further investigation through interviews revealed prevalent responses on e-learning materials utilization that are categorized as follows: accessibility, practicality, authenticity, and variety. Other benefits, such as the features of online resources that positively attract young learners in foreign language learning are meaningfully advantageous as they improve students' learning engagement (SLE). These findings support evidence for e-learning resources as teaching materials for overcoming the shortage of teaching guidelines and materials in English for Young Learners (EYL) classes. Teachers' responses towards the challenges in using this type of material lead to the implication that schools and other related stakeholders should take serious concerns to equip EYL teachers with professional development or in-service training, particularly in teaching material development and online resources integration.

Keywords: E-learning resources; English for Young Learners; online materials

Introduction
The phenomena of offering English as a foreign language since the primary level occurs in many countries, including Indonesia. This trend is evidently encouraged by the economic globalization that has drawn the attention of not only educators, but also policy-makers to prepare English instruction for students since in the early grades (Tseng, 2014). With the intentions to introduce English as an international language as well as to motivate the young learners to learn a foreign language, English has thus been taught in many Indonesian elementary schools as

a non-compulsory subject and included as one of the main subjects at the secondary level.

With its status as an elective subject where the implementation is a bottom-up policy (Alwasilah, 2013), the English language teaching (ELT) at the primary school level faces numerous challenges, particularly dealing with the curriculum, teacher and teaching resources (Hamied, 2010; Musthafa, 2010; Setiasih, 2012). The unclear instructions might possibly delude English teachers in undertaking the teaching and learning activities. As the blueprints are not clearly formulated, teachers of English at this level seem to encounter unavoidable impedes in conducting the class, so that the implementation of English teaching is considered to be based on teachers' own beliefs and pretension. Accordingly, many teachers spend most of the allocated time for learning English to assign the students to do the exercises in the workbook. Similar to what occurs in Japanese elementary schools that homeroom teachers are the ones who are responsible for conducting English teaching activities (Musthafa, 2010), Indonesian teachers of English are mostly homeroom teachers who do not have the English education background. Most of them are also assigned to teach other subjects besides English (Butler & Takaechi, 2008).

Concerning the textbooks, while teaching and learning materials for other subjects are available online where teachers and students can download the files of the book for free at the website address www.bse.kemdikbud.go.id., the government does not provide English teaching materials at this level. In fact, Zein's (2017) findings show that teachers believed that the most imperative policy expected from the government is on the materials used for teaching. Although these conditions may actually bring positive impacts to teachers to be explorative and creative in conducting the class (Harmer, 2007; Thomlinson, 2003), he stated that for young learner English teachers, selecting and developing learning materials are not an easy task, and consequently they require more applied knowledge rather than theoretical one as proposed by the curriculum (Butler & Takaechi, 2008).

As resources teachers use to deliver instruction play important role in supporting student learning, structuring the lesson, as well as determining the success of teaching and learning process, this present study was aimed at investigating how teachers of English in elementary school reacted to the lack of English teaching materials. It is then related to the growing trend of internet use as a part of the development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) which expands its usage to all side of human-like, including business, industry, social relation, and education (Yanti et al., 2018).

Rich literature found out that online sources are well utilized for teaching and learning materials nowadays (Kain & Moukarzel, 2018). This has led the present study to explore whether the English teachers in the elementary school also took advantages of using Google or other search engines for finding supporting materials for delivering instruction in their English classes. Regarding this, the current research was then explored through three questions: 1) how popular are e-learning resources used for teaching English for Young Learners (TEYL) ?, 2)

what are the forces that drive teachers to use online teaching materials?, and 3) what are the challenges the teachers face in utilizing the online materials?

EYL Teaching Materials

The essential roles of materials in the teaching and learning process have been well documented in many studies as they act as lesson structure that teachers and students depend on to conduct the lesson (Thomlinson, 2003; Zhang, 2018). Ghosn (2019) defines materials as teaching aids that include coursebooks and any supplementary materials such as workbooks, flashcards, posters, cassettes, CD-ROMs, videos, dictionaries, worksheets and supplementary.

As the growing of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the changes and developments it brings, resources of knowledge and information are not only available in print, but also online where people can access anywhere and anytime as long as internet connection is obtainable. Echoing Bull and Ma (2001), to help and improve language learning, teachers usually use some forms of technology which provide unlimited resources to language learners. Shyamlee and Phil (2012) lend support by pointing out that multimedia technology plays a encouraging role in upholding activities and initiatives of student and teaching effect in English class. As the innovations in technology are closely connected with the growth of English, the use of multimedia technology may open the avenues to colourful and stimulating teaching and learning process. With the platform for universal information accessibility that the internet provides, people worldwide, including teachers, students, and even parents are able to access to huge amounts of information and a number of free application software for teaching and learning materials (Ugwu & Orsu, 2017).

Online resources themselves are defined as any resources that can be accessed through internet and World Wide Web (Rahimi & Bayat, 2015). Kumar (2019) goes along by stating that any support software available online can also be considered a resource. Thus, materials, notes, timetables, notices and the like, that are available online for reading are among those that can be called online resources or e-resources. Ghosn (2019) and Arnold and Rixon (2008) explicitly mention among the most popular language learning applications for children offered by https://elearn- ingindustry.com. Teachers can also access various young learners' materials from the web-based resources, like https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org, www.learninggamesforkids.com and www. eslgamesplus.com.

Compared to printed version, many studies have documented the plusses of using electronic resources, such as easy and quick access, and the ability to share, port, edit and search. One of the studies exposing the advantages of using e-sources as teaching and learning materials is conducted by Thienthong and Lian (2014). Involving 70 Thai EFL teachers in north-eastern Thailand, the results showed that Google, YouTube, and Facebook were widely used resources by language teachers to support teaching, encourage autonomous learning, and enhance communication. From the interviews, it was known that some teachers were still anxious about integrating technology into teaching due to the lack of technical knowledge and skills. Focusing on the use of e-resources by young learners, Schuh and Farrel (2006) conducted a study investigating whether elementary school students made better achievement in writing tasks when using

electronic resources. The findings revealed that there was no significant difference among students who used print resources, electronic resources via the Internet, or both types of resources. Nevertheless, it was interesting to know that students preferred using internet for finding resources to printed ones because it was easier and fun so that students were willing to put more efforts into it.

In the context of providing the instructional materials for young learners, their characteristics that have not yet developed literacy in their first language (L1) and have different levels of linguistic development should be taken into account. Another important consideration is the level of teacher qualifications and experience in teaching young learners. Both of the mentioned points take part in determining the success of EYL teaching and learning (Ghosn, 2019).

Method

As defined previously, the present study was conducted to explore the popularity of e-learning resources in TEYL practices, the forces that encourage teachers to use this type of materials, and the challenges they face in utilizing them for teaching young learners English. As expounded by Swedberg (2018), an exploratory study is fundamentally administered for two reasons. They are to increase the knowledge of a topic which is not intensively investigated and to generate recent and interesting hypothesis about a particular existing topic. The uses of e-learning materials in the English teaching and learning practices may have been studied by numbers of researchers. However, a general lack of knowledge about how prevalent these materials in TEYL constituted a reason for using an exploratory research design. There was also a need to know more about teachers' motivation as well as encounters in using the materials.

Participants

The present exploratory research was conducted in a selected municipality in East Java, Indonesia. There were 274 elementary schools in the city, including public and private, which were under the supervision of Regional Office of Education. The participants of the study were 178 teachers who were teaching English subject in the elementary schools. This number of teachers were gained through the preliminary survey which found that not all elementary schools offered English subject and not all respondents agreed to participate in the study.

From the questionnaire, the demographics of the teacher participants show that females participants dominated with 150 respondents (84.3%) and 28 others (15.7%) were males. A 22-year-old teacher was the youngest and the oldest was aged 50. The rest varied within those range of age, but were controlled by the participants with the age of 30s. Teacher's educational backgrounds were heterogeneous. The responses were categorized into five groups. They were Bachelor Degree (S-1) in English Education (46.07%), S-1 in English (Literature/Linguistics) (22.47%), S-1 in Elementary Education (15.19%), S-1 in other major (7.31%), and the rest of the participants had graduated from Master Degree (1.1.3%).

Similar to teachers' educational background, their employment status was also varied. Most of the total respondents (73.60%) were non-permanent teachers

who taught in public elementary schools. Others who taught in the private schools were permanent teachers (16.29%). Only small number of the teachers reposted that were civil servants (3.37%).

Instruments

After the Regional Office of Education of the City that supervised the elementary schools participated in this study approved the survey, the paper-based questionnaires were handed out to the participants who were the English teachers. The questionnaire contained three themes, namely the agreement to be the participant of the study, personal particular (gender, age, educational background, and employment status), and teacher's experiences in using online teaching materials. The participants were given one week to return the paper to the head of school group. Each school group usually consisted of 10 to 12 schools which were located within the same sub-district. Further investigation of the underlying reasons of the use of E-learning resources and the challenges in using them was carried out through semi-structured interviews with five random participants.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire administered in the present study was adapted from the preceding research (Mardiani, 2011). Instrument validation was undertaken by involving two experts majoring English Education and English for Young Learners (EYL). After receiving the comments and suggestions from the experts, adjustments were made by amending the ambiguous questions, rephrasing the complex items and eliminating the ineffective and non-functioning questions. Data that were collected from the questionnaires were then inputted in Google Form. This free web-based application which is used to create forms for data collection purposes was selected to analyze the data as it provides a response sheet that loads and displays data in diagrams and graphics, so that trends can be easily seen. Additionally, interviews were conducted to explore teachers' perceptions on e-learning use, specifically the advantages and the encounters they faced. The data gathered from the interviews were the interview transcripts which were analyzed by re-reading and dissecting the transcripts to find the themes.

Findings and Discussion

There were 178 English teachers in elementary schools in the research site who responded to the questionnaire particularly asking the teaching materials that they used for teaching English for Young Learners (EYL) as guidance was not provided by both local and central government when the current Indonesian national curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, was implemented.

The data on the teaching resources that the teacher respondents used are categorized into four groups: 1) existing teaching resources used when prior curriculum was implemented, like handbook and workbook provided by the local government, 2) teaching resources for carrying particular curriculums, e.g., Cambridge curriculum, 3) school-modified teaching resources, and 4) teaching resources taken from online sources combined with the existing book. Further investigation was then undertaken to investigate the underlying reasons towards the use of the online resources as the number was dominant as shown in Figure 1.

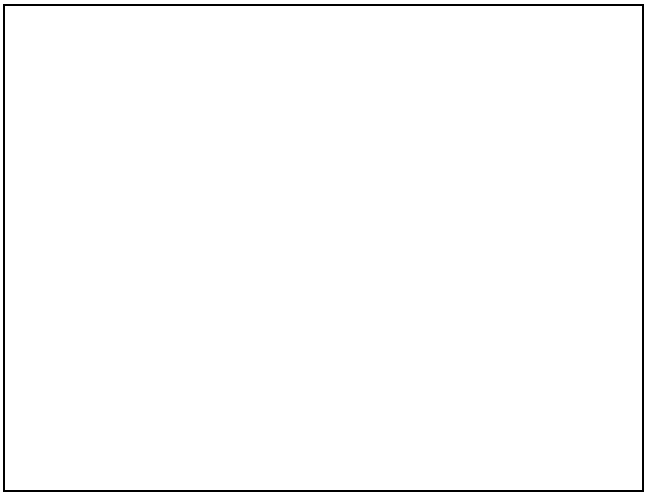


Figure 1. EYL Teaching Resources

Figure 1 displays that E-learning resources were famously used by teachers (91%). From the notes, it was known that these materials were combined with the printed ones. The findings also revealed that many of the teachers, especially the ones taught in the public schools admitted that they used the former teaching sources as the teaching roadmap. Not few of them even informed that the previous guidelines still could accommodate the students' English learning. The syllabus, the handbooks, the workbooks, and even question sheets for quizzes and tests used when the previous curriculum, the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP) was implemented were still useable. However, many reported that they supported those abovementioned materials with the updated ones taken from online sources, like: YouTube, BBC Learn English Kids, and other e-sources. On the other hands, some other schools, particularly the best accredited private schools, reported that as they carry on certain curricula, like Cambridge and school-developed curriculum, they tended to have up-to-date resources based on the requirements of the curriculum.

As indicated by the results, it proves that internet has become one of the most important guides for learning as it opens the avenues for virtual learning environment (VLE) in which tools required for conducting the class, such as grouping students, giving and submitting assignment, doing assessments and evaluation, and publishing students' work, are well-provided (Yanti et al., 2018). Other benefits cover accessibility and practicality. The following phrases stated by the respondents exemplify their viewpoints towards the use of online resources.

> (Teacher 1) *'We can select the materials that fit our learning objectives, support the printed materials we have with the audio and visuals we get online, and even edit them so that it improves our ICT skills. Often, the online materials I use for teaching also provide the lesson plan so it really helps me conduct the teaching and learning activities using those materials.*'

(Teacher 2) *'The online resources I usually use are authentic materials that are closely related to students' real life so that they are meaningful for students. As the materials are accessible, so it is easy to get by downloading the ones we choose thus enable us to prepare our teaching wherever we are.'*

(Teacher 3) *'I take YouTube video as a learning source because many videos on YouTube suit the topic learned in my classroom. Besides, it also provides the authentic language in use, like song, short movie, or talks (interview, talk show, etc.).'*

(Teacher 4) *'On the website, every text is completed with a series of pictures, both folktales (illustration) and personal blog (personal documentation). These pictures make the students, especially young learners, become interested in reading the text. Then, the students can also learn a lot from others' personal story, like the expression of sadness, happiness, madness, anger, etc. Besides, when reading other countries' folklore, they can also learn the culture revealed in the story.'*

(Teacher 5) *'The main benefit of serving online video in the classroom is the high students' interest in taking a part the classroom activity. They become more active in the discussion and they get excited when they are being chosen to review or to give opinion regarding the movie or song. Then, the students also not only learning the right pronunciation, but also the non-verbal language expression, in the interview or talk show. The students also learn a lot of new words and vocabulary which are quite strange for them or even they never hear previously.'*

From teachers' explicit opinion above, E-learning resources bring more advantages, not only limited to classroom-oriented activities. Besides being accessible, practical, acting as authentic materials, as well as providing more options, the teachers mentioned the presence of online resources stimulated students' learning engagement as they are interested in the lesson presented more interactively through online resources. A teacher also stated that the need for finding, designing, and modifying the materials improved his ICT skills progressively.

In spite of supporting the teaching and learning process and other advantages that online resources bring, challenges exist and may hinder teachers in integrating teaching to technology. Two teachers reported that technical problems covering the internet connection and teaching facilities can be challenging impediment as can be seen in the following example.

(Teacher 1) *'Technical problems always happen. When internet connection is unavailable while I am in the search of materials or in the middle of teaching activities, it is sometimes frustrating.'*

(Teacher 2) *'In my school, not all classes are equipped with an LCD projector and speaker.'*

Other hinders that teachers reported were dealing with technology-related knowledge and skills and the time allocated to make the materials more appropriate for teaching as shown in the extracts below.

(Teacher 1) *'I am not really good at using technology and this may lead to human errors when teaching with technology.'*

(Teacher 3) *'To produce good and appropriate teaching materials, I always edit the resources I get from the internet. The editing process can be so time consuming.'*

(Teacher 4) *'Well, even though there are a lot of suitable videos for the topics, somehow, the video includes inappropriate language, like swore words. Then, some music videos for the song also serve inappropriate action for children to watch. Many videos are created with a long duration so extra job is needed, like: edit it, cut it, or skip it, to the main part which is related to the topic.'*

As the learners that the participant teachers were dealing with were children, they also concerned about the appropriateness of the material contents. Selecting the ones for children may require some considerations regarding their age and the time span for learning (Hamied, 2010). The extracts below illustrate the teachers' voices.

(Teacher 2) *'Some articles contain incorrect information (hoax) and it may mislead the students also. Then, sometimes the length of the available article is too long and it may demotivate the students in reading.'*

(Teacher 5) *'Many contents served on the blog are inappropriate to be chosen as children learning sources. Then, the personal blog also contains "too personal" stuff which is not appropriate with the students' age.'*

Regarding the challenges mentioned above, school and other related stakeholders should support EYL teachers with in-service training related to the use of technology for teaching and material development besides providing the teaching facilities that can enhance the ELT practices and teachers' pedagogical use of technology.

Conclusion

As Information, Communication, and Technology (ICT) has continuously been growing, its presence contributes to better implementation of ELT practices, particularly related to teaching resources which are available online. The findings of the current study showed that the major participants have utilized online resources along with the printed version. Further investigation also captured that the existence of resources available online has brought benefits in terms of the accessibility, practicality, authenticity, and variety. Regarding the challenges, supports from school and related stakeholders are significant in providing the

facilities and professional development for teachers so that teachers' digital knowledge and skills can be enhanced and teaching with technology can be effectively conducted.

Acknowledgement

This research is fully funded by LPDP (Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education), Ministry of Finance, Republic of Indonesia.

References

Alwasilah, A. C. (2013). Policy on Foreign Language Education in Indonesia. *International Journal of Education*, *7*(1), pp. 1–19, 2013. https://doi.org/10.17509/ije.v7i1.5302

Arnold, W. & Rixon, S. (2008). Materials for Young Learners. In B. Tomlinson (Ed.) *English Language Learning Materials.* London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Buttler, Y. G. and Takaechi, A. (2008). Variables that Influence Elementary School Students' English Performance in Japan. *The Journal of Asia TEFL*, *5*(1), pp. 65-95. Retrieved on March 10, 2020, from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/e0fe/a8d2415f4de427e32bd34d0236b9e39b027e.pdf?_ga=2.26930237.1807811674.1582956882-572307371.1582956882

Ghosn, I. (2019). Materials for Early Language Learning. In S. Garton & F. Copland (Eds.). *The Routledge Handbook of Teaching English to Young Learners* (pp. 374-388). New York: Routledge.

Hamied, F. A. (2010). EFL Assessment in Indonesia: National Exams and Quality Education. In B. Spolsky & Moon, Y. *Language Assessment in Asia: Local, Regional or Global?* Asia TEFL (pp. 99-120). Retrieved on May 5, 2020, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/285299294_Language_assessment_in_Asia_Local_regional_or_global

Harmer, J. (2007). *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (4th ed.). Malaysia: Longman.

Kain, H., & Moukarzel, D. (2018). Teachers' and Students' Perceptions of Online Research Skills: An Exploratory Study in South Lebanese Schools. *Journal of Education and Practice, 9*(24), pp. 109-117. Retrieved on March 10, 2020, from https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/JEP/article/view/44039/45374

Kumar, A. A. (2019). Usage of Electronic Resources among Ophthalmologists in India, in *Literacy skill development for library science professionals*. IGI Global. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-7125-4.ch003

Mardiani, R. (2011). *The Washback Effect of English National Examination (ENE) on English Teachers' Classroom Teaching and Students' Learning: A Case Study at Three Secondary Schools in Bandung, East Java, Indonesia* (Doctoral dissertation). Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia.

Musthafa, B. (2010). Teaching English to Young Learners in Indonesia: Essential Requirements. *Educationist*, *4*(2), 120-125. Retrieved on January 8, 2020, from http://file.upi.edu/Direktori/JURNAL/EDUCATIONIST/Vol._IV_No._2-Juli_2010/07_Bachrudin_Musthafa.pdf

Rahimi, M., & Bayat, Z. (2015). The Relationship between Online Information Seeking Anxiety and English Reading Proficiency across Gender, in Information and Technology Literacy: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-3417-4.ch069

Setiasih, L. (2012). *The Role of Out of School Literacy Activities in Promoting Students' English Literacy* (Doctoral Dissertation). Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia.

Schuh, K. L., & Farrell, C. A. (2006). Student effort, media preference, and writing quality when using print and electronic resources in expository writing. *Journal of Educational Computing Research, 35*(1), pp. 61–81. https://doi.org/10.2190/QJ4N-2863-Q6L0-6360

Shyamlee, S. D., & Phil, M. (2012). *Use of technology in English language teaching and learning: An analysis.* In International Conference on Language, Medias and Culture, Volume 33, pp. 150-156. Retrieved on November 2, 2020, from http://www.ipedr.com/vol33/030-ICLMC2012-L10042.pdf

Swedberg, R. (2018). On the uses of exploratory research and exploratory studies in social science. Retrieved on October 23, 2020, from http://people.soc.cornell.edu/swedberg/On%20the%20Uses%20of%20Exploratory%20Research%20and%20Exploratory%20Studies%20in%20Social%20Science.pdf

Thomlinson, B. (2003). *Developing Materials for Language Teaching.* London: Continuum Press.

Thienthong, A., & Lian, A. (2015). The Use of Internet Resources and Applications for Language Instruction. Retrieved on November 2, 2020, from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1143399.pdf

Tseng, Y. (2014). Effects of Early Exposure to a Second Language on Its Proficiency at Later Age. *Journal of Modern Education Review*, *4*(6), pp. 418–426. DOI: 10.15341/jmer(2155-7993)/06.04.2014/003

Ugwu, C. I., & Orsu, E. N. (2017). Challenges of utilization of online information resources by undergraduate students: Implications for information. *Library Philosophy and Practice*. Retrieved on October 23, 2020, from https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1668

Yanti, H., Setiawan, A., Nurhabibah, & Yannuar. (2018). Teacher's perception about the use of E-learning/Edmodo in educational activities. IOP Conference Series: Material Science and Engineering. DOI: 10.1088/1757-899X/306/1/012055

Zein, S. (2017). The Pedagogy of Teaching English to Young Learners: Implications for Teacher Education. *Indonesian Journal of English Language Teaching*, *12*(1), 61-77. DOI: 10.25170/ijelt.v12i1.1469

Zhang, X. (2018). Developing College EFL Writers' Critical Thinking Skills through Online Resources: A Case Study. *SAGE Open*, pp 1-12. https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244018820386