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# EFL Teachers' Continuous Professional Development in the Use of E-Learning Materials in Indonesia: Perception, Needs and Challenges

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#### **Abstract**

This study aimed at describing the teachers' perceptions, needs and challenges to the EFL Secondary teachers in using E-Learning Materials which contributed to the improvement of EFL teachers' E-Learning personal and professional competency development. This research applies qualitative methods and uses case study as the research design. This research comprises a sample of 140 EFL teachers in Indonesia. The data was collected through questionnaire, interview to the participants and documentation of English learning materials and media. Then, the data was analysed by applying three techniques; data reduction, data display, and data verification. The results revealed that the perceptions of the teachers are they have adequate overview and competency for CPD E-Learning materials. Meanwhile, the needs of the teachers in the CPD E-learning activities should cover the combination of learner-led and e-coaching mode in the CPD E-Learning and served with both local and native experts to synchronise the local and authentic context. However, the researchers found that the challenges faced by the teachers are connectivity, teaching load and students' varied competency.

Keywords: CPD E-learning materials, EFL, online learning

#### Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic significantly impacted the use of technology in teachers' professional development. Teachers were faced with asynchronous and synchronous online learning and teaching which leads to the ability to utilize forms of technology. The effect of Covid 19 also shifted the teachers' professional development in the reliance of video to communicate and using various forms of

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resources which are accessible in visual format (Crane, 2020). Therefore, teachers have to adapt quickly to new digital tools and platforms, altering traditional methods of training and collaboration. This shift also highlighted the importance of digital literacy and the need for ongoing support to help teachers navigate these changes effectively.

Meanwhile, the increasing availability of online Professional Development has become crucial to identify effective elements in teaching and learning transformation (Poole, 2022). The online Professional Development should also be in line with the teachers' awareness of digital technology. A well-structured Learning Management System is recommended to be developed for the advancement in pedagogical perspective. In addition to the influence of the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on teachers' professional development, the 21st century has brought substantial shifts in societal expectations regarding educational systems globally, requiring the advancement of innovative teaching concepts and methods (Donaldson, 2014). Moreover, teachers are now expected not only to impart subject knowledge and elucidate learning processes but also to serve as role models in demonstrating effective learning (Schollaert & Lievens, 2011).

Continuing professional development (CPD) for teachers is an ongoing learning process that holds the potential to enhance adult learning principles, career prospects, and personal and professional fulfilment. From the theoretical perspectives, CPD is related to teachers' work practices, such as teaching and teacher development in a rapidly changing globalising and digitising world (Simmie, 2023). Therefore, in order to reach the sustainable improvement in learners' achievement, it is highly necessary to design effective online CPD programs (Ibrahim et al., 2020).

Apart from effective and digitalized, CPD should be relevant to local curriculum. CPD should be served in interesting, well-designed, student-centred outcomes, and relevant to the local curriculum (Liu, 2022). Digitalized CPD materials can be served through e-learning materials that can enhance learning and teaching behaviours. E-learning provides learners with an enhanced level of simulation that can be tailored to their individual proficiency levels. With daily access, students can progress at their own pace and revisit learning materials as needed. By allowing learners to customize content to meet their needs, e-learning offers greater control over the learning process, helping students achieve a deeper understanding of the material (Broadbent & Poon, 2015). To achieve the teachers' professional competency, Digital CPD should be complemented with planned, accessible, interactive and understandable e-materials. However, given this significance, there is limited research found about EFL Teachers CPD on the use of E-learning materials. A

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research found that e-materials is mostly used for student learning (Kencana et al., 2023). Another research found that E-materials are predominantly utilized in university student subject (Dinar Nur Syifa et al., 2021).

Most previous studies primarily focus on the awareness and importance of EFL teachers' CPD (Continuing Professional Development) through E-learning. In response to the evolving demands of 21st-century education and the impact of Covid-19, there is an increasing emphasis on enhancing teachers' digital teaching skills and methods. However, the literature examining the relationship between teachers' perceptions, needs, and challenges in this context is limited. These three factors are crucial for understanding how CPD E-learning should be designed and implemented. A close examination of prior research reveals that mainly centers on the design of Elearning for teaching, rather than on enhancing teachers' competencies. Only a few studies investigate the specific competencies of teachers need to cultivate using Elearning materials. Hence, to achieve sustainable improvements in student outcomes, it is essential to design effective online CPD programs for teachers. Additionally, while previous research has examined general CPD for teachers, there is a need for more focused studies on the use of CPD E-learning materials. To answer the limited literature in exploring the relationship between teachers' perceptions, needs, and challenges in this context, the researcher aims to conduct the study in exploring teachers' perceptions, needs, and challenges regarding the use of CPD Elearning resources, thereby addressing a gap in the literature on EFL teachers' use of E-learning materials for professional development.

Therefore, this research is led by three research questions as follows: (1) What are the teachers' perception in EFL Teachers' continuous professional development in the Use of E-Learning Materials in Indonesia?, (2) What are the teachers' needs in EFL Teachers' continuous professional development in the Use of E-Learning Materials in Indonesia?, (3) What are the challenges for EFL teachers' Continuous professional development in the use of E-Learning materials in Indonesia?

#### Methodology

This research applies qualitative methods of Qualitative Analysis and uses case study as the research design. The respondents are all ELT teachers that incorporate primary until secondary teachers in all over Indonesia. The respondents comprised a sample of approximately 140 teachers and 8 interviewees in Indonesia. In addition to the interviewees, the interview is conducted with 8 teachers from all over Indonesia, representing urban and rural areas. The data collected from the questionnaire, interview and documentation.

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The questionnaire comprises 34 questions. The questionnaire consists of 3 parts. The first part comprises open-ended and closed-ended questions. The second and third part consists of statements of the questionnaire containing either positive or negative attitudes towards implementing the EFL Teachers' Continuous Professional Development in the Use of E-Learning Materials in Indonesia . Using a 5-Point Likert-scale, the questionnaire scaled from 1-5 (ranging from 1 which means "strongly disagree" to 5 which means "strongly agree"). On the other hand, the scale for the negative statements was 1 "strongly agree" and 5 "strongly disagree".

The responses were analysed using descriptive statistics to summarize the overall trends and patterns in the data. Additionally, cross-tabulations and correlation analysis were used to identify relationships between different variables, helping to address specific research hypotheses. The interview data was qualitative, capturing in-depth insights into participants' experiences, opinions, and interpretations of the topic. The analysis began with transcribing the interviews and then applying thematic analysis, a widely used approach in qualitative research. This process involved several stages: Initial coding, Categorizing, and Pattern identification. The analysis of documents involved identifying relevant themes and pieces of information that helped triangulate findings from both the questionnaires and interviews. The process included Content analysis, Cross-referencing, and Contextualization. The process of cross-verifying data from multiple sources—ensured that the conclusions drawn were valid and reliable. This approach served several purposes: confirming consistency, exploring discrepancies, enhancing depth and breadth. This approach aims to combine quantitative insights from the questionnaires with qualitative narratives from interviews and documentary evidence enriched the analysis, providing a more comprehensive picture of the research problem. The findings from the questionnaires provided a broad, numerical overview of the study, the interviews added depth and context, and the documentation helped frame the case within its historical and organizational context. These elements were used to draw conclusions about the research question, identify key themes, and provide actionable insights.

#### **Findings**

The respondent population demonstrates that the intended representative sample was achieved. The selection of teachers that responded to the questionnaire were of all levels of English Teachers across Indonesia, 89.1% in secondary schools and 10,9% in primary school. The representative respondents were heavily female dominated with 68,1% female and 31,9% males. The semi-structured interviews were conducted with 8 teachers across Indonesia. The selection of the interviewee is based

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on the geographical areas in Indonesia. 4 of them are teaching in the urban areas and 4 of them in the rural areas. The selection of the interviewee is based on the geographical areas because in the questionnaire result, we found that the challenges in using E-Learning are the connectivity and ICT facilities. Thus, E-learning has significant barriers that require investment in infrastructures and teaching skills development to make students learning satisfactory.

To answer the research question to the EFL teachers' perception of CPD E-Learning, it can be inferred from the questionnaire result that there are 90,7% respondents who have completed the CPD E-Learning training, with the average of 62,1% of one time participating. Similar percentages showed that 37,6% participated in the government's CPD E-Learning while 36,2% participated in other organisers. In addition to CPD perception, it is divided into two perceptions, mainly in professional and self-development scopes. In professional scope, Respondent 5 (R5) wrote that " CPD is an activity to improve teachers' competency continuously and independently", while respondent 10 (R10) wrote that "CPD is a training which aims to sharpen teachers' skills, incorporating class management, ICT, teaching method and strategies in order to produce creative and innovative teaching" while in an interview with Teacher 3 (T3) CPD is perceived as, "The CPD is developed into various materials and updated with current needs". Teacher 5 (T5): "CPD aims to reach professional competency, the training should be divided into levels and graduate in each level, so that the teacher will achieve the competencies well." Teacher 8 (T8): "CPD provides the training of updated teaching lessons, we will be provided with creative and innovative teaching lessons that are adapted to generations". From these perceptions, we can see that the teachers are having an adequate overview for CPD as their perceptions of CPD are covered on updated materials and ongoing competency. Apart from their perception of CPD in professional scope, it is also broadened into personal impact as respondents 5,6,7,8,9,10,11, 12 (R5-R12) mentioned that CPD E-Learning improves their English speaking skills, Teacher 2 (T2) said that "I have my confidence levelled up from participating in CPD as we had the chance to interact with the native speakers and provided with updated resources", Teacher 7 (T7) said that " The personal impact of CPD for me is that we can communicate in English well in the classroom, it reflects to our satisfaction in teaching process that we can do it. Furthermore, the interaction with Native speakers in webinar enhances our confidence to practise our speaking skills". In addition to ICT application self-skill improvement, respondents 14,15,16,17,18,19, 20 (R14-R20) mentioned that CPD E-Learning improves their ICT application skills. This is in line with Teacher 6 said, "Through CPD E-Learning, I am able to improve my ICT skills and apply it not only for the teaching process but also

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to my peers", Teacher 8 said, "Although I am teaching in rural areas where the facilities and connectivity is limited, having ICT skills for self-development is crucial as my knowledge is levelled up and it motivated me to share it to students alternatively".

The second question of the result is the needs of EFL teachers in CPD E-Learning. To elaborate the needs, we need to know what skills they have acquired so far. In the questionnaire summary of section 2 using likert scale, the table showed the summary of the skill acquisition in CPD E-Learning and the ICT preference part they have participated in, this result helped us in producing and elaborating interview guidelines.

Table 1

The Skills Acquisition of CPD E-Learning Participation

Survey Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
CPD E-Learning teaches us on how to develop lesson plan	0,7%	4.3%	40%	55%
CPD E-Learning teaches us on how to apply ICT skills in the classroom based on the situation and needs	0%	1,4%	37,9%	60,7 %
CPD E-Learning teaches us on how to develop activities that correlates with students' skills and situation	0%	2,10%	38,6%	59,3%
I prefer CPD E-Learning with video and resources also real-time experience with the instructors	0%	3,6%	42,9%	53,6%

In addition to acquiring the needs, the summarised responses from the open ended questionnaire is included in some points, merely the same; developing lesson plan, developing activities, the continuous updated ICT skills. We also specify the types of E-Learning that can be showed in the table below.

Table 2
The CPD E-Learning Type Needs

Survey Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I prefer CPD E-Learning with recorded video and resources so that I am able to study repeatedly	0%	42,8 %	35,5%	61,7%
I prefer CPD E-Learning with recorded video and resources that combines	0%	3,5%	42,6%	52,9 %

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with real-time interaction experience with the instructor				
I prefer CPD E-Learning with forum and chat discussion to discuss with the instructor	0%	6,4%	41,4%	52,1%

These points are emphasised in the interview as Teacher 4 (T4) elaborated;

"We need a CPD training that gives us the skill in developing lesson plans in regards to adapting it from the applied curriculum and to update the ICT skills".

Teacher 1 (T1): "We need updated resources so that we can develop it into activities, we also need to know how to do the class management in the right way as it is correlated with a conducive class".

and Teacher 3 (T3): "Classroom time management skills are needed and rarely provided by CPD training, it correlates with the implementation of activities and lesson plan development".

Apart from developing lesson plan and ICT skills, mentorship sessions in between the CPD E-Learning is crucial *teacher 2 (T2)*:

"A CPD learning that combines LMS for flexibility and mentorship mentor with native speaker is needed, the lesson can be discussed and the participants have the opportunity to interact with native speakers". Teacher 8 (T8): "I think it will be better if the CPD has online or offline mentorship sessions, so that we can have the opportunity to ask and discuss. The expert can be provided by both locals and native. the local expert meant to assist us in Indonesian curriculum context while the native will be our motivation to increase our speaking skills and confidence".

By these data, it can be concluded that there is a need to have a combination of learner-led and e-coaching in the E-Learning with both local and native experts to synchronise the local and authentic context. With the exception of the teaching process and types of E-Learning needs, the teachers also reflected the needs of their self-competency to be improved. There is only 8% respondents saying they need personal needs impact and only 3 respondents said that they have improved their level of confidence. The needs of self-competency can be seen in their perception and elaborated more on the interview,

Teacher 2 (T2): "The teachers need to develop their communicative skills as some of them are not passionate in teaching and it correlates in their communicative skills. Meanwhile, speaking and writing skills are significant to improve their confidence in teaching, writing skills are crucial to be sharpened as it can be a way to be the receptive skills to enhance the speaking structure".

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Teacher 1 (T1): "I want a CPD that improves our quality as teachers, such as academic writing and speaking skills. because teaching writing can be a challenging part. We have to master the skills first so that we can teach those in a qualified skill".

Teacher 6 (T6): "We need our speaking skills to be improved, from my experience and point of view, the ELT teachers in the rural areas are not able to communicate in English fluently even though they have graduated from an English Education major".

From the interview responses, it can be seen that speaking and writing competencies are needed to improve the teachers' ability to deliver a qualified teaching process in the classroom.

In response to the EFL teachers' challenges in conducting CPD E-Learning, the result of the questionnaire responds are in the scope of understanding students' style 45,2% and increased self-motivation to keep up on learning improvement 50,7%. Meanwhile, the open-ended questions in the questionnaire summary showed that the challenges in conducting E-Learning are connectivity, teaching load and students' varied competency. As we can see from the interview responses,

Teacher 1 (T1): "Self-commitment for teachers to complete the course is crucial, as teachers, we are having a huge teaching load and teaching schedule, teachers should have awareness of the needs of self-development in themselves'. Teacher 4 (T4); "Even though we live in the rural areas which have limited connectivity, the knowledge and competency of updated skills especially in ICT is a must. In that way, teachers will be able to adapt in the current situation".

Teacher 2 (T2): "I am teaching in rural area, the students' motivation are low as the poverty rate is high and the facilities are limited, so in the teaching process I am focusing in their motivation and apply the teaching strategies from the CPD training, we need more CPD that provide us with various strategies and media to overcome those challenges".

Teacher 5 (T5); "I teach in a full-facilitated school, my challenge is in the teaching load and full teaching schedule so I can not cater to the students' varied background and it obstructs the learning achievement in the teaching process.".

From the interview response, we can see that the challenges have the same points as resulted in the questionnaire responses.

#### Discussion

Through participation in CPD E-Learning, the teachers' perception reveals that the materials contribute significantly to both their professional and personal development. This aligns with the British Council's definition of CPD as a continuous, planned, and lifelong process that helps educators enhance their personal and professional qualities, improve their knowledge, skills, and teaching practices,

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leading to greater professional autonomy, improved classroom performance, and institutional and student growth (Phillips, n.d.). Regarding professional development, teachers' perceptions include improving their teaching methods, strategies, and classroom management. Effective teachers have a deep understanding of the subject matter and are able to apply it competently (O'Brien & Jones, 2014). In the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching, educators must possess strong knowledge of language skills, phonology, pronunciation, vocabulary, and other linguistic areas.

Additionally, they must be well-versed in language teaching strategies and various methods suitable for language classrooms. On the personal development side, CPD plays a vital role in helping to achieve their own personal development in their communication and professional skills, through personal development (Herman, 2020). Therefore, teachers must work on enhancing their abilities in several key areas: content mastery, curriculum knowledge, teaching strategies, and selfawareness (Jhang, 2020). This foundational knowledge enables them to deliver lessons with confidence and clarity. This knowledge allows teachers to create cohesive and effective lesson plans that align with educational standards and goals. Moreover, CPD to include not only methodological skills but also subject matter knowledge, understanding of learners, assessment literacy, motivation, self-directed learning, and collaboration (Borg, 2015). According to the study, teachers identified Speaking Skills and ICT skills as key areas of self-development. Although limited research exists on the perception and needs related to speaking skills, a British Council study on ELT teachers in China highlighted a significant demand for support in improving speaking skills, along with decreasing motivation towards English among students and parents (Borg et al., 2022). Concurrently, professional development of EFL teachers should include the use of ICT, identifying future opportunities, and providing ideas for educational policy making (Ardıç & Çiftçi, 2019). Moreover, Professional development programs have had a positive impact on teachers' information technology skills and knowledge of ICT as a teaching tool (Lie et al., 2020).

In terms of CPD E-Learning materials' needs, the study found that lesson planning, classroom activity development, and ICT skills are critical competencies. Lesson planning and classroom activity development are parts of curriculum materials that are needed in teacher professional development materials. Teacher professional development typically includes curriculum materials, ranging from the introduction of new resources, occasionally accompanied by extra guidance or support, to the collaborative creation and implementation of classroom activities

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through approaches like lesson study (Elliott, 2019). In addition to ICT skills, teachers needed ICT skills to create English environment but having some barriers in using it. Digital technology is recognized as a powerful tool for creating a rich and authentic English environment (Chan et al., 2014). Hence, teachers often struggle to develop reflective and action-based skills despite engaging in professional development (Agbayahoun, 2016).

Teachers also appreciate a combination of learner-led and e-coaching formats in CPD E-learning. The learner-led model allows for effective, independent learning (Sundari & Utomo, 2020). In complex training contexts, a well-defined framework and guidance are beneficial, while for straightforward content, self-directed e-learning is an efficient method. Motivating trainees to achieve mastery and encouraging mistakes as learning opportunities can enhance outcomes. In terms of E-coaching, remote guidance via video conferencing and instant messaging holds value in supporting teachers (Kovalchuk & Vorotnykova, 2017). In addition, e-coaching's effectiveness relies on reflective practices, though it cannot replace the personal interactions found in face-to-face mentorship (Sundari & Utomo, 2020).

In terms of self-development, teachers identified speaking and writing skills as key areas to focus on in CPD E-learning materials. The British Council reports that speaking skills were of utmost importance, with many educators expressing a need for strategies to teach speaking effectively, particularly in the areas of phonetics, phonology, and pronunciation (Liu, 2022). While writing skills also require attention, there is little research focusing on how to address these needs.

Teachers also face challenges when engaging with CPD E-learning materials, particularly related to connectivity issues, heavy workloads, and students' varied competencies. Connectivity problems can hinder teachers' motivation to engage with CPD materials. Poor access to resources can impede teachers' willingness to implement new curricula. In addition, time constraints, workload pressures, and financial challenges are often reported as barriers to CPD (Geldenhuys & Oosthuizen, 2015). Teachers also face difficulties in dedicating time for professional development due to administrative responsibilities, such as lesson planning and report writing (Lie et al., 2020). Thus, teachers must adjust their instruction to accommodate the diverse competencies of their students, requiring them to build strong relationships and show the impact of their teaching on student achievement.

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#### Conclusion

It can be concluded that teachers perceive that CPD E-Learning materials have significant improvement in their professional and personal development. The professional perception covers teaching methods and strategies and class management while the personal perception covers the speaking and ICT skills. In terms of teachers' needs in CPD E-learning materials, the lesson plan and activities development along with the ICT skills are needed in order to keep up with the occurring growth. The type of CPD E-Learning refers to the combination of leaner-led and e-coaching.

In addition to their self-development needs, speaking and writing skills are preferred to be concluded in the CPD E-Learning materials. To achieve the effective result in developing CPD E-Learning materials; connectivity, teaching workload and students' varied competency should be considered. Consequently, the CPD E-learning materials should contain both professional and personal competencies serves in learner-led and e-coaching mode. The time allocation on each CPD E-learning materials development should be calculated upon teachers' connectivity, teaching workload and students' varied competency. This research is sponsored by British Council Indonesia through English Connects Teacher Educator Enabling Fund (TEEF) 2022.

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