

ENGLISH TEACHERS' LEARNING RESOURCES ADAPTATION: AN ANALYSIS ON TEACHER AGENCY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

Learning resource adaptation is an important aspect of English language teaching because teachers need to align instructional materials with students' learning needs, classroom conditions, and instructional objectives. Although previous studies have examined instructional material adaptation, limited attention has been given to how such practices constitute an enactment of teacher agency in Indonesian secondary school contexts. This study explores how English teachers adapt learning resources and how these practices reflect teacher agency. A qualitative case study was conducted with three EFL teachers from secondary schools in Bandung, Indonesia. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and documentary evidence of adapted and teacher-made learning resources and analysed qualitatively to identify patterns of resource adaptation and teacher agency. The findings show that teachers adapted learning resources through selecting, supplementing, modifying, and selectively replacing materials according to students' needs and classroom conditions. The extent and form of adaptation varied: one teacher substantially modified materials from different sources, another integrated digital resources with the prescribed textbook, while the third relied primarily on the government-issued textbook and selectively used supplementary materials. These practices reflected teacher agency through professional judgement, autonomy in resource selection, collaborative lesson planning, and context-sensitive instructional decision-making. The study contributes theoretically by positioning learning resource adaptation as a concrete enactment of teacher agency in English language teaching. Practically, it highlights the need for professional development, institutional support, and instructional flexibility to enable teachers to develop contextually responsive learning practices.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's rapidly changing educational landscape, teachers' ability to adapt learning resources has become an essential component of effective teaching. It is widely acknowledged that teachers are not merely policy implementers but active professionals who interpret, adapt, and even respond critically to educational policies within their own teaching contexts (Çakır, 2015; Sum & Kwon, 2020). The capacity of teachers to make professional decisions and implement appropriate actions to bring about meaningful change is commonly referred to as teacher agency (Tao & Gao, 2017). The growing interest in teacher agency reflects the increasing expectations placed on teachers to respond to educational reforms while maintaining their professional autonomy. As Cuayahuitl & Carranza (2019) argue, teacher agency has gained global attention as teachers seek to preserve creative and responsive teaching practices amid increasing standardisation and accountability demands. Likewise, Fu & Clarke (2017) and Nguyen & Bui (2016) emphasise that teacher agency enables teachers to initiate meaningful changes within their professional environments, particularly in classroom instruction. Through this capacity, teachers are able to adopt, adapt, or even resist newly implemented policies and programmes according to their students' needs and classroom realities, thereby influencing the success of educational reforms at both school and national levels (Severance et al., 2016; Tao & Gao, 2017). Within this perspective, examining what teachers do with the instructional resources available to them provides an important way of understanding how teacher agency is enacted in everyday classroom practice.

Within the context of English Language Teaching (ELT), teacher agency is closely reflected in the way teachers select, adapt, and utilise learning resources. Learning resources constitute valuable instructional assets that significantly influence students' learning experiences and outcomes. Consequently, selecting appropriate materials is one of the teachers' most important professional responsibilities. Among the wide range of learning resources available in ELT, textbooks continue to occupy a central position because of their accessibility, structured organisation, continuity of learning, and efficiency in supporting classroom instruction. They provide systematic content that enables teachers to organise lessons coherently while reducing the time required for lesson preparation (Priestley et al., 2015; C. A. Tomlinson, 2016), textbooks also have inherent limitations. Since they are generally designed for broad educational contexts, they cannot fully accommodate the diverse characteristics, learning needs, and contextual realities of every classroom (McGrath, 2016; Richards, 2010). Therefore, careful selection and adaptation of learning resources become necessary to ensure that instructional materials remain relevant to students' needs and learning objectives.

The need for learning resource adaptation has become even more prominent with the rapid development of technology and the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka in Indonesia. While textbooks continue to function as the primary instructional resource in many schools, teachers now have greater opportunities to enrich classroom learning through various supplementary resources, including digital materials, online platforms, multimedia content, and teacher-developed materials. Such flexibility enables teachers to provide more personalised learning experiences by adjusting instructional materials to accommodate students' abilities, interests, and learning contexts. Rather than relying solely on commercially produced textbooks, teachers are increasingly encouraged to combine multiple resources and modify existing materials to create more meaningful and engaging learning experiences.

Previous studies have consistently highlighted the importance of learning resource adaptation in English language education. Researchers have suggested that adapting textbooks through modifying, supplementing, or replacing particular sections enables teachers to better align instructional materials with course objectives, learner characteristics, and classroom contexts (Çakır, 2015; Hanifa et al., 2024; Rathert & Cabaroğlu, 2022). Likewise, several scholars have advocated the use of teacher-made materials as either complementary or alternative instructional resources because they allow teachers to contextualise learning, respond to students' immediate needs, and personalise instruction (Bouckaert, 2019; Li et al., 2023; Zhang, 2018). However, these strands of research have largely approached learning resource adaptation from the perspective of materials selection, development, suitability, or classroom usefulness. As a result, less attention has been given to the professional decision-making underlying teachers' adaptation practices and to what these decisions reveal about teachers as

active agents in curriculum implementation. This distinction is important because adapting a learning resource involves not only changing its content or format but also making contextual judgements about what should be selected, modified, supplemented, or omitted for particular learners.

The gap becomes more evident in relation to teacher agency. Although teacher agency has been increasingly examined in relation to curriculum reform and teachers' professional autonomy, comparatively limited empirical attention has been given to how agency is enacted through the everyday selection, adaptation, and implementation of learning resources in Indonesian secondary school English classrooms. Existing discussions of teacher agency emphasise teachers' capacity to interpret and enact curriculum according to contextual conditions (Fu & Clarke, 2017; Tao & Gao, 2017; Zhang, 2018), while research on learning resources has more commonly focused on the characteristics and adaptation of materials themselves. These two areas of inquiry therefore remain insufficiently connected. In particular, there is a need to understand how teachers' decisions regarding learning resources are shaped by students' learning needs, classroom conditions, available facilities, and instructional objectives, and how such decisions reflect the exercise of professional agency.

Addressing this gap is important because the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka provides teachers with greater opportunities to exercise professional judgement in organising classroom learning, while the availability of diverse learning resources simultaneously creates more choices and potential constraints for instructional decision-making. Examining teachers' adaptation practices can therefore provide empirical insight into how professional autonomy is enacted within the actual conditions of English language teaching, rather than treating teacher agency only as an abstract capacity or policy-related concept.

Accordingly, this study explores how English teachers in Indonesian secondary schools adapt learning resources to achieve their instructional objectives and examines how these adaptation practices reflect teacher agency. Specifically, the study investigates the ways teachers select, modify, supplement, and utilise instructional materials in response to students' learning needs, classroom contexts, and curriculum expectations. By connecting learning resource adaptation with teacher agency, this study seeks to extend existing discussions of both areas by showing how teachers' material-related decisions constitute a form of professional and context-sensitive agency in everyday English language teaching. The study also provides practical implications for supporting teachers' professional judgement, instructional flexibility, and capacity to adapt learning resources in ways that are responsive to diverse classroom contexts.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative case study design to investigate how English teachers adapt learning resources to achieve instructional objectives and how these adaptation practices reflect teacher agency in secondary schools. Qualitative research seeks to understand how individuals interpret and construct meaning from their experiences within real-life contexts (Maxwell, 2013). A case study was considered appropriate because it provides an in-depth understanding of a bounded phenomenon within its natural setting (Yin & Campbell, 2018). This approach enabled the researchers to explore teachers' experiences, professional decisions, and classroom practices related to learning resource adaptation within their specific school contexts.

The study was conducted in public and private secondary schools in Bandung, Indonesia. These schools were selected because English instruction was supported by textbooks, adapted learning materials, or a combination of both. The participants consisted of three female English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers from junior and senior secondary schools, each having more than four years of teaching experience. The participants were purposively selected based on their direct experience in selecting, adapting, and implementing learning resources in English language instruction. This criterion was intended to ensure that the participants could provide relevant and information-rich accounts of the phenomenon under investigation. The variation in school level and institutional context also enabled the study to examine learning resource adaptation across different classroom conditions.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews and supporting documents. The interviews were conducted in the participants' first language to facilitate more comprehensive and authentic responses regarding their experiences in adapting learning resources. The interview questions explored teachers' processes of selecting instructional materials, adapting textbooks and supplementary resources, developing learning activities, and exercising professional judgement in classroom practice. To strengthen the credibility of the findings, documentary evidence in the form of adapted learning materials and teacher-made resources was also collected and analysed. The use of interview data alongside documentary evidence provided source triangulation, allowing the researchers to compare teachers' reported experiences with the learning resources they used or developed. This procedure helped strengthen the credibility of the interpretation by providing evidence from more than one data source.

The collected data were analysed qualitatively using thematic analysis. The analysis began with repeated reading of the interview transcripts and supporting documents to develop familiarity with the data and identify relevant information. The data were then coded according to recurring patterns related to learning resource adaptation and teacher agency. Related codes were subsequently compared and grouped into broader themes concerning how teachers selected, modified, supplemented, and implemented learning resources in their instructional practices. The emerging themes were reviewed and refined in relation to the research objectives, while the interpretation focused on understanding teachers' professional decisions and experiences within their classroom contexts (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The analysis focused on understanding how teachers selected, modified, and implemented learning resources to achieve instructional objectives, as well as how these practices reflected their professional autonomy in responding to students' learning needs and classroom contexts. The final themes were interpreted in relation to the relevant literature on learning resource adaptation and teacher agency to explain how teachers' resource-related decisions reflected professional autonomy and context-sensitive instructional practice.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Learning Resource Adaptation

Selection and Adaptation of Learning Resources

The findings revealed that all participating teachers adapted learning resources to support the achievement of their instructional objectives. Although government-issued textbooks remained the primary instructional resource in their schools, each participant demonstrated different approaches to selecting, modifying, and utilising learning materials according to students' learning needs and classroom contexts. These differences were evident in the extent to which teachers retained, supplemented, modified, or replaced the prescribed learning resources.

Teacher 1 (T1) reported that she rarely used the government-issued textbook (*buku paket*) as the main instructional resource. Instead, she relied on a commercial textbook, English for SMA published by Bumi Aksara, together with various supplementary materials obtained from online platforms. According to T1, although the government-issued textbook provided a well-organised learning sequence consisting of introductory, learning, and reflection stages, its content lacked sufficient scaffolding to facilitate students' understanding. Consequently, she retained the instructional sequence while replacing much of the learning content with resources that she considered more appropriate for her students.

"Substantially, I do not use the textbook provided or *buku paket* because it lacks scaffolding. The book is good, actually, it has steps such as introduction, learning, and reflection. So, I only use the steps, but not the content of the book. I use another textbook, titled English for SMA by Bumi Aksara and other learning resources, mostly from the internet, as complementary materials."

T1 further explained that she seldom adopted online learning resources without modification. Instead, she adjusted the materials by revising examples, contextual information, classroom activities, and language use to ensure that the resources were aligned with students' abilities, instructional objectives, and classroom contexts. She also noted that she had previously

designed interactive activities using Quizizz but later preferred handwritten classroom tasks, believing that they encouraged students to develop their writing skills and reduced excessive dependence on artificial intelligence tools.

T1: “I choose materials that better suit my students’ needs and capabilities. I do not use materials taken from the internet as they are; I make adjustments to better align them with the subject matter and to make them more relatable (Teacher1)

Figure 1. Learning resources adapted by T1



Source: Authors' analysis based on research data (2026).

As illustrated in Figure 1, T1 supplemented textbook-based instruction with various teacher-selected and adapted learning resources. Rather than relying solely on commercially available materials, she modified the content to better accommodate students’ learning needs while maintaining alignment with the intended learning objectives.

Unlike T1, Teacher 2 (T2) continued using the government-issued textbook, English for Nusantara, as the primary instructional resource. However, she regularly complemented the textbook with supplementary materials obtained from online platforms, particularly Google and YouTube. Instead of substantially modifying these materials, T2 generally retained their original content while simplifying explanations through her own language to improve students’ comprehension.

“I combine the materials from the textbook with additional materials from the internet, such as Google and YouTube. Sometimes, I use my own language so the students will understand better..”

T2 selected supplementary learning resources based on their relevance to the learning objectives and their suitability for students’ learning levels. The additional resources were primarily used to enrich classroom instruction and provide students with more varied learning experiences without replacing the prescribed textbook.

Figure 2. Learning resources used by T2.



Source: Authors' analysis based on research data (2026).

Figure 2 demonstrates how T2 integrated printed instructional materials with digital learning resources. The selected resources functioned as complementary materials that enhanced students’ understanding while maintaining consistency with the prescribed curriculum.

In contrast, Teacher 3 (T3) relied almost exclusively on the prescribed textbook as the principal learning resource. She explained that many of her students had limited access to digital devices and internet connectivity, making extensive use of online learning resources less feasible. Consequently, supplementary materials were incorporated only occasionally, primarily in the form of classroom icebreakers or simple educational games. According to T3, the textbook already provided sufficient learning content, whereas limited instructional time required careful selection of teaching materials.

“I do not use additional materials during the lesson, as the textbook is sufficient, and there is so little time. The only exceptions are icebreakers or games, which I adapt from the internet.

T3 further explained that she intentionally minimised the use of supplementary learning resources because she believed that introducing excessive materials could confuse students with limited English proficiency. Instead, she selected only simple supporting activities that reinforced vocabulary learning and maintained students’ classroom engagement.

Figure 3. Learning resources used by T3.



Source: Authors' analysis based on research data (2026).

Figure 3 illustrates that T3 used supplementary learning resources selectively to support students’ engagement while maintaining the prescribed textbook as the primary instructional resource.

Although the three participants demonstrated different approaches to adapting learning resources, they shared a common orientation toward making instructional materials responsive to their students’ learning needs. Consequently, supplementary learning resources including online texts, instructional videos, worksheets, images, and interactive classroom activities were incorporated to complement textbook-based instruction. The extent and form of adaptation varied according to each teacher’s professional judgement, students’ characteristics, available facilities, and classroom conditions.

Teaching Methods in Learning Resource Adaptation

The findings indicate that learning resource adaptation was closely associated with the instructional approaches employed by the participating teachers. Although all participants aimed to achieve the same curriculum objectives, each teacher implemented different teaching methods based on students’ learning characteristics, classroom conditions, and personal teaching preferences.

Teacher 1 (T1) preferred conventional classroom instruction supported by audio-visual resources and reading activities. Rather than relying extensively on digital learning platforms, she intentionally encouraged students to complete written assignments manually. According to T1, handwritten activities enabled students to practise their writing skills more effectively while reducing their dependence on artificial intelligence applications, such as ChatGPT, for completing classroom

tasks. Consequently, digital resources were primarily used as supporting materials during instruction, whereas students' learning activities remained centred on classroom interaction and written practice.

Teacher 2 (T2), in contrast, adopted a more blended instructional approach by combining printed textbooks with various digital learning resources. Online materials obtained from Google and YouTube were integrated into classroom explanations to enrich students' learning experiences. Instead of asking students to rely directly on digital resources, T2 used these materials to clarify concepts, provide additional examples, and facilitate classroom discussions while maintaining the textbook as the primary instructional guide.

Meanwhile, Teacher 3 (T3) implemented teaching strategies that emphasised repetition and scaffolding. Considering that many of her students experienced difficulties in learning English, she prioritised repeated explanations, guided practice, and gradual learning support before introducing additional classroom activities. Rather than incorporating numerous supplementary resources, T3 selectively used simple games and icebreakers to maintain students' engagement without distracting them from the core learning objectives.

The three teachers therefore demonstrated different ways of aligning teaching methods with the learning resources available in their respective contexts. T1 emphasised written practice and teacher-guided classroom interaction, T2 combined printed and digital resources to support explanation and discussion, while T3 prioritised repetition, scaffolding, and limited supplementary activities. Although the three teachers demonstrated different instructional approaches, they shared a common principle in adapting teaching methods to accommodate students' learning needs. The selection of instructional strategies was closely aligned with the learning resources they employed, indicating that resource adaptation was accompanied by corresponding adjustments in classroom practice.

Teacher Agency Reflected in Learning Resource Adaptation

The findings demonstrate that learning resource adaptation reflected the participants' teacher agency in making instructional decisions. All three teachers reported having considerable autonomy in selecting learning resources, developing lesson plans, and determining teaching strategies that they considered most appropriate for their students and classroom contexts.

The participants explained that lesson planning was generally conducted collaboratively through the English teachers' subject group within their respective schools. Although the lesson plans were submitted to school administrators, the teachers retained substantial freedom to determine the instructional materials, learning activities, and teaching approaches implemented in their classrooms.

"We prepare all the materials ourselves. In our school, there are three English teachers. I create the lesson plans for Grade 11, while the other teachers prepare those for Grades 10 and 12. Usually, there is no checking or revision because the principal trusts us to manage our lesson plans."

T1's statement indicates that collaborative lesson planning did not restrict teachers' professional autonomy. Instead, the collaboration served to distribute responsibilities among teachers while allowing each participant to exercise professional judgement in selecting and adapting learning resources.

Similarly, T2 and T3 reported that they were free to determine the learning resources used in their classrooms. Although curriculum evaluations were conducted periodically by the school, these evaluations focused primarily on curriculum implementation rather than limiting teachers' decisions regarding instructional materials or classroom practices. As a result, both participants perceived that they possessed sufficient flexibility to adapt learning resources according to students' needs and instructional objectives.

Overall, the findings indicate that teacher agency was reflected through several interconnected practices: autonomy in selecting instructional materials, professional judgement in adapting learning resources, collaborative lesson planning, and flexibility in determining teaching strategies. These practices enabled the participants to mediate curriculum expectations in relation to students' learning needs and classroom contexts.

Discussion

Learning Resource Adaptation as a Contextual Teaching Practice

The findings demonstrate that learning resource adaptation was not limited to selecting supplementary instructional materials but also involved teachers' professional judgement in modifying, combining, and implementing learning resources according to students' learning needs and classroom contexts. Although all participants worked within the same curriculum, each teacher employed different strategies when adapting learning resources, reflecting the contextual nature of instructional decision-making. This finding suggests that learning resource adaptation is not simply a technical process of modifying materials but a form of contextual pedagogical decision-making through which teachers interpret the suitability of available resources for particular learners and instructional purposes.

The differences identified among the three participants indicate that textbooks were not viewed as fixed instructional guides but rather as flexible resources that could be modified to support effective classroom learning. While T1 substantially reconstructed the instructional content by replacing textbook materials with resources from commercial textbooks and online platforms, T2 complemented the prescribed textbook with digital resources without extensive modification. In contrast, T3 relied primarily on the government-issued textbook and introduced supplementary materials only when they supported students' engagement or addressed specific classroom needs. These findings suggest that learning resource adaptation is highly dependent on teachers' perceptions of students' characteristics, available learning facilities, and instructional constraints. These differences appear to have been influenced by several contextual considerations, particularly students' English proficiency, access to digital facilities, available instructional time, and teachers' perceptions of the suitability of particular materials. For T1, the perceived lack of scaffolding in the prescribed textbook encouraged substantial modification. T2's use of supplementary digital resources reflected the availability and perceived usefulness of online materials, whereas T3's more limited adaptation was closely related to students' proficiency levels, restricted access to digital resources, and limited classroom time. Thus, the variation among participants should not be understood simply as differences in teachers' willingness to innovate, but as different professional responses to the conditions in which teaching occurred.

This finding is consistent with Yin & Campbell, (2018) who argues that instructional materials should be adapted to accommodate learners' needs and classroom realities rather than being implemented without modification. Similarly, (De Neve et al., 2015) emphasises that adapting instructional materials enables teachers to improve the relevance and effectiveness of learning activities by considering students' proficiency levels, learning objectives, and contextual conditions. However, the present findings extend these perspectives by showing that adaptation does not necessarily involve extensive modification. Teachers may substantially reconstruct materials, selectively supplement existing resources, or deliberately maintain prescribed materials when these are considered appropriate for their students. In this sense, the significance of adaptation lies not in the amount of modification undertaken but in the professional reasoning behind teachers' decisions.

The findings also reinforce the view that effective learning resources extend beyond government-issued textbooks. Consistent with (C. A. . Tomlinson, 2016) learning materials should facilitate meaningful language learning experiences by responding to learners' cognitive and communicative needs. In this study, teachers incorporated various supplementary resources, including online texts, instructional videos, worksheets, and interactive classroom activities, not necessarily to replace the prescribed textbook but to enrich learning experiences and address particular instructional needs. The findings therefore indicate that the same curriculum framework can generate different patterns of resource use because teachers (2016) mediate curriculum materials through their understanding of students and classroom realities. This is particularly relevant in the context of the Kurikulum Merdeka, which provides greater room for teachers to make contextual decisions in classroom instruction. The findings suggest that such flexibility becomes meaningful when teachers are able to critically evaluate available resources and determine which materials should be retained, modified, supplemented, or limited according to their students' needs.

Another important finding concerns the relationship between learning resource adaptation and instructional practice. The participants did not merely adapt learning materials but also adjusted their teaching methods to maximise the usefulness of those resources. T1 preferred conventional classroom instruction supported by teacher-modified materials, T2 integrated printed and digital resources through a blended instructional approach, and T3 emphasised repetition and scaffolding to strengthen students' understanding before introducing enrichment activities. This pattern suggests that resource adaptation and instructional strategy are mutually connected rather than separate pedagogical decisions. Teachers' decisions about what materials to use were accompanied by decisions about how those materials could be delivered most appropriately to their students. The findings consequently position learning resource adaptation as part of a broader process of context-sensitive instructional decision-making

Teacher Agency in Learning Resource Adaptation

The findings demonstrate that teachers' decisions to select, adapt, and implement learning resources reflected their professional agency in responding to students' learning needs and classroom realities. Although all participants worked within the same national curriculum, they exercised different forms of professional judgement when determining which instructional materials and teaching strategies were most appropriate for their respective classrooms. Rather than implementing prescribed learning resources without modification, the participants continuously evaluated available materials and made instructional decisions based on contextual considerations, including students' English proficiency, available facilities, and instructional objectives.

This finding supports the view that teacher agency extends beyond teachers' freedom to make classroom decisions. According to Priestley et al. (2015) teacher agency is an ecological achievement that emerges through the interaction between teachers' professional experiences, contextual conditions, and future educational goals. The present findings provide empirical support for this ecological understanding because the participants' agency was shaped by the interaction between what they believed their students needed and what their teaching contexts allowed them to do. T1's substantial modification of learning resources, T2's selective integration of digital materials, and T3's deliberate reliance on the prescribed textbook demonstrate that agency was enacted differently under different contextual conditions. Importantly, the findings indicate that a teacher's agency cannot be assessed simply from the extent to which the teacher departs from prescribed materials.

The findings further indicate that teacher agency was evident in teachers' capacity to evaluate and modify instructional materials rather than merely select them. T1 actively reconstructed learning resources by adapting examples, contextual information, and classroom activities before implementation. T2 demonstrated agency through the careful selection of supplementary digital resources that complemented textbook-based instruction, whereas T3 exercised professional judgement by intentionally limiting supplementary materials in response to students' proficiency levels and classroom conditions. These different approaches illustrate that learning resource adaptation involves ongoing pedagogical decision-making rather than simple material selection. As argued by Zhang (2018) teacher agency enables teachers to actively shape curriculum implementation by adapting instructional practices to suit their educational contexts rather than passively following prescribed materials. The present study extends this argument by showing that agency may also be expressed through deliberate non-adaptation. T3's decision to limit supplementary materials was not an absence of agency; rather, it represented a professional decision based on perceived student needs, limited access to facilities, and instructional constraints. This finding is important because it demonstrates that teacher agency should be understood in terms of the intentionality and contextual reasoning behind teachers' decisions, rather than the visible degree of change made to learning resources.

Another important finding concerns the relationship between teacher agency and curriculum implementation. Although all participants collaborated with colleagues in preparing lesson plans, they consistently reported having considerable autonomy in determining learning resources and classroom practices. Collaborative lesson planning therefore functioned as professional support rather than administrative control. This finding reflects Tao & Gao (2017)) argument that teacher agency is strengthened when teachers are trusted to make professional decisions while working collaboratively within curriculum reform. Similarly, Fu & Clarke (2017) emphasise that teachers become active curriculum developers when they

are provided with opportunities to interpret, adapt, and implement curriculum policies according to local classroom conditions. In the present study, collaboration did not eliminate individual professional judgement. Instead, teachers participated in collective planning while retaining discretion over the materials and instructional strategies used in their own classrooms. This suggests that teacher agency can operate within collaborative structures when institutional arrangements provide teachers with sufficient space for professional decision-making.

Institutional support also played an important role in enabling teacher agency. The participants explained that school leaders provided sufficient flexibility for teachers to prepare lesson plans collaboratively and determine appropriate learning resources while maintaining curriculum accountability through periodic evaluations. Rather than restricting teachers' instructional decisions, these evaluations functioned as quality assurance mechanisms to ensure that curriculum objectives were achieved. This finding is consistent with Sum & Kwon (2020), who argue that teacher agency develops more effectively when institutional structures provide both professional autonomy and organizational support. Likewise, Nguyen & Bui (2016) emphasise that institutional trust and collaborative professional environments encourage teachers to exercise greater initiative in curriculum implementation and instructional innovation. These findings indicate that teacher agency is not produced by individual teachers alone. It is also enabled or constrained by the organisational conditions surrounding classroom practice. Professional trust, collaborative planning, and sufficient flexibility therefore appear to provide an important foundation for teachers to exercise agency in adapting learning resources.

The findings further suggest that teacher agency is closely associated with teachers' adaptive expertise. Throughout the learning process, the participants continuously adjusted instructional materials, teaching strategies, and classroom activities according to students' responses and emerging instructional needs. Such adaptive decision-making reflects teachers' capacity to evaluate classroom situations and modify instructional practices through ongoing professional reflection. This interpretation aligns with Biesta (2013), who argues that adaptive expertise requires teachers to possess the agency to improvise, envision alternative instructional approaches, and respond flexibly to changing classroom conditions. Taken together, the findings suggest that teacher agency in learning resource adaptation involves three interconnected capacities: evaluating the suitability of available resources, making context-sensitive instructional choices, and adjusting those choices in response to students' needs and classroom constraints.

Implications for Kurikulum Merdeka and Teacher Professional Development

The findings have implications for the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka, particularly in relation to the expectation that teachers make instructional decisions that are responsive to their students and teaching contexts. The different adaptation practices demonstrated by T1, T2, and T3 indicate that curriculum flexibility does not automatically result in similar instructional practices across classrooms. Instead, teachers interpret and enact this flexibility through their own professional judgement. Therefore, the successful implementation of curriculum flexibility depends not only on providing teachers with freedom but also on ensuring that they possess the knowledge, confidence, and contextual understanding required to use that freedom effectively.

From a professional development perspective, the findings suggest that teacher training should move beyond introducing teachers to new learning resources or digital platforms. Professional development should also strengthen teachers' ability to evaluate the pedagogical suitability of resources, identify students' learning needs, adapt materials appropriately, and justify instructional decisions based on classroom evidence. Such professional development would be more consistent with the agency-oriented view of teachers demonstrated in this study, in which teachers are positioned as active decision-makers rather than passive users of curriculum materials.

At the school level, professional learning communities and collaborative lesson planning can provide opportunities for teachers to exchange strategies for adapting learning resources while retaining individual professional judgement. School leaders can further support this process by providing reasonable flexibility, access to instructional resources, and an evaluative environment based on professional dialogue rather than solely on compliance. These conditions may help teachers exercise agency while remaining accountable to curriculum objectives.

At the policy level, the findings suggest that curriculum implementation should recognise contextual variation among schools and classrooms. A uniform expectation concerning the use or adaptation of particular learning resources may not adequately reflect differences in students' proficiency, digital access, instructional time, and school facilities. Supporting teachers to make evidence-informed and context-sensitive decisions may therefore be more productive than prescribing a single model of resource adaptation.

Discussion Synthesis

The present study contributes to the existing literature by bringing learning resource adaptation and teacher agency into a more explicit analytical relationship. Previous studies have established the importance of adapting instructional materials to learners' needs and classroom contexts (De Neve et al., 2015; Richards, 2010), while studies on teacher agency have emphasised teachers' capacity to interpret and enact curriculum within particular professional and institutional contexts (Priestley et al., 2015; Tao & Gao, 2017). However, the findings of this study show more specifically how agency becomes visible through teachers' everyday decisions concerning learning resources.

The study further suggests that teacher agency should not be equated with the degree of modification made to prescribed materials. The three participants demonstrated agency through substantially different practices: replacing and reconstructing resources, selectively combining prescribed and digital resources, and deliberately limiting supplementary resources. What connects these practices is not their level of innovation but the professional reasoning through which teachers responded to their students and contextual constraints. This provides a more nuanced understanding of teacher agency in English language teaching by positioning learning resource adaptation as one concrete site where professional agency is enacted.

In this sense, the study does not merely confirm that teachers adapt learning resources. Rather, it demonstrates that the form and extent of adaptation are shaped by an interaction between teachers' professional judgement and the ecological conditions of their classrooms. The contribution of the study therefore lies in showing that adaptation can function as an observable manifestation of teacher agency, including when agency is expressed through selective adaptation or intentional non-adaptation.

Taken together, the findings highlight that learning resource adaptation and teacher agency are closely interconnected aspects of English language teaching. Teachers' decisions regarding instructional materials were shaped not only by curriculum requirements but also by their professional understanding of students' learning characteristics, classroom conditions, available facilities, and instructional objectives. Consequently, learning resource adaptation should be viewed as an ongoing pedagogical process rather than a technical task of selecting teaching materials.

CONCLUSION

The present study explored how English teachers adapt learning resources and how these practices reflect teacher agency in secondary school contexts. The findings show that teachers exercised professional judgement in selecting, modifying, combining, and using learning resources according to students' needs and classroom conditions. The variation among participants indicates that teacher agency is not determined by the extent of material modification, but by the contextual and intentional reasoning underlying teachers' instructional decisions. Thus, substantial adaptation, selective supplementation, and deliberate non-adaptation can all represent forms of teacher agency.

Theoretically, this study extends the understanding of teacher agency by positioning learning resource adaptation as a concrete context in which professional judgement is enacted. Practically, the findings highlight the importance of strengthening teachers' capacity to evaluate and adapt learning resources within the flexibility of the Kurikulum Merdeka through professional development, collaborative planning, and institutional support.

This study is limited to three female English teachers in secondary schools in Bandung and relies primarily on semi-structured interviews and supporting documents. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted within this specific context.

Future research could involve more diverse participants and settings and incorporate classroom observations or longitudinal designs to examine teacher agency more comprehensively.

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