
English Teachers' Experiences in Teaching with Limited Instructional Media: A Case Study at SMPN 2 Kuripan

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Abstract: This study explores the lived experiences of English teachers in teaching with limited instructional media at SMPN 2 Kuripan. The purpose of this study is to investigate teachers' instructional experiences, emotional and professional responses, and reflective practices in a media-limited classroom context. This research employed a qualitative case study design supported by classroom ethnographic techniques. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, and were analysed using ethnographic data analysis procedures involving coding, theme development, and interpretation. The findings reveal that English teachers experienced instructional and emotional challenges due to limited instructional media; however, they demonstrated strong teacher agency, pedagogical flexibility, and creativity by utilizing available resources and implementing student-centred activities. These experiences contributed to emotional resilience, continuous reflection, and the development of teachers' professional identity. In conclusion, effective English teaching in media-limited contexts depends more on teachers' professional agency, reflective practice, and emotional adaptability than on the availability of instructional technology.

Keywords: limited instructional media, professional identity, teacher agency, teacher experiences, rural schools

INTRODUCTION

Teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia remains challenging, particularly in rural areas such as Lombok. Limited access to learning resources, minimal exposure to English outside the classroom, and inadequate instructional facilities often hinder effective teaching and learning processes (Stroupe, 2024; Laila et al., 2023). In such contexts, English teachers are required to design meaningful and engaging lessons while working under various constraints. This situation demands not only pedagogical knowledge but also teaching experience, reflective ability, and adaptability (Saiful & Triyono, 2018). One important factor influencing teaching effectiveness is the selection and use of appropriate instructional media (Safitri et al., 2022).

Teaching experience plays a crucial role in enabling teachers to respond to classroom challenges. Experience is not merely measured by years of service but by teachers' ability to reflect on practice, adapt to classroom conditions, and continuously develop instructional strategies.

Schon (1983) defines teaching experience as learning from real classroom situations through reflective practice. Similarly, Elny et al. (2022) report that experienced teachers tend to demonstrate stronger problem-solving skills and are more capable of selecting strategies that suit students' needs.

Instructional media is another key element in effective EFL instruction. Media such as images, audio, video, and digital tools can enhance students' understanding and motivation by making learning more interactive. Learning becomes more effective when verbal explanations are supported by visual and multimedia elements (Heinich et al., 2002; Mayer, 2009). However, access to such media remains limited in many Indonesian schools, especially in rural regions. In Nusa Tenggara Barat, fewer than half of schools have stable internet access, limiting the integration of digital media in classroom instruction (BPMP NTB, 2023). Moreover, PKBI NTB and UNICEF (2023) report that many students face barriers to digital learning due to limited devices and unstable internet connections.

These conditions reflect what Yusra (2015) describes as English-poor environments, where teachers work with limited materials, low student exposure to English, and weak learning motivation. In such environments, the success of English Language Teaching (ELT) largely depends on teachers' creativity, professional judgment, and initiative. This issue is evident at SMPN 2 Kuripan, a junior high school that promotes inclusivity and cultural diversity but faces persistent challenges related to limited instructional media. English teachers at this school lack access to basic audio-visual tools such as projectors, speakers, and internet-connected computers. Teaching under such constraints involves not only pedagogical strategies but also emotional and reflective experiences. Teachers may experience frustration and professional stress, yet these challenges may also foster creativity and professional growth (Hargreaves, 1998).

While previous studies have focused mainly on teaching methods and media effectiveness, limited attention has been given to teachers' emotional and reflective experiences in under-resourced schools. Therefore, this study aims to explore the lived experiences of English teachers at SMPN 2 Kuripan in teaching with limited instructional media, focusing on the challenges they face, the reflections they develop, and the strategies they employ to sustain effective instruction. This focus is reflected in the title of the study, "English Teachers' Experiences in Teaching with Limited Instructional Media: A Case Study at SMPN 2 Kuripan."

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study approach supported by classroom ethnographic techniques to explore English teachers' experiences in teaching with limited instructional media. The research was conducted at SMPN 2 Kuripan, a public junior high school in West Lombok, Indonesia, from June to July 2025. The population consisted of English teachers at SMPN 2 Kuripan, and three teachers were selected through purposive sampling based on their experience teaching with limited

instructional media and a minimum of five years of teaching experience. The participants represented different grade levels (Grades VII, VIII, and IX), with teaching experience ranging from 15 to 20 years. This design allowed an in-depth exploration of teaching practices within their natural classroom context (Yin, 2018; Spradley, 1980).

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Interviews explored teachers' instructional experiences, emotional responses, and professional reflections, while observations examined classroom practices in media-limited contexts. Document analysis focused on lesson plans and instructional materials. Data were analysed using ethnographic analysis procedures involving data familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretation (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Trustworthiness was ensured through triangulation and thick description (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that teaching English with limited instructional media at SMPN 2 Kuripan required teachers to rely heavily on non-technological and context-based instructional strategies. From the class observation and interview technique, the lack of projectors, speakers, and reliable internet connectivity affected the language skills instruction process, especially listening and speaking skills. The teacher was able to fall back on other instructional techniques, especially using the object, making non-tech visual aids, repetition, class interaction, and instructional class activities. The instructional lesson was mainly delivered using oral explanation, whiteboard demonstration, class interaction, and context-driven tasks, as can be seen, with instructors falling back on creativity. Beyond instructional practices, teachers' emotional experiences while teaching in media-limited classrooms showed distinct patterns. From the data shows in Table 1.

Table 1. Categories of Teachers’ Emotional Responses

No	Teachers Emotions	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Empathy and Care towards Students	10	35.7%
2.	Positive Motivation towards Challenges	8	28.6%
3.	Pride and Satisfaction	6	21.4%
4.	Frustration and Disappointment	4	14.3%
Total		28	100%

Observation data shows empathy and care toward students constituted the most dominant emotional response, accounting for 35.7% of. This was followed by positive motivation in facing instructional challenges (28.6%) and feelings of pride and satisfaction (21.4%). In contrast, frustration and disappointment were observed less frequently (14.3%). These data

indicate that while the teacher was faced with considerable challenges, his emotional involvement was dominated by rather supportive, resilient, and student-centred patterns rather than negative emotional withdrawal. These emotional reactions were closely connected with teachers' professional practices in the classroom. As can be seen from Table 2.

Table 2. Categories of Teachers’ Professional Responses

No	Teachers Emotions	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Creative Adaption	16	40%
2.	Students-Centred Teaching	14	35%
3.	Collaboration and Peer Support	10	25%
Total		40	100%

The table presents creative adaptation was the most frequent professional reaction; it constituted 40% of the practices observed. Teachers were observed to actively adapt instructional strategies, devise homemade materials, and use locally available resources as alternatives to unavailable technological media. Student-centred teaching approaches constituted 35%, where teachers were observed focusing on keeping students interested and enjoying classes

by using games, pair work, and other interactive activities. Collaboration and peer support was not as frequent, 25%, but still an important professional reaction whereby teachers shared materials, ideas for teaching, and emotional support to handle instructional difficulties. Sustained engagement in reflective practice further led to the professional development of teachers. Analysis of reflective activities and identity-related outcomes summarized in Table 3.

Table 3. reflection and creativity in forming professional

No	Teachers Emotions	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Building Confidence and Independence	18	42%
2.	Encouraging Adaptability Flexibility	15	35%
3.	Strengthening Professional Values and Peer Collaboration	10	23%
Total		43	100%

It reveals that building confidence and independence was the most leading outcome, taking up about 42% of the instances observed. The more teachers relied on their professional judgment rather than the technological tools. This followed closely with enhanced adaptability and flexibility, at 35%, since teachers kept modifying strategies as per the classroom dynamics and student responses. Strengthening professional values and peer collaboration had a proportion of about 23%, indicating that reflection contributed toward enhancement of collegiality, empathy, and concern for teaching.

Overall, the results demonstrate that teaching in media-limited contexts not only shaped instructional practices but also influenced teachers’ emotional resilience, professional responses, and identity development. The combination of creative adaptation, reflective practice, and sustained emotional engagement enabled teachers to transform material constraints into opportunities for professional growth and meaningful classroom interaction.

The results of this study show that the teaching of English at SMPN 2 Kuripan is more contextualized by the ability of teachers to adapt

to the constraints of the context in which they work than by the availability of instructional technology. Even though limited media meant the absence of projectors, speakers, and internet access, the teachers responded by improvising learning materials and strategies with locally available resources. This represents a form of pedagogical flexibility whereby effective instruction is located in teachers' ability to alter methods as per contextual realities rather than depending on fix tools (Richards & Rodgers, 2014). The pattern is very similar to rural Indonesian contexts where teachers compensate for material limitations through contextualized and creative pedagogy (Lestari et al., 2021; Nadila et al., 2024).

The teachers' instructional practices also demonstrate strong professional agency. By independently designing materials, reorganizing classroom interaction, and initiating contextual games, teachers exercised autonomous decision-making over their teaching practices. This aligns with Biesta, Priestley, and Robinson's (2015) conception of teacher agency as the capacity to act purposefully and creatively within structural constraints. Rather than being passive recipients of limited resources, the teachers positioned themselves as active designers of learning. Their use of real-life objects and collaborative activities further supports social constructivist perspectives, which emphasize interaction and shared meaning-making in language learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Tomlinson, 2013).

Emotionally, teaching in a media-limited environment involved an evolving process of frustration, motivation, empathy, and professional pride. Initial disappointment due to inadequate facilities gradually transformed into emotional resilience and renewed commitment. This finding supports Hargreaves' (1998) view that teaching is inherently emotional and that emotional challenges often become catalysts for professional growth. Teachers did not suppress negative emotions but redirected them toward constructive problem-solving, illustrating how emotions shape pedagogical decisions and moral responsibility (Zembylas, 2005). Studies in similar contexts have likewise shown that empathy, humour, and emotional engagement help sustain student motivation in low-resource classrooms (Fadilah et al., 2023; Anggela et al., 2024).

Reflection played a central role in sustaining teachers' adaptability and creativity.

Teachers continuously evaluated their instructional practices before, during, and after teaching, adjusting strategies based on student responses and classroom dynamics. This reflective behaviour corresponds to Schön's (1983) concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, as well as Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle, where experience becomes a source of professional learning. Reflection enabled teachers to transform challenges into practical innovations, including modified worksheets, movement-based activities, and alternative assessment strategies.

Through sustained reflection and creative practice, teachers developed a stronger professional identity characterized by confidence, adaptability, and collaborative values. Their identity shifted from reliance on instructional media to trust in professional judgment and interpersonal engagement. This development aligns with theories of teacher identity formation, which emphasize experience, values, and social interaction as key elements of professional growth (Sachs, 2005; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009). Consistent with previous findings, teachers in resource-constrained contexts often emerge as flexible facilitators and motivators rather than technology-dependent instructors (Risnawati et al., 2022; Sari et al., 2023).

Overall, this study demonstrates that effective English teaching in rural, low-resource settings depends less on technological availability and more on teachers' professional agency, emotional resilience, reflective practice, and creativity. The experiences of teachers at SMPN 2 Kuripan show that limitations can function as catalysts for professional growth, reinforcing the view that high-quality instruction is rooted in teachers' capacity to adapt, reflect, and care within challenging educational environments.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that English teachers in SMPN 2 Kuripan used the limited instructional media through their professional agency, reflection, and creativity. Instead of dependence on technology, it is the adaptability and emotional resilience of teachers that plays an important role in sustaining a meaningful student-centred learning process. These findings indicate that generally, effective teaching in

resource-constrained contexts depends more on reflective and creative capacities rather than material availability.

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