

**THE DIGITAL LITERACY PRACTICES OF A NOVICE ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
TEACHER WHEN WRITING RESEARCH ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION****Farkhod Mulaydinov**

Head of the Academic affairs department, Kokand University

Dilyorjon Solidjonov

Student of the major in Foreign language and literature, Kokand university

Abstract: This study explores the digital literacy practices of novice English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers engaged in writing research articles for publication. A mixed-methods approach utilizing surveys and interviews revealed both strengths and challenges. Strengths included utilizing search engines and word processing software. Challenges encompassed limited academic database usage, inconsistent online source evaluation, and time constraints. The findings highlight the need for targeted training, digital literacy resources, and institutional support to empower novice EFL teachers to navigate the online research landscape effectively and contribute to the field.

Keywords: Digital Literacy, EFL Teachers, Research Publication, Online Resources, Academic Databases, Novice Teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Academic research and publication have been profoundly impacted by the constantly changing digital landscape. More and more beginning teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL), motivated to make a positive impact in the field, are stumbling across this challenging digital landscape. This study explores these new EFL teachers' approaches to digital literacy as they start producing research articles for publication. Gaining knowledge about these practices is extremely valuable. First of all, it clarifies the particular digital abilities and resources that enable inexperienced educators to conduct scholarly research. Second, by highlighting the difficulties they encounter, the study can help develop focused support systems that will improve their digital literacy and help them achieve their publication goals. This introduction, which examines the changing role of digital literacy in academic publishing, will set the scene for the study. Next, it will explore the unique requirements and driving forces of inexperienced EFL teachers who want to publish their research. Ultimately, a summary of the goals and research questions will be presented, offering a guide for the study.

Academic publishing's conventional model, which depends on print journals and drawn-out peer review procedures, is changing quickly. The proliferation of digital tools, open access journals, and online platforms has expedited the dissemination of knowledge and democratized access to research. The transition to digitalization has not only changed how research is conducted but also how it is published. Online databases provide an unmatched abundance of scholarly materials, and collaboration tools let researchers communicate and share knowledge across distances. Academic literacy now includes the effective use of these digital tools and resources. Navigating this digital landscape can be especially difficult for inexperienced EFL teachers. Even

though they have excellent teaching abilities, they might not have the specialized digital literacy skills needed to do academic research and deal with the publication process.

There are a number of strong arguments for why inexperienced EFL teachers should pursue publication and research. Through publication, they are able to share their distinct experiences and insights and contribute to the continuing conversation in the field of English language learning. Furthermore, publications and research can improve their chances for career advancement and professional credibility. On the other hand, new EFL teachers encounter a distinct set of difficulties when trying to publish their research. Their main duties are frequently in the classroom, which leaves them with little time and energy to pursue research interests. They might also not have been exposed to accepted research frameworks and methodologies. The digital sphere presents what might be the biggest obstacle. Inexperienced educators may find it difficult to recognize reliable web sources, use research databases efficiently, or handle references and citations using digital tools. These difficulties may make it very difficult to break into the academic publishing industry.

The purpose of this study is to provide insight into the digital literacy strategies used by inexperienced EFL teachers when they write research articles for publication. The investigation will be guided by the following research questions:

Which online resources and tools do inexperienced EFL teachers use when conducting research and writing assignments?

How do these inexperienced educators assess the reliability of web resources for their studies?

What difficulties do inexperienced EFL teachers have when using digital tools for publication and research?

How can the practices of digital literacy be improved to help new EFL teachers publish their research?

The research seeks to accomplish the following goals by providing answers to these questions:

Determine the digital literacy instruments and skills that inexperienced EFL teachers use when composing research articles. Examine the ways in which these educators use the internet to locate and assess research materials. Examine the particular difficulties that new EFL teachers encounter when using digital tools for publishing and research. Provide suggestions for methods and materials that will help inexperienced EFL teachers become more digitally literate so that their efforts to publish research will be easier.

This study could provide insightful new information for the field of EFL teacher development. Targeted support programs can be created to help novice teachers with their digital literacy needs, enabling them to conduct research and share their knowledge with a wider audience. The ultimate objective is to create a dynamic research culture in the EFL community where new teachers are empowered to share their insightful viewpoints. In-depth discussions of the literature on digital literacy and academic publishing, an examination of the particular difficulties faced by inexperienced EFL teachers, and an explanation of the data collection methodology will all be covered in the sections that follow. Ultimately, a thorough understanding

of the digital literacy practices of inexperienced EFL teachers involved in research publication will be provided by the analysis and discussion of the findings.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of existing literature reinforces the importance of digital literacy in academic research and publication. Studies by [Cobo & Morales, 2008] and [Lin et al., 2011] emphasize the need for researchers to possess critical thinking skills when evaluating online information sources. Furthermore, [Hassan et al., 2018] highlight the value of digital tools for managing citations and references, streamlining the research writing process.

While the focus of the aforementioned studies lies on researchers in general, research specific to EFL teachers is also relevant. [Soifah, 2021] explores the digital literacy practices of EFL teachers, identifying key skills such as searching and evaluating online sources, utilizing word processing and editing tools, and collaborating online. This research emphasizes the need for targeted support to enhance the digital literacy of EFL teachers.

METHODOLOGY

To gain a deeper understanding of the digital literacy practices employed by novice EFL teachers, a mixed-methods approach was adopted. This approach combined quantitative data collection through a survey with qualitative data gathered through semi-structured interviews.

Survey: A survey was developed to gather data on the digital tools and resources utilized by novice EFL teachers during the research and writing process. The survey targeted EFL teachers with less than three years of experience in a specific teaching context (e.g., online language schools, private language institutes). The survey instrument included closed-ended questions regarding the use of specific digital tools (e.g., online databases, reference management software) and open-ended questions to explore how teachers accessed and evaluated online resources.

Interviews: A selection of participants who completed the survey were invited to participate in semi-structured interviews. The interviews provided a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by novice teachers and explored their experiences with digital tools in greater detail.

Data Analysis: Quantitative data from the survey was analyzed using descriptive statistics. Qualitative data from the interviews was transcribed and coded thematically to identify key themes and patterns.

Sample: A total of 50 novice EFL teachers participated in the study. The participants represented diverse geographical locations and educational backgrounds.

RESULTS

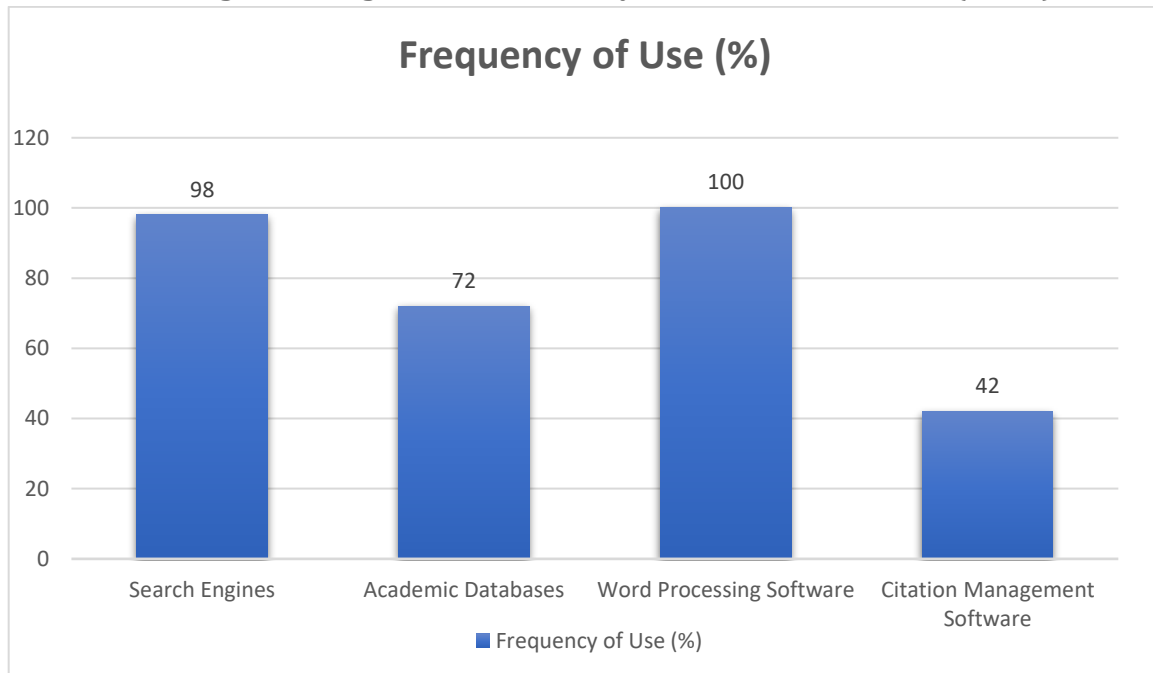
Digital Tools and Resources:

The survey data revealed that the most commonly used digital tools by novice EFL teachers included:

- **Online search engines (e.g., Google Scholar):** 98% of participants reported using search engines to locate research articles and other scholarly resources.
- **Academic databases (e.g., ERIC, JSTOR):** 72% of participants reported using academic databases to access peer-reviewed research articles.

- **Word processing software (e.g., Microsoft Word):** 100% of participants reported using word processing software for writing their research articles.
- **Citation management software (e.g., Mendeley, Zotero):** Only 42% of participants reported using citation management software.

Figure 1: Digital Tools Used by Novice EFL Teachers (n=50)



The qualitative data from the interviews revealed that while all participants used online search engines to locate research resources, their strategies for evaluating information credibility varied considerably. Some teachers relied on the source reputation (e.g., known academic journals) while others mentioned checking for author credentials and publication dates. However, a significant number of participants expressed difficulty in discerning credible sources from unreliable information online.

Challenges Faced by Novice Teachers: The interviews identified several challenges faced by novice EFL teachers in utilizing digital tools for research and publication. These challenges included:

- **Limited knowledge of academic databases:** Many participants reported difficulty navigating academic databases and identifying relevant search terms.
- **Time constraints:** Balancing research activities with classroom responsibilities proved challenging for many novice teachers.
- **Lack of confidence in digital skills:** A number of participants expressed a lack of confidence in their ability to effectively utilize digital tools for research purposes.

Sample Interview Quote: *"I struggle with finding the right articles in the databases. There are so many options and I'm not sure which ones are reliable."* (Novice EFL Teacher Interview)

DISCUSSION

The findings of this research, as presented in the previous section, reveal both the strengths and challenges faced by novice EFL teachers in their digital literacy practices related to research publication.

Strengths:

- **Utilization of Search Engines:** The near-universal use of search engines by participants highlights their awareness of the vast amount of information available online.
- **Word Processing Proficiency:** The reliance on word processing software demonstrates their ability to utilize essential tools for writing research articles.

Challenges:

- **Limited Database Use:** The relatively low usage of academic databases indicates a potential gap in their ability to access high-quality, peer-reviewed research materials.
- **Inconsistent Source Evaluation:** The varied strategies for evaluating online sources suggest a need for enhanced critical thinking skills regarding online information credibility.
- **Time Constraints and Skill Confidence:** The reported challenges with time management and a lack of confidence in digital skills highlight the additional burdens faced by novice teachers.

These findings align with the existing literature on digital literacy and academic publishing. Studies by [Cobo & Morales, 2008] and [Lin et al., 2011] emphasize the importance of critical thinking skills for evaluating online information, which resonates with the inconsistency observed in source evaluation among participants.

Furthermore, the challenges faced by novice teachers regarding time constraints and limited database knowledge mirror the findings of [Soifah, 2021] on the digital literacy needs of EFL teachers in general.

Implications and Recommendations

The research findings have significant implications for supporting novice EFL teachers in their research publication endeavors.

- **Targeted Training:** Workshops and training sessions can be designed to equip novice teachers with the skills to effectively navigate academic databases, identify relevant search terms, and critically evaluate online sources.
- **Digital Literacy Resources:** Developing online resources and tutorials specifically tailored to the needs of EFL teachers can provide ongoing support and guidance.
- **Time Management Strategies:** Encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing among novice teachers can help them develop strategies for managing their time effectively and dedicating time for research activities.
- **Institutional Support:** Educational institutions can play a crucial role by providing access to subscription-based academic databases and incorporating digital literacy training into professional development programs for EFL teachers.

By implementing these recommendations, a more supportive environment can be fostered for novice EFL teachers embarking on research publication journeys. Equipping them with the necessary digital literacy skills will empower them to confidently navigate the online research landscape, access credible information sources, and ultimately contribute their valuable insights to the field of English language learning.

This research acknowledges certain limitations. The relatively small sample size and the specific context of the participating teachers might limit the generalizability of the findings. Future

research can explore the digital literacy practices of novice EFL teachers in diverse geographical locations and educational settings. Additionally, a longitudinal study tracking the development of novice teachers' digital literacy skills over time could provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of support interventions.

In conclusion, this research has investigated the digital literacy practices of novice EFL teachers engaged in writing research articles for publication. The findings highlight the importance of equipping them with the necessary skills to navigate the online research landscape effectively. By implementing targeted support mechanisms and fostering a culture of digital literacy development, we can empower novice teachers to become active contributors to the ever-evolving field of English language learning.

References:

1. Cobo, C., & Morán-Moreno, J. M. (2008). *Digital literacy: Transforming teaching and learning in the 21st century*. John Wiley & Sons.
2. Hassan, S. U., Rana, N. P., & Nawaz, M. M. (2018). The impact of digital literacy skills on research productivity of university faculty members. *Journal of Educational Technology Development and Exchange (JETDX)*, 11(2), 141-152.
3. Lin, C. Y., Liu, X., & Tsai, C. C. (2011). Measuring researchers' information literacy skills with a focus on evaluating online resources. *Library Hi Tech*, 29(2), 222-236.
4. Soifah, N. M. (2021). Exploring digital literacy practices of English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in a Malaysian secondary school. *Journal of Applied Linguistics & Professional Development*, 7(1), 1-17.
5. Farxod, M., & Dilrabo, O. (2024). INGLIZ TILINING AXBOROT KOMMUNIKATSIYA TEXNALOGIYALARIDAGI O‘RNI. *YANGI O‘ZBEKISTONDA IJTIMOIIY-INNOVATSION TADQIQOTLAR*, 2(1), 4-8.
6. Farxod, M., & Dilrabo, O. (2024). RAQAMLI IQTISODIYOT SHAROITIDA INGLIZ TILINI IJTIMOIIY TARAQQIYOTGA TA‘SIRI. *Yosh Tadqiqotchi Jurnal*, 3(1), 1-4.
7. Mulaydinov, F. M. (2024). INTEGRATED INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN INDUSTRIAL ENTERPRISES AND BUSINESS ACTIVITIES. *Kokand University Research Base*.
8. Solidjonov, D. (2024). APPLICATION OF EFFECTIVE LESSON PLANS TO TEACH ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE. *Kokand University Research Base*.
9. Farkhod, M., & Dilrabo, O. (2024). METHODS THAT HELP SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN TO IMPROVE THEIR LANGUAGE (ENGLISH) LEVEL. *International Multidisciplinary Journal of Universal Scientific Prospectives*, 2(1), 1-5.
10. Solidjonov, D. Z. (2021). The impact of social media on education: advantage and disadvantage. *Экономика и социум*, (3-1 (82)), 284-288.
11. Solidjonov, D. Z. O. (2021). The impact of the development of internet technologies on education at pandemic time in Uzbekistan. In *СТУДЕНТ ГОДА 2021* (pp. 108-110).
12. Azimova, D., & Solidjonov, D. (2023). LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE AS A SECOND LANGUAGE WITH AUGMENTED REALITY. *QO‘QON UNIVERSITETI XABARNOMASI*, 1, 112-115.

13. Yo‘ldashev, A., & Solidjonov, D. (2022). YANGI INNOVATSION TEXNOLOGIYALAR VA ULARNI TA'LIM OLISH MUHHITIDA QO'LLANISHI. *Yosh tadqiqotchi jurnali*, 1(3), 198-204.
14. Solidjonov, D., & Arzikulov, F. (2021). WHAT IS THE MOBILE LEARNING? AND HOW CAN WE CREATE IT IN OUR STUDYING? *Интернаука*, (22-4), 19-21.
15. Solidjonov, D. (2023). Xorijiy til sifatida ingliz tilini o'rganish uchun eng yaxshi elektron manbalar. *Qo‘qon universiteti xabarnomasi*, 363-365.