

DIGITAL PEDAGOGY IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION: A LITERATURE-BASED ANALYSIS OF CURRENT TRENDS

Wiwit Engrina Nora¹, Absharini Kardena², Arifmiboy³, Devi Triana⁴



*Correspondence :

Email :
wiwitengrinan@uinbukittinggi.ac.id

Authors Affiliation:

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Sjech M.
Djamil Djambek Bukittinggi, Indonesia

²University Putra Malaysia, Selangor,
Malaysia

³Cambera University, Australia

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Abstract

This article explores how digital pedagogy is currently conceptualized and applied in English language education, asking what opportunities and challenges emerge from its integration. The study is grounded in the broader context of globalization and rapid technological change, which have shifted English teaching from traditional approaches toward digitally mediated practices. Its novelty lies in offering an integrative perspective: rather than focusing on individual tools, the review synthesizes diverse studies to examine digital pedagogy as a pedagogical paradigm shaped by technological, cultural, and institutional factors. Methodologically, the research adopts a qualitative literature review design, systematically collecting and analyzing studies published between 2015 and 2025 through thematic analysis to identify recurring themes. The results show that digital pedagogy has evolved from a supplementary role to a transformative force that enhances learner autonomy, collaboration, and multimodal engagement, while also revealing challenges such as unequal access, teacher readiness, and risks of superficial learning. The article concludes that sustainable frameworks integrating pedagogy, technology, and cultural context are needed to ensure that digital pedagogy develops as a relevant, equitable, and transformative paradigm for English language education.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana pedagogi digital saat ini dikonseptualisasikan dan diterapkan dalam pendidikan bahasa Inggris, dengan mempertanyakan peluang dan tantangan apa yang muncul dari integrasinya. Studi ini didasarkan pada konteks globalisasi dan perubahan teknologi yang cepat, yang telah mengubah pengajaran bahasa Inggris dari pendekatan tradisional menuju praktik yang dimediasi secara digital. Keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada perspektif integratifnya: alih-alih fokus pada alat-alat individu, tinjauan ini mensintesis berbagai studi untuk menganalisis pedagogi digital sebagai paradigma pedagogis yang dibentuk oleh faktor-faktor teknologi, budaya, dan institusional. Secara metodologis, penelitian ini menggunakan desain tinjauan literatur kualitatif, secara sistematis mengumpulkan dan menganalisis studi yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2015 dan 2025 melalui analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi tema-tema yang berulang. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pedagogi digital telah berkembang dari peran pelengkap menjadi kekuatan transformatif yang meningkatkan otonomi belajar, kolaborasi, dan keterlibatan multimodal, sambil juga mengungkap tantangan seperti akses yang tidak merata, kesiapan guru, dan risiko pembelajaran yang superficial. Artikel ini menyimpulkan bahwa kerangka kerja berkelanjutan yang mengintegrasikan pedagogi, teknologi, dan konteks budaya diperlukan untuk memastikan bahwa pedagogi digital berkembang sebagai paradigma yang relevan, adil, dan transformatif dalam pendidikan bahasa Inggris.



INTRODUCTION

Pedagogy plays a crucial role for learners to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and engage in meaningful and mindful learning experiences. In English language education, pedagogy can be referred as principles, theories, approaches and techniques teachers use in their classroom as a guidance of their classroom practice. Richards and Rodgers (Richards, 1999) emphasize that pedagogy in language learning is strongly influenced by underlying linguistic, psychological, and sociocultural theories, which determine how teachers design learning activities and assessments (Richards, 1999)

Years ago, English language teaching classrooms were influenced by traditional pedagogical approach, such as Grammar-Translation Method, Direct Method, and Audio-Lingual Method (Brown, 2006). These methods emphasized on repetition, teacher-centered, and believed that teachers play as the main sources of knowledge. These methods contributed to systematic grammar and vocabulary learning, however there were some weaknesses in the way that these methods cannot provide learners with opportunities for authentic communication (Kalajdžisalihović et al., 2023) (Diane Larsen-Freeman and Marti Anderson, n.d.).

However, today's rapid advancement of technology has significantly influenced educational practices where there is a shift from traditional pedagogy to digital pedagogy positioning digital pedagogy as a significant research focus within English Language education (Kalajdžisalihović et al., 2023). Originally, digital pedagogy was seen as additional in English education, but nowadays it plays a central role in curriculum development and instruction, as the result of globalization and technology innovation (Dmitrenko & Akhmadullin, 2023); (Kurnia et al., n.d.) (Kurnia et al., n.d.). Digital pedagogy is recognized as transformative, redefining teaching and learning models as well as the demands of contemporary education (Zou et al., 2025). This progress shows that pedagogy in language education is dynamic rather than static. As educational needs and social contexts evolve, teaching approaches also adapt.

Digital pedagogy is more than bringing technology into the classroom. This concept involves digital transmission of instructional content, facilitation of interactive, multimodal and student-centered learning experiences, and digital feedback. Digital environment enables students to engage with language through modalities and scaffolded support, as well as increase engagement and cognitive depth (Chun et al., 2016). Furthermore, digital pedagogy focuses not only as tools, but also as reflection on how technology can change the nature of teaching and learning (Fawns, 2022).

At the same time, integrating digital pedagogy is not without difficulties. Many teachers and learners still have limited access to technology and internet connections. Teacher may feel unprepared to use digital tools effectively and students can easily become distracted in digital environment (Doiraghusoha, 2022) (Fawns, 2022) (Schmid & Whyte, 2012). There are a lot of research in English language education emphasized the use of particular applications or platforms in classroom, but only a few that fit into coherent approaches to teaching and learning.

METHODS

This research conducts a qualitative literature review design in order to explore, analyses, and interpret existing articles on digital pedagogy including the use of new teaching methods, curriculum adaptation, and the use of local in English language education. A literature review is chosen because it provides access for identification of patterns, discussions and gap gaps in the field. The research focuses on gathering descriptive insights rather than numeric data, so it is possible to get complex and content-dependent realities in educational practices. According to (Snyder, 2019), the review was integrative in



nature, combining both theoretical discussion and empirical studies to build a comprehensive understanding of current trends of digital pedagogy.

The data for this study is taken from reviewing educational articles and academic reports published in some journals. The particular intention is focus on digital pedagogy, mobile-assisted learning, digital literacy, pedagogical innovations and curricular adaptation. Six key references served as central points for this study, including research on mobile applications in education (Drigas & Angelidakis, 2017), pedagogical innovation in the Indonesian context (Asmayawati et al., 2024), innovative microteaching models (Sugihartini et al., 2025), and broader reflections on digital pedagogy and literacy found in international scholarship. This method is intended to give participants the opportunity to share narratives, explain their values and rationales, and clarify how local cultural elements shape their engagement with digital literacy.

The process of gathering and organizing the literature was conducted systematically. First, titles and abstracts were screened for relevance, focusing on studies that examined the relationship between pedagogy and technology in English language education. Full-text versions of the most relevant works were then retrieved and read in detail. Inclusion criteria required that the studies be published in English between 2015 and 2025, present a clear focus on pedagogy or digital learning, and be based on theoretical or empirical evidence. Studies that lacked academic rigor, were merely opinion-based, or duplicated findings already included were excluded.

After gathering the data, the analysis was conducted by using the approach known as thematic analysis, following the steps described by Braun and Clarke in 2006. This method was chosen it allowed for a flexible and systematic way to identify, code, and interpret recurring ideas across a wide range of literature. The process started with repeated readings to gain familiarity with the material, followed by the generation of initial content. Next, initial codes were created to highlight important points and topics. These codes were then grouped into broader themes, which continued to be adjusted and developed as the review moved forward. The final themes included the shift from traditional to digital pedagogy, the affordances of mobile learning, challenges in digital literacy and access, innovations in teacher professional development, and curricular adaptation in response to technological change.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The review of the selected literature revealed several prominent themes regarding the role of digital pedagogy in English language education. First, there is a clear consensus that digital pedagogy has moved beyond its supplementary role to become a central component of contemporary curricula (Kalajdzisalihović et al., 2023) (Dmitrenko & Akhmadullin, 2023). The studies analyzed highlight that mobile learning, learning management systems, and interactive platforms now provide learners with increased opportunities for authentic communication, collaborative tasks, and individualized learning experiences (Drigas & Angelidakis, 2017).

Second, the review shows that digital pedagogy has significant potential to foster learner autonomy and engagement. The integration of multimedia and multimodal input—such as videos, podcasts, and interactive texts—supports diverse learning styles and contributes to deeper language acquisition (Asmayawati et al., 2024).

Third, while opportunities are widely acknowledged, the literature also emphasizes persistent challenges. Access to technology remains uneven, particularly in developing contexts, creating a digital divide that limits equal participation (Schmid & Whyte, 2012), (Sugihartini et al., 2025). Teacher readiness and digital literacy skills are also recurring concerns, with many educators struggling to



integrate digital tools in ways that align with pedagogical goals (Fawns, 2022). Additionally, the risk of superficial engagement—where students focus on the technological features rather than meaningful language use—is noted as a limitation across multiple studies (Kurnia et al., n.d.).

In conclusion, the findings suggest that there is an increasing focus on new teaching methods and adapting curricula to meet changing needs. Studies emphasize the need to incorporate digital teaching methods in ways that respect local cultures and traditions, so that technology enhances rather than replaces existing educational values. (Asmayawati et al., 2024). This suggests that digital pedagogy is most effective when combined with sensitivity to sociocultural contexts and when it is viewed as a transformative force rather than a set of tools.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this review affirm that digital pedagogy has become a transformative element in English language education. Consistent with previous scholarship, this study confirms that technology is no longer an optional supplement but a fundamental aspect of how English is taught and learned in the 21st century (Kalajdžisalihović et al., 2023); (Zou et al., 2025). The transition from traditional to digital pedagogy reflects not only technological innovation but also broader shifts in pedagogical philosophy, where the learner is positioned as an active agent in constructing knowledge (Fawns, 2022).

One of the most significant insights emerging from the literature is the role of digital pedagogy in fostering learner autonomy. This aligns with communicative and task-based teaching traditions, which emphasize real-world interaction and active learning. However, autonomy requires scaffolding; without adequate teacher support, learners may become overwhelmed or distracted in digital contexts (Diane Larsen-Freeman and Marti Anderson, n.d.).

Another critical theme is equity and inclusion. While digital pedagogy opens opportunities for innovation, it also risks reinforcing inequalities when access to devices, reliable internet, or teacher training is limited (Sugihartini et al., 2025); (Schmid & Whyte, 2012). This suggests that future research and practice should not only focus on the design of digital tools but also address systemic issues that shape who benefits from digital pedagogy. Policymakers, therefore, must consider infrastructure development and teacher professional development as integral components of digital education strategies (Asmayawati et al., 2024).

The literature also demonstrates that cultural adaptation is essential. As English is taught globally, digital pedagogy should not simply replicate Western models but should instead integrate local cultural values and learning traditions (Kurnia et al., n.d.). This aligns with the view that pedagogy is inherently dynamic, shaped by both global and local contexts (Crystal, 2003). Innovative practices such as blending local wisdom with digital literacy development in Indonesia illustrate how culturally responsive pedagogy can make digital approaches more meaningful (Asmayawati et al., 2024).

Finally, the discussion points to the need for sustainable pedagogical frameworks. Many studies examine individual tools or apps, yet fewer explore how these tools fit into coherent pedagogical models that can guide teachers in their practice. Future research should, therefore, move beyond evaluating specific technologies toward developing integrative frameworks that connect pedagogy, technology, and cultural context.

CONCLUSION

This review has shown that digital pedagogy is no longer a peripheral aspect of English language education but a central force shaping how teachers teach and how students learn. The literature consistently demonstrates that digital tools—ranging from mobile applications to learning management



systems—provide learners with greater opportunities for authentic communication, collaboration, and autonomy. At the same time, the findings highlight persistent challenges, including unequal access to technology, varying levels of teacher preparedness, and the risk of superficial engagement when pedagogy is overshadowed by technology. These results affirm that pedagogy remains dynamic, adapting continuously to global, technological, and cultural changes.

The implications of this review are threefold. For teachers, there is a need for professional development that emphasizes not only digital literacy but also pedagogical integration, ensuring that technology serves meaningful language learning objectives. For policymakers, investment in digital infrastructure and equitable access must be prioritized to prevent widening educational inequalities. For researchers, future studies should move beyond evaluating single tools and instead explore integrative frameworks that link pedagogy, technology, and cultural context. In particular, more work is needed on how digital pedagogy can be adapted to diverse sociocultural environments so that it reflects local values while also preparing learners for global communication.

Ultimately, digital pedagogy should not be understood as a replacement for traditional approaches but as an evolving paradigm that redefines language education in the digital era. By embracing its opportunities and addressing its challenges, educators and institutions can ensure that English language teaching remains relevant, inclusive, and transformative in a rapidly changing world.

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