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Evaluating the Contextual Factors Influencing the Implementation of Edlink in English Language Teaching for Vocational Students

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Abstract

This study evaluates the contextual factors influencing the implementation of Edlink, a digital learning platform, in English language teaching (ELT) for vocational students at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis. Using the CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) Evaluation Model, the research investigates the institutional needs, challenges, and opportunities that justify the adoption of Edlink. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with English lecturers and vocational students, along with document analysis. The findings reveal that digital learning is highly valued, with 63% of students considering it essential, and the majority of students recognize the necessity of Edlink in their learning process. However, accessibility issues, including internet connectivity and device limitations, remain significant barriers. The study highlights the importance of aligning technological tools with institutional goals and the need for further training and resources to overcome contextual challenges.

Keywords : CIPP, ELT, Edlink

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the rapid development of digital technologies has revolutionized education, particularly in higher education institutions. For vocational students, digital literacy and communication skills in English are essential to adapting to technology-driven workplaces and global communication needs. Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Edlink have become crucial tools in English language teaching (ELT), offering both synchronous and asynchronous learning opportunities. However, the effectiveness of these platforms depends on how well they align with the context of the educational institution, including the needs of the students and the infrastructure available. Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis, a vocational higher education institution, adopted Edlink as its primary LMS for English instruction. While Edlink holds the potential to improve learning accessibility and engagement, its effectiveness in the context of vocational education remains underexplored. The current situation on campus highlights two significant issues. First, Edlink does not have a secure examination environment. During quizzes and tests, students are still able to open other browser tabs or applications, allowing them to seek answers from outside sources, including search engines or AI tools such as ChatGPT. This open access undermines academic integrity and raises serious concerns regarding the validity of assessments. Second, Edlink's assessment feature is currently limited to multiple-choice questions (MCQs), which restricts lecturers from evaluating more complex language skills such as writing, reasoning, and problem-solving—skills that are essential in vocational English education.

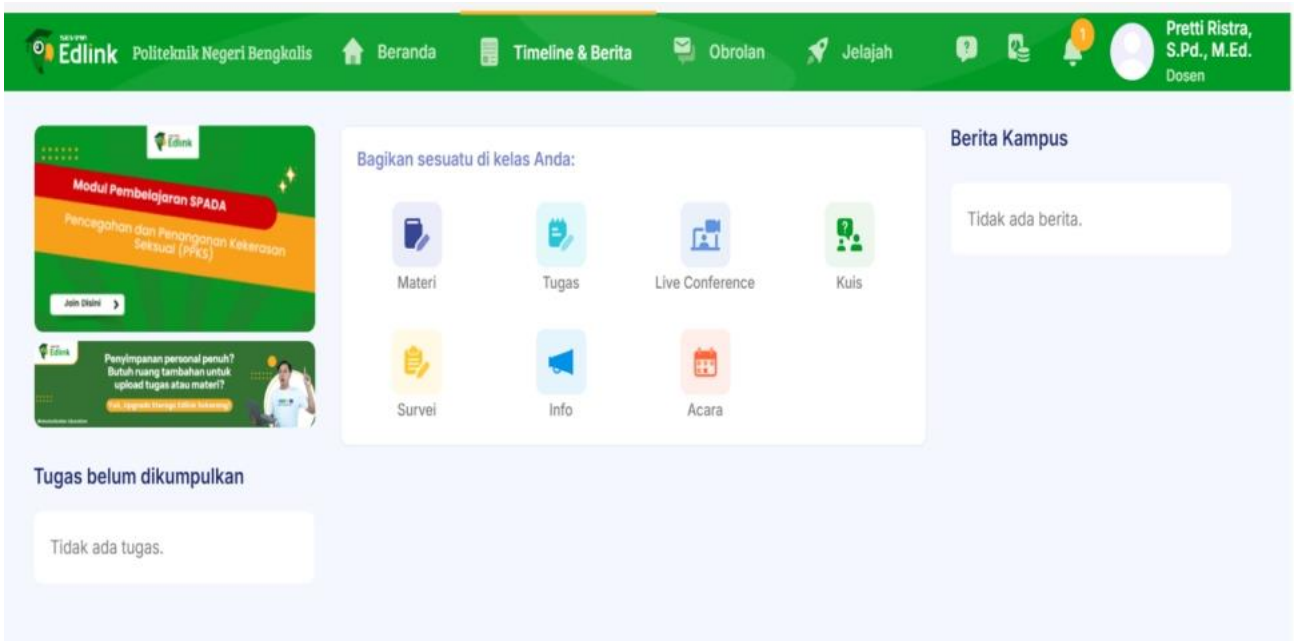

Figure 1. Edlink homepage layout and its features

This study applies the CIPP Evaluation Model, focusing specifically on the Context component, to examine the factors influencing Edlink's implementation in English language teaching at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis. The primary research question guiding this study is: What contextual factors influence the implementation of Edlink in English language teaching for vocational students? Understanding these factors is crucial for optimizing the use of Edlink and ensuring its alignment with the institution's pedagogical goals and the needs of vocational students.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Role of LMS in Vocational Education

The integration of technology into education has led to significant transformations in the delivery and management of courses. Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and Edlink, are at the forefront of this digital transformation, offering tools for the management of learning content, communication, assessment, and student engagement. According to Sun & Gao (2019), LMS platforms enable flexible learning, allowing students to access materials and assessments asynchronously, which is especially beneficial for vocational students who may have limited face-to-face contact time due to practical training schedules.

Al-Said (2015) highlights the importance of LMS in enhancing learner autonomy and engagement, offering students opportunities to access a variety of resources beyond traditional classroom materials. LMS platforms provide multimedia tools that enhance the development of essential language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—which are integral to English language teaching (Wang, 2020). For vocational students, who often have distinct learning needs and future job requirements, LMS platforms also offer the flexibility needed for English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or English for Vocational Purposes

(EVP), which emphasize functional language skills related to their careers (Basturkmen, 2010).

Despite the advantages, several studies (Martin et al., 2020) have noted the limitations of LMS platforms, especially in the areas of assessment tools and academic integrity. Many LMS platforms, including Edlink, rely on multiple-choice assessments which may not fully capture students' proficiency in productive skills like writing or speaking. Furthermore, concerns over security during online testing are common, as students can potentially access other applications or browser tabs during assessments.

Context of English Language Teaching in Vocational Settings

In vocational education, English instruction must go beyond language proficiency to meet the functional communication needs of students in their respective fields. English for Vocational Purposes (EVP) emphasizes the development of language skills that are directly applicable to professional and workplace contexts. According to Dudley-Evans & St John (1998), ESP and EVP focus on integrating technical vocabulary**,** authentic tasks**,** and real-world communication into language learning to ensure that students are equipped to succeed in their careers.

For vocational students, English language teaching (ELT) plays a critical role in preparing them for global communication and employment opportunities. As Basturkmen (2010) suggests, the goal of ELT in vocational education is not only to improve linguistic accuracy but also to enhance students' communicative competence—the ability to use language effectively in professional environments. Given the increased use of digital technologies in vocational sectors, English instruction must also adapt to include the integration of digital tools that mirror workplace practices.

LMS platforms like Edlink are designed to support these needs by providing a flexible and accessible medium for delivering English for Vocational Purposes. They allow for the integration of multimedia and interactive activities, which can be tailored to the specific needs of vocational students. However, the adoption and effectiveness of such platforms depend heavily on the contextual factors that shape the learning environment, including institutional goals**,** student readiness**,** and technological infrastructure (Zhang et al., 2011).

CIPP Evaluation Model in Educational Research

The CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) Evaluation Model, developed by Stufflebeam (2003), provides a comprehensive framework for assessing educational programs and interventions. This model focuses on evaluating the following components:

1. Context: This component assesses the needs, problems, and opportunities that justify the implementation of a particular educational program or tool. In the case of Edlink, the Context component evaluates the institutional needs for digital learning platforms and the opportunities for improving English language instruction through technology.
2. Input: This component focuses on the resources, strategies, and infrastructure that support the implementation of an educational intervention. For Edlink, this would include examining the technological infrastructure (e.g., internet access, devices), training programs, and institutional support for both students and lecturers.

3. Process: The Process component evaluates the actual implementation of the educational program or tool. For Edlink, this would involve examining how the platform is used in practice, including student participation, lecturer engagement, and the integration of platform features into teaching and learning activities.
4. Product**:** The Product component assesses the outcomes and effectiveness of the program or tool. In the case of Edlink, this involves evaluating students' learning outcomes, including motivation, engagement, and the development of language skills.

The CIPP model has been widely used in educational research to evaluate various learning tools and platforms, offering a systematic and contextualized approach to assessment. Zhang et al. (2011) and Stufflebeam & Shinkfield (2007) emphasize that the model's comprehensive nature allows for a balanced evaluation of both quantitative and qualitative data, making it particularly useful for evaluating complex educational interventions like Edlink.

Previous Studies on Edlink and LMS in Vocational Education

Several studies have explored the use of Edlink and other LMS platforms in vocational education, highlighting both their potential and limitations. Laili et al. (2024) conducted a study on the use of Edlink in vocational English learning and found that the platform improved students' engagement and autonomy, aligning with the findings of Alharbi & Khalil (2022), who noted that LMS platforms contribute to more flexible learning environments. However, concerns regarding the lack of secure assessments and the limited variety of assessment types were also raised, similar to the challenges identified in this study.

Permatasari et al. (2022) also reported positive feedback from students using Edlink for learning vocabulary, noting that the platform enhanced accessibility and provided a range of interactive resources. Despite these benefits, they pointed out that the assessment tools available on Edlink did not fully capture students' language proficiency, particularly in productive skills such as speaking and writing. This gap in assessment features remains a significant challenge for vocational education, where authentic communication and practical language use are paramount.

3. METHOD

This study follows a qualitative descriptive research design, employing the CIPP Evaluation Model (Context, Input, Process, Product) to evaluate the implementation of Edlink in English language teaching. Specifically, the focus of this article is on the Context component, which investigates the institutional needs, challenges, and opportunities that justify the use of Edlink.

Participants

The participants were selected through purposive sampling, ensuring that only those with direct experience with Edlink were included. The sample consisted of:

- 3 English lecturers who actively use Edlink for teaching English to vocational students.
- 30-60 vocational students who have used Edlink for at least one academic semester.


Figure 2 and 3 Students' behavior during Edlink usage

Data Collection

Multiple data collection methods were employed to gather comprehensive insights into the contextual factors:

1. Semi-Structured Interviews: Interviews were conducted with both lecturers and students to explore their perceptions of Edlink, its relevance to their learning needs, and the institutional factors that supported or hindered its adoption.
2. Document Analysis: Relevant institutional documents, such as course syllabi, lesson plans, and Edlink usage guidelines, were analyzed to understand the institutional context and how Edlink fits into the broader educational framework.

Data Analysis

Data from interviews and documents were analyzed using thematic analysis, which involved identifying key themes related to the contextual factors that influenced the adoption and implementation of Edlink. The analysis was guided by the Context component of the CIPP model, focusing on factors such as institutional goals, student needs, available resources, and existing challenges.

4. RESULT & DISCUSSION

This study presents its findings based on a component of the updated CIPP Evaluation Model: context. The results reflect students' views on the implementation of Edlink in English language teaching at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis.

Table 1: Student Responses on Edlink Implementation in English Language Teaching

CIPP Component	Focus Area	Key Findings	Highlights
Context	Significance of digital English learning	63% strongly agree, 26% agree	Students view digital learning as highly important.
	Necessity of Edlink in	56.2% agree, 27.4% strongly	The majority support the use of

CIPP Component	Focus Area	Key Findings	Highlights
	English learning	agree	Edlink in learning.
	Access issues (internet/device)	28.8% disagree, 20.5% neutral, 37% agree/strongly agree	Some students still face challenges with internet/device access.

Context Evaluation

The results indicate that students strongly recognize the importance of digital-based English learning, with 63% rating it "very important" and 26% rating it "important." Similarly, 56.2% of respondents agreed and 27.4% strongly agreed that Edlink is needed in English instruction. These findings confirm the relevance of integrating LMS platforms into vocational English courses. However, 42.5% of students reported moderate to high difficulties in accessing Edlink due to internet or device limitations, highlighting contextual challenges that must be addressed for more equitable way.

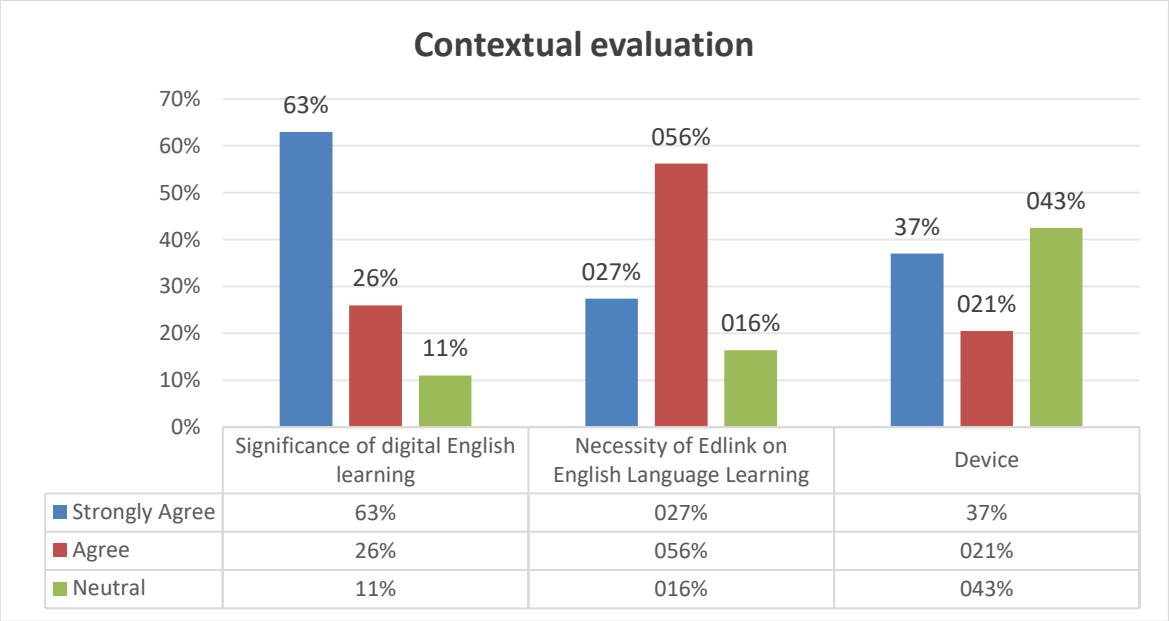

Figure 4. Contextual evaluation on Edlink usage

1. **Significance of Digital Learning in English Education**

The findings reveal that a substantial majority of students (63%) strongly agree that digital-based English learning is highly important, while 26% consider it important. This highlights the growing recognition of the importance of incorporating digital tools in English language education. As educational landscapes shift towards more flexible and technology-enhanced learning environments, students seem to appreciate the role of digital platforms in enhancing their learning experiences. This aligns with global trends where digital learning has become integral in improving access and engagement in educational settings.

2. Necessity of Edlink in English Learning

A majority of students (56.2%) agree, and 27.4% strongly agree, that Edlink is essential for English learning. These results strongly support the integration of Learning Management Systems (LMS) like Edlink into vocational English courses, as students find value in using the platform for organizing materials and completing tasks. The use of Edlink not only aligns with the trend of digitalization in education but also helps facilitate self-paced learning, providing students with more control over their learning experience. The positive response to Edlink suggests that it can play a significant role in modernizing English instruction.

3. Access Challenges (Internet/Device Limitations)

However, the table also highlights a notable concern regarding access issues. 28.8% of students disagree, and 20.5% are neutral about the availability of proper access to Edlink, while 37% agree or strongly agree that internet and device limitations hinder their ability to use the platform effectively. This indicates that while Edlink holds promise, the technological barriers, such as inadequate internet connections or device incompatibility, prevent some students from fully benefiting from the platform. The challenges faced by these students are significant and must be addressed to ensure equitable access to the benefits of Edlink for all students, irrespective of their technological resources.

While the majority of students acknowledge the importance of digital learning and see Edlink as a useful tool for English language learning, access issues remain a significant barrier. To maximize the platform's potential, it is crucial to address these technical limitations, such as improving internet connectivity and ensuring that students have access to compatible devices. This would enable a more inclusive and effective use of Edlink, ultimately enhancing the quality of vocational English instruction.

Discussion

The findings of the study indicate several key contextual factors that influence the implementation of Edlink in English language teaching at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis:

1. Institutional Support for Digital Learning: A strong institutional commitment to incorporating digital learning tools like Edlink was evident, with 63% of students agreeing that digital learning is essential to their education. The majority of students (56.2%) also recognized the need for Edlink in their learning process.

2. Technological Readiness: While most students (70%) reported having devices suitable for using Edlink, issues with internet connectivity and device availability remained a challenge for some students, especially those in rural areas.

3. Perceived Benefits: Students acknowledged the importance of Edlink in providing flexible access to learning materials and assessments. However, the lack of secure testing environments and the limited functionality for assessing higher-order language skills were identified as limitations.

4. Training and Resource Availability: Although training on the use of Edlink was available, only 26% of students reported feeling highly confident after the training.

This suggests the need for improved and more targeted training programs for both lecturers and students.

Qualitative Insights into Students' Experiences with Edlink

In addition to the quantitative data, student interviews provided a deeper understanding of their experiences with Edlink in English courses. Many students shared positive feedback, noting that the platform helped them become more self-reliant and organized. For instance, several participants appreciated the ability to revisit materials at their convenience, which boosted their preparation for quizzes, while others highlighted the motivation to meet deadlines, thanks to clear reminders and due dates. These insights suggest that Edlink fosters better time management and supports self-directed learning.

However, some students expressed neutral views. While they acknowledged Edlink's usefulness, they noted it hadn't fully integrated into their study habits. They tended to rely on more familiar platforms like WhatsApp or preferred direct, in-person interactions with their lecturers. This indicates that Edlink is often seen as an auxiliary tool rather than a core part of the learning process.

A smaller group of students reported negative experiences, citing technical and functional issues. They mentioned problems like missed notifications, slow loading times during assessments, and system performance glitches, which caused frustration and anxiety. These challenges highlight that while Edlink is valuable for learning, its technical reliability needs significant improvement.

Overall, student feedback presents a range of experiences: most appreciated the platform's flexibility and convenience, some viewed it as optional, and a few were dissatisfied due to technical difficulties. This underscores the need for ongoing system updates and better integration into students' digital learning habits.

Lecturers' Perceptions of Edlink in English Language Teaching

Interviews with three English lecturers supported the view that Edlink is a useful tool for organizing teaching and engaging students. The lecturers noted that the platform allowed them to centralize learning materials, track assignments, and promote greater student accountability by providing access to tasks anytime. These benefits align with the role of Learning Management Systems (LMS) in improving instructional efficiency and supporting autonomous learning.

However, lecturers also identified some challenges. A recurring concern was the lack of exam security, as students could easily switch browsers during online quizzes. Additionally, some students ignored notifications or delayed checking the platform until deadlines were imminent, pointing to issues with digital discipline and consistent use. Lecturers also emphasized that Edlink's full potential would only be realized with regular system updates, institutional training, and improved infrastructure. Overall, lecturers viewed Edlink as a

promising platform for content delivery and assignment management, but recognized the need for technical improvements and enhanced pedagogical support to maximize its effectiveness.

The qualitative findings complement the survey results, showing that both students and lecturers generally view Edlink as a valuable tool for English language teaching and learning. Positive feedback focused on its accessibility, ability to enhance time management, and role in organizing materials, which aligns with previous research on the benefits of digital platforms in fostering learner autonomy and engagement (Laili et al., 2024).

However, the varying student attitudes—from enthusiasm to neutrality and frustration—suggest that the platform has yet to become fully integrated into their learning routines. This points to the importance of blended approaches that combine the flexibility of digital platforms with traditional, face-to-face instruction. Neutral responses may also reflect differences in digital literacy, indicating a need for orientation and training.

Negative feedback, particularly regarding unreliable notifications, slow performance, and insecure online exams, highlights critical areas for improvement. Such technical and security issues can erode trust in the platform and negatively impact student well-being, especially during assessments. Similar concerns were raised by Alharbi and Khalil (2022), who emphasized the need for ongoing technical support and system improvements to ensure successful adoption of educational technologies.

Lecturers' perspectives further support these points: while they valued the organizational benefits of Edlink, they also stressed the importance of secure testing environments, stronger digital discipline among students, and continuous institutional support. They saw training for both instructors and students as essential for the platform's effective use. In conclusion, the qualitative data show that while Edlink is appreciated for its convenience and support, there are areas needing attention—namely system reliability, exam security, user training, and better integration into academic routines. Addressing these issues will enhance user satisfaction and strengthen Edlink's role in improving vocational English instruction.

5. CONCLUSION

This study provides valuable insights into the contextual factors that influence the implementation of Edlink in English language teaching for vocational students at Politeknik Negeri Bengkalis. The findings highlight the importance of aligning digital learning tools with institutional goals, ensuring equitable access to technology, and providing adequate training and support for both students and lecturers. While Edlink is seen as beneficial, challenges related to infrastructure, training, and assessment security must be addressed to maximize its effectiveness.

To optimize the use of Edlink, the study recommends:

1. Enhancing digital infrastructure to ensure equal access for all students.

2. Improving training programs for both lecturers and students to increase confidence in using the platform.

3. Strengthening academic integrity measures to ensure secure and reliable assessments.

4. Aligning Edlink's features with the needs of vocational students, particularly in terms of offering more diverse and interactive assessments.

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