Journal of Research and Educational Research Evaluation

Experienced and Inexperienced Secondary-School English Teachers' Strategies and Challenges in Teaching Speaking Using Blended Learning

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Article Info	Abstract
	This study investigated the strategies and challenges of implementing blended learning in teaching speaking instructional activity at the secondary school level in the Indonesian context. It employed a qualitative design, adopted a narrative study, and utilized in-depth semi-structured interviews to gain insights into the challenges and strategies two experienced and two inexperienced English teachers encountered when implementing blended learning in teaching speaking. The study findings suggest that the teachers from both groups reported similar strategies and challenges in their speaking instructional activities. Concerning the similarities, they reported using technological-based learning tools and encountering challenges regarding students' linguistic competencies and infrastructures. Both teacher groups differed in their reported implementations of blended learning and applications of communicative instructional strategies. The study contributes to a better understanding of English language instruction in the Indonesian context. It provides valuable insights for English language teachers and educators in designing effective language teaching programs that align with the standards outlined in the Indonesian curriculum documents. It finally recommends that professional development programs focus on improving teachers' teaching skills by utilizing appropriate educational technology and communicative activities.

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INTRODUCTION

Blended learning has emerged as a new and significant educational concept in the last few decades (e.g., Albiladi & Alshareef, 2019; Mulyanto et al., 2020; Watson, 2008). It combines classroom teaching with online methods (Watson, 2008). Badawi (2009) describes it as a flexible approach that blends face-to-face and online activities, allowing synchronous and asynchronous student interactions.

Li and Wong (2021) underline blended learning's strength in integrating face-to-face and online activities. Dimitrios et al. (2013) and Faisal et al. (2021) noted that the former is characterized by teacher-centeredness, with teachers typically delivering materials and evaluating students while students take notes and complete assignments. In contrast, the latter involves using the internet to access materials and interact with teachers or peers to achieve learning goals (Alonso et al., 2005). Blended learning amalgamates these methods, utilizing accessible materials for students and teachers.

Studies have acknowledged that blended learning positively impacts instruction in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). It embraces collaborative learning, provides personalized language support, and boosts student engagement and language skills, improving learning outcomes (Marsh, 2012). In addition, Senffner and Kepler (2015) pointed out its flexibility and value in EFL, enhancing student participation.

Using blended learning improves English proficiency in Indonesian students (Ginaya et al., 2018). Ginaya et al. (2018) found it enhanced language skills, fostering critical thinking and digital skills. Blended learning, with activities like business games and role plays, increased student interaction and engagement, promoting critical thinking. Teachers supported learning through online activities, using inventive methods to engage students.

Some Indonesian English teachers use blended learning in speaking instruction, arguing that it enhances students' English skills and offers flexibility by combining offline and online sessions (Anugrah, 2021; Fitri et al., 2021; Pardede, 2019). Quick access to online resources enables effective learning and ample practice.

In the current Indonesian curriculum context – the 2013 Curriculum, blended learning is one of the instructional modes the Indonesian government (MoEC, 2022b) suggests. Particularly, this mode is deemed to help secondary school students achieve the envisaged English-speaking competence (MoEC, 2013a). In a more detailed manner, the main goal is to develop students' oral communicative competence to achieve functional literacy, enabling them to apply text information in daily life (Cahyaningrum et al., 2023; MoEC, 2013b; Setyarini et al., 2021). To support this, teachers should understand communicative competence, the communicative language teaching method, and learning materials, as briefly explained below.

Communicative competence involves using language appropriately in various contexts (Celce-Murcia, 2007). It focuses on discourse competence, which combines forms and meanings to create meaningful spoken or written texts (Canale, 2014). Discourse competence is supported by linguistic, socio-cultural, and strategic competencies (Agustien, 2004; Faisal et al., 2021). Linguistic competence covers language rules and patterns (Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Hayes et al., 2013). Strategic competence is the ability to overcome communication barriers (Canale & Swain, 1980; Light, 1989). Socio-cultural competence involves understanding cultural norms in communication (Smorochynska, 2011).

Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) is central to the learning process in Indonesia, aiming to prepare students for real-world communication (Dörnyei, 2009; Faisal et al., 2021; MoEC, 2013b). Teachers should

engage students in active and collaborative communication to enhance their speaking skills.

Implementing the 2013 Curriculum requires English teachers to focus on enhancing students' discourse competence through relevant speaking activities and to understand the key principles of CLT to foster active and collaborative communication in the classroom (Faisal et al., 2021).

At junior high schools, students learn spoken and written interpersonal, transactional, and functional texts (MoEC, 2022a). This study emphasizes speaking skills, focusing on spoken texts. Interpersonal texts are used for social interactions, such as personal interviews or informal conversations (Adiningtyas, 2012; Celce-Murcia et al., 1995; Fauziati et al., 2013). Teachers can use CLT in blended learning to engage students in group discussions and improve the quality of communication with their peers.

Transactional texts are used to share information and include linguistic components like promising, requesting, and warning (Fauziati et al., 2013; Nuha, 2014; Syafrizal et al., 2020). To teach students in blended learning, teachers can build activity-based learning. Activity-based learning involves interaction and project-based learning. Even when the teaching and learning process is done online, the teacher's duty in this environment is to facilitate the students, ensuring they actively participate in the learning process.

Functional text is a sort of text that delivers information so that readers may quickly understand it (Fauziati et al., 2013). The functional text includes brief messages such as announcements, memos, advertisements, and texts that provide orders or prohibitions against what is prohibited and what is permitted. In relation to teaching speaking in blended learning, monitoring the teaching and learning process is a teacher's responsibility. Even group work discussions cannot be successful if the teacher does not provide instruction. Teachers' advice is crucial

for the teaching and learning process (Fadhilah & Giyoto, 2020).

Several studies have explored the effects of blended learning on students' speaking skills and teachers' perceptions of its use in speaking classes. In an investigation about the impacts of blended learning on students' speaking skills, Isda et al. (2021) found that it helped their students improve their oral abilities. They argued that blended learning allows the students to interact and collaborate maximally during classroom activities. Furthermore, blended learning enables students to examine linguistic elements, including vocabulary and grammatical structures. The video recording of the class can show how attentively the students paid attention to their assignments and how their vocabulary, grammar, performance, pronunciation, and fluency have improved.

Regarding teachers' perceptions, Aldosemani et al. (2019) found that their teachers showed good impressions of blended learning, particularly because of its flexibility and students' capability to access the information anytime. In addition, their teachers perceived several challenges, including limited technological skills and technological issues, such as insufficient infrastructure. Isda et al. (2021) and Sari et al. (2021) investigated their students' perceptions of utilizing blended learning in classroom activities. They shared an observation in common: their students positively perceived that blended learning could facilitate their learning activities, boost their motivation, and eventually improve their learning outcomes.

Other scholars have researched potential challenges English teachers may encounter in implementing blended learning. Tayebinik and Puteh (2013) found that the biggest misconception among teachers is the perception that online learning predominates over face-to-face learning. Other issues concern teachers' limited technology knowledge and infrastructure, including internet access and availability of ICT tools

(Aji et al., 2020; Nasrullah & Asrimawati, 2023).

Despite these studies, there is limited research on the challenges and strategies reported by junior-secondary-school English teachers implementing blended learning in speaking classes based on the 2013 Curriculum. Additionally, no studies have explored these aspects from the perspectives of both experienced and inexperienced English teachers.

This study aims to address these gaps by investigating the challenges and strategies reported by both experienced and inexperienced English teachers in implementing blended learning for teaching speaking in the 2013 Curriculum through the following research questions:

What are the strategies used by experienced and inexperienced teachers in implementing blended learning in speaking instructional activities?

What challenges do the experienced and inexperienced teachers encounter in implementing blended learning in speaking instructional activities?

What are the similarities and differences in strategies and challenges in implementing blended learning in speaking instructional activities between experienced and inexperienced teachers?

METHODS

This study used a qualitative descriptive design, which focuses on explaining occurrences in detail using concrete language (Sandelowski, 2000). Qualitative researchers need a good grasp of social science theory and relevant research methods to effectively investigate issues in this context (Lune & Berg, 2017; Whitehead & Fitzgerald, 2007). It adopted a narrative study to capture teachers' experiences in teaching speaking to junior high school students using blended learning. A narrative study aims to describe experiences

in a storytelling format (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Faizin (2020) described it as a qualitative research method that focuses on individual participants' experiences and presents them in a chronological narrative. This approach helps to understand and present real-life experiences through the participants' stories (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

This study included experienced and inexperienced English teachers, ET and IT, respectively. Triastuti and Riazi (2020) argue that experienced teachers have at least five years of teaching experience and a National Teacher Certification Program (NTCP) certificate. Inexperienced teachers have less than five years of experience, are not certified, and have not yet been promoted to a level allowing them to participate in the NTCP (Triastuti & Riazi, 2020).

Participants were selected using purposive sampling, and teachers from junior high schools were chosen based on specific criteria. Given the recommendation that small-scale studies typically include three to six participants (Bartholomew et al., 2021; Smith et al., 2009), this study involved four teachers: two experienced and two inexperienced English teachers.

In this study, interviews were used as the primary data collection method. Pandey and Pandey (2021) define interviews as face-to-face oral discussions to collect information. The interviewers used a set of predetermined questions to guide the conversation and gather specific data.

The interviews here are based on a previously created interview blueprint. The blueprint underpins its framework with the principles of blended learning, the current curriculum's nature of communicative competence, in addition to the implementation of blended learning in teaching speaking.

Table 1. Interview Blueprint

Topics	Prompts
Personal information	Educational background
	Teaching experience
	For experienced teachers (NTCP)
	Professional development program
Blended learning	Primary concept
	Procedures
	Daily uses
Communicative competence in speaking skill	Primary concept
	Materials to teach
	Teaching procedures/manners
Communicative language teaching	Primary concept
	Materials to teach
	Teaching procedures
Teaching speaking in a blended learning	Materials to teach: discourse, linguistic, strategic, and socio-cultural competences
	Teaching procedures
	Strategies
	Challenges

The data was collected through a two-round, in-depth, semi-structured interview with teachers who had previously employed blended learning in their speaking classes. The researcher initiated the interviews to obtain detailed information on the participants' experience teaching speaking in blended learning. The data produced can be of greater quality since it was collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews to allow participants to be open and honest about their thoughts and grasp the most recent information.

This study used qualitative thematic analysis to analyze the in-depth semi-structured interview data from experienced and inexperienced teachers regarding their strategies and challenges in implementing blended learning in speaking classes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The analysis process involved several steps. The first was to ensure the completeness of the data by checking audio transcriptions and reviewing the text. The second step involved coding the data by identifying transcribed interviews and creating codes to represent their meaning (Caulfield, 2022). Coding qualitative data to identify recurring themes and ideas is known as thematic analysis. The thematic analysis extracts themes from the text by examining the words and sentence patterns.

The third step was to generate and review themes by observing patterns within the codes, ensuring themes accurately and relevantly summarized the data (Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006; Vaismoradi et al., 2013).

The next step is to outline each of the themes. Defining themes entails precisely articulating each topic and determining how it contributes to the comprehension of the data. The last step was writing up the data analysis, which involved outlining the topic, objectives, and methodology, in addition to presenting the findings and discussing the significance of the identified themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section aims to present the research findings and discussions.

Results

The purpose of this part is, firstly, to present the results of the analysis data regarding teachers' strategies and challenges in teaching speaking through blended learning in junior secondary schools (SMP) in the context of the 2013 Curriculum. Secondly, this part presents the research findings from the data collected to address the above research questions.

The following paragraphs present the analysis of teachers' reported strategies for teaching speaking through blended learning, focusing on the strategies used to engage students in collaborative learning and their implications to address the first research questions. Furthermore, the analysis highlights the similarities and differences between experienced and inexperienced teachers' strategies in response to the third research question.

Strategies for teaching speaking in blended learning

According to the 2013 Curriculum, teaching English speaking requires teachers to implement the fundamental principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) (MoEC, 2022a). Teachers should engage students in active and collaborative speaking activities. The interview analyses revealed three main themes for managing CLT in teaching speaking through blended learning: instructional strategies, learning settings, and learning media. These themes highlight similarities and differences between experienced and inexperienced teachers.

The first theme identified from the data analysis is teachers' instructional strategy. Both experienced and inexperienced teachers commonly reported using collaborative activities and individualized learning. The following paragraphs will detail these activities.

The first strategy both groups of teachers mentioned was collaborative learning, aligning with the curriculum's Standard of Process (MoEC, 2022b),

emphasizing the importance of collaborative learning to promote student teamwork (Sembiring & Dewi, 2023). Two specific features within collaborative learning emerged from the analysis: dialogue activities and communicative games, revealing both similarities and differences between the teacher groups.

All teachers highlighted using dialogue activities to facilitate communicative language teaching in speaking lessons. For instance, ET-1 emphasized the importance of habituating students to dialogues, stating, "Literacy is not only text, but it can be dialogues. So, when students use new vocabulary, they know what to use it for" (March 16, 2023) and provided videos of dialogues as examples. Similarly, ET-2 paired students to create dialogues about transactional text materials, while IT-2 used video dialogues and paired discussions to enhance communicative competence.

In contrast, only inexperienced teachers mentioned using communicative games. IT-1 used a board game with questions like, "What is your hobby?" and "Where do you live?" (March 24, 2023) to encourage students to interact and communicate effectively. She explained, "They can communicate [in] English contextually" (March 24, 2023), highlighting the relevance of these games to developing socio-cultural competence as defined by the 2013 Curriculum (MoEC, 2022a).

The second strategy identified was individualized learning, emphasized by the 2013 Curriculum's Standard of Content (MoEC, 2022a) to help students enhance their speaking skills. Two features emerged: video-form assignments and station rotation, revealing both similarities and differences between the teacher groups.

The two groups used video-form assignments to facilitate communicative language teaching in speaking lessons. ET-2 highlighted the efficiency of video assignments, stating, "I think making a video is the easiest task to assign to students because

it is fairly effective and efficient, and does not make any difficulties for the teacher or students" (March 21, 2023). Similarly, ET-1 employed video assignments, providing learning materials and a video example via Google Sites, requiring students to create videos based on the template. Inexperienced teachers, like IT-2, found video assignments beneficial for encouraging student engagement and motivation and evaluating pronunciation through activities like creating a video about a procedure text.

Experienced teachers, however, used a different strategy: station rotation. ET-1 utilized this approach to identify each student's learning style—auditory, visual, or kinesthetic—through a diagnostic test, stating, "By using station rotation mode, I could deliver diverse learning media to students to accommodate the learning process and students' needs" (March 16, 2023). She emphasized the importance of preliminary assessments to tailor teaching strategies and believed station rotation effectively supports differentiated learning and 21st-century skills.

In summary, both groups employed dialogue activities and video-form assignments, while only inexperienced teachers used communicative games and experienced teachers used station rotation to manage communicative competence.

The second identified theme was the teachers' learning settings, defined in this study as a blend of face-to-face and online learning (Huang et al., 2022). While experienced teachers mainly used either online or offline settings, it was unexpected that inexperienced teachers reported using a blended learning approach.

In the literature, offline learning settings are described as face-to-face, teacher-centered instruction where teachers deliver and assess materials while students complete assigned tasks (Dimitrios et al., 2013). Firstly, the data showed that the experienced teachers mainly used this approach. For instance, ET-1 taught speaking material and an invitation dialogue in offline sessions, citing various effective strategies and parent preferences for offline learning (March 16, 2023). Additionally, these teachers incorporated games like 'clap and boom' to enhance student focus and engagement, with losers answering questions about personal information in English.

Secondly, the analysis showed no experienced teachers used blended learning to teach speaking skills. In this study, blended learning refers to a mix of offline and online sessions (Badawi, 2009). However, both inexperienced teachers reported using blended learning. IT-2 divided speaking instruction into online and offline sessions, managing virtual meetings via Microsoft Teams for online sessions to ensure student readiness and engagement (March 27, 2023). She also assigned video dialogues for online activities, promoting collaborative learning and technological integration. For offline sessions, IT-2 used project-based learning and storytelling to boost confidence and speaking skills, pairing students based on their speaking abilities to enhance learning outcomes. Surprisingly, IT-2 used technology-based games in offline sessions to make learning more engaging, noting the importance of technology in today's digital era (March 24, 2023).

The last theme that emerged from the analyzed data is teachers' learning media. Further, This study revealed that both teacher groups used an ICT-based learning platform that combines mobile-assisted language learning or MALL and computer-assisted language learning (CALL). The following paragraphs will elaborate on each of the features.

Both experienced and inexperienced teachers utilized Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) in their speaking instructional activities, primarily using WhatsApp as their main tool, as it is efficient and accessible for students (Sutrisna et al., 2018). ET-1 emphasized the use of WhatsApp groups for students, while ET-2 shared learning materials like YouTube video links through WhatsApp, stating, "I send the link

from YouTube so that they can access it at home" (March 21, 2023).

Additionally, both groups combined MALL with other platforms like Google Sites, Google Classroom, and Microsoft Teams during online sessions. ET-1 described managing pre-activity greetings via WhatsApp, followed by sharing a YouTube video link on Google Sites and concluding with a post-activity assignment.

In summary, the analysis revealed that both teacher groups employed MALL and similar instructional strategies like dialogue activities and video-form assignments.

Unexpectedly, only inexperienced teachers reported using communicative games and station rotation modes. The analysis also showed that inexperienced teachers were more familiar with blended learning settings, while experienced teachers mainly applied online or offline learning settings.

Despite the strategies, the participating teachers also mentioned their challenges in teaching speaking through blended learning. The following section will elaborate on the challenges to addressing the second and third research questions.

Challenges in teaching speaking in blended learning

The following sections discuss teachers' detailed challenges in teaching speaking through blended learning. These challenges highlight the similarities and differences between experienced and inexperienced teachers in managing communicative language teaching and communicative competence.

The analysis of interview data revealed three main challenges in managing communicative language teaching: students' linguistic competence, infrastructure issues, and limited time allotment. The following paragraphs will discuss each of these themes in detail.

The first challenge identified was students' linguistic competence, which focuses on pronunciation and vocabulary, essential for

meaningful and coherent communication (Brown & Abeywickrama, 2004; Khasawneh, 2020; MoEC, 2022a). Both experienced and inexperienced teachers reported difficulties with students' pronunciation. IT-2 mentioned persistent mispronunciations, such as saying /knəw/ instead of /nəʊ/ for 'know' (March 27, 2023). Similarly, ET-2 cited issues with the word 'student', with students saying /ˈstjaːdənt/ instead of /ˈstjuːdənt/ (March 24, 2023). Additionally, both groups reported vocabulary challenges. ET-1 observed that her students lacked a diverse vocabulary, often using generic adjectives like 'beautiful' instead of more specific terms like 'cute' or 'lovely', impacting their speaking performance.

Infrastructure issues were the second challenge. Experienced teachers faced problems with students lacking personal devices, which is crucial for blended learning using MALL. ET-1 highlighted that not all students could afford smartphones due to economic disparities in her rural school. In contrast, inexperienced teachers, particularly IT-1, struggled with internet connectivity issues, especially in online sessions. She emphasized the difficulties of online learning in regions with poor internet access, suggesting the need for broader internet coverage to enhance education (March 24, 2023).

Lastly, time allotment was identified as a challenge in managing speaking instruction in blended learning. English lessons in junior high schools are limited to a maximum of four hours per week (MoEC, 2022b), making it hard to implement blended learning effectively. ET-1 expressed challenges in managing speaking instructional activities within the given time: "Blended learning is less effective due to difficulty in allocating time for delivering speaking instructional material in one semester" (March 16, 2023). Similarly, ET-2 found it challenging to properly assess speaking activities given the time constraints, doing her best by assigning students dialogues for assessment (March 21, 2023).

Discussions

This section summarizes the key findings and discusses the factors that may have affected both teachers' groups concerning their reported strategies and challenges in speaking instructional activities in a blended learning mode.

The study highlighted similarities and differences in the strategies and challenges experienced and inexperienced teachers face in teaching speaking through blended learning. Both groups employed collaborative and individualized learning strategies and mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and computer-assisted language learning (CALL) tools like WhatsApp. These findings align with previous studies that emphasized the effectiveness of such strategies and tools in enhancing speaking skills (Fitri et al., 2021; Sembiring & Dewi, 2023).

Common identified challenges included students' linguistic competencies, infrastructure issues such as lack of personal devices and internet connectivity, and limited time allotment. These challenges were consistent with findings from other studies, highlighting the difficulties teachers face due to students' vocabulary and pronunciation issues, infrastructure limitations, and inadequate time for online sessions (Anugrah, 2021; Pratolo & Solikhati, 2021; Yusuf & Zuraini, 2016).

Interestingly, inexperienced teachers more frequently implemented blended learning and communicative games, whereas experienced teachers predominantly used non-game activities. These differences were consistent with findings that communicative games can effectively improve students' speaking skills when integrated with various teaching activities (Maryam, 2020). The study suggests that teacher professional development programs and school settings significantly influence teachers' strategies and challenges in blended learning.

This study argues that teacher professional development programs and schools' settings appeared to have impacted their explanations regarding their strategies and challenges in teaching speaking in blended learning. The following paragraphs provide an expanded overview of the research's problem and describe how the research findings addressed the research questions.

The first factor concerns the teacher professional development program. Numerous Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs, including Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran (MGMP), have been established to enhance teachers' professional and pedagogical competencies (GoI, 2008). The two teacher groups teachers reported participating in TPD programs that mainly focused on administrative tasks rather than technological literacy. Research, nevertheless, suggests that TPD programs should prioritize technological literacy to improve teaching methods and resources (Tamah et al., 2020; Wuryaningsih et al., 2019).

The analyzed data revealed that the inexperienced teachers reported involvement in TPDs emphasizing practical ICT-based learning strategies like Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer (GPT) training. Their involvement in such programs entails the process of implementing blended learning keeps going on effectively (Faisal, et al., 2021; Mhlanga, 2023).

The experienced teachers asserted to have joined TPDs; however, such programs put little emphasis on technological literacy. Accordingly, the learning instruction typically focuses on theory and limited learning variations. Such a focus is considered less than ideal since experienced teachers must participate in other programs beyond their schools to expand their skills and knowledge in the teaching and learning process.

In conclusion, experienced teachers have fewer opportunities to advance their skills due to TPD programs not emphasizing technological literacy suitable for speaking instructional practices, while inexperienced teachers attend programs focusing on

integrating ICT-based practices into their instruction.

The second factor concerns the school setting that may have affected teachers' reported speaking instructional activities in blended learning. Schools significantly influence students' academic achievement (Churiyah et al., 2020; Febriana et al., 2018; Pratama & Scarlatos, 2020).

This study identified two main issues in school settings – rural and urban – that may have affected teaching gaps between experienced and inexperienced teachers. Firstly, as the analyzed data indicated, experienced teachers teaching in rural schools reported having issues with students' personal devices and internet connectivity. Literature has acknowledged that school students in rural schools are often poorly motivated and are commonly raised in low economic backgrounds with low parental educational attainment (Faisal et al., 2021; Khodarahmi & Nia, 2014). The lack of personal devices and internet connectivity will consequently hinder the implementation of blended learning, affecting students' access to educational resources and opportunities (Kawuryan et al., 2021).

Conversely, inexperienced teachers in urban schools have fewer device-related issues, as most urban students have access to personal devices. The availability of students' devices impacts the process of implementing blended learning since it will enhance students' learning outcomes and allow them to explore their learning resources (Syamsuri & Bancong, 2022).

Secondly, this study revealed an issue pertaining to internet connectivity. The experienced teachers in rural schools in this study reported difficulty accessing online professional development resources due to limited internet connectivity. In contrast, inexperienced urban private school teachers seemed to have a better internet infrastructure, supporting the effective implementation of blended learning (Akbari & Pratomo, 2022).

Therefore, prioritizing facilities and infrastructure, particularly internet connectivity, in rural schools is essential to enhance the quality of education and ensure that students in these areas have similar educational opportunities as students in urban schools. Such a priority allows rural schools to implement innovative teaching methods, integrate technology into the learning process, and provide students with a more engaging and diverse learning experience. Bridging the digital divide and promoting educational equity will benefit individual students and contribute to the overall progress and development of rural communities and the nation as a whole.

CONCLUSION

The study findings demonstrated that regardless of the length of their teaching experience, the teachers from both groups shared similar narration regarding the strategies and challenges they encountered in speaking instructional activities. Both teachers' groups reported using mobile-assisted language learning or MALL – mainly WhatsApp – and computer-assisted language learning or CALL – primarily Google Classroom and Microsoft Team as their instructional strategies. In their narrations, the inexperienced teachers seemed to have had more encounters in using educational technology. The inexperienced teachers reported having applied more creative strategies, including communicative games and technology-based strategies, in their speaking instruction than did the experienced teachers.

Regarding the challenges, teachers from both groups reported similar issues in their speaking instructional activities, including students' linguistic competence, limited time allotment, and their students' limited access to internet-based devices, which were reported as the most demanding challenges. In conclusion, both teacher groups had no significant differences in applying strategies

and encountering challenges in speaking instructional activities.

To address these issues, educational agencies should prioritize TPD programs that focus on improving teachers' technological literacy and teaching methods rather than administrative tasks. Additionally, the government should enhance internet infrastructure in rural areas to improve access to online resources and virtual learning. Teachers should stay updated on new educational technologies to enhance their teaching strategies and create an engaging learning environment.

Future research should focus on integrating various educational technologies in blended speaking instructional activities and assess their effectiveness in improving speaking proficiency, involving stakeholders to ensure relevant and applicable findings.

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