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Barriers about utilizing technological tools and the role of a principal: Autoethnography

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CALL (computer-assisted language learning); principal's attitudes; change; resistance; school leadership; culture; autoethnography

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Abstract

This study uses autoethnography as a research design, exploring my role of principalship toward technology integration in the language classroom and the EFL teachers' resistance to using computer-assisted language learning (CALL). Such resistance has created severe stress and an emotional threat to my well-being. Therefore, this tension between resisting EFL teachers and me has affected my administration skills, roles, and the relationship with the EFL teachers. Being both the research subject and the researcher in the authentic social context of a language school has provided me with a meaningful opportunity to investigate the tension in this autoethnographic study. The main data used for this study are my own memories and reflective analysis. In addition, semi-structured interviews were employed to assess how I created the culture of encouraging technology integration in my language institution. Findings have revealed my positive attitude toward technology integration and a range of problems encountered by EFL teachers that may have created tension between EFL teachers and me. In addition, this self-study has revealed other associated issues such as autocratic response, time constraints, a lack of experimentation, and the need for peer observation of CALL activities—further helped me develop a better perception of CALL resistance and different barriers impede its integration.

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1. Introduction

This qualitative research utilized autoethnography to investigate a problem in endeavouring to integrate technology in learning and teaching. More specifically, apart from using coursebooks, language skills would be taught by using technological tools, such as computer-assisted language learning (CALL) and e-content. Being the principal, I have often experienced EFL teachers' resistance to the use of technology in learning and teaching. Teachers' resistance created several problems and placed me under a great deal of stress. Tensions created between EFL educators and me created frustration for me and, therefore, affected my relationship with EFL teachers and learners, as well as my performance at work and my well-being. This was ensured sometimes by low self-esteem to lead the technology integration and foster the culture of using e-content. From the very beginning, I was faced with the problem, and I believed - that this was only happening to me, however, after discussing it with the other principals, the same problem was happening to them as well. Moreover, the literature provides evidence that technological tools are not accepted in learning and teaching by most of the teachers (Bullock, 2004; Carrillo & Flores, 2020; Scrimshaw, 2018).

The rapid development of technological tools utilized in learning and teaching provides opportunities to improve education and the teaching environment with the use of Web 2.0 technologies, such as social media which increases students' interaction and enhances their writing skills, as well as with CALL programs students can practice language learning through motivating activities (Flemmer, 2015). Therefore, there is a need for an instructional design method that utilizes these tools to facilitate both learning and teaching. I am designing this study to measure my perceptions of the use of technology in practice based on my experience. In addition, how I reacted toward EFL teachers' resistance to use technological tools and CALL programs. Moreover, this research intends to understand better how I create the culture of technology in learning and teaching. What factors and decisions facilitate this integration into a classroom, and as a result, promote a culture of technology use. Using my beliefs about CALL, my memories, reflections, and data collected from semi-structured interviews with EFL teachers, I hope to find answers to all these challenges.

I strongly believe that teachers and learners are the main drivers within the language learning process and the mediators of the effectiveness of classroom technology. Their educational beliefs play an indispensable role, in the way they perceive, and use technology in classrooms (Zhao, 2005, p. 454). Hence, researchers need to investigate the psychological, social, cognitive, and organizational factors that affect teachers' willingness to integrate technology in their classroom environment. Therefore, this study hopes to provide evidence-based on these factors. In addition, uncovering foreign language teachers' beliefs about technology can enable administration, professional development, and pre-service teachers' programs to make changes, to better suit the needs of foreign language educators.

Research has proven that the administration helps predict the teachers' abilities to integrate technology in the classroom. Numerous factors have been identified as essential for technology integration: a supportive school system, adequate resources, and professional development (Corey, 2016; Zhao, 2005). Nevertheless, the factors aforementioned do not provide a holistic picture of administration and principality and suggest the need to expand further the factors. These factors must be based on a new pedagogy which resonates with the needs of today's education. In addition, the literature discussion cannot provide evidence regarding the purposes of using technological tools in learning and teaching. Moreover, which factors force principals to build curricula around technology and how they mingle e-content with traditional settings environments? The administration at each setting and level plays a pivotal role in establishing the educational climate against technology innovation within the educational systems (Vanetta & Fordham, 2004). Therefore, this study can contribute to and identify the purposes of incorporating technology in curriculum design by principals.

Finally, to expand the current literature, this paper using autoethnography aimed to capture the ways, I experienced trying to implement technology in learning and teaching. Moreover, the findings of this self-study will help me to have a greater understanding of managing different contradictions and conflicts that arose between me and EFL teachers' resistance. In addition, I want to understand the factors that impede technology use and find ways to overcome them.

This paper hopes to make a quintessential contribution to the field of educational leadership, by providing valuable clues about principals' role in supporting EFL teachers using technological tools. Additionally, this self-study using autoethnography as a research design can be used by language school principals and administrators that are facing resistance from educators to implement technology successfully.

2. Literature review

To support this personalized study, in which the author is both the subject and the researcher, previous literature, which is in line with this study, will be examined. Therefore, I have selected to examine studies that have explored the use of technology in language learning and teaching and support my research and the chosen methodology.

Examining the relevant literature aided me to shape and build my personal experiences. Telling my own story, related to the EFL teachers' resistance to technology in the language classroom, as well as my role as a principal. Therefore, I am focused on two main concepts of the literature to construct the foundation of this research: First, I examine technology use and teachers' attitude, and next, I discuss principals' roles in technology integration.

2.1 Technology use and teachers' attitude

It is widely accepted that one of the fundamental roles that a teacher should perform is to organize and select the appropriate content and available tools which facilitate the learning process. Research has demonstrated that the success of technology in teaching depends on the teachers' attitudes (Bullock, 2004). Moreover, Bullock (2004) asserts that educators who have positive perceptions and beliefs toward technology use tend to feel more comfortable and incorporate technological tools in their teaching. Therefore, attitudes are quintessential in deciding humans' reactions to a specific situation. It is assumed that technological tools provide a different environment and aim to improve teaching and learning. However, it is not clear that technology improves teaching and learning because a certain amount of teachers seem to be resistant to its use in their classroom environment (Bullock 2004). At the same time, we should not take it for granted that its use improves the ultimate acquisition process. Moreover, teachers are unaware of the importance of utilizing technological tools in teaching (Aydin, 2007). Bates (2005) states that educators do not consider technological tools as part of their curriculum design. Nonetheless, I do not agree with the above statement because teachers seem to value the use of technological tools in learning and teaching and their views are that technology can be used as supplementary outside and inside the classroom settings. In addition, Anderson & Stillman, (2011) state that educators require a clear understanding of technology use and its outcome on learning. To some extent, I agree with the particular view, but I would add to the aforementioned view that educators need to be aware of technology content pedagogy. Therefore, examining EFL teachers' attitudes about the use of technology might provide an opportunity to bridge the gap between attitudes and pedagogy and provide some useful insights to principals toward teachers' technology resistance.

While there are many potential benefits from the employment of technologies in language learning and teaching, over the past years, researchers have explored the various uses of technology in teaching and learning. For instance, they have explored if learning is enhanced and other variables such as motivational levels, perceptions, and contradictions using technology. They found that optimal use of ICT in instructional delivery is rare or when used, it is often not truly integrated with the curriculum. For instance, the study of Wozney, Venkatesh, and Abrami (2006) provided evidence that teachers' use of computer technologies was predominantly for 'informative' and 'expressive' purposes. On the other hand, Bauer, and Kenton's (2005) study showed that language educators were well equipped with technological skills, innovative and adept at overcoming obstacles, however, they did not integrate technology consistently as a pedagogical tool. Whereas the study conducted by Oda (2011) discovered that teachers' beliefs are greatly impacted by past experiences both as teachers and learners in the classroom. In another study carried out by Zhong and Shen (2017) revealed that though new technologies were used in instruction, they were utilized as teaching accessories to support a predominantly teacher-driven class with minimum interaction between learners. Moreover, research studies have demonstrated that teachers' attitudes play a focal role in influencing their tendency to be in favour or against employing any form of technology in teaching (Cavas, et al., 2002; Kreijn et al. 2016). Kreijn et al. (2012) study investigated Dutch teachers to find out their usage of digital learning materials (DLM). The results demonstrated that attitude was the one variable with the strongest predicting factors for the teachers' intention to use DLM.

In short, the studies discussed above manifested that learners' motivation was increased, and students' ultimate acquisition process to some extent was improved. However, they explored their attitudes toward technology in teaching and not the factors which hinder the integration process. Therefore, it clearly shows a gap in the literature, which requires exploration, and this study addressed the particular gap.

2.2 The role of a principal

The principal role is to create effective strategies and vision to support learning and teaching (Leithwood & Riehl, 2003). The school environment consists of a combination

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of a school's vision, teachers, learners, as well as resources – and principals have control over them. According to Kurland, Peretz and Hertz-Lazarowitz (2010), a principal vision has an essential effect on the school's organizational learning. More specifically, Kurland et al., (2010) state that the principal's attitude might be only a piece together with the opinions of the community. Principals' duty and autonomy vary from school to school, however, most of them are responsible to set their objectives and creating a plan for their staff to ensue. Kurland et al., (2010) state that principals who developed a school vision for effective technology integration were found to be the most effective. Hence, principals' perceptions toward technology use in the school are affected by their vision regarding technology. To some extent, I agree with the aforementioned point of view, nevertheless, I would like to add that principals except the strategies and visionary leadership are required to bring digital age learning and model the use of technology in teaching and learning. Moreover, before they proceed to the integration process, it is very important to explore principals' attitudes towards technology use in teaching and learning. For instance, what factors motivated me as the principal of a language school to integrate technological tools and e-content in learning and teaching?

It is believed that the role of the principal plays a focal role in technology integration (Hallinger, 2011). However, to achieve and meet this integration, they need to change the school culture. In addition, something that is considered essential is the discussion between principals and teachers regarding the use of technology in learning and teaching. This creates a positive influence, which-in-turn influence learners' attitude (Hallinger, 2011). In addition, the role of the principal consists of thinking and considering all the compartments of a school, and the people who foster learners' learning and outcomes (Senge, 2015, p.6). To put it differently, it includes various departments and subject matters, named: teachers, learners, administrators, and parents. Therefore, in order to achieve this complex task and foster technology use in the classroom, principals need to communicate the value of technology among teachers, learners, and parents because they contribute to the ultimate use of technology in teaching and create the appropriate environment for successful implementation in the long run (Senge, 2015, p.6). Thus, principals can attain change and foster the culture of technology. Earl (2002) states that technology integration is complex and requires systems thinking, and I agree with this, however, it requires the appropriate pedagogy and methodology from the very beginning.

Anderson and Dexter (2015) pointed out, that principals' leadership plays an essential role in technology usage. In their study, they provided evidence that when technological tools are spread throughout the school environment, it is due to the principal's role. They concluded that in the particular schools the role of the principal had changed from a 'facilitator' to an 'initiator'. Nevertheless, I think that the principal's role changes when there is a combination of a successful integration process, and it reflects the teachers' role as well. In addition, their study could not provide evidence regarding principals' initial attitudes towards technology use, such as CALL and technological tools. Therefore, based on the aforementioned point of view, this study aims to investigate my initial attitudes on technology use.

2.3 Technological barriers and principal's actions

Literature provides evidence that principals' actions and decisions play a fundamental role in addressing obstacles related to technology integration (Draper, 2013). There are two kinds of obstacles: First barriers are to some extent external to educators, and this requires passing the appropriate knowledge and skills to teachers by training them. In addition, providing suitable materials and resources, such as software and basic equipment (Ertmer, 1999). The second obstacles are mainly internal, and as postulated by Ertmer (1999), they are the most difficult to overcome and change. Therefore, these obstacles seem to provide challenges to EFL teachers' and learners' attitudes toward technology, which forms the cognitive process and increases self-confidence use of technology inside and outside the classroom settings.

The study carried out by O'Dwyer et al. (2005) investigated the three factors: use, effect, and support of instructional technology research with a hierarchal lens. Their participants were secondary school principals and teachers from different districts. The study aimed to understand administrative organizations regarding the increased use of technology. They compared educators in a single building and found that teachers had similar survey responses. On the other hand, when comparing different schools in a single district, the variability was greater. They concluded that, albeit all the principals had access to the same software, principals provide varying technology-related resources to teachers.

Another qualitative study carried out by Venezky (2014), sought to explore the effects of instructional technology. More specifically, the study observed the approaches and strategies employed by principals toward technology improvement. The findings provided evidence that principals' management capacity which contained the appropriate knowledge and had a clear pedagogy, was more successful. Moreover, they showed using several strategies to facilitate

technology integration. Subjects of the study believed that this attainment was due to the principals' ability to provide professional development. I would say that this study missed the chance to reveal deeper perspectives. On the other hand, the purpose of this study is to present my perceptions and responses to EFL teachers' resistance to employ technology and fostering the culture of technology through the collection of qualitative data.

It becomes clear that the literature indicates several barriers, however, the most difficult obstacles include teacher beliefs regarding technology use and teacher technological skills. Moreover, the interplay of first-order barriers with each other, and with the second-order barriers seems to be complex. I would state based on my observations that EFL teachers who have more access to technology and are more experienced with technological tools seem to be more comfortable and less reluctant to use digital learning resources in their teaching than novice educators.

Many experimental studies have investigated principals' role in technology integration in language learning and teaching. Nevertheless, there are several problems and gaps which have not been addressed by the previous experimental studies, and are presented as follows: To begin with, various studies have attended to find out teachers' perceptions of technology in higher education (Smith, 2012). However, rarely are questions raised about principals' language school attitudes towards CALL and factors which impede technology integration regarding EFL teachers' resistance. Secondly, many experimental studies have provided evidence that principals have shown to be critical of technology integration (Fisher, 2013), however, they have not explored and explained how principals create the culture of technology integration, in our case CALL. Finally, these studies have not used autoethnography as a research methodology. Therefore, based on the gaps mentioned above, this study utilizes my experiences as primary data, aiming to provide answers to the literature gaps, and therefore, helping myself and the other principals to solve their contradictions.

3. Theoretical framework

Tate (2007) points out that a researcher aims to produce events of a community by observing their nature. Therefore, the way how the researcher delineates and observes social events entirely depends upon the approaches the researcher uses and the focus of the story. Therefore, this study hopes to provide different notions and stories about EFL teachers' perceptions of CALL employment and their resistance to technology integration. To attain this, the conceptual framework that makes up this study is Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).

To have a better understanding of the use of technology in learning and teaching TAM was useful to explain EFL teachers' resistance to CALL and perceptions towards technology employment. TAM attempts to explain how educators come to accept and use technological tools in their teaching and learning. The model has developed since it was presented by Davis, Bagozzi and Warshaw (1989) and has incorporated several variables and factors. The original model consists of four compartments named as follows: Perceived usefulness, followed by perceived ease of use, the third one is the attitude toward using technology, and finally, behavioural intention to use (see figure 1). Figure 1 shows that the actual system employment is affected by behavioural intention. The particular model is based upon two focal factors: perceived usefulness in addition to perceived ease of use to predict someone's beliefs in addition to attitude toward computer technology approval (Davis et al., 1989). Nevertheless, TAM was criticized because were several limitations. For instance, Surendran (1999) mentioned its inadequacy to pay attention to external factors and its poor variance of studies.

After the limitations mentioned above, Venkatesh and Davis (2000) expanded the initial TAM in response to the aforementioned problems and they deemed it quintessential that the other features must be included to better determine factors of perceived usefulness. Therefore, the expanded model contains the social influence processing variable (see figure 2). Although the expansion comprises more elements and especially the factors that impact the perceived usefulness, it was considered incomplete since it does not include the elements that relate to the perceived ease of use.

Therefore, Venkatesh and Davis (2000) expanded the TAM further which is known as the TAM3. The main objective of this development focused on the perceived ease of use (see figure 3). The elements added were called by Venkatesh and David (2000) the "anchors" because when the facts regarding the systems of use are deficient, someone tends to develop on general information (Venkatesh & David, 2000).

However, for this paper, the last version of TAM was used because it contains the comprehensive concepts related to the study. More specifically, the TAM3 model is useful for the study because it tries to explain the factors which influence an individual to adapt and accept a new technological item. Whereas the original model as discussed above was considered incomplete because it does not include the external

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Figure 1. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, 1989)

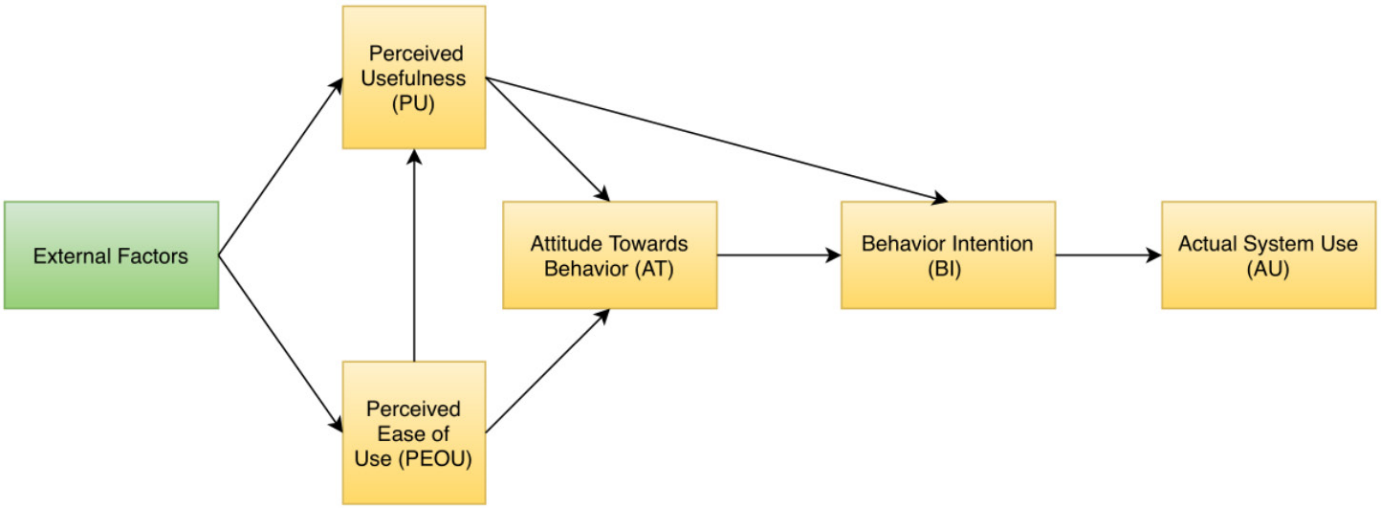
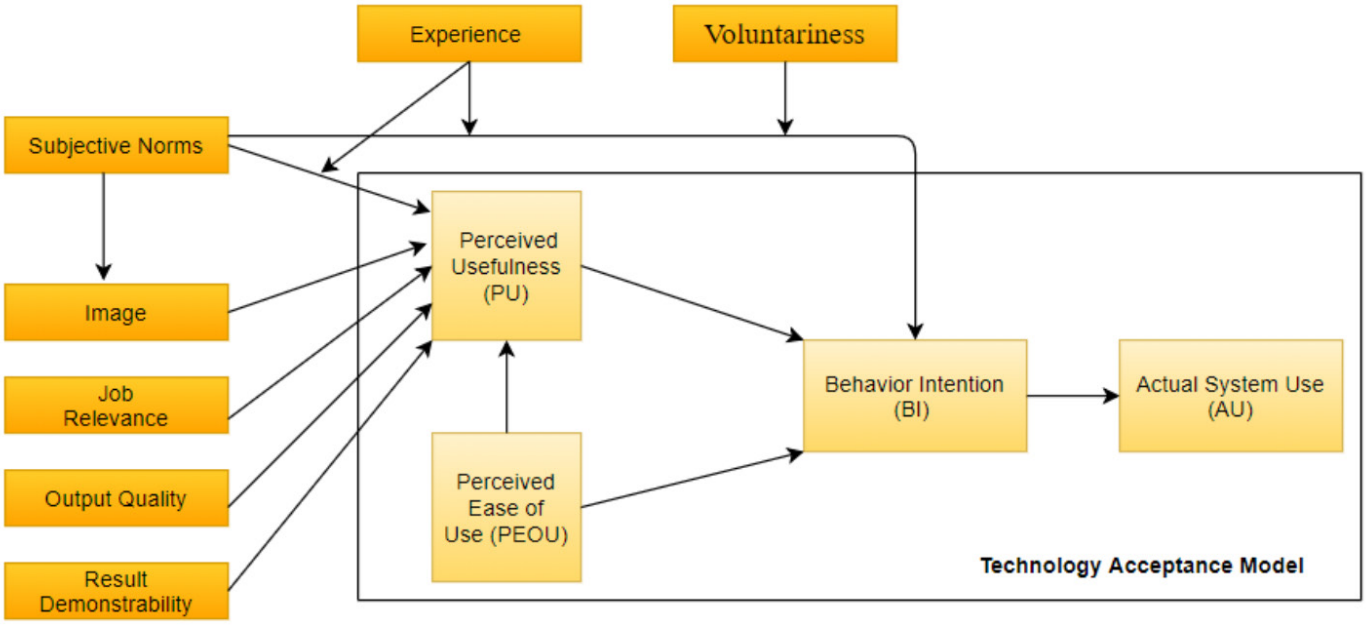


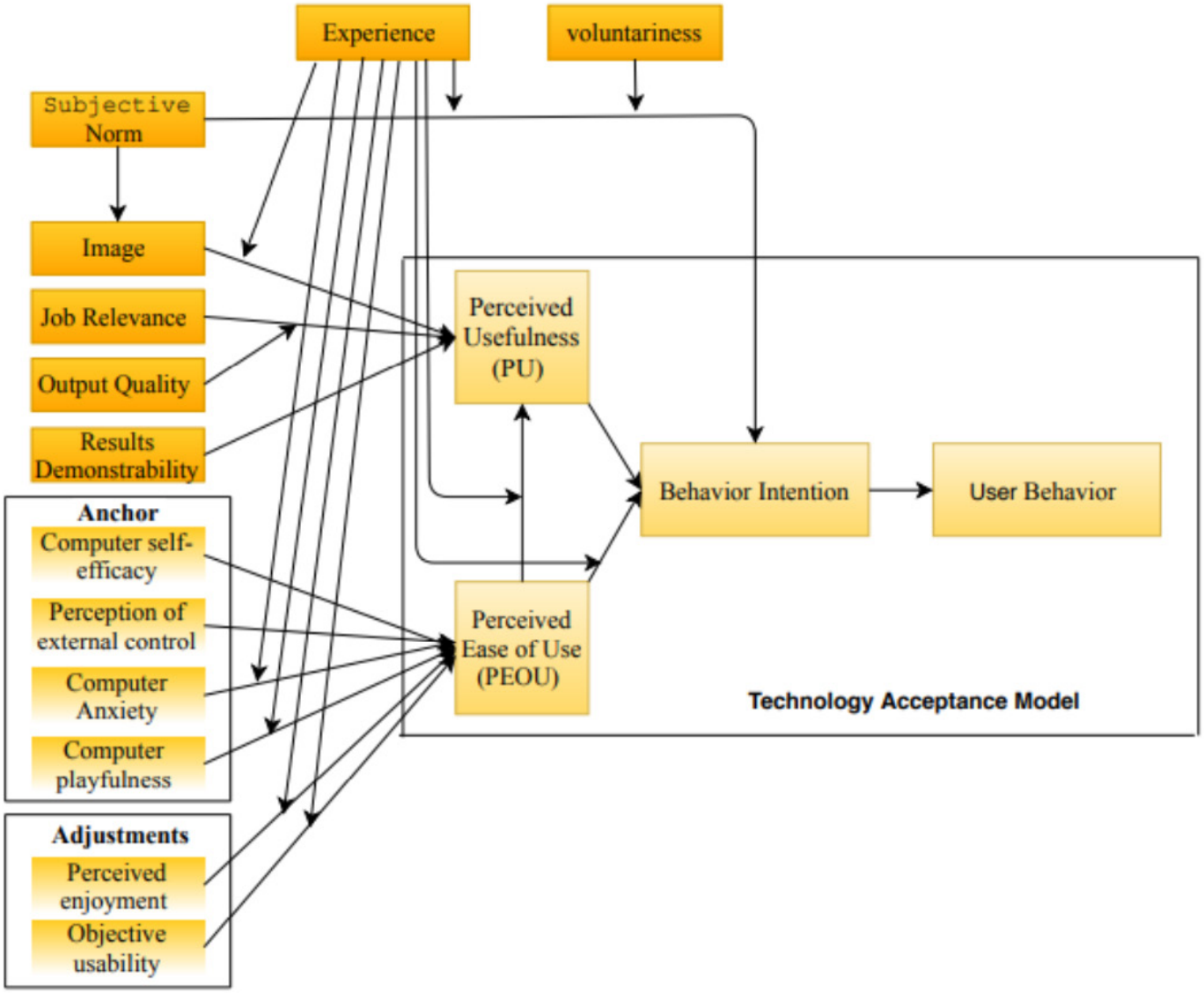
Figure 2. TAM2 (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000)



factors. Thus, for this study, the two important constructs of the TAM were used: '*perceived usefulness*' and '*perceived ease of use*'. They were employed because they are the most important factors of the TAM model and are further discussed below to gain a better understanding of what they refer to.

Perceived usefulness obtains that educators' or in general users' acceptance toward utilizing one tool should be quintessential for them and must believe that this item will improve their performances. Therefore, being aware of the benefits and pros of the tool, which they are employing. Having clear notions and believing that technology can be useful for their teaching and learning, as well as perceiving that their performance is enhanced, educators will use it. From the learning and teaching context, a teacher might consider important technology and might feel the need to use it because they believe that teaching and learning might be improved. This can arouse teachers' and learners' motivation to accept utilizing technology in their classroom environment (David et al., 1989).

Figure 3. TAM3 (Venkatesh and Davis, 2000)



Lederer et al., (2000) postulate that the "perceived ease of use" leads to the amount to which the users expect the target system to be of effort. We can find in literature the difficulties to utilize a specific item might result from a myriad of reasons, which include technical and non-technical things. The technical things that teachers might face can be regarding lack of resources, equipment, internet connection, and a plethora of other factors which shape these difficulties. In addition, they might also feel unwilling to employ technological tools, and this is related to their lack of appropriate knowledge to use technology. Another factor which might contribute to their reluctance is the classroom management, or they feel that this approach to teaching and learning does not reflect their pedagogy in learning and teaching. Being under these circumstances makes teachers doubt and dispute technology because it requires tremendous effort, and as a result, this contributes to teachers' decline of motivation toward its implementation (Davis et al., 1989).

4. Research methods and design

The qualitative research methodology chosen for this study is autoethnography. The best way to define this research paradigm is by analyzing the three compartments of autoethnography. To begin with, auto: This kind of research is conducted and represented from the point of view of the self. Secondly, ethno: the focus and this research

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aims to explore how culture shapes and is constructed by an individual. Finally, graphy: This states that writing is not only the means of disseminating someone's experiences, but it contains and puts emphasis on the creativeness of writing, especially, narrative, for producing and recording data that can be analyzed (Chang, 2008 p. 43).

Therefore, this self-study focuses on my perspective as the principal of a language school, taking into consideration my challenges, and a myriad of memories that will aid me to construct my own experience. All interpretations and meanings that I create are negotiated with human data sources, and interactions that I have faced as part of the culture. Based on Cunningham's (2000) point of view as a principal myself. I am always interested in learning and hearing the voices, interpretations, and experiences of colleagues and constituents, and to recognize patterns in their perceptions. Therefore, I aim to take these voices, perceptions about technology integration, interpretations, and experiences of technology resistance, and put them all together to portray my principalship.

Autoethnography has its limitations and is not clearly defined. According to Chang (2008), it is a "war" between two kinds. More specifically, evocative, and analytical autoethnography. On the other hand, Anderson (2006) puts it in another way, namely a "methodological fence sitter". In addition, there is too much argument because autoethnography as a method is questioned whether it contains scientific research. Ellis and Bochner (2000) assert that a story might be taken into consideration as a scholarly if it makes someone or the reader believe the story is authentic, reliable, as well as credible. In a world where empirical studies dominate, producing narratives is not an easy endeavour. Therefore, this study will take into consideration the benefits and challenges of studying culture through my lenses of me.

4.1 Research questions

My ethnographical analysis of the use of technology will particularly examine the following questions and issues:

- **RQ1**: How do I perceive the use of CALL in learning and teaching?
- **RQ2**: How did I react towards EFL teachers' resistance to using CALL?
- **RQ3**: What have I done to cultivate the culture of EFL teachers toward the use of CALL activities?

4.2 Data collection

This self-study research aims to produce literary representations. Therefore, having this in mind, the main data collection tool was writing self-narratives and my objective was to gain insights into CALL employment regarding EFL teachers' resistance to using technological tools in learning and teaching. More specifically, we sought to gain experience in how I dealt with teachers' resistance. Therefore, I used my memories to reflect on the emotions and occurrences of all these years. So, I used descriptive lexis that would remind me of quintessential issues, I needed to cope with EFL language teachers. Sometimes, I utilized my notes from the past meetings which provided reflections, constructing, and interpreting the meaning of those meetings, and their topics throughout these years. More specifically, to inform RQ1 and RQ2, I employed a useful strategy proposed by Chang, which suggests recalling data on a specific topic by discussing it with myself (2008, p.90). This technique is useful to discover my reactions to EFL teachers' resistance.

To have a holistic picture and increase the credibility and validity of the study, and inform RQ3, I collected data through semi-structured interview questions with five EFL language school teachers teaching in our language school. A semi-structured interview consists of a set of questions, which provide a participant with the opportunity to bring other topics or focus his/her thoughts deeper into a topic. Purposeful sampling was employed to attain different views on the problem (Creswell, 2007). Therefore, Since the objective was to collect rich data from different perspectives of the particular problem, selecting participants randomly was not allowed because the study required subjects that use technological tools in their teaching. Thus, participants were first asked in person to check for their availability and willingness to take part. Therefore, before proceeding to semi-structured interview questions, the researcher sent the consent forms and information sheets to the participants by email. So, before starting the interviews, I explained to the EFL teachers, the purpose of the study, by introducing a brief explanation of the literature. Then, the interview started, and the duration of each interview varied from (35 to 40 mins) and took place in our language school. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. These research tools were useful and allowed the design of the study to be fluid in its construction, presenting the researcher with the opportunity to have a better understanding of EFL teachers' resistance to the use of technology.

4.3 Data analysis

From the moment we have collected the data, the objective is to proceed to the analysis of this information. Having autoethnography as a research design suggests that the procedure of data is a continuing process. Therefore, by recalling my memories, re-reading my reflexive notes, and with deeper introspection and self-analysis, the research is believed to be enhanced. Data collection and analysis ensure each other, and throughout this process, different themes and patterns are produced during the study.

Ellis and Bochner (2000) note that personal data analysis is a process which involves the researcher expressing and recalling past events. Therefore, I will go back to specific occasions, memorable events which are still vivid and pay attention to my emotions. During the process of recollection, recalling the past introduce writing that involves thoughts, events, and dialogue of the event. Qualitative research enables the researcher to let the data evolve during the process of writing. From the beginning of this study, it has not been clear enough, what distinctive patterns and themes will be produced. Ellis and Bochner (2008) point out "the qualitative researcher employs inductive analysis, which means that categories, themes, and patterns come from the data. The categories that emerge from field notes, documents and interviews are not imposed before data collection" (p. 221).

The research questions, my memories and data collected from the semi-structured interviews guided the study, and attention was placed on each of the following topics, as my research unfolded. Having the research questions guiding my thoughts, in writing the story aided my narrative. Nevertheless, being under personal biases, which I might face in specific conditions might have affected some information. However, I tried to remain honest in my narrative by including a variety of experiences, both failures and successes that I have faced as a principal to integrate technology in a language school.

5. Findings

Having the research questions as a guide and TAM, I took into consideration all the relevant data while encoding and carrying out data analysis. Therefore, in this section, I have presented the main findings and themes that emerged during my analysis and helped the structure of my discussion.

5.1 RQ1: My perceptions towards the use of CALL into learning and teaching

My narrative about my perceptions of technology use has always played a quintessential role, in my curriculum as an EFL teacher, administrator and principal. Some of the reasons that I am keen on technology use, are: To begin with, I believe that technology use is innovative because it provides a novel teaching environment that distinguishes it from traditional teaching methods, and as a result, it has a positive impact on learners' higher thinking skills, and on the ultimate acquisition process. Nevertheless, we need to consider the drawbacks that might appear during the integration process that might affect the teaching and learning process. In addition, I think that the use of CALL can increase English-language learners' motivation and based on Dôrnye & Skehan's point of view, which postulate that motivation plays a significant role in learning a second language (2003, p. 610). Whereas technological tools such as interactive whiteboards, projectors, and printers might improve teachers' teaching and motivation. Another important benefit is that the use of CALL in learning enables learners to be autonomous, and autonomous learning plays an essential role in acquiring knowledge (Abrami 2006). Another belief of CALL employment which has shaped and structured my perceptions toward it is the fact that it deepens learning by using resources that learners are interested in. Also, I think that living in the digital age, the presence of technological tools will render a language school, a better environment, and might be valued by the community as an innovative school. Finally, I believe that the use of CALL helps EFL teachers to make their teaching more learner-centred.

These perceptions towards technology use align with the essential conditions of TAM. More specifically, '*perceived usefulness*' determines that users' have a positive attitude toward using technological tools because they believe, it enhances learning and teaching, and they accept and use it.

5.2 RQ2: My reactions towards EFL teachers' resistance to using CALL

At first EFL teachers seemed to be enthusiastic about the use of technology in teaching. Nevertheless, after a while, the resistance to using CALL in their teaching appeared. More specifically, some of them began to reduce their use of them in the classroom settings and then refused to use them or use them very rarely in teaching and learning. The vast majority of them were reluctant to say why they did not prefer to use them in teaching. Despite the fact that new technological tools were bought such as interactive

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whiteboards and software programs like "Rosetta Stone" seemed not to alter the situation and foster EFL teachers to employ them. It became obvious that they did not believe in technology employment and as time was passing, they began to show resistance to utilizing technological tools in teaching, and therefore, the particular phenomenon created an awkward situation.

Writing my story about how I reacted towards EFL teachers' resistance, took me back to each of the conditions that I had faced throughout the past eight years. These incidents are still vivid and often took place during our meetings, and sometimes before EFL teachers were proceeding to enter the classroom. During these years, I have felt the stress of organizing and facilitating EFL teachers' needs and emphasizing the use of technological tools in teaching and learning. At some point, I required resting, but as you can observe throughout my story, pressure has been present, sometimes followed by panic and reluctance to proceed, in order to find effective strategies and responses to solve the problems. Therefore, responding to this situation, I started reading literature regarding technology integration. Also, EFL teachers' resistance made me increase our weekly meetings, from once a week to two or three times.

My pedagogy was based on designing a curriculum that intertwined technological tools in teaching and learning to render the language school as one of the most up to date schools, which uses CALL in learning and technological tools in teaching to respond to learners' needs. After revising my notes kept throughout these years, my reactions were as follows: The first reaction was that of an autocratic principal because I had designed the curriculum without considering EFL teachers' points of view. I had not involved them in planning, decision making, and program development process based on technology. I had forced them at some point to follow the pedagogic approach by using CALL activities more often than before, without considering their views. Being aware of the situation, they did not appreciate this approach but believed, they will be familiar with the specific pedagogy in the future. Nevertheless, this type of response seemed not to function, because after using it for about two or three months, I observed a decline in CALL employment again.

The second response, observed from my notes, is that of a democratic reaction because I started to discuss with EFL teachers, the reasons for not using technological tools and CALL activities. During our conversation, I insisted and explaining the benefits of technology in learning and teaching. Looking at my notes from our conversations, and later discussing them with myself, I noticed that many incidents arise when facing EFL teachers' attitudes, and my reactions were sometimes unspoken, followed by internal anger regarding their resistance. From the notes that I had kept during our conversations, EFL teachers had mentioned several reasons for not using CALL activities and technological tools which are as follows:

> "I have not been involved in the curriculum design, and I did not know that I am required to use technological tools in teaching, and I think EFL teachers need to be involved because they are part of the school community" (ENGTeacher1).
>
> "I could, for example, provide all the stakeholders with some notions regarding particular technological tools and software applications for effective learning and teaching, which will enable me to use them, and as a result, I will be less reluctant to use them" (ENGTeacher2).

Also, one of them was unclear about the strategies and plans, I had made related to technology-mediated in teaching and learning during the previous years. She explained:

> "I have been teaching English since 2012, and this is the first time that the principal has started to inform and discuss with me about technology use in learning and teaching, but before I had no idea at all regarding the details of the technology integration, just using them" (ENGTeacher3).

5.3 RQ3: Cultivating the culture of EFL teachers toward the use of CALL activities?

To answer the third research question, semi-structured interview questions were conducted, and the aim was to understand how to create a culture of technology integration to meet my pedagogical approach.

5.4 Guiding question one: How does your principal help you integrate CALL activities?

The guiding question manifested the theme that EFL teachers had been provided with a supportive environment to attain CALL integration by their principal. The two findings that emerged from this question were: EFL teachers were fostered to experiment with CALL by using new software programs every term and provided support for professional development. Nevertheless, comprehensive planning seemed to be rare. In addition, participants constantly mentioned the need for a teacher-to-teacher model of demonstrating the use of CALL activities in learning and teaching. More specifically, it suggests that EFL teachers re-

quired the demonstration to be presented by their colleagues which will facilitate the integration process. Moreover, four out of the five EFL teachers stated that they weren't provided with enough information about the plans and strategies, the principal had made regarding technology-mediated learning and teaching. The next guided question, which I was curious to have a better understanding of, was about the specific obstacles EFL teachers perceived as barriers to CALL integration.

5.5 Guiding question two: How have you been helped by the principal to overcome the obstacles of CALL use

Barriers to CALL integration seemed to be affected by a plethora of factors that interfere with the improvement of CALL. The main theme helping EFL teachers overcome barriers to CALL integration found the following obstacles and a brief explanation of those barriers are presented below.

For me, the implementation of CALL activities is successful, only if it is supported by teachers. Therefore, one of the barriers found was time. All EFL teachers mentioned the fact that altering their practices seemed to be a fast process because their workload was increased, and they needed to put extra effort into CALL integration. For instance, the adaptation of lesson planning and professional development required efforts besides the actual teaching hours. They stated that the principal did not provide enough time to them to adopt and follow a slow process. For instance, one of them stated:

> "It seems to be so fast-changing the approach of teaching by using technology in learning and teaching because I need time to adapt the lesson plans which I have been using up until now. Therefore, much more time is required for the integration of CALL activities in teaching and learning"

Another, focal element impeding CALL activities was teachers' belief regarding the importance of CALL in learning, whether the benefits outweigh the disadvantages was consistently mentioned by all participants. Even though, in their weekly meeting held by the principal technology used was the main topic discussed. Also, lack of time to observe CALL activities being used by their colleagues, to question the observation, and form an idea, before attempting to use it, and 3 out of the five participants required their principal to watch some recordings from their colleagues before they use it into their learning and teaching. The last finding found inhibiting CALL integration was fear. The obstacles of fear mentioned by teachers were as follows:

- Fear of CALL problems occurring during the lesson;
- Fear of parents' point of view;
- Fear of classroom management; and
- Fear of not covering the material.

In short, fostering the culture of technology use in teaching and learning was provided by the principal to the EFL teachers. More specifically, the data manifested that EFL teachers were fostered to experience call activities in teaching, but without a specific plan on how to do it. Therefore, it seemed to have impeded the integration process, followed by the other barriers mentioned by the EFL teachers such as not having ample time to absorb the new curriculum design and the need for support from their experienced colleagues.

6. Discussion

Based on an in-depth analysis of the findings provided a greater understanding of the phenomenon and demonstrated some insights which enabled me to try to answer the research questions and discuss the themes that emerged about TAM and previous literature.

Therefore, this section explains the significance of the findings with supporting literature and discusses several themes that emerged.

6.1 The value of technological tools in learning and teaching

This study revealed the main theme about the value of technology in learning and teaching. My positive attitude regarding technology use was based on the notion that it can be innovative, increase learners' motivation, and foster autonomous learning. In addition, the presence of technology is valued by the community, and teaching becomes more student-centred. Nevertheless, it becomes obvious that without a clear pedagogy, the employment of CALL and technological tools might not be successful. In addition, the results suggest that a positive attitude is shaped around the idea that CALL employment responds to the students' needs and deepens learning and the ultimate acquisition process. Whereas technological tools improve teachers' teaching and motivation.

The findings of this study are supported by previous studies which have found that positive attitudes toward technology are related closely to the benefits of using it as a tool in teaching (Bullock, 2004; Oda, 2011; Zhong and Shen, 2017). However, unlike previous studies, this study

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adds to the previous studies that a positive attitude is also shaped due to the authentic activities that the CALL offers, and to the fact that they provide a suitable environment for autonomous learning and responding to the students' needs. These findings suggest that the positive attitude regarding technology relies upon the advantages that they provide in teaching.

These attitudes towards the use of technological tools and CALL programs align with the essential conditions of the TAM model. More specifically, with the '*perceived usefulness*' and as stated by Davis et al. (1989) the integration of technology occurs, when school administrators have a positive attitude and believe that there are several benefits. However, I could add to the point stated by Davis et al., that not only administrators' positive attitudes, but also, teachers' attitudes contribute and play a significant role in the process of integrating technology into the learning environment. The results of this study support the aforementioned statement because the contradiction and conflicts that I encountered throughout these years suggest that EFL teachers' attitudes play a focal role since the integration process was hindered by their resistance. Furthermore, findings suggest that other factors are required to be taken into consideration such as the teacher's role and pedagogy about technology use which facilitates the implementation process. Finally, the results suggest that EFL teachers find it difficult to comprehend the need to employ CALL and technological tools without taking into consideration the pedagogy of why using it.

6.2 Responding to EFL teachers' resistance towards technology use

The second research question explored my reactions toward EFL teachers' resistance to the use of CALL and technological tools. Two Significant themes emerged from this research question: the first autocratic response and the particular response created a myriad of problems. Some of the reasons might have been the absence of EFL teachers, in decision-making and planning, and as a result, had impeded the use of CALL activities and technological tools in teaching and learning. EFL teachers are being silenced from participating, and just follow the pedagogical approach proposed by the principal, which affects their beliefs, as well as technology implementation. My view holds about the exclusion of EFL teachers from the curriculum design and to ensure it slavishly created more resistance and tension between me and EFL teachers. Increasing the use of CALL activities in learning and teaching manifested that EFL teachers can use it just for a while, but as the time is passing, they stop utilizing them. Thus, this is consistent with the previous studies (Aydin, 2007; Abrami, 2006) that EFL teachers consider technological tools and CALL activities as supplementary and not part of the curriculum design and utilize them as teaching accessories to support a predominantly teacher-driven class with minimum interaction between learners. Moreover, it aligns with Senge's (2015) perspective point of view that it is required by the principals to communicate the advantages of technology use in learning and teaching, and as a result, minimize the barriers. Therefore, this study revealed a call to involve EFL teachers during the curriculum design and discuss the importance of technology in learning and teaching based on a new pedagogy that is built around technology and CALL use. In addition, the results to some extent aligned with the statement proposed by Leithwood and Riehl (2003) that the principals' role is to create effective strategies and visions but adds to the particular statement that in order to achieve these strategies and visions and avoid conflicts, EFL teachers must be included, as well as learners for successful integration and all these align with the external constructs of the TAM model.

The second emerging theme was that of a democratic perspective point of view. The involvement of teachers in the discussion process aided me because I attained a greater understanding of the EFL teachers' resistance. During our conversations, EFL teachers mentioned the fact that they had no idea about the curriculum design, and this unawareness seemed to have impeded technology integration and created several conflicts between me and EFL teachers. In addition, EFL teachers mentioned the fact that they could provide the principal with different software programs which suit better students' and their needs. According to EFL teachers, this would enable teachers to use technology in learning and teaching. Therefore, this suggests that being aware of the curriculum design, and using EFL teachers' choice regarding applications, can reduce resistance. Research suggests that EFL teachers' involvement is quintessential, as it aids them to construct leadership capacities (Serafidou & Chatziioannidis 2013, p. 171).

6.3 Technological barriers

The semi-structured interview emerged two main themes: the first and second-order barriers. First-order barriers continued to persist. Although EFL teachers were provided with various technological tools, first-order barriers were present, and are as follows: time was needed for EFL teachers to observe their colleagues teaching learners utilizing CALL activities, and the fast rate of changing technological tools. These barriers are the influences outside of EFL teachers' control, which hinder technology use, and this includes support, training, and resources. Therefore, the findings of this study suggest that I have contributed to

the barriers EFL teachers face. Thus, as the principal of the particular language school, I need to identify these barriers and seek ways to solve them. The data is not consistent with previous studies (O'Dwyer et al., 2005; Venezky, 2014) which found that principals who contained the appropriate knowledge and pedagogy were successful since the results manifested that the absence of pedagogy created conflicts between me and EFL teachers.

Second-order barriers. EFL teachers were keen on the slow implementation of technology in their learning and teaching. This self-study revealed the obstacle of fear. Fear of classroom changing, evaluation process, and being afraid of making mistakes in front of learners. Second-order obstacles are attitudes that keep an educator from utilizing technology. More specifically, these obstacles involve EFL teachers' beliefs regarding the way learners learn and acquire knowledge and the role of these tools in learning and teaching. Related to the TAM and the "perceived ease of use" this fear results from a lack of knowledge. Previous research states that fear can be reduced through professional development (Ertmer &Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2015; Wachira & Keengwe, 2016). Nevertheless, this study provided evidence that EFL teachers were provided with ample professional development. The Literature might be true; however, I believe that despite training, teachers need to possess the courage to use and attempt new technological tools, and the particular view is consistent with Bauer and Kenton's (2005) study which found that despite the fact that teachers were well equipped with the technological knowledge, they did not use technology in their teaching. Therefore, it suggests that other factors might contribute to the resistance to technology use, and the findings of this study suggest the need to pay attention to teachers' attitudes regarding technology use and pedagogy before using CALL and technological tools in learning and teaching. In addition, the results suggest that principals need to discuss the benefits of technology in learning rather than forcing EFL teachers to use them. Regarding the 'perceived ease of use' and its anchors added, the results of the study might explain the resistance of CALL and technology use, but the next generations will be obsolete and unable to explain educators' resistance since they will be well equipped with technological skills.

7. Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to take a deep look at me as the principal of a language school, that is attempting to integrate technology. By exploring the unique challenges of being in this position, as the researcher and the subject at the same time. I employed autoethnography to build the foundation of this qualitative study. Reed- Danahay (1997) asserts that through a self-story, autoethnography provides the opportunity to connect personal experiences to the culture. By telling the story, I wanted to contribute and inspire other language school principals to consider my findings, when dealing with EFL teachers' resistance toward CALL and technological tools in their educational institutions.

Some of the findings from this self-study to some extent answered my research questions. They revealed how I perceive the use of technology. Furthermore, how I perceived my reactions to deal with EFL teachers' resistance by describing my emotional reactions, aid me to have a greater understanding of the problems experienced which I undergo between my administrative role and technology rejection. At the same time, the outcomes of this research paper might provide useful insights for technology implementation.

This study deepened my knowledge regarding the benefit of using pedagogical theory for technology integration. At the beginning of this study, I didn't name CALL resources as constructivist or any other theory. However, reading the literature provided me with the opportunity to create a greater understanding. I strongly believe that introducing these theoretical perspectives to teachers would help them to recognize the advantages of using technology in learning and teaching.

The potential contribution to scholarship and practice should be carefully considered when generalizing its findings. The key limitation of this study is that the findings of this paper to scholarship and practice should be carefully considered. More specifically, as an autoethnography, it is relied on a single dataset and provides the experience of one personal narrative, by presenting my memory, reflections, and experiences. Moreover, this study is situated in the context of a language school principal, being a principal of a language school which involves particular needs and challenges in a developing language school, and therefore, its results should be interpreted with this context in mind which suggests the need to be cautious about generalizing the results.

Future studies could investigate principals as a group to better identify their attitudes, approaches, and management strategies, as well as obstacles they encounter in order to create a holistic picture of how to solve them during the integration process. Gaining a better understanding of the language school principals' use of technology might help practitioners and administrators develop effective strategies for integrating technological tools into the educational system. Furthermore, it might also aid principals themselves

to make better decisions about their approaches to the use of technological tools in teaching and learning.

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About the author



Kristo Ceko is interested in the principals' attitudes towards technology integration in teaching and learning and their role in the integration process. Moreover, exploring the factors which inhibit the implementation process and affect teachers' attitudes and motivation towards the use of technological tools in learning and teaching? And whether their attitudes and motivation to use technological tools and multimedia applications change over a period of time.

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