



Deliberative Teacher Agency: A Phenomenological Study on ICT Integration in Writing Instruction by Indonesian EFL Educators

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Annotation. This phenomenological study explores how Indonesian EFL teachers exercise deliberative teacher agency in integrating ICT tools for writing instruction. Drawing on Molla and Nolan's framework, six dimensions are identified: reflection, thoughtfulness, collaboration, adaptation, evidence-based practice, and growth. The study reveals both benefits and challenges of ICT integration, emphasizing the role of context-sensitive and reflective decision-making.

Keywords: *deliberative teacher agency, EFL education, ICT integration, phenomenological study, writing instruction.*

Introduction

Deliberative teacher agency is conceptualized as a teacher's ability to think critically, make purposeful instruction decisions, and influence pedagogical practice in accordance with their unique contexts. In English as a Foreign Language teaching

contexts where teachers are continuously challenged to respond to heterogeneous learner preferences, multiple educational reforms, and ever-advancing technological change, deliberative agency takes on a new sense of urgency. It aids in transforming the ways educators approach teaching and classroom management into adaptive, efficient, and engaging learning environments for improved student participation and learning (Ashton, 2022; Pantić et al., 2022; Ahmad & Shah, 2022). Deliberate agency allows the teacher to plan lessons with care and take into account the welfare of the students and the teaching context, balancing both external and internal standards.

ICT tools can be employed to improve students' writing skills, which are frequently perceived as a barrier in EFL. Used thoughtfully, digital tools, including collaborative forums, media, and digital feedback systems, can foster students' creativity, interaction, and building of competencies (Backfisch et al., 2024; Karchmer-Klein & Konishi, 2023; Zagouras et al., 2022; Ziemba & Eisenbardt, 2022). The successful amalgamation of ICT into the teaching of writing, however, does not happen by default: it is contingent on the teacher's conscious, reflective decisions. Teachers need to understand not just the technological affordances of digital technologies and tools but also their pedagogical potential, using them in ways that connect to curricular objectives and student needs (Robertson & Yazan, 2022). As such, deliberative teacher agency becomes integral to meaningful ICT utilization in EFL writing classrooms.

Deliberative agency is particularly salient to Indonesian EFL teachers, who typically work in multilingual, multicultural classrooms influenced by such factors as scarce resources, policy restrictions, and local teaching practices (Budianto et al., 2023; Apriani et al., 2022; Hafifah & Sulisty, 2020). As teachers, they have to manage institutional norms and expectations, as well as the very material constraints of their classrooms, and both the linguistic and technological struggles of students, in ways that are responsive and flexible. However, while there is increased attention to the integration of ICT in the classroom and teacher agency, there is scant research into how Indonesian EFL teachers enact deliberative agency in EFL writing classes employing ICT tools (Molla & Nolan, 2020). Insight into this dynamic is an important guide for those responsible for policies, teacher training, and classroom practice that promote effective uses of ICT.

To fill this void, this paper takes a phenomenological perspective to investigate how Indonesian EFL teachers perceive and enact deliberative agency in using ICT in their writing classes. Phenomenology is a desirable approach to conduct such inquiry since it centres on participants' lived experiences, allowing for a deep exploration of teachers' reflections, choices, and actions in context (Ghiasvand & Sharifpour, 2024; Rezai et al., 2024; Imran et al., 2024). In contrast with those who favour generalisation or quantification, a phenomenological perspective focuses on those unique views that professionals have when completing tasks in inherently complex settings (Estaji, 2024; Derakhshan & Ghiasvand, 2024; Feng & Liu, 2024). The research questions are as follows.

How do Indonesian EFL teachers exercise deliberative teacher agency in integrating ICT tools and resources into their writing instruction practices?

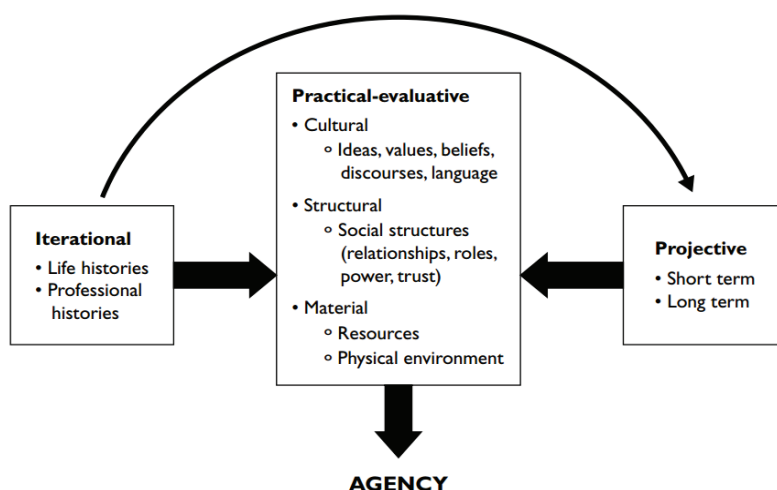
What are the perceived benefits and challenges experienced by Indonesian EFL teachers in exercising deliberative teacher agency as they integrate ICT tools and resources into their practices of writing instruction?

Through the lens of EFL teachers' experiences and perspectives, the current study intends to shed light on their professional practices, learning needs, adjusting factors influencing their agency. The results would add to the larger pool of literature on teacher agency and ICT integration and provide some practical implications for enhancing the quality of writing instruction in Indonesian EFL classrooms.

Conceptualizing Deliberative Teacher Agency

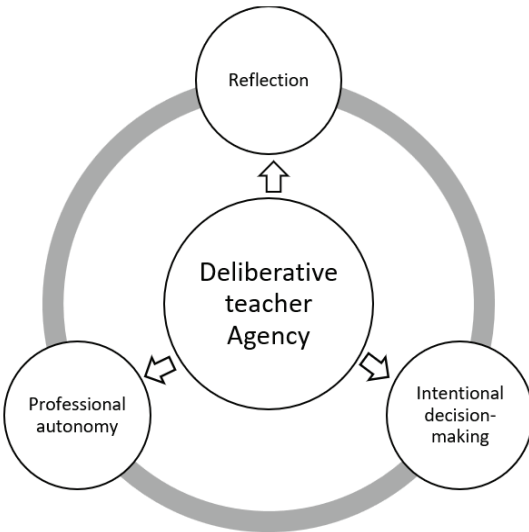
Teacher agency is generally defined as teachers' intentional and active decision-making towards their pedagogical practices, which is commonly shaped by the teaching context. It shows how teachers balance structural and contextual constraints with professional discretion in order to give students educational experiences appropriate to them and their needs (Reinius et al., 2022). This is elaborated in Figure 1 and draws from three related notions of time: the iterational, taking account of former practices and experiences; the practical-evaluative, addressing the nature of the now and the immediacies of the now of closing the classroom door; and the projective, what we hope to come to pass and shape. These dimensions illustrate how teachers integrate the past, present, and future to make informed decisions that guide their professional actions.

Figure 1
Teacher Agency Model by Priestley et al. (2015)



More specifically, the idea of deliberative teacher agency (Figure 2) provides attention to reflection, intentionality, and context sensitivity in teacher decision-making within this overall framework. As opposed to being an entirely separate category, deliberative agency is best thought of as a particular instantiation of teacher agency, characterized by a deeper level of cognition and focused judgment (Molla & Nolan, 2020). It requires close reflection on pedagogical alternatives and instructional actions. At the heart of such agency is teachers' capacity to reflect on their practice, to think critically about the pedagogical consequences of different tools or strategies, and to situate their decisions within instructional goals and student needs (Runge et al., 2023; Ahmad & Shah, 2022). It is this agency that demands thoughtful conscious doing but also some refocus internally and from the profession that allows teachers to make responsible, well-reasoned decisions in particular contexts.

Figure 2
Teacher Agency Model Adapted From Molla and Nolan (2020)



The significance of deliberative teacher agency is particularly evident in EFL writing instruction utilizing ICT. What this indicates is that ICT-based technologies, including collaborative writing tools, the use of word processors in the cloud, grammar-checking tools, and discussion platforms are more than just tech devices. They afford pedagogical acts, such as peer review, iterative drafting, and class-specific feedback for differentiated assistance (Johinke et al., 2024; Williyen et al., 2024). In this sense, a teacher's agency is manifested by making thoughtful decisions on how use of ICT can serve instructional goals, for example, promoting writing fluency, scaffolding revision, or promoting independent learning (Novoa-Echaurren, 2024). For example, choosing

to use Google Docs for writing tasks may indicate a conscious decision to promote simultaneous collaboration and peer-to-peer interaction. These are decisions which illustrate deliberative agency, in that teachers consider the pedagogic worth of digital tools, rather than accepting them submissively or reactively.

Understanding deliberative agency in this way contrasts with more reactive and habituated approaches involving the use of ICT tools, where the pedagogy underpinning their use remains unexamined and the tools are simply applied on the teacher's reflection. Those who show deliberative agency work strategically in ICT decisions concerning curriculum goals and outcomes, existing constraints, the lesson, and learner performance targets (Gao & Cui, 2024; Fawns, 2022; Jeon et al., 2022). This type of teacher agency expands the idea of teacher agency, and it is still one of the fundamental gaps for meaningful ICT integration in EFL writing classes.

This study focuses on how Indonesian EFL teachers integrate ICT resources in teaching writing, guided by the deliberative teacher agency of Molla and Nolan (2020). The theory offers a framework for examining the performance and the complexity of teacher agency in computer-mediated classrooms. Towards that end, research questions guiding this inquiry are designed: (1) to examine how teachers enact deliberative agency in their teaching and (2) to explore the perceived affordances and constraints associated with this process. These questions are theoretically underpinned in that agency is an exercised with reflection, judgment and action so that Molla and Nolan's (2020) framework becomes crucial to interpreting the findings and making sense of the complexity associated with the way teacher agency is experienced in EFL writing pedagogy.

Previous Research on Teacher Agency and the Use of ICT in ELT

There has been an emerging interest in teacher agency in language education, particularly in the light of pedagogical, technological, and socio-cultural challenges (Figure 3). Bringing evidence together from 24 studies, five core themes are determined: 1) language teaching and teacher agency; 2) teacher identity and professional development; 3) teacher agency in educational contexts; 4) language teacher agency and pedagogy; and 5) teacher agency and cultural diversity. All of these threads add to a more complete picture of agency, but people still know little specifically about EFL teachers in Indonesia and how they incorporate ICT in their writing classes.

The first thread, Language Teaching and Teacher Agency, illustrates the response of language teachers to pedagogical disruption and the evolution of technology through agentic engagement. The work of Ashton (2022), Chen (2022), and Lee and Jeon (2024) are only a few examples of the digital transition embrace studies conducted during the COVID-19 crisis which focused on teachers' acceptance of digital and ICT tools. Nevertheless, this research has a general scope and provides little information on how writing is taught.

Figure 3
Prior Research on Teaching Agency

Language Teaching and Teacher Agency	(Toró & Keszeg, 2022), (Chen et al., 2022), (Chen, 2022), (Ashton, 2022), (Zhang et al., 2023), (Lee & Jeon, 2024), (Jeon et al., 2022), (Zhu et al., 2022), (Vong & Wei, 2023)
Teacher Identity and Professional Development	(Groenewald & Arnold, 2024), (Davis & Howlett, 2022), (Li, 2023), (Ershadi et al., 2024), (Tao et al., 2024), (Nagel et al., 2023)
Teacher Agency in Educational Contexts	(Sang et al., 2023), (Dinh & Sannino, 2024), (Meihami, 2023) (Ahmad & Shah, 2022)
Language Teacher Agency and Pedagogy	(Shah, 2023), (Beck & Jones, 2023), (Watson et al., 2022)
Teacher Agency and Cultural Diversity	(Vong & Wei, 2023), (Troyan & Auger, 2022)

The second theme, Teacher Identity and Professional Development, investigates the relationship between teacher agency and identity formation and professional learning (e.g., Groenewald & Arnold, 2024; Tao et al., 2024). This body of work shows how the affective, situational, and ideological dimensions, such as native-speakerism, impact the emergence of teacher agency. Although communicative agency is theoretically rich, in this literature, there is scant attention to the pedagogical instantiation of agency in terms of classroom practices, particularly related to digital integration.

A third theme, Teacher Agency in Educational Contexts, focuses on how larger socioinstitutional structures, such as the school atmosphere, collegiality, policy reforms, impact the activation of teacher agency (Sang, et al., 2023; Dinh & Sannino, 2024). While these studies inform how the systemic conditions are conducive or stifling relative to agency, little was written about how systemic factors impact day-to-day instructional decisions, such as in regard to ICT-supported writing instruction.

The fourth theme, Language Teacher Agency and Pedagogy, examines how teachers act purposefully in instruction, in class and with materials (e.g., Shah, 2023; Beck & Jones, 2023). These studies show how teachers fight against dominant stories and give their students more power. Unfortunately, the link between pedagogical reasoning and using digital tools to teach writing is not fully explored.

Teacher Agency and Cultural Diversity serve as the concluding theme in this compilation, which applies to the studies researching the teaching practices of culturally and linguistically diverse students (e.g., Vong & Wei, 2023; Troyan & Auger, 2022). These

findings demonstrate the possibilities available to educators as active protagonists in the practice of inclusion and in the management of conflicts of allegiances to different social and identity groups. Yet, though applicable to multilingual EFL settings, such as Indonesia, these approaches rarely engage with the digital dimension of pedagogy, notably in the case of writing.

In summary, these five categories of themes extend the understanding of teacher agency in a significant manner. Nevertheless, there is a significant void in investigating how Indonesian EFL teachers enact deliberative agency in the use of ICT tools when teaching writing. Current research provides only a partial understanding of teachers' lived experiences in this domain, including how they negotiate institutional requirements, social norms, technical constraints, and pedagogic aims. To fill this gap, this current study takes a phenomenological standpoint in order to investigate the learning process based upon their lived experiences and perceptions of Indonesian EFL teachers. It is hoped that this qualitative method sheds some light on the way in which teachers exert agency, face challenges, and integrate ICT in writing in their classrooms. Working from the teachers' perspective, this study seeks to discover which motivations, challenges and strategies influence the professional work of teachers. This strategy provides nuanced, context-bound analyses of the intricate interplay of teacher agency and technology integration.

Method

Study Context and Participants

This research is founded on phenomenology, a qualitative inquiry methodology that focuses on the meaning of lived experiences as described by the individuals experiencing them. In general, phenomenology attempts to discover the meanings of individual experiences and concerns itself with subjective rather than objective reality (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). Through a focus upon participants' own reflections and interpretations, it permits researchers to explore in depth the richness of how people make sense of their everyday doings. This study, in particular, utilizes interpretative phenomenology (hermeneutic phenomenology), which transcends its descriptive role and seeks explicit meanings of experiences-in-context (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In this instance, the study investigates the ways in which Indonesian EFL teachers experience and practice deliberative teacher agency when implementing ICT tools in their writing instruction. This study is particularly well suited to the interpretative phenomenological approach because it is designed to illustrate the teachers' actions and reflect on the ways in which the teachers were making decisions, developing strategies, and coping with the challenges of ICT-based pedagogy. From here

the study is able to develop a more nuanced understanding of both teacher agency and ICT use, informing the subjective and contextual nature of teachers' professional practice.

The participants of this study were four Indonesian EFL teachers (2 males and 2 females) who range in age from 28 to 42, where an optimal number of samples is generally recognized in phenomenological research, which is attached to the intention of thoroughness, not generalization. They had 4 to 12 years of teaching experience and had a minimum of 3 years' experience in integrating ICT into their writing instruction. T1 and T2 were senior high school English writing teachers, and T3 and T4 were university teachers. Their courses emphasized writing instruction-narrative, expository, and academic writing. All residents had earned bachelor's degrees in English education. This variety of backgrounds offered multiple perspectives on the integration of ICT in various EFL writing settings.

Procedural Steps of the Study

This current study follows a structural-methodological approach derived from Creswell and Poth's (2018) phenomenological research to examine Indonesian EFL teachers' deliberative agency when integrating ICT for writing instruction. The most relevant procedural steps are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Procedures for Conducting Phenomenological Research

No.	Steps	Description
1.	Securing of the Fit of Phenomenology to the Research Issue	In this article researchers examine how Indonesian EFL teachers exercise deliberative agency in their attempt to integrate ICT in writing instruction, and the kind of influence it has on their shared lived experiences, and how a phenomenological perspective could be useful for capturing those experiences and informing teaching practices and policies.
2.	Identifying and Describing the Phenomenon	The concept is deliberative teacher agency in ICT integration into EFL writing instruction and represents teachers' reflective and purposeful actions in relation to ICT tools. Investigating this presents the intricacies of teaching writing in ICT-based classrooms of EFL in Indonesia.
3.	Specifying the Philosophical Assumptions of Phenomenology	In line with assumptions of the phenomenological tradition, the present study aims at investigating the teachers' subjective experiences of agency and the authors interpretation of their practices of teaching. It takes into account both the objective context (e.g., existing ICT tools) and personal reflections while bracketing out the researcher's own view to focus on the participants' view.

No.	Steps	Description
4.	Data Collection	Data were gathered from semi-structured interviews and class observations, according to a layered method influenced by Molla and Nolan (2020). Drawing on the interview data, constructed based on open-ended questions, the experiences, beliefs, and difficulties of teachers in employing ICT in teaching writing were documented. The discussions were audio-taped and transcribed for qualitative content analysis. Classroom observation offered immediacy in terms of evidence of ICT use both in terms of technology resources, pedagogical approaches to teaching, as well as degree of student engagement with the technology as well as report of perceived problems met during the time. These sets of approaches together present a holistic picture of ICT integration in EFL writing instruction, by analysing subjective reflections and observed practices.
5.	Data Analysis	The analysis was performed based on thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2021). The procedures are: All interviews are recorded verbatim for ease in transcription. Initial coding attempts to create the closest match possible to the data's underlying structure. A codebook is developed to streamline code assignment and aid in analysis. Themes that encapsulate the collaborators' collective experiences are constructed from major patterns and critical statements in their responses. This step is the continual back and forth between interview data and field notes where the developing themes are purified and confirmed. Horizontalization and Clustering: Significant statements are highlighted and clustered into meaning categories following Moustakas (1994). These clusters are then interpreted to reveal further meaning on the role of teacher agency and the integration of ICT.
6.	Textural and Structural Descriptions	The next is to create textural (what the participants experienced) and structural (what influenced the context) descriptions of teacher's interpretations of teacher agency and of the forces that have formed the teacher's expressions and practical guiding in their ICT practice.
7.	Describing the Nature of the Phenomenon	The summary at the end of the paper, using repetition and self-abstracting of the text to present a dynamic aggregate of what researchers have called in this study deliberative teacher agency in ICT-integration. It draws attention to shared problems, practices, and opportunities, providing a window into teachers' experiences of teaching writing with ICT and the agency they exercise in relation to the students' learning.

By using Creswell's (2014) phenomenological research design supported by Braun and Clarke's (2021) thematic analysis, this study systematically and rigorously investigates the experiences of Indonesian EFL teachers. In this methodological framework, not only a profound insight is possible into the teachers' lived experiences, but also a fine-grained exploration of the relationship between teacher agency and ICT integration in language teaching. This study will add to the conversation about how to best combine teaching and technology for students.

Findings

The analysis indicates that teachers make use of ICT tools with the purpose of improving the writing skills of EFL students. They engage in critical self-reflection, deliberate pedagogy, and professional self-learning, which indicates that teaching has a very important impact on learning outcomes. The analysis also emphasizes five advantages and challenges in EFL teaching.

Research question 1: Deliberative teacher agency among Indonesian EFL teachers

Exercising deliberative teacher agency through critical self-reflection

Indonesian EFL teachers focus on critical self-reflection for deliberative decision making, evaluating the effectiveness of instruction, and adapting relative to the learners' context and previous knowledge. All of the participants emphasised the importance of self-examination in guiding their teaching. They identified continued habits of questioning their assumptions, considering lesson efficacy, and responding to feedback as central to their professional development.

...I'm always thinking about how I'm teaching, trying to make it work for everyone. This includes looking at my lesson plans critically, listening to student opinions, and challenging my own beliefs in order to provide this comfortable learning environment... (T1)

...I constantly doubt my own assumptions and beliefs about teaching and learning, look for ways to grow and be better, seek wise mentors to support my work. We need to be able to know our limitations and accept student and colleagues' feedback ... (T2)

...I question myself a lot if I ask tough questions of my own teaching like, am I giving all students equal opportunities and creating an environment where they feel safe to learn?... (T3)

...I think a lot about how I teach, what goes on in the classroom, and how I assess in order to do better. So, it's knowing that you can be introspective and you can adjust to feedback... (T4)

These thoughts reveal a central aspect of deliberative teacher agency: an intensified state of attentiveness to pedagogical practice. According to Molla and Nolan (2020), deliberative agency consists of reflective and intentional judgments, which extend from the typical acts of teaching. The participants demonstrated this by their persistent attempts to investigate and develop their practice in response to student requirements and contextual tensions. The thoughtful position of the teachers exemplifies the inquiry-oriented thinking that supports responsive instructional decisions.

Exercising deliberative teacher agency through pedagogical thoughtfulness

Pedagogical thoughtfulness formed a second major axis of deliberative teacher agency. Teachers reported that they made deliberate, research-driven decisions to match instructional approaches to student needs, curricular goals, and pedagogical beliefs. While designing their instructional strategies, each teacher foregrounded an intentional, theoretically grounded perspective with regard to their writing instruction, focusing on the importance of theory guiding practice.

...In order to teach a lesson that targets the learning outcomes, and standards through meaningful learning experiences, I need to carefully consider the students, their background, the learning goals, and their standards.... (T1)

...My pedagogical principles are based on evidence-based techniques and research... (T2)

...I allude to thoughtful pedagogy, thinking deeply about the why behind what we do when we teach to meet our students' dispositions and the way they learn... (T3)

... Through designing learning experiences that not only interest and challenge students, but inspire students to think, we can develop greater understanding and encourage lifelong learning abilities... (T4)

Such observations are symptomatic of intentional convergence between pedagogical intent and instructional strategy. According to Molla and Nolan's (2020) model, the participants exhibited thoughtful processing on evidence until weighing the risk and choosing the alternative. The ways they respond demonstrate their deliberative agency as proof of meticulous action grounded on serious reflection.

Exercising deliberative teacher agency through collaborative reflection

Collaborative reflection was another unique aspect of deliberative teacher agency. Participants continually noted how collegial discourse and shared reflection underpinned their professional learning, decision-making, and re-envisioning of ICT-integrated writing. The quotes below demonstrate that all four teachers sought the peer collaboration as a means of enhancing pedagogical practice and increasing reflective practice.

...I value the insights and perspectives of my colleagues, and it's a rich and robust conversation about what's working well and what we need help with and who has some strengths that they can offer... (T1)

...I regularly attend professional learning communities and peer observations in which I can learn something new and look through a different lens... (T2)

...we can discuss a common problem, discuss possible solutions and can be a support for each other as we travel through our professional journey.... (T3)

...It is a wonderful source of support and inspiration, and it makes me feel that I'm not the only one struggling with teaching. We can accomplish more together and make a difference in student learning... (T4)

These narratives exhibit how deliberative agency might be socially produced and maintained. Molla and Nolan (2020) claim that this agency is never practiced in isolation, but instead, in dialogic reflection, it is an extended version of individuals. In actively challenging each other, the individuals gained practice in critiquing practices and pedagogical reconstructing. In this way, working together to reflect became an important device helping to support deep instructional insight and promote greater informed decision making.

Exercising deliberative teacher agency through responsive adaptation

Responsive adjustment was a feature of the participants' deliberative teacher agency. In the light of the rapid development of learning circumstances and widely varying pupil needs, teachers manifested a spirit of flexibility, creatively changing teaching patterns, among them the use of ICT facilities. All participants reported experiences of modifying their teaching as a result of changing circumstances, including remote teaching, digital literacies, and student engagement.

...I did adapt my roles to unexpected conditions, such as the shift to remote learning during the pandemic, by changing the pedagogical process in my courses and providing assistance to students... (T1)

...I've learned to be flexible in my teaching approach, because not all my students are the same. Whether it be incorporating a new tool or changing an assignment, I do what I can to meet students where they are and help them succeed in their learning... (T2)

... I've had to change the curriculum that I teach, use technology, and provide support for students to experience high-quality learning environments... (T3)

...I've had to reconsider my philosophy of writing teaching, experimenting with different technologies and modes of teaching while finding ways to reach students in online contexts productively... (T4)

These responses reflect the key idea that deliberative agency cannot be static but must be adaptable over time. As Molla and Nolan (2020) argue, it is the intentional

character of such adaptation, and not mere flexibility, which distinguishes deliberative action. The teachers' capacity to reorient their practices towards the goals of instruction in response to dynamic contexts is an example of the context-responsive judgment that typifies deliberative teacher agency.

Exercising deliberative teacher agency through evaluation and evidence-based practice

Evaluation and evidence-based practice surfaced as a critical foundation of deliberative agency and pertained to participants' desire to use data to inform instructional decisions. Teachers reported the importance of receiving feedback (through classroom observations, student performance, and feedback) to refine their ICT-supported writing teaching. All four teachers reported systematically collecting, analysing, and responding to various forms of evidence to enhance their effectiveness.

...I collect data on student learning outcomes, solicit feedback from students, and use evidence to inform my instructional decisions. By continuously evaluating the effectiveness of my teaching methods, I can refine my approach and improve student learning... (T1)

... I analyse student performance data, gather feedback from students, and conduct research to identify best practices and innovative approaches to integrating ICT tools into writing instruction...(T2)

... I use a variety of assessment methods, including performance assessments and formative feedback, to measure student progress and adjust my instructional strategies accordingly... (T3)

...By collecting data, soliciting feedback, and staying informed about current research, we can ensure that our teaching methods are effective and responsive to the needs of our students... (T4)

These reflections illustrate the inquiry-driven nature of deliberative agency. Consistent with Molla and Nolan (2020), respondents consistently appraised outcomes and linked instructional strategies to evidence. That they make evidence-based decisions as a part of a continuing critical inquiry into what works best, why, and how it can work better is a core component of deliberative agency.

Exercising deliberative teacher agency through continuous professional growth

Continuous professional growth was a reported theme that lay at the heart of the participants' proactive pursuit of learning and development options. For teachers, continued professional development of teachers was seen as key to improving their knowledge of how to teach and integrate ICT tools with the teaching of writing. All four of these teachers recounted participating in organized and informal forms of learning in order to keep up to date on trends in teaching and technology.

... I go after my own professional development, take classes, and engage in collaborative projects to enhance my knowledge and skills... (T1)

...If something is going to increase my knowledge, I want to be a part of it, whether it be further qualifications, certification or online communities. By continuing to develop, I can help my students more efficiently and effectively meet my students' needs... (T2)

...I'm always asking for feedback from my colleagues, reflecting on my practice and trying new ideas and ways of teaching. It is a matter of staying proactive and also remaining inquisitive of what's new in the field... (T3)

...I actively seek information about trends and best practices, attending conferences, seeking certifications in the field in order to further my abilities as an educator... (T4)

These narratives attest to the validity of reflective and intentional professional development in contributing to deliberative agency. Molla and Nolan (2020) identify inquiry, reflection, and autonomy as core elements of such agency. By deliberately seeking out learning opportunities and aligning them with their instructional goals, these teachers demonstrated how professional growth functions as a driver of pedagogical inquiry and continuous improvement.

Research question II: Benefits and challenges of Indonesian EFL teachers in exercising deliberative teacher agency

The results of this study support the advantages and obstacles of Indonesian EFL teachers in practicing deliberative teacher agency for incorporating ICT tools into their writing instruction practices. Based on thematic analysis of interviewees' responses, five major advantages and challenges were identified, drawing attention to the multiple benefits and challenges that both arise from and need to be addressed by teachers in the dynamic environment of EFL learning today. This evidence is summarized in the following table and contributes to the understanding of the complex pressures teachers are facing in negotiating the relationship between pedagogy and technology contexts of English language teaching.

The table above captures the essence of Indonesian EFL teachers' lived experiences as they exercise deliberative teacher agency in integrating ICT tools into their writing instruction. The gains are indicative of increased teacher autonomy in adjusting their instruction to be more suited to various learners, and of reflective practices that are self-sustaining in terms of teacher development. This integration results in increased pacing for educators, students more engaged with one another, and stronger classroom discussions. Yet there remain big obstacles to realising these benefits. Teachers face difficulties due to technical problems, deficiencies in digital literacy as well as the tension between the freedom of ICT tools and school constraints while keeping in control of pedagogy. Moreover, the efforts and time needed for adaptation indicate how complex it is to incorporate ICT into teaching and therefore the tension between innovation and sheer classroom management. These experiences shed light on the

dynamic nature of the process of ICT integration, influenced by affordances as well as barriers in the act of teacher agency.

Table 2

The Benefits and Challenges of Exercising Deliberative Teacher Agency

Benefits	Enhanced Autonomy in Instructional Design	...Using the writing platform, I could customize activities to suit my students' needs. I liked having the flexibility to choose the tools that matched my teaching style and their learning preferences...(T1 excerpt)
	Fostering Reflective Practice	...ICT tools made me reflect on my teaching more often. If something didn't work, I would rethink my approach and adjust the tools or strategies for next time. It has really helped improve my teaching...(T3 excerpt)
	Improved Student Engagement and Collaboration	...Students were more engaged and even collaborated better using online tools. They enjoyed adding ideas and giving feedback on shared documents, making the class more interactive...(T2 excerpt)
	Tailoring Instruction for Diverse Learners	...ICT tools helped me adjust lessons for students with different skill levels. I used a platform that gave personalized feedback based on each student's writing ability, making it easier to meet their needs...(T4 excerpt)
	Enhanced Professional Growth	...Learning to use ICT in my lessons has also been a learning process for me. I've gained new skills and confidence, making me a better teacher...(T1 excerpt)
Challenges	Balancing Autonomy with Institutional Constraints	...It was hard to align ICT tools with the curriculum. I had to find a balance between using new technology and meeting the required learning outcomes...(T2 excerpt)
	Navigating Technical Challenges	... Sometimes the platform would crash, or students had trouble logging in. I spent a lot of time solving these technical problems instead of focusing on teaching...(T3 excerpt)
	Addressing Digital Literacy Gaps	...Some students sometimes struggled with basic computer skills. I had to teach them how to use the tools before we could even begin the writing tasks...(T4 excerpt)
	Maintaining Pedagogical Control	...It was challenging to keep students focused during online sessions. They had access to other online content, which made it harder to keep the lesson structured...(T4 excerpt)
	Time and Effort Required for Adaptation	...Adapting to the new ICT tools took a lot of time. I had to spend extra hours learning the platforms, creating materials, and figuring out how to make them work with my lessons...(T1 excerpt)

Discussions

This study makes a distinct contribution to the growing body of literature on teacher agency by offering an in-depth, phenomenological account of deliberative teacher agency as enacted by Indonesian EFL educators in the specific context of ICT integration for writing instruction. While previous research has explored general aspects of teacher agency or technology use in language education, few have investigated how teachers reflectively and intentionally navigate the integration of digital tools in the pedagogically demanding domain of writing. Additionally, the study foregrounds six interrelated aspects of deliberative agency – critical self-reflection, pedagogical thoughtfulness, collaborative reflection, responsive adaptation, evidence-based practice, and ongoing professional development – thus advancing existing conceptualizations of deliberative agency beyond the individual mind to social, contextual, and developmental levels. In this sense the attempt to address the complexity of the practices is in line with the work of Bütün Ikwuegbu and Harris (2024), Groenewald and Arnold (2024), Paloniemi et al. (2023), and Fosse (2023), who focus on reflective practice as a way to promote teacher agency. The dedication to critical self-reflection observed in this study corresponds to the studies of Kim et al (2024), Yang and Gong (2023), and Ashton (2022), who concluded that reflective processes allow teachers to evaluate and make modifications to their teaching styles, which in turn improves their teaching proficiency. This situated view in the context of the experiences of Indonesian EFL teachers does not only fill a geographical and topical void in the literature but also offers theoretical elucidation as to how agency is manifested in under-resourced, multilingual settings.

Besides, the theme of pedagogical thoughtfulness is consistent with Demissie et al. (2022) on the significance of pedagogical content knowledge that has bearing on instruction practices. Intentionality of Indonesian EFL teachers in paying attention to the students' variety of learning needs and preferences. This consideration for personalized learning is in line with Balgopal (2020), who noted that technology purposefully integrated within a classroom allows for more precise and suitable teaching to take place. However, this study also problematizes the assumption that pedagogical responsiveness will occur automatically when teachers reflect on and have knowledge of practice. The results grapple with the notion that thoughtful educators have difficulty finding the best pedagogical practice within a syllabus-disconnected institution and within the gaps of technology, which indicates that thoughtfulness alone is insufficient if the structure and context are also not provided.

The study reveals that deliberative teacher agency promotes autonomy in lesson creation, reflection, student cooperation and interaction, professional progress, and self-improvement. These results support the claims of Chen et al. (2022) and Zhang and Zou (2022) that teacher autonomy influences teaching effectiveness and learner engagement. The ability to tailor ICT to the personal demands of learners echoes Rad et al.'s (2023)

claim that students who receive constructive feedback in teaching and proper adjustments made tend to perform better. The findings, however, also raise questions regarding the taken for granted empowerment-autonomy correlation. Autonomy is sometimes seen as a hardship, especially when trying to innovate in a limited technological or curriculum adaptable framework. This indicates that autonomy in contexts with strong institutional demands and minimal support can be performative or oppressive.

The results further corroborate Al-Rahmi et al. (2022) that use of ICT tools helps to cultivate effective and collaborative learning environments. The possibility of having students engage in collaborative tasks through technology allows them to collaborate with each other and gain a sense of community within the classroom, which in turn increases engagement and improves learning. However, this study refines these findings, as it demonstrates that these forms of cooperation are largely motivated by individual teachers' initiative, creativity, and the informal support of peers, rather than the support provided systemically. In short, without equity in infrastructure and access to digital media, the idea of facilitating collaboration through ICT may be more of an aspiration than an attainment, particularly in poorly endowed schools.

This research does, however, show that educators have a problem with their deliberative agency. Lau et al. (2023) discusses the impact of organisational culture on teacher agency, and it is striking how it resembles the battle between organisational control and autonomy. Suryanarayana et al. (2024) also tackles the problem of ICT integration into fixed curricula, and it epitomizes the contest between creative and innovative teaching and the rigid world of standardised schooling. This paper reiterates those tensions, but it goes further by delineating ways in which teachers are constantly compelled to make ethical and strategic compromises, privileging student interest and fitting into bureaucratic expectations to reveal an aspect of pedagogical negotiation that is underexplored in contemporary literature.

Technical barriers and digital divide issues compound the development and use of ICT for writing. This is consistent with the concerns raised by Molefi et al (2024), in the demand for the provision of functional technical support and professional development in the wake of technology integration. The necessity for teachers to invest additional time and effort in adapting to new technologies emphasizes the ongoing challenges faced by educators in an evolving digital landscape, a sentiment echoed by Haleem et al (2022) and Kaminskienė et al. (2022). However, this study also uncovers a model of resilience and self-regulated professionalism for teachers who do not passively wait for organizational support but who actively contribute themselves through peer learning, self-study, and an improvisation of resources in order to ensure pedagogical quality. This agency-in-action represents a form of professional development which is dynamic and proactive and moves beyond the model of an assumed formal training model that is reflected in the literature.

The results indicate that continued professional development is key to the development of teachers' confidence and competence to integrate ICT tools within their teaching. Continuous professional development enhances educators while simultaneously equipping them with the skills required to navigate the complexities of contemporary teaching styles (Ordynans et al., 2024; Oliveira Leite et al., 2024). Most significantly, however, this study also underscores the importance of professional development models that are responsive to local context, emphasizing the importance of context-appropriateness, flexibility, and teacher voice, over top-down, one-size-fits-all programs that fail to take the particular challenges of a given education system into account.

The implications of this study reach far beyond Indonesia, in light of the fact that competing tensions found between teachers' autonomy and institutional conformity have likewise been found in centralized system, for example, China and South Korea, where centralized policy making limit pedagogical flexibility (Chen, 2022; Zhang & Wang, 2025). For example, in countries such as Finland and New Zealand, teachers are freer to shape the curriculum, mobilizing alternative enactments of agency within more conducive contexts (Chung, 2023; Reinius et al., 2022). The description is enriched by the Indonesian context, marked by the crossing point of inflexible curricula, scant infrastructure, and socio-economic differences. All three conditions are found in most Local South environments. As such, the findings shed light on the global discourse about the enactment of deliberative agency across different educational ecologies.

Conclusion

The research clearly indicates the role of teacher agency within the context of Indonesian EFL writing classes. Instructors implement divided instructional strategy, collective reflection, teaching mindfulness, self-critique, and responsive pedagogy. Still, issues like technical issues, lacking computer skills, outdated curriculum, and extensive material adaptation persist. The report proposes optimal institutional frameworks, professional ICT training concerning pedagogy, and institutional ICT facilities. It is necessary to examine whether the use of ICT shapes instructors' future language use over an extended period. This may involve extended investigations into the students' writing skills, the teaching methods, the ICT elements incorporated into the teaching, and the institutional frameworks. The relationship needs to be established because, as ICT becomes more prevalent in teaching, effective approaches to teaching language need to be prepared.

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Sąmoninga mokytojų veikmė: fenomenologinis rašybos mokymo taikant IKT tyrimas (Indonezijos EFL mokytojų praktika)

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Santrauka

Šiuo fenomenologiniu tyrimu atskleidžiama, kaip Indonezijos anglų kalbos, kaip užsienio kalbos (angl. *EFL*), mokytojai pritaiko sąmoningą mokytojo veikmę integruodami IKT įrankius į rašybos mokymą. Remiantis Mollo's ir Nolan'o sistema, išskiriami šeši pagrindiniai aspektai: kritinė savirefleksija, pedagoginis apmąstymas, bendradarbiavimu grįsta refleksija, reaguojanti adaptacija, įrodymais grįsta praktika ir nuolatinis profesinis tobulėjimas. Naudojant pusiau struktūrizuotus interviu ir stebėjimus klasėje, nagrinėjamas mokytojų refleksyvus ir sąmoningas sprendimų priėmimas taikant IKT unikaliems mokymo kontekstams. Tyrimas atskleidžia šio proceso privalumus ir iššūkius. Kaip privalumai išskirtini šie aspektai: didesnė mokymo planavimo autonomija, geresnis besimokančiųjų įsitraukimas ir bendradarbiavimas, pritaikytas mokymas skirtingiems besimokantiejiems ir sustiprintas profesinis tobulėjimas. Vis dėlto esama ir iššūkių. Jie apima institucinių apribojimų valdymą, skaitmeninio raštingumo spragas, techninius sunkumus, pedagoginės kontrolės išlaikymą ir didelius laiko reikalavimus IKT pritaikymui. Šis tyrimas praturtina supratimą, kaip mokytojo veikmė įmanoma nepakankamai išteklių turinčiuose EFL kontekstuose, ir pateikia praktinių patarimų profesiniam tobulėjimui, mokymo programų reformai ir IKT integravimo politikai kalbų mokyme.

Esminiai žodžiai: *sąmoninga mokytojo veikmė, anglų kalbos kaip užsienio kalbos ugdymas, IKT integracija, fenomenologinis tyrimas, rašybos mokymas.*

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