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Navigating Intercultural and Pedagogical Challenges: A Case Study of a Foreign ELT Teacher in Indonesia's Dual-Curriculum Secondary School

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Abstract

This case study investigates the instructional challenges and adaptation strategies of a foreign English Language Teaching (ELT) teacher in a private secondary school in Batam, Indonesia, that implements both the Merdeka Curriculum and the Pearson Edexcel system. Using a single-case qualitative design, the study aims to (1) identify the pedagogical and technological challenges encountered by the teacher, (2) examine how she integrates Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to mediate instruction under these constraints, and (3) analyze how she negotiates curricular and intercultural demands between the two curricula. Data were collected through three classroom observations (approximately 80 minutes each) and one 45-minute semi-structured interview with a Filipino teacher who has taught in Indonesia for over twelve years and were examined through thematic analysis. The findings, presented as context-bound themes rather than generalizable outcomes, indicate that the teacher encountered challenges related to language barriers, limited instructional resources, technological disruptions, and the adaptation of curriculum content to the Indonesian sociocultural context. In response, she employed strategies such as simplified instruction, peer-supported learning, culturally localized materials, and flexible use of available technology. Within the boundaries of this single case, these strategies illustrate forms of teacher agency, intercultural responsiveness, and curriculum mediation that appear to support classroom-level inclusion; establishing their effectiveness or their alignment with international teaching standards would require further evidence from learners or outcome data. The findings suggest that intercultural sensitivity and flexible pedagogical approaches, supported by adequate institutional structures, are central to sustaining dual-curriculum ELT practice.

Keywords: Intercultural English language teaching; Dual curriculum implementation; ICT integration in ELT; Foreign ELT Teacher; Merdeka curriculum

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesian secondary schools that adopt an international curriculum alongside the national Merdeka Curriculum place their English teachers at the intersection of two distinct sets of demands. The Merdeka Curriculum is a competency-based, student-centered national framework that emphasizes contextualized learning outcomes, differentiated instruction, and the cultivation of higher-order thinking through the Profil Pelajar Pancasila (Nurlaily et al., 2026; Tang, 2023). In recent decades, the landscape of education has been transformed by the rise of international curricula, which are designed to prepare students for success in a global context (Ottman & Delina, 2024). The Pearson Edexcel system, by contrast, is a United Kingdom–based international qualification track

built around standardized syllabi, externally moderated assessment, and progression toward the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and A-Levels (Coulombe et al., 2020; Yao et al., 2025). Where the Merdeka Curriculum grants teachers latitude to adapt content to local context, Pearson Edexcel constrains that latitude through fixed learning outcomes and assessment criteria set outside Indonesian (Khasbani, 2019). A school that runs both curricula in parallel therefore asks its teachers to reconcile locally contextualized, competency-based pedagogy with an externally standardized, internationally benchmarked one within the same classroom hours (Ndari & Mahmudah, 2023; Van Geel et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, ELT at the secondary school level has evolved significantly through major curriculum reforms, notably the 2013 Curriculum (K13) and the Merdeka Curriculum (Febria et al., 2025; Nurlaily et al., 2026; Sofiana et al., 2019). These reforms emphasize student-centered learning, communicative competence, and higher order thinking skills (Tang, 2023). English is taught not only as a subject but also as a medium for cultivating critical reasoning and global engagement (Liu & Wei, 2024) . The curriculum promotes contextualized learning and competency-based outcomes (Lature et al., 2024). However, the transition has not been seamless. Teachers report challenges such as unclear guidelines, increased administrative demands, and difficulties in aligning assessment practices with learning objectives (Imran et al., 2025) . In addition to the national curriculum, a growing number of Indonesian private and international schools have adopted foreign curricula such as the Pearson Edexcel system from the United Kingdom (Imran et al., 2025). The objective of implementing international curricula is to prepare students for competitive global environments by promoting analytical thinking, academic rigor, and international qualifications, including the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and A Levels (Yao et al., 2025) . These curricula use English as the medium of instruction and emphasize inquiry-based learning, standardized assessments, and independent learning skills (Khasbani, 2019) . The implementation of international curricula alongside the national Merdeka Curriculum creates a dual-curriculum system that presents unique pedagogical challenges (Ndari & Mahmudah, 2023) . Teachers are required to navigate differing learning outcomes, instructional approaches, and assessment formats (Van Geel et al., 2023) . For foreign teachers, this dual expectation is further complicated by the need to understand local cultural norms and student behavior while maintaining international standards (Tatik et al., 2025).

Given the increasing complexity of ELT instruction within Indonesian secondary schools, this study seeks to explore how foreign English teachers manage pedagogical, cultural, and technological demands in IT- enhanced classrooms (Sofiana et al., 2019)**.** It focuses specifically on how foreign educators integrate the Merdeka Curriculum and Pearson Edexcel standards within a bilingual classroom setting, where English is used as a medium of instruction for students with diverse proficiency levels (Sofiana et al., 2019). The study also examines how ICT is used to mediate learning and support curriculum delivery (Chen et al., 2023; Zaki et al., 2024). By focusing on the real-world experiences of a foreign ELT teacher, this study aims to understand the practical strategies employed to cope with linguistic diversity, curricular duality, and digital instruction (Taşdemir & Journal, 2022) . These insights will be valuable in informing policy and practice for teacher recruitment, training, and support systems in similar educational contexts (See et al., 2020).

Although various studies have examined ELT curriculum reform and technology integration in Indonesia, most of the literature between 2018 and 2025 has concentrated on the experiences of local teachers or general challenges associated with curriculum change. Research on foreign teachers working in Indonesian secondary schools remains

limited, particularly regarding their adaptation to dual-curriculum environments and their use of ICT in ELT classrooms (Anwar et al., 2020) . Existing studies tend to overlook the nuanced cultural negotiations, language accommodations, and instructional strategies employed by foreign teachers (Groves et al., 2015) . Furthermore, few studies have utilized qualitative case study approaches to investigate the lived experiences of foreign educators in bilingual and digitally supported classroom settings (Priya, 2021) . This research gap indicates a lack of comprehensive understanding about how foreign teachers mediate between national education policies, international standards, and local classroom realities— particularly in technologically mediated environments (Wei et al., 2022) foreign teachers face unique challenges in this context. Anggieta et al., (2023) highlights that intercultural sensitivity is crucial for effective ELT material design, yet this can be a significant hurdle for foreign educators unfamiliar with local cultures, traditions, and learner expectations (Piret et al., 2025; Puad & Ashton, 2023).

This study addresses that gap through an in-depth, context-bound examination of how one experienced foreign teacher mediates curricular, linguistic, technological, and cultural demands within a single Indonesian dual-curriculum classroom. Its novelty lies not in demonstrating that such challenges exist — prior case studies of foreign or expatriate teachers in Asian contexts have established this (Taşdemir & Journal, 2022) — but in tracing, through direct classroom observation combined with the teacher's own account, the specific instructional decisions through which one teacher reconciles a nationally mandated, contextualized curriculum with an internationally standardized one in real time. The study pursues three objectives: (1) to identify the pedagogical and technological challenges faced by the teacher in delivering ELT instruction under the dual-curriculum structure; (2) to examine how she integrates ICT to mediate these challenges; and (3) to analyze how she negotiates curricular and intercultural demands between the Merdeka Curriculum and the Pearson Edexcel system. Findings from this case are intended to inform how schools recruit, prepare, and support foreign ELT teachers working within similarly structured dual-curriculum settings.

METHOD

Type of Study

This study employed a single-case qualitative design, following the case-study tradition described by Yin (2018) to develop an in-depth understanding of the pedagogical challenges and instructional strategies of one foreign ELT teacher working within a dual-curriculum Indonesian secondary school (Hall & Liebenberg, 2024) . The case is bounded at the level of the teacher's instructional practice: the unit of analysis is the individual teacher's classroom decision-making i.e. her pedagogical, linguistic, and technological choices. This single, purposively selected case was chosen because it offered rare access to a foreign teacher with over a decade of experience operating simultaneously under the Merdeka Curriculum and the Pearson Edexcel system, a combination that is uncommon and therefore analytically valuable for surfacing decision-making that a more typical or single-curriculum case would not reveal. A case-study approach was chosen over alternative qualitative designs because it allows sustained, detailed attention to how one individual manages cultural adaptation, language accommodation, and technology use (Lim, 2025; Purba & Setiawan, 2021).

Research Site and Participants

The study was conducted at a private secondary school in Batam City, Indonesia, selected for its dual implementation of the Indonesian Merdeka Curriculum and the Pearson Edexcel Curriculum. This dual-curriculum environment provided a rich context for examining the intersection of local and global educational standards, particularly in the use of English as a medium of instruction and in an IT-supported learning

environment. The participant was a female English teacher of Filipino nationality who has taught in Indonesia for over twelve years, with prior teaching experience at both university and high-school levels in her home country. She is fluent in English and Tagalog but has limited proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia, a constraint that directly shapes the communication strategies examined in this study. She was purposively selected because her combined tenure and cross-curricular experience made her decision-making a methodologically appropriate window into sustained dual-curriculum adaptation: a newly appointed or single-curriculum teacher would not have accumulated the comparative basis for the instructional adjustments this study examines. Classroom observations were conducted in a Grade 11 science class of 25 students, selected because it exemplifies the blended curriculum model and the bilingual learning environment.

Data Gathering Technique

Observation

Classroom observation was the first method of data collection, conducted across three separate sessions to capture the general phenomena under study (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Taylor et al., 2016) . Each session lasted approximately 80 minutes and combined two instruments: a structured observation checklist and a field-note guide. The checklist was constructed around five categories aligned with the study's research questions and conceptual framework — clarity of learning objectives, alignment of lesson content with curriculum standards, classroom management, instructional strategies, and assessment practice — so that each observed lesson could be evaluated consistently against the same dimensions of dual-curriculum delivery. The field-note guide directed the observer to record qualitative detail beyond these categories, including the teacher's use of bilingual explanation, classroom interaction patterns, levels of student engagement, and responses to unplanned events such as technical disruption, as well as the broader learning atmosphere, collaborative and project-based activity, and peer discussion relevant to how the teacher managed mixed English proficiency in the room. Two observers were present at each session to support the objectivity of the procedure, and the resulting observation record was shared with the teacher for member-checking wherever clarification was needed.

Semi Structured Interview

The second method of data collection was a semi-structured interview, which was conducted with an English teacher after the final observation session. Prior to the interview session, an interview protocol and blueprint were developed as to assure the validity of the instrument (Anggieta et al., 2023; Anwar et al., 2020; Creswell & Guetterman, 2019) . The interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and aimed to explore the teacher's reflections on her teaching experiences, the challenges she encountered in delivering lessons within the dual-curriculum and IT-integrated classroom, and the strategies she employed to support students' learning. Topics discussed included the adaptation to Indonesian cultural and educational norms, balancing the requirements of the national and international curricula, managing classroom dynamics in a diverse linguistic setting, integrating technology into lessons, and approaches to assessment and feedback. The interview was audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis, providing valuable insights into the teacher's perspectives that complemented the observational data.

Table 1. Interview Protocol

No	Variable	Indicator	Interview domain
1	Challenges	Linguistic Mediation and Communication Challenges	Language barriers in classroom communication.
		Instructional Resource	Resource limitations in English

No	Variable	Indicator	Interview domain
		Constraints	curriculum implementation.
		Intercultural and Curriculum Alignment	Balancing a standardized curriculum with diverse student needs.
2	Strategies	Student Engagement and Active Learning Practices	Strategies for engaging students with diverse English proficiency levels.
		Inclusive Support for Diverse Language Proficiency Levels	Support strategies for students with lower English proficiency.
		Technological and Resource Negotiation	Use of limited technology to support English language teaching.
		Pedagogical Adaptation in Dual-Curriculum Contexts	Adaptation of standardized curriculum materials to the Indonesian context.
		Interactive and Learner-Centered Instructional Practices	Classroom activities promoting active participation and collaborative learning.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study was conducted using thematic analysis ((Creswell & Guetterman, 2019; Lichtman, 2023; Taylor et al., 2016) . The researcher began by reviewing and organizing the observation notes collected from the three classroom sessions. These notes were carefully read multiple times to become familiar with the data and to identify meaningful patterns related to the research objectives. Through an iterative coding process, key themes were identified and refined to capture the central ideas emerging from the observations. The results outlined here result from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews. Coding facilitates the segmentation of a set of data (Miles et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Purba & Setiawan, 2021). The aim is to classify patterns, relationships, and the way participants value the experience to result in meaning-making process of the event or activity as well as program. The researcher applied the code family developed from Bogdan & Biklen (2003) and Purba & Setiawan (2021) as he presented on the following table.

Table 2. Code Family and Description

Code Family	**Code Description**
Setting/ Context	Description of research setting, topic, and boundaries.
Definitions of Situation	Interpretation of events or situations or how one values/ name something.
Perspectives Held by Subjects	Shared beliefs, values, and norms.
Way of thinking about People and Objects	Description of how participants view others and material things.
Process	Trace sequences, phases, and changes over time.
Activity	Identification of routine behaviors, tasks, and roles.
Event	Mark discrete incidents or notable occurrences.
Strategy	Records of methods, tactics, and approaches used to achieve goals.
Relationships and Social	Mapping of social ties, interactions, and power relations.
Method	Report research procedures, challenges, and ethical issues.

This part, as the nature of qualitative research, underpins the coding categories developed from the interview data. The researcher sought to unveil deeper understanding into the identity and contextual factors that describe the phenomena understudy. Coding is the process of labeling segments of data to facilitate understanding

and analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The coding process accelerates interpretation of large amounts of qualitative data by classifying them into meaningful segments (Taylor et al., 2016). Once transcription is complete, the data is thoroughly reviewed to develop an initial understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Linguistic Mediation and Communication Challenges Resource Limitation

This section emphasizes the obstacles that the teacher encounters because of language barriers. The teacher does not speak Bahasa Indonesia, while her students possess varying levels of English proficiency, which she identified as a recurring source of difficulty in classroom communication.

Language barriers in classroom communication: Interview*: Language barriers can significantly affect my ability to communicate concepts and instructions effectively in class. When students struggle to understand the language I'm using, they may misinterpret lessons, feel confused about tasks, or hesitate to ask questions. This can lead to slower learning progress and less participation. I often need to repeat myself, simplify my vocabulary, or use gestures, visual aids, and demonstrations to make sure everyone understands. Observation: The second observation shows students showed confusion with rapid lesson delivery on singular and plural forms, requiring the teacher to repeat instructions and use slides, aligning with her adaptive communication strategy.*

When explaining materials, she reported turning to more proficient students to translate for peers who struggled: Interview: *My biggest challenge when explaining materials in English is when some students have little to no understanding of the language. When this happens, I usually ask a student who understands English well to help translate the explanation for those who struggle, so everyone can follow along.* Observation: *The 1st observation shows mixed-proficiency groups were observed, with proficient students assisting peers, corroborating her reliance on peer translation.*

She described combining several strategies at once to prevent misunderstanding: Interview: *I use multiple strategies. First, I rely heavily on visual aids, slides, handouts, even gestures to clarify my points. Second, I simplify my language and try to give examples that are contextually familiar to them. Third, I organize the students into mixed-proficiency groups. The more proficient students help translate or rephrase the material in Bahasa Indonesia to support those who are struggling.* Observation: *The first observation the lesson was presented about the apostrophes used color-coded slides and gestures. The second observation shows that group dynamic supported her described strategies.*

The language barrier, profoundly found, is a substantial obstacle that affects student participation and lesson comprehension. Based on the results, it is shown that dealing with the instructional adaptation, the teacher actively mitigates the language barriers that may occur during the process by using multimodal scaffolding. The multimodal scaffolding used employs visual aids or being done visually and by gesture or kinesthetically to promote more understanding. Secondly, there is a clear reliance on peer translation or peer-mediated learning within mixed-proficiency group that is done due to the comprehension gaps. This in-pair activity can bridge the gap between the students across different proficiency. Finally, the teacher implements strategic redundancy by repeating instruction and simplifying the word choices as key tactics to handle rapid lesson delivery.

Instructional Resource Constraints

This section discusses the limitations the teacher encounters with respect to resources, including periodic shortages of teaching aids and deficient air conditioning, which affect the delivery of lessons and the concentration of students. Her adaptive strategies guarantee that learning persists despite these constraints.

Limitations in classroom resources; Interview: *One limitation I currently face is the lack of proper air conditioning in the English room, which often makes students uncomfortable, especially during hot days. This affects their concentration and energy levels during class. Aside from that, I don't have major problems with resources like projectors, technology, or internet access.* Observation: *Field notes from both sessions noted students' discomfort due to heat, impacting their focus.*

Coping with unavailable teaching materials; Interview: *When books or teaching aids are unavailable, I create my own materials by sourcing them from different references. I focus on what is available and make the most of it, rather than stressing over what's missing.* Observation: *The teacher was seen distributing self-prepared handouts on the first observation, supporting her proactive material creation.*

Lesson plan adjustment under resource constraints; Interview: *When certain tools are unavailable, I adjust the lesson by focusing more on discussion, peer work, or printed materials. I've developed a teaching style that's not overly reliant on technology, although I use it when possible.* Observation: *On the second observation, when the laptop lagged, she shifted to interactive whiteboard tasks, aligning with her flexible approach.*

The findings on the instructional resource constraints show that resource limitation in dual-curriculum ELT settings should be addressed not merely as logistical or infrastructural aspects but rather as a pedagogical resource negotiation where the teacher regulates instruction to sustain learning effectiveness regardless of any constrained conditions. The data indicate that the teacher's responses were not a reactive improvisation but more on the adaptive instructional cognition. First, the issue of inadequate classroom facilities, for instance poor air conditioning demonstrates that physical learning environments directly shape the cognitive engagement and effective instruction. Secondly, teacher self-developed teaching materials illustrate the pedagogical adaptation and teacher agency for not being dependent on the standardized resources but rather engaging in contextual material reconstruction based on the alternative references. Lastly, the adjustment during technological emergences reflects instructional resilience. This challenges the ICT-integrated ELT that teacher cognition and adaptive expertise are more prominent in the instructional process.

Intercultural and Curriculum Alignment

This section delves into the challenge of integrating the Pearson Edexcel curriculum with Indonesian cultural contexts, necessitating that the teacher modifies materials and adhere to local norms to effectively address the diverse requirements of students.

Balancing standardized curriculum and student needs; Interview: *Navigating the tension between a standardized curriculum like Pearson Edexcel and the diverse learning needs of my students requires a flexible and student-centered approach. I often need to adapt my teaching strategies to match the varying levels of language proficiency, learning styles, and backgrounds of my students.* Observation: *Lessons adapted to student levels were evident, with simplified instructions observed on the first observation*.

Responding to cultural differences in curriculum content; Interview: *I am always open and respectful to all cultures. I haven't had to modify a lesson, but I do take time to explain cultural differences when needed.* Observation: *No major modifications were noted, but explanations of cultural context were observed during the second session.*

Adapting lessons to local cultural norms; Interview: *Yes, a few times. Some cultural references in reading texts or writing prompts didn't sit well with the local context. I either replace the examples or guide the discussion in a way that students can still meet the learning objectives while respecting local norms.* Observation: *Subtle adjustments to examples were noted, aligning with her described approach on the second session.*

The findings on the intercultural and curriculum alignment illustrate that dual curriculum is not simply delivering international standardized content but rather a process of intercultural pedagogical negotiation where the teacher is a mediator of global curriculum standards and local realities. The dual curriculum necessitates cultural adaptation, which the teacher facilitates by localizing information and elucidating distinctions, so assuring relevance and respect for Indonesian traditions. First, the result shows that effective dual-curriculum teaching is less dependent on a strict curriculum reliability but more on adaptive instructional alignment of curricular objectives and learner readiness and competence. Secondly, intercultural ELT doesn't solely rely on localizing materials but on the development of learners' capacity to interpret and negotiate unfamiliar cultural perspectives by respecting the pedagogical environment. Finally, the teacher adapts culturally responsive pedagogical that reflects a balance process of global education standards and local normative expectations.

Student Engagement and Active Learning Practices

This section delineates teachers' strategies for ensuring that courses are engaged, which include the use of interactive activities and multimedia to accommodate the diverse proficiency levels of students and sustain their interest.

Strategies for engaging mixed-proficiency learners; Interview: *I incorporate visual aids, real-life examples, and multimedia resources to help explain concepts more clearly. I also design activities that encourage interaction, such as group work, role-plays, and games.* Observation: *Visual aids and group work were actively used on the first and second observation, enhancing engagement.*

Classroom attention-grabbing strategies; Interview: *The quickest way to grab students' attention is by getting them involved right away. I've found that students enjoy English lessons most when they are actively performing rather than just listening.* Observation: *Immediate involvement through quizzes on the first observation kept students engaged, as noted in field notes.*

Interactive classroom activities for engagement; Interview: *I love doing weekly speaking exercises. Students prepare short presentations or dialogues, and we make a small event out of it. Peer grading is also great; it allows them to be reflective and take more responsibility for their learning.* Observation: *Speaking exercises with microphones were observed on the second observation, boosting student participation.*

Inclusive Support for Diverse Language Proficiency Levels

This section emphasizes teacher's customized support for pupils with limited English proficiency, employing peer aid, simpler instructions, and more attention to promote inclusivity.

Support strategies for lower proficiency students; Interview: *I simplify instructions, break tasks into smaller steps, and use visuals, gestures, and real- life examples to clarify meaning. I also provide vocabulary support and pair them with more proficient classmates who can explain instructions or model tasks.* Observation: *Simplified instructions and peer support were evident during the second observation through group activities.*

Assistance for students with minimal comprehension; Interview: *I reach out to them even outside of our regular class schedule, giving them special attention, care, and time. I patiently explain the lessons repeatedly using the simplest and clearest ways possible.* Observation: *Individual check-ins were noted during the first observation session, supporting her extra effort.*

Inclusive support for struggling students; Response: *I constantly monitor their progress during class. I walk around, observe their work, and offer help where needed. I also assign group roles so that every student has something meaningful to contribute.* Observation: *Teacher's movement around the class on second observation ensured all students participated.* Students with lower proficiency gain from individualized assistance, collaborative engagement with peers, and diligent oversight, guaranteeing that all learners progress effectively.

Technological and Resource Negotiation

This section illustrates how the teacher maximizes technology resources, such as laptops and projectors, to improve learning, showcasing her ingenuity in a diverse linguistic setting.

Maximizing limited classroom technology; *Interview: I project content for whole-class instruction using a projector to display videos, slides, and interactive materials. I also encourage students to use the laptop for group presentations. Observation: Projector use was employed during the process of teaching the apostrophe lesson, enhancing delivery*.

Frequently used teaching technology; *Interview: I most often use a laptop, projector, speaker, and microphone to support my lessons. I play audio clips or videos for students to listen and respond to, then use the microphone during class presentations. Observation: Microphones and speakers were used during the teaching and learning process, boosting speaking practice*.

Effective use of simple technology in teaching; *Interview: One lesson I remember was on apostrophes-possessive nouns. I created a slide deck with color-coded examples and visual illustrations. Students were able to grasp the difference between "student's" and "students" very quickly. Observation: a slide deck was used during the first observation, and the students were observed engaged actively*.

The findings of the interview and observation on technological and resource negotiation showcase the technology integration in dual-curriculum ELT settings is molded less by advanced technology use and more by the teacher's willingness to strategically regulate available resources to support instructional goals. The teacher's practices reveal that effective ICT integration in resource-variable classrooms depends on adaptive pedagogical intentionality rather than on the abundance of technological infrastructure itself. Functional technology mediation is implemented using projectors, videos, slides, and shared laptops in which the technology is employed to enhance collective classroom comprehension and participation.

Pedagogical Adaptation in Dual-Curriculum Contexts

Adapting curriculum materials to local contexts; *Interview: I localize content by replacing unfamiliar references with relatable Indonesian examples such as Hari Kartini or Eid Mubarak instead of Western holidays to teach vocabulary or writing. Observation: Local examples were noted during the second observation session, enhancing relevance and cultural adaptation*.

Simplifying instructional materials; *Interview: I explain the lessons in the simplest way possible, using clear and basic English. I localize English materials by using examples, names, situations, and topics that are familiar to my students' daily lives and culture. Observation: Simplified explanations were observed in the teaching and learning process, aiding comprehension of the students by using common and familiar words for the students*.

Localization of English teaching materials; *Interview: I adapt the content by inserting local events or familiar names. For example, instead of talking about Halloween, I ask them to write about how they celebrate Eid Mubarak. Observation: Local event discussions were noted during the process of teaching and learning, aligning with her approach*.

Collectively, the findings suggest that pedagogical adaptation in dual-curriculum ELT contexts should be perceived as a process of culturally and linguistically responsive instructional mediation where the process allows the connectivity between curriculum and personal identity or experience to result in student engagement.

Interactive and Learner-Centered Instructional Practices

Activities promoting participation and collaboration; *Interview: One of the most effective ways is through weekly speaking exercises, which my students genuinely enjoy. I've found that students are more engaged and confident when they're given the opportunity to speak in front of the class. Observation: Speaking exercises were a min activity employed in the second observation, with high engagement of the students allowed them to express themselves.*

Activities encouraging English speaking practice; *Interview: Individual speaking tasks are the most effective. They give each student a chance to express themselves and build confidence in using English. Observation: Individual presentations were observed in the second observation, boosting confidence.*

Encouraging student initiative and leadership; *Interview: I rotate leadership roles during group activities. Each week, different students are assigned as group leaders or discussion facilitators. I also give them space to suggest topics or choose formats for certain projects. Observation: Rotating roles were noted during the March 24 group tasks, fostering leadership.*

Discussion

The findings show that teaching English in a dual-curriculum Indonesian secondary school requires more than the delivery of two curricular frameworks. The focal teacher had to mediate linguistic diversity, technological and material constraints, cultural differences, and competing curricular expectations while maintaining classroom participation. Her strategies—simplifying language, using visual and gestural support, relying on peer mediation, localizing examples, adjusting activities when technology failed, and promoting speaking and collaborative work—suggest adaptive teacher agency rather than simple curriculum compliance. Interview and observation data repeatedly showed that she altered language, materials, grouping, examples, and delivery in response to classroom needs. The finding therefore confirms earlier work showing that ELT teachers in linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms require contextual judgment to convert formal curriculum goals into workable classroom practices (Anwar et al., 2020; Taşdemir & Journal, 2022).

The linguistic mediation finding is especially important. The teacher's limited proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia, combined with uneven student proficiency in English, created recurrent communication difficulties. She responded by repeating instructions, simplifying vocabulary, using gestures and visuals, and asking more proficient students to rephrase or translate for peers. These strategies show how peer-supported learning can become a practical resource when a teacher and some students do not share sufficient linguistic resources for direct explanation. This finding is compatible with research showing that foreign teachers' classroom experiences are shaped by local linguistic and cultural conditions (Taşdemir & Journal, 2022). It extends that work by showing that mediation can emerge pragmatically through students themselves, rather than only through teacher bilingualism. However, this should not be interpreted as proof that peer translation improved learning outcomes because the study contains no direct measures of student achievement.

The study also shows that instructional resource constraints were negotiated pedagogically. The teacher reported discomfort caused by inadequate air conditioning, shortages of materials, and disruptions such as laptop lag. Rather than suspending instruction, she prepared handouts, shifted toward discussion or peer work, and used alternative classroom tools. This confirms Tondeur et al. (2016), who emphasize that meaningful technology integration is shaped by teachers' pedagogical beliefs and instructional decisions, not simply by technology availability. It also complements Hafifah and Sulistyo's (2020) findings on ICT integration in Indonesian ELT. The present case qualifies technology-centered assumptions: sophisticated infrastructure was not necessary for every productive instructional move. The teacher's more consequential competence appeared to be her ability to regulate available resources according to instructional goals. Technology therefore functioned as a flexible mediator rather than the driver of pedagogy.

The findings on intercultural and curriculum alignment indicate that dual-curriculum teaching involves negotiation between standardization and contextualization.

Pearson Edexcel represented internationally structured curricular expectations, whereas the Merdeka Curriculum emphasized contextualization and responsiveness to learner needs. The teacher managed this tension by simplifying tasks, explaining unfamiliar cultural references, and substituting locally meaningful examples when appropriate. More specifically, she reported replacing unfamiliar cultural references with Indonesian examples such as Hari Kartini and Eid Mubarak while retaining the intended language-learning objectives. This confirms research identifying tensions between global educational expectations and local curricular concerns in Indonesia (Puad & Ashton, 2023) and aligns with Anggieta et al. (2023), who emphasize intercultural sensitivity in EFL material design. The case extends these studies by showing curriculum mediation as a moment-to-moment pedagogical practice rather than solely a policy issue. Cultural responsiveness involved maintaining intended learning objectives while changing examples, explanations, and interactional pathways through which learners accessed them.

Student engagement emerged as another important dimension of adaptation. The teacher used group work, role-play, visual materials, quizzes, speaking tasks, presentations, peer grading, and rotating leadership roles. Observations indicated stronger visible participation when students were positioned as active participants rather than passive listeners. These practices are consistent with the student-centered orientation associated with the Merdeka Curriculum (Tang, 2023; Nurlaily et al., 2026) and with Indonesian secondary ELT's emphasis on communicative competence (Sofiana et al., 2019). The present study extends these perspectives by showing that learner-centered practices can bridge two curricula. Interactive activities allowed the teacher to respond to local learner needs while pursuing internationally oriented English objectives. Participation therefore functioned as both an engagement technique and a form of curricular mediation.

The teacher's support for lower-proficiency learners strengthens this interpretation. She broke tasks into smaller steps, provided vocabulary assistance, paired less proficient learners with stronger peers, monitored progress, and offered additional help outside regular class time. These practices suggest that inclusion in a dual-curriculum setting may depend on differentiated access to shared objectives rather than identical treatment of every learner. This is consistent with Van Geel et al. (2023), who emphasize adapting teaching to students' needs, and with the differentiated orientation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Nurlaily et al., 2026). Importantly, the study documents supportive practices, not their measured impact. Claims that these strategies improved proficiency, achievement, or long-term inclusion would require student interviews, assessment data, comparison evidence, or longitudinal outcomes that were not collected.

The ICT findings likewise suggest that educational value came from purposeful use rather than technological sophistication. Projectors, slides, speakers, microphones, videos, and shared laptops were used to clarify explanations, support speaking practice, and sustain engagement. When technology malfunctioned, instruction continued through alternatives. This pattern is consistent with Zaki et al. (2024), who highlight ICT as a support for classroom learning, and with Chen et al. (2023), who connect ICT utilization to broader learner capabilities. The current study extends these discussions by locating technology within a broader system of teacher regulation: digital tools were selected, replaced, or combined according to linguistic and pedagogical demands. Thus, technology integration in this case was less about the quantity or sophistication of devices than about the teacher's capacity to align available tools with immediate instructional purposes.

The findings largely confirm rather than directly contradict previous research on intercultural sensitivity, curriculum adaptation, teacher agency, differentiated teaching,

and ICT integration. Their contribution lies primarily in extending those ideas into the underexplored setting of an experienced foreign ELT teacher simultaneously working with the Merdeka Curriculum and Pearson Edexcel. The case suggests that dual-curriculum ELT can be understood as continual pedagogical regulation across four interacting domains: language, culture, curriculum, and resources. This interpretation is compatible with evidence linking multicultural experience, cultural intelligence, and creative teaching (Wei et al., 2022). Nevertheless, the study does not establish that the observed adaptations are superior to alternatives or that they cause better student outcomes. Based on one experienced Filipino teacher, three observations, and one interview, the findings should be treated as context-bound analytic insights rather than statistically or analytically generalizable evidence of effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the instructional practice of the foreign ELT teacher in the dual-curriculum secondary school was characterized by continuous mediation across linguistic, pedagogical, cultural, and technological demands. Her principal challenges arose from the absence of a fully shared classroom language, differences in students' English proficiency, occasional resource and facility constraints, technological disruptions, and the need to reconcile the contextual orientation of the Merdeka Curriculum with the standardized expectations of Pearson Edexcel. In responding to these conditions, she simplified explanations, used multimodal support, relied on peer mediation, prepared alternative materials, localized examples, and employed interactive speaking, group, and leadership activities. Available technology was used selectively to support comprehension and participation rather than as an instructional goal in itself. Taken together, these practices portray the teacher as an active curriculum mediator who continually adjusted the route to learning objectives while attempting to preserve both international academic expectations and local cultural relevance. The case therefore highlights intercultural responsiveness, adaptive expertise, and teacher agency as central features of foreign ELT practice in a dual-curriculum classroom. These conclusions correspond with the observed patterns of localization, technological negotiation, and learner-centered adaptation reported throughout the findings.

The findings should nevertheless be interpreted within the boundaries of the study design. The evidence was derived from one experienced Filipino teacher, three classroom observations, and one semi-structured interview, and the study did not include student interviews, achievement measures, comparative classrooms, or longitudinal outcome data. Consequently, the observed strategies cannot be claimed to have caused improvements in language proficiency, engagement, or academic achievement, although the observations suggest that they helped the teacher sustain participation and instructional continuity. The study's main contribution is therefore an in-depth account of how curricular and intercultural negotiation occurs in practice rather than a generalizable model of effectiveness. For schools implementing national and international curricula simultaneously, the findings point to the importance of intercultural orientation, collaborative planning, adequate facilities, flexible access to teaching resources, and professional support for curriculum adaptation.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on these findings, this study suggests that schools operating dual-curriculum systems provide stronger support for foreign ELT teachers through regular intercultural training, collaborative lesson planning, and flexible teaching policies that account for the linguistic and cultural diversity of Indonesian classrooms. Curriculum developers and school administrators are encouraged to give teachers more latitude to adapt international curriculum materials to local contexts while maintaining academic

standards, particularly in culturally sensitive situations. Future studies should extend this single-case design by involving multiple foreign and local teachers, incorporating student-level data such as learning outcomes or engagement measures, and examining how foreign and local teachers collaborate in curriculum adaptation, student engagement, and intercultural communication across different Indonesian dual-curriculum settings, so as to build a more generalizable understanding of dual-curriculum ELT implementation in Indonesia.

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Declaration of Using AI Tools

Generative artificial intelligence tools, specifically OpenAI ChatGPT, were used only to assist with language refinement, organization, and stylistic editing of the manuscript. The tool was not used to collect, fabricate, modify, or analyze primary data. All interpretations, conclusions, citations, and final decisions were independently reviewed and verified by the authors.

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