

## Exploring Language Teachers' Emotional and Personal Experiences in Technology Integration in Education

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### ABSTRACT

The integration of technology in education has become a central topic in language teaching, yet the subjective experiences of teachers in this context remain underexplored. While research has focused on the outcomes of technology adoption, little is known about the personal and emotional aspects that influence teachers' perceptions and use of digital tools in their classrooms. This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the lived experiences of language teachers using technology in their teaching practices. We employed a phenomenological approach to explore the challenges and benefits teachers perceive in integrating technology, focusing on their personal, cultural, and professional contexts. Through in-depth interviews with 10 language teachers from diverse institutional backgrounds, we identified four central themes: (1) emotional challenges and technostress in classroom implementation, (2) insufficient institutional support and professional training, (3) perceived pedagogical benefits including increased student engagement and interactive learning, and (4) the influence of cultural and contextual factors on technology use. Our findings demonstrate that teachers' experiences are shaped by a complex interplay of individual, institutional, and cultural factors, which significantly impact the success and sustainability of technology integration in language education. Specifically, emotional responses such as frustration or confidence were found to directly influence instructional decision-making, the frequency of technology use, and the adoption of student-centered strategies. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the human dimension of technology adoption in teaching, highlighting the importance of providing sustained professional development, contextualized institutional support, and culturally responsive implementation strategies for teachers. Future studies should explore the long-term effects of technology use in education and the role of students' experiences in shaping teaching practices.



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## INTRODUCTION

The integration of technology into language education has become a significant phenomenon in modern classrooms worldwide (Malik et al., 2025). With rapid advancements in digital tools and online platforms, educational settings are increasingly adopting technology to enhance learning experiences. This shift is particularly evident in language education, where digital resources offer new opportunities for students to engage with language learning in interactive and dynamic ways. However, the application of technology in language teaching is not without challenges (Almukhailed & King, 2024). Teachers face various obstacles, ranging from technical difficulties to the need for adequate training, and their experiences with technology integration are often shaped by broader social and cultural contexts.

The relevance of this phenomenon extends beyond mere technological adoption. It involves a deeper understanding of the subjective experiences of language teachers who navigate this integration process (Kim, 2024). Teachers' perceptions, emotions, and challenges are critical to understanding how technology influences the teaching and learning process (Mukhlis, 2025a; Mukhlis & Saidah, 2025). This is especially true when considering the cultural, institutional, and personal factors that influence how technology is embraced and used within different educational settings. The experience of

integrating technology is not a uniform one; rather, it is shaped by individual and contextual variables that affect the teachers' ability to implement and adapt these tools effectively.

Given these complexities, there is a pressing need for an exploration of the lived experiences of language teachers using technology in their classrooms (Elov et al., 2025). While previous studies have focused on the potential benefits and challenges of technology in education, they have often overlooked the rich, subjective experiences of teachers themselves. A phenomenological approach allows for an in-depth investigation of how teachers make sense of their experiences with technology, providing valuable insights into the meanings they attach to these experiences and how they navigate the challenges they encounter (Jin, 2024). Understanding these personal and professional experiences is essential for improving educational practices and supporting teachers in effectively incorporating technology into their teaching strategies.

Research into the lived experiences of individuals within specific phenomena has become an important area of inquiry, particularly in the field of education (Espinoza et al., 2025). Understanding the subjective experiences of teachers as they navigate the integration of technology into their teaching practices is crucial for gaining deeper insights into the complexities of educational environments. Previous studies have highlighted the benefits and challenges of technology in language education, yet these studies often fail to capture the rich, nuanced experiences of teachers themselves (Mukhlis, Arifin, Ridwan, & Zulbaidah, 2025; Mukhlis, Arifin, Ridwan, Zulbaidah, et al., 2025). This gap underscores the need for qualitative research that focuses on the meanings and personal insights that teachers derive from their interactions with technology.

However, exploring these deep meanings presents several methodological challenges. Traditional quantitative methods, while useful for identifying broad patterns and trends, often fall short in capturing the subjective and multifaceted nature of individual experiences (Biza & Giannakou, 2024). These approaches focus primarily on measurable outcomes, such as test scores or engagement metrics, which do not account for the emotional, cognitive, and contextual factors that influence a teacher's use of technology (Xiao et al., 2025). As a result, much of the existing literature does not adequately address the complexities of the personal and professional dynamics at play in technology-mediated language teaching.

The limitations of quantitative and other traditional methods make them less effective in uncovering the full essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Katsantonis & McLellan, 2023). The phenomenological approach, with its focus on the lived experience and meaning-making processes, is uniquely suited to address this gap. By prioritizing the personal, subjective experiences of teachers, this approach provides a more holistic understanding of how technology is integrated into language teaching and the broader implications of these experiences for educational practice (Mukhlis, Maryam, et al., 2023; Mukhlis et al., 2024). As such, it is essential to employ a phenomenological methodology to fully explore the deeper layers of meaning that teachers attach to their use of technology in language classrooms.

In the context of technology integration in language education, most existing studies rely on practical, quantitative approaches to assess the effectiveness of digital tools in the classroom. These methods, while useful for measuring outcomes such as student engagement or academic performance, tend to overlook the deeper, subjective experiences of teachers (Wang & Chung, 2021). By focusing on observable and measurable factors, these approaches fail to capture the complex and multifaceted nature of teachers' lived experiences with technology. As a result, the current literature offers a limited understanding of how teachers perceive, adapt to, and navigate the challenges associated with technology in language teaching.

Moreover, the typical solutions offered in these studies such as training programs or technology implementation strategies often neglect the individual and emotional aspects of teaching with technology. These approaches are insufficient for capturing the rich meanings and personal insights that teachers derive from their daily interactions with digital tools (Ng & Cheung, 2025). Therefore, they fall short in providing a holistic view of the phenomenon, especially when considering how cultural, personal, and institutional factors influence the integration process.

An alternative solution to this gap lies in the adoption of a phenomenological approach. By focusing on the lived experiences of teachers, this method allows for a deeper exploration of the meanings they attach to using technology in their teaching practices (Mukhlis, Janwari, et al., 2023; Mukhlis & Abdullah, 2025). Phenomenology provides the tools to uncover the nuances and complexities of teachers' experiences, offering a more comprehensive and authentic understanding of how technology impacts language education (Pramoolsook & Dalimunte, 2020). This approach not only sheds light on the challenges and benefits of technology integration but also reveals the emotional and cognitive dimensions that shape the teachers' professional practices.

Numerous studies have explored the role of technology in language education, primarily focusing on its benefits and challenges from a pragmatic standpoint (Prabawani et al., 2022). These studies often examine the impact of digital tools on student engagement, performance, and learning outcomes. However, few have delved into the lived experiences of teachers who are directly responsible for integrating technology into their classrooms (Wawire et al., 2025). Existing research highlights the importance of teacher training and support but fails to fully explore the subjective experiences that shape how teachers interact with and adapt to these technologies. The theoretical foundation of this research is grounded in phenomenology, which offers a unique lens through which the personal and emotional dimensions of technology integration can be understood.

The approach chosen for this study is phenomenology, as it allows for an in-depth exploration of teachers' lived experiences with technology in language education. By adopting a phenomenological methodology, the study aims to uncover the underlying meanings and emotional responses that teachers associate with their use of technology in teaching (Wang et al., 2020). This approach addresses the knowledge gap identified earlier by moving beyond surface-level observations to a deeper understanding of the challenges and opportunities that technology presents in language classrooms. Phenomenology is particularly suited for this investigation, as it emphasizes the significance of personal experiences and the meanings individuals attach to them, which are often overlooked in traditional research methods.

This article is structured to provide a comprehensive view of the phenomenon under investigation (Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2022). The introduction presents the background of the research, contextualizing the phenomenon of technology use in language education and the need for exploring teachers' experiences. The methodology section outlines the phenomenological approach used to gather and analyze data, followed by a discussion of the findings (Mukhlis, 2025b; Mukhlis, Suradi, et al., 2023). The analysis will focus on identifying key themes through a thematic approach, leading to a detailed discussion of the results. Finally, the article concludes with a summary of the key insights and their implications for both theory and practice in the field of language education.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

### **Study Design**

This study utilized a phenomenological approach to explore the subjective experiences of teachers in implementing technology in language education. The phenomenological design was selected because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of individuals, emphasizing their personal perspectives and meanings (Lutz & Knox, 2014; McNabb, 2015). By focusing on the essence of these experiences, the design provides valuable insights into how teachers perceive and navigate the integration of technology into their teaching practices. Specifically, a descriptive phenomenological approach was applied, which is grounded in the philosophy of Edmund Husserl. This approach focuses on capturing the essence of participants' experiences as they relate to a specific phenomenon, in this case, the use of technology in language teaching.

### **Participants**

Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling to ensure that individuals with relevant experiences were included. The inclusion criteria were: (1) teachers currently using technology in their language teaching practices, (2) teachers with at least one year of experience in integrating

technology into their classroom, and (3) teachers working in diverse educational settings. The sample consisted of 10 language teachers from different schools, with an average age of 35 years (Hillman & Radel, 2018; Migdal, 2018). The participants represented a variety of teaching backgrounds, including primary, secondary, and higher education levels, and had diverse experiences in using technology for language teaching. Gender representation was balanced, with five male and five female participants.

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted directly with the participants (Fife, 2020; Kawamura, 2020). The interviews were designed to elicit detailed narratives about the teachers' personal experiences and perceptions of using technology in language teaching. Each interview lasted approximately 60-90 minutes and was conducted in a private setting to ensure a comfortable and confidential environment for the participants (Carreiras & Castro, 2012; Iosifides, 2016). The interviews followed a guide with open-ended questions that allowed for flexibility in exploring the unique experiences of each participant. The interview guide was based on existing literature on technology in language education and was adapted to ensure relevance to the specific context of the participants' experiences. Audio recordings of the interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, a common method in phenomenological research. The analysis process involved several systematic steps to identify the core themes that emerged from the data. First, the transcriptions were thoroughly read and re-read to gain an initial understanding of the content. The next step involved the identification of meaning units, which were segments of text that captured the essence of the participants' experiences. These meaning units were then coded and grouped into broader categories (Daly, 2007; Longhofer et al., 2012). The final step involved the reduction of themes, where the data were distilled to highlight the essential experiences related to the phenomenon under study. This process resulted in the emergence of key themes that represent the core aspects of teachers' experiences with technology in language education. NVivo software was used to assist with the organization and management of the data during the analysis process.

## **RESULTS**

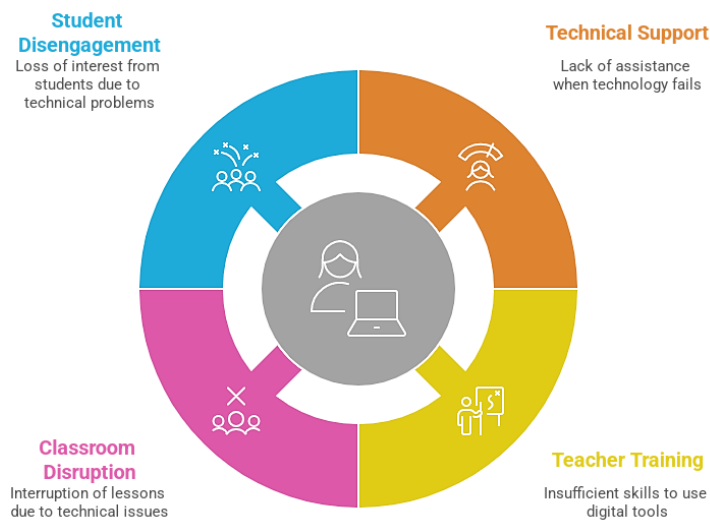
### **Challenges in Implementing Technology in Language Teaching**

The primary challenge faced by teachers in integrating technology into language teaching was the insufficient technical support and training. Teachers frequently expressed feelings of frustration when they encountered technical difficulties, which hindered the smooth implementation of digital tools in their classrooms. As one teacher noted:

"I often feel lost when the technology fails during lessons, especially when there is no one to help. It takes time to fix things, and in the meantime, the students lose interest." (Participant 3)

This sentiment was echoed by several other teachers, emphasizing that the lack of sufficient training on how to utilize educational technologies effectively left them feeling unprepared and overwhelmed. Many teachers described these experiences as disruptive, detracting from the overall teaching process. The difficulty in troubleshooting technological issues in real-time further exacerbated the challenge, leading to a sense of disengagement from both teachers and students. Importantly, these emotional challenges did not merely reflect temporary discomfort but significantly shaped teachers' instructional practices. Several teachers reported simplifying lesson plans, reducing the frequency of technology use, or reverting to traditional methods to avoid potential disruptions. Thus, emotional frustration and lack of institutional support directly influenced the consistency, confidence, and pedagogical depth of technology integration in the classroom.

### Technology Integration Challenges



### Perceived Benefits of Technology in Language Learning

Despite the challenges, teachers acknowledged significant benefits from integrating technology into language education, particularly in terms of increasing student engagement and providing access to diverse learning resources. Teachers observed that digital tools, such as interactive apps and online platforms, enabled more dynamic and interactive lessons. One teacher reflected:

"The students are more engaged when they use apps in class. They can practice speaking and listening skills with real-world content, and they seem to enjoy it more than traditional methods." (Participant 5)

This theme suggests that the use of technology allowed teachers to diversify their teaching methods and cater to different learning styles. Students who might struggle with traditional face-to-face instruction found these technological tools to be more accessible and engaging, fostering a more inclusive learning environment.

Beyond engagement, teachers noted that technology integration encouraged them to adopt more student-centered approaches, such as collaborative tasks, autonomous learning activities, and authentic language exposure. In this sense, positive emotional experiences—such as satisfaction and renewed teaching motivation—strengthened their commitment to experimenting with innovative pedagogical strategies.

### Teacher Perceptions of Student Adaptability to Technology

Teachers also highlighted the varying levels of adaptability among students when it came to using technology for language learning. While some students quickly embraced digital tools, others struggled to navigate the platforms effectively. Teachers expressed mixed feelings about this disparity:

"Some students adapt immediately to the technology, but others seem to be overwhelmed. It's challenging to find a balance in the classroom where everyone can benefit equally." (Participant 2)

The disparity in student adaptability was particularly noticeable among different age groups and backgrounds. Teachers noted that younger students were generally more comfortable with digital tools, while older students, or those with less prior exposure to technology, took longer to adjust. This variation presented an additional layer of complexity in the teaching process, requiring teachers to provide differentiated support.

Consequently, teachers had to modify their instructional pacing, allocate additional time for technical guidance, and design parallel activities to ensure inclusivity. This adaptability demand influenced classroom management strategies and occasionally shifted the instructional focus from

language objectives to technical troubleshooting. Therefore, student adaptability was not merely a learner characteristic but a factor that reshaped teaching practices and time allocation.

### **The Role of Cultural Context in Technology Use**

Another significant theme that emerged from the data was the influence of cultural context on how technology was perceived and utilized in language education. Teachers reported that in classrooms with a diverse student body, the integration of technology needed to be carefully tailored to align with students' cultural backgrounds and prior experiences with technology. As one teacher explained:

"Cultural differences play a big role. In some cultures, students are more accustomed to technology, while others view it with skepticism. Understanding this helps me decide how to present technology-based activities." (Participant 4)

This theme underscores the importance of considering the cultural and educational backgrounds of students when integrating technology. Teachers emphasized that adapting digital tools to be culturally relevant and accessible was crucial for ensuring that all students felt comfortable and engaged with the learning process.

More importantly, cultural context influenced teachers' decision-making processes, including the selection of digital platforms, examples, and interaction styles. Teachers who were sensitive to cultural expectations tended to scaffold technology use gradually and contextualize digital content to avoid resistance. Thus, cultural awareness functioned as a mediating factor that determined whether technology integration enhanced or hindered classroom effectiveness.

The findings highlight both the challenges and benefits associated with the integration of technology into language teaching. While teachers faced difficulties with technical issues and varying levels of student adaptability, they also recognized the significant potential of technology to enhance student engagement and provide a more dynamic learning experience. The role of cultural context emerged as a key factor in the successful implementation of technology, suggesting that a tailored, culturally sensitive approach is necessary for optimal outcomes.

Taken together, the themes reveal that emotional challenges, student adaptability, and cultural context are not isolated factors but interrelated elements that collectively shape teaching practices. Teachers' emotional responses influenced their willingness to sustain technology use; student adaptability affected instructional design and pacing; and cultural context guided pedagogical adjustments. Overall, the impact of technology integration on teaching practices was contingent upon the interplay between institutional support, teacher emotions, learner diversity, and cultural sensitivity. These findings suggest that effective technology integration requires not only technical infrastructure but also emotional resilience, adaptive pedagogy, and culturally responsive strategies.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Summary of Key Findings**

This study uncovered the nuanced and multifaceted experiences of teachers in integrating technology into language education. The findings reveal both the challenges teachers face, such as technical difficulties and lack of sufficient training, as well as the significant benefits they observe, including increased student engagement and the ability to access diverse learning resources. These experiences provide a deeper understanding of how teachers make sense of and adapt to the integration of technology in their classrooms, shedding light on the emotional and practical dimensions of the phenomenon.

### **Contribution to Research Questions**

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the lived experiences of teachers, answering the research questions posed in the introduction. By focusing on the subjective experiences of teachers, the study reveals that while the integration of technology presents numerous challenges, it also holds transformative potential for language education (Fernández Álvarez & García-Hernández, 2024). Teachers' perceptions of technology are shaped by their individual contexts, emotional

responses, and the support they receive. This research contributes to the understanding that technology integration is not a straightforward process; instead, it involves navigating a complex set of personal, cultural, and institutional factors that influence teachers' decisions and actions in the classroom. Furthermore, the study highlights the importance of providing targeted support to teachers, not only in terms of technical skills but also in addressing their emotional and pedagogical needs.

### **Relation to Existing Literature and Theory**

The findings align with existing literature on the challenges of technology integration in education, which often emphasizes the need for adequate training and support (Bauer & Kenton, 2005). However, this study adds depth to this understanding by exploring the emotional and subjective experiences of teachers, an aspect often overlooked in prior research. For instance, while previous studies have discussed the technical aspects of technology use in classrooms, few have examined how teachers feel and react when confronted with technical issues or when they struggle to implement digital tools effectively (Deniz, 2025). This emotional dimension is crucial for understanding the full scope of technology integration and aligns with the work of Ertmer (1999), who emphasized the significance of teachers' beliefs and attitudes in the adoption of technology. Additionally, the study's findings contribute to Vygotsky's social constructivist theory, which posits that learning is shaped by social and cultural contexts. The teachers' varying experiences with technology reflect the broader cultural and institutional factors at play in education, supporting the idea that the integration of technology is not a one-size-fits-all process.

### **Implications of Findings**

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the complexities of integrating technology in language education. One significant implication is that teachers' experiences with technology are deeply influenced by their individual contexts, beliefs, and the emotional challenges they face, highlighting the need for a more personalized approach to professional development. In practice, this means that training programs should not only address technical skills but also consider teachers' emotional and pedagogical needs (Khoiriyah & Mashuri, 2025). This holistic approach could better support teachers in overcoming the challenges they face, leading to more effective technology integration in language teaching. Furthermore, the study underscores the importance of understanding the social and cultural factors that shape teachers' experiences, as these factors can significantly impact how technology is perceived and used in different educational environments. These findings are relevant not only for language teachers but also for educators in other fields, as they provide a broader understanding of the role technology plays in shaping teaching practices across disciplines.

### **Limitations of the Study**

While this study provides important insights, it also has certain limitations that must be considered. One limitation is the relatively small and specific sample of language teachers, which may not fully represent the diverse range of experiences across different educational systems and cultural contexts (Bhansari, 2024). The study focused on teachers in specific settings, and as such, the findings may not be generalizable to all teachers, particularly those in different countries or educational levels. Additionally, the phenomenological approach, while offering in-depth insights into individual experiences, does not provide statistical generalizability. The subjective nature of the data means that the findings reflect personal perceptions, which may vary widely among different individuals. Future research should consider a broader and more diverse sample to explore the generalizability of these findings across different contexts and populations.

### **Future Research Directions**

The findings of this study open several avenues for future research. One potential direction is to further investigate how different cultural and institutional contexts influence teachers' experiences with technology in language education. A comparative study across diverse educational systems could shed light on how global trends in technology integration intersect with local teaching practices and beliefs. Another promising area for future research is exploring the long-term effects of technology integration on teachers' professional development and their evolving perceptions of technology in the classroom. Additionally, future studies could examine the role of students' experiences and perspectives

in shaping the way technology is used by teachers, adding another layer of insight into the technology adoption process. By expanding on these findings, future research can deepen our understanding of how technology impacts education on both a personal and systemic level.

## CONCLUSION

This study explored the lived experiences of language teachers in integrating technology into their teaching practices, addressing the gap in understanding the subjective dimensions of this process. The findings reveal that while teachers face technical challenges and lack adequate training, they also recognize the potential of technology to engage students and enhance learning. The research provides valuable insights into how personal, cultural, and institutional factors shape teachers' perceptions and use of technology, contributing to a more holistic understanding of technology integration in language education. These findings fill a significant gap in the literature, which largely overlooks the emotional and experiential aspects of technology use in teaching.

Building on these findings, future research should move beyond short-term implementation issues and examine structured, long-term teacher support systems. Specifically, longitudinal studies are needed to investigate how sustained professional development programs, ongoing mentoring, and institutional technical assistance influence teachers' confidence, emotional resilience, and consistency in technology use over time. Researchers may also focus on evaluating the effectiveness of school-based support models, such as peer coaching, professional learning communities (PLCs), or embedded digital facilitators, in reducing technostress and strengthening pedagogical innovation.

Future research could expand on these findings by examining the long-term impacts of technology integration on teaching practices or exploring how students' perspectives influence the adoption of technology by teachers. In addition, comparative studies across different institutional contexts—such as urban and rural schools or resource-rich and resource-limited settings—would provide deeper insight into how structural inequalities shape sustained technology integration. Investigating policy-level interventions, including funding allocation, digital infrastructure planning, and leadership support, would also contribute to a more comprehensive framework for long-term teacher empowerment.

This research sets the stage for further investigation into the complex relationship between teachers, technology, and education. Ultimately, advancing this line of inquiry requires an integrated research agenda that connects emotional experiences, institutional support mechanisms, and measurable instructional outcomes to better inform sustainable technology integration policies and practices.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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