

Improving Students' Understanding of Narrative Text Through Appropriate Teaching Methods in the Eighth Grade of SMPN 2 Kertosono

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received

Revised

Accepted

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the potential of technology to address the challenges faced by English language learners in Bangladesh, where many struggle to maintain or advance their proficiency after formal instruction. Employing a resource-based instructional design approach, the findings compile a list of tools, applications, and websites for practicing the four core English language skills. These resources offer significant opportunities, highlighting the transformative potential of technology as a supplement to traditional language education. However, the study also identifies notable challenges, such as the risk of digital dependency and the need for strategic, independent use of these tools to achieve sustained language development. Furthermore, the instructional design develops a lesson plan aimed at autonomous tertiary-level and adult learners, guiding them on how to use these technologies independently. These findings emphasize the need for a comprehensive instructional approach to better understand both the opportunities and the limitations of integrating these tools into educational settings, as well as to establish practical strategies for their effective and autonomous use. This study advocates for the strategic use of technology to mitigate the limitations of English language courses and to optimize language learning outcomes in resource-limited settings.

Keywords: Autonomous English Learners, English language skills, lesson plan, and technology

How to cite	Mostafa, M. (2025). A Digital Guideline for Self-Directed English Language Proficiency Pedagogy: Journal of English Language Teaching, x(x). xx-xx DOI: xxxxxxxxxxxx
Journal Homepage	https://e-journal.metrouniv.ac.id/index.php/pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of digital technology has profoundly transformed the landscape of English language education. Modern tools and platforms have redefined access to information, instructional methodologies, and learner engagement. As emphasized in the *Global Education Monitoring Report* (2023), leveraging technology in education must be responsive to local contexts and focus on equity and inclusivity.

Numerous studies from countries such as Indonesia, Turkey, Vietnam, and Bangladesh highlight how digital tools and mobile apps promote autonomous learning, enhance speaking and listening skills (Jailani et al., 2022; Halatsyn & Feshchuk, 2024; Hasbi & Nursaputri, 2024). Other research emphasizes the importance of designing multimedia-rich lessons with clear objectives and real-time feedback (Rauf, Rajab, & Nashruddin, 2023; Verbeem, 2023).

Despite these advancements, previous research reveals certain limitations. Many studies focus on individual tools or case-specific implementations but lack a comprehensive, structured plan that integrates multiple platforms for learners at various proficiency levels. Moreover, challenges such as high costs, technology overload, ineffective pedagogical integration, and lack of learner persistence after formal instruction continue to hinder

optimal outcomes (Rintaningrum, 2023; Suchona, 2024). While there is a plethora of digital resources for English language learners, many students—especially autonomous or self-directed learners—struggle to select and utilize these tools effectively. The absence of a coherent, personalized, and sustained learning plan often results in inconsistent progress, particularly once formal instruction ends. Although individual tools have proven effective in specific contexts, there is limited research on how to systematically combine them into a technology-enhanced, goal-oriented lesson plan tailored to diverse learner needs. This study addresses that gap by proposing an integrated plan for learners from beginner to advanced levels, focusing on long-term skill development. Consequently, this research is of considerable relevance.

This research aims to develop a structured, three-month lesson plan that leverages selected websites and apps to promote self-governing enhancement of English proficiency. The objective is to provide a replicable model that incorporates real-world conversation practice, feedback mechanisms, and multimedia resources to enhance learning across all language domains.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Rauf, Rajab, and Nashruddin (2023) explores the strategies used in designing online courses through Learning

Management Systems (LMS) in Indonesia. Their research identifies setting clear learning objectives, using a range of instructional materials, implementing low-risk practice exercises, and designing assessments that align with the learning objectives contribute to effective LMS course design. They also emphasized providing students with immediate feedback on their performance. This research highlights the need for a well-structured approach to online course development, suggesting that these key elements can improve the overall learning experience for students in an online environment.

Verbeem (2023) also focused on designing digital solutions-based lesson plans for English as a Second Language (ESL). She emphasized the importance of using interactive activities and multimedia in a way that aligns their application with specific teaching objectives and desired learning outcomes. She advocates for embracing technology as a powerful tool to enhance language acquisition, foster cultural understanding, and increase student engagement within the ESL classroom.

In 2023, Ayar developed a unit titled "World without Crime," aimed at enhancing the language skills of young adults and teens at the pre-intermediate level in Turkey. This unit was structured around four core language skills and included pre-, during-, and post-activities designed for implementation on various e-learning platforms, grammar and

vocabulary exercises informed by a process-oriented approach and an integrated syllabus. To foster effective learning within a connected online community, the design emphasizes communicative practices that address aspects of visual literacy and digital citizenship. This approach not only enriches language acquisition but also encourages responsible engagement in the digital age.

Fariani et al. (2023) emphasize the essential role of technology in enabling personalized learning. Their findings indicate that while the implementation of personalized learning has shown potential to improve learning outcomes, motivation, engagement, and learner satisfaction, there remains a need for further research to assess the broader impact of Technology-Enhanced Personalized Learning (TEPL), as they can provide deeper insights into how TEPL functions in real-world educational settings.

A study by Soriano-Alcantara et al. (2025) confirmed that an instrument developed by Carrera et al. (2011) is a reliable and valid tool for assessing the basic digital skills of teachers, students, and parents. This instrument evaluates six key areas: technological data management, software/hardware skills, web navigation, word processing, data management, and multimedia design. The research underscored that digital competence is a fundamental prerequisite for using digital tools effectively in education. It provides a valuable framework for measuring a

person's readiness for technology-enhanced learning, which is particularly important for self-directed learners who need digital literacy to navigate online resources independently. The systematic review by Fan et al. (2023) underscores the increasing relevance of Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) theory in digital learning environments, where learners' behaviors can be effectively tracked and analyzed through trace-based methods. It posits that learners are not passive recipients of instruction but active agents who plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning to achieve specific academic goals.

Moving to the Bangladesh ELT, research on technology in over the past decade reveals a clear trajectory:

Early efforts focused on leveraging accessible technologies to reach a broad audience. The BBC Janala program (launched in 2009) stands as a foundational example. This initiative successfully used TV, mobile phones, and newspapers to provide basic English instruction to lower-income populations, demonstrating the potential of simple, widespread technology to expand access to education.

Subsequent research highlighted the importance of a well-designed and teacher-centric approach. Parvin and Salam (2015) emphasized that the success of interactive multimedia software in government primary schools was dependent not just on the technology

itself, but on its design and on how teachers were trained to use it effectively. This finding was echoed by Mallick et al. (2020), who reached similar conclusions while studying secondary schools in Dhaka and Khulna, reinforcing the critical role of teacher training in successful technology integration.

As internet access grew, so did the use of new digital tools. Hossain and Hasan (2023) surveyed undergraduate students and found that while most were aware of and used various EdTech tools on their own, their educational institutions seriously lacked the necessary logistical support to facilitate this. This finding underscores the gap between individual awareness and institutional support, a recurring problem in the country's educational landscape.

While many platforms emerged, their pedagogical quality varied. Rumman and Mubasher (2019) noted that many Bangladeshi YouTube English teaching channels, despite their popularity, often relied on traditional methods, were run by facilitators without formal linguistic training, and gave insufficient attention to individual language skills. In contrast, Zahan and Haque (2019) found that both students and teachers held a positive perception of educational podcasts, viewing them as effective and useful tools for language learning.

Recent studies have shifted focus to the transformative potential of Artificial

Intelligence (AI), particularly ChatGPT. Research by Tarannum et al. (2025), Howlader et al. (2025), and Akanda et al. (2024) indicates a largely positive perception of ChatGPT among university students and teachers. They appreciate its accessibility, utility, and ability to generate materials, recognizing its potential for personalized learning and efficiency. However, this enthusiasm is tempered by significant concerns, particularly within public universities. Teachers and students at these institutions have expressed anxieties regarding academic dishonesty, plagiarism, and ethical usage. This highlights a critical need for targeted interventions to address these risks and establish clear guidelines for the ethical integration of AI in education.

Alternatively, Suchona (2024) noted that technology fosters opportunities for autonomous learners to improve and benefits teachers in becoming more professional and skilled. All these studies underscore the pressing need for training teachers in advanced technological tools. There is a clear gap in local research on lesson plans for English Language Teaching (ELT) that include technology.

This literature review supports the identified research lacuna by highlighting a range of global and regional studies that demonstrate how technology-enhanced lesson planning can improve language instruction. International research showcases effective strategies for integrating digital tools into ESL and EFL

instruction. Studies in the Bangladeshi contexts are largely descriptive and cross-sectional, providing snapshots of a positive perception toward tools like podcasts (Zahan & Haque, 2019) and ChatGPT (Tarannum et al., 2025), it establishes that AI is being used and is generally viewed positively, but it stops short of providing the necessary empirical evidence to understand its full academic consequences. This gap means educators and policymakers are making decisions based on perceptions and concerns, rather than on data-driven insights into AI's actual impact on student learning and skills development. Thus, a significant research gap exists due to the lack of interventions and longitudinal studies that could measure the effectiveness of specific technology adoption and pedagogical frameworks. Furthermore, while informal learning through platforms like YouTube is briefly noted (Rumman & Mubasher, 2019), there is an unexplored relationship between these autonomous learning tools and students' formal academic performance. Finally, current studies do not specify which tools are most effective for improving particular skills, leaving a critical gap in practical, skill-focused guidance. This underscores the need for targeted research on developing comprehensive lesson planning models by providing a concrete guide with specific tools, digital guidelines, and lessons that leverage digital tools effectively for language teaching in Bangladesh.

METHOD

This study examined literature from 2014 to 2024, but found that designing lesson plans has not received much research attention. Despite the many great lesson plans available online, customized instruction remains a key desideratum for Bangladeshi tertiary and adult learners.

The methodology for investigating a range of technologies and developing a lesson plan to improve English skills of autonomous students involves several systematic steps. Initially, a comprehensive review of existing research on digital tools used for language learning was conducted. This review included an analysis of websites such as Talkenglish.com, British Council platforms like Learn English Online and Learn English Teens, and various mobile applications including ELSA Speak, Duolingo, Memrise, and Tandem, among others. Special emphasis was placed on resources that facilitate real-world conversation practice and provide personalized feedback through AI, such as ChatGPT, and Gemini.

Following this, a needs analysis was imperative. This involved evaluating their current proficiency levels, primarily within the B1 to B2 CEFR categories, through online assessments like Oxford English Online Class and Tracktest English Test. The assessment focused on vocabulary and grammar to determine appropriate starting points for autonomous learning.

Subsequently, a selection process was undertaken to identify effective and accessible technologies suitable for independent learners with basic English knowledge. Resources were evaluated based on usability, engagement potential, and relevance to improving four skills. My experience as an English teacher and handling the technologies and resources paved the way to assess the practicality and impact of these tools which itself was a Pilot testing.

Based on the insights gained, a structured lesson plan was developed. This plan integrated selected digital resources and activities, emphasizing autonomous learning strategies such as role-plays using AI assistants, pronunciation practice via online dictionaries like Cambridge and Oxford, and listening exercises with podcasts and YouTube channels like VOA Learning English, BBC Learning English, 6 Minute English and TED talks. The activities targeted key skills, including pronunciation, vocabulary building, note-taking, summarization, and active participation.

The process involved aligning these technological options with the specific needs of tertiary and adult learners, emphasizing learner independence and self-directed practice. To ensure the lesson plan effectively guides autonomous learners, the researchers incorporated clear, structured instructions on how to access and utilize each resource

independently, fostering confidence and self-regulation. The design was guided by principles of constructivist and learner-centered pedagogy, emphasizing meaningful engagement, reflection, and the development of self-assessment skills. Additionally, the researchers addressed limitations of traditional methods by integrating technology to provide flexible, personalized learning opportunities, and they explicitly outlined strategies within the lesson plan to help learners overcome challenges such as hesitation or dissatisfaction with conventional courses. This approach ensures that the lesson plan not only introduces technological tools but also actively supports learners in developing autonomous learning habits.

TECHNOLOGY IN BANGLADESHI ELT

The incorporation of technology into English language teaching (ELT) in Bangladesh encompasses a wide range of tools, including computers, laptops, mobile phones, tablets, internet access, interactive whiteboards, headphones, microphones, multimedia resources, sound systems, various applications, as well as platforms like YouTube, Facebook, e-resources, websites, online and digital classes, electronic dictionaries, listening CD players, and educational video clips, among others. Over time, the adoption of these technologies has increased, with both the government and educational institutions recognizing their potential to improve language learning outcomes. These technologies are primarily used in

two ways: integrated into classroom instruction by teachers and utilized for independent study by students.

A major advantage of technology, for instance Google classroom, is their ability to provide instant, personalized feedback—something teachers often lack the time or capacity to do for every student in real time. Consequently, students get delayed feedback on tests, which impede opportunities for error correction. Thus, effective implementation of modern technologies allows for a more integrated approach to language, content, and culture while providing students with distinct opportunities for self-directed learning.

Reading and Technology

Critical reading has historically been a considerable challenge for English learners. However, e-reading tools and digital devices have significantly expanded and diversified literacy opportunities. AI platforms can adjust to each student's needs, offering customized content and feedback to boost their reading comprehension and proficiency. By offering customized explanations, AI tools can help enhance comprehension of complex text. AI can democratize access to effective reading instruction, helping to close literacy gaps and create more equitable opportunities for all learners.

Before technology, people used to read books, literature and newspapers to improve reading skills. Those options are

more accessible online today. People can store a pdf of any reading material on their cellphone or laptop and read it anywhere. Besides, there are countless authentic online reading materials available from American English Reading Resources, Voice of America news stories, Project Gutenberg and so on. Reading comprehensions on these webpages are bite-size. Learners who fear long books can also improve through these small stories and reading comprehensions. Additionally, several online readability assessment tools, such as Readable.io and the Readability Test Tool, can help anyone choose appropriate texts according to learners' level. Indexed journals are now freely accessible, assisting research-based learners in understanding academic English.

Websites like Udemy.com and Coursera.org are prominent American platforms for massive open online courses (MOOCs). Additionally, sites like TED.com and Khan Academy offer free educational tools designed to enrich student learning, while ALISON, an Irish online education platform, provides certificate and accredited diploma courses. Online platforms such as Coursera, Udemy, and Khan Academy serve as extensive digital knowledge repositories, featuring several English language courses to create numerous opportunities for skill acquisition. Clever.com enhances the digital classroom experience by providing a single sign-on portal that simplifies student access to all their educational

resources. Other platforms, including Study.com, Studypool.com, and Study7, offer a diverse range of online courses and study materials, including video lessons and practice quizzes, to support students at all levels.

Websites like Fabulang.com and examenglish.com provide reading materials, opportunities for discussion with peers, quizzes, and immediate feedback tailored to learners' proficiency levels (A1-C2). Sites like News in Levels and Breaking News English offer current events, while others like Linguapress and Lingua.com offer more general topics. ESL Fast and Cambridge English, provide texts that are leveled by difficulty, ensuring feeling challenging but not overwhelming. British Council and News in Levels use real-world articles and stories, helping learners get accustomed to reading genuine English text. UsingEnglish.com is specifically designed to help with vocabulary, providing glossaries, definitions, and quizzes to reinforce new words encountered in the reading materials. My Teacher MED, English Learning Hub, MahEnglish, Corpus to Learn, ESL Lounge, English Practice Online, ESOL Courses, Learn English Daily, and Cambridge English offer graded reading materials, targeting from basic comprehension to advanced analysis.

Hidayat (2024) advocates ReadTheory as the core tool for an intervention, being an effective, adaptive

online platform. ReadTheory personalizes reading materials for students by using an algorithm to adjust the difficulty of passages and questions to match each student's level, offers a wide variety of topics and provides instant feedback, helping students track their progress and focus on areas needing improvement.

Writing and Technology

Technology has catalyzed learners to develop proficiency in various writing styles, including academic, professional, and communicative English. Fortunately, a wide array of digital tools and platforms can support this development, but it is crucial to use them as aids rather than replacements for independent thought.

Grammarly.com, ChatGPT, Gemini, and Quillbot.com are invaluable for honing fundamental writing skills. They provide real-time feedback on grammar, spelling, and punctuation, helping students understand and correct their mistakes. ChatGPT and Gemini, while capable of generating entire texts, are more effectively used to enhance existing writing. By inputting your own text and asking for revisions, you can get suggestions for improving clarity, tone, and style. The paraphrasing tool can help learners discover a wider range of vocabulary and sentence structures, which can significantly enrich their writing style. Marzuki et al. (2023) stated that Quillbot, ChatGPT, Gemini and WordTune positively enhanced student's writing quality. ChatGPT and Gemini are

powerful tools for clarifying collocations, connotations, and nuances of usage to make writing sound natural. However, their effectiveness as learning tools largely depends on the user's self-discipline and ability to treat them as collaborators rather than replacements for their own intellectual effort. Writing A-Z offers structured lessons and practice opportunities, while platforms like Teachable can host courses on specific writing genres. For creative writing, Storybird and Storium.edu provide unique, interactive environments for collaborative storytelling and skill-building.

AI chatbots can assist in structuring research papers by generating outlines, providing summaries of complex topics, and helping with citation formatting. However, it is vital to remember that AI-generated content must always be verified and critically evaluated to ensure accuracy and avoid plagiarism.

For professional communication, AI tools can help refine emails, reports, and proposals. They can adjust the tone to be more formal or concise, suggest alternative phrasing for greater impact, and ensure fluency. This helps learners communicate more effectively and professionally in various workplace scenarios.

Instagram, WordPress, and WhatsApp are excellent for practicing communicative English. While students often overlook correctness on these

platforms, they provide a low-stakes environment for consistent practice. Online forums and discussion groups are especially beneficial for EFL students, as they facilitate interaction, brainstorming, and editing with peers. This collaborative environment promotes authentic writing and boosts motivation.

Considering the potential drawbacks of technology, Anani et al. (2025) and Apriani et al. (2025) suggests, over-reliance on AI can hinder critical thinking and compromise the authenticity of a learner's work. Using AI solely for "ready-made answers" bypasses the cognitive processes necessary for true skill development. Conversely, a lack of adequate understanding of these tools may result in them being either underused or misapplied, thereby limiting their ability to improve educational and research outcomes. Hence, Taktak (2025) advocated gaining a more comprehensive insight into the role of AI technologies in education is crucial.

Accordingly, resources that provide a structured approach are highly valuable. Write & Improve with Cambridge is a specialized tool for focused writing practice with structured, objective feedback. It provides visual instructions and time constraints that encourage independent effort. Ultimately, the most significant improvement comes not from having AI write for you, but from using it to analyze, rephrase, and edit your own work. By noticing the subtle distinctions in

vocabulary and sentence structure that AI suggests, learners can develop a deeper understanding of language, which is the key to becoming a better writer.

Grammar and vocabulary

YouTube videos and online British or American books are significant resources to practice grammar and vocabulary. For instance, free online textbooks and dictionaries from publishers such as Macmillan, Longman, Cambridge, Oxford, McGraw-Hill, Springer, and Barron's, cover topics like grammar, vocabulary, conversational English, punctuation, style, usage, and academic writing. Anyone with a computer and internet access can download and print these materials to practice at their own pace, enabling them to concentrate on areas that require improvement. Such resources foster personalized learning, empowering students to become self-directed learners.

Table 1 shows a comprehensive list of native and non-native YouTube channels:

YouTube channel	Subject matter	Teacher
The Grammar Goat	quiz or a documentary style	British
English Lingo	conversation and pronunciation containing everyday situation	British

English with Lucy	pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, and cultural nuances.	British		low-intermediate learners.	
Learn English with Bob the Canadian	grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, real-life speaking practice	Canadian	Learn English with Teacher Aubrey	building confidence in spoken English, overcoming the fear of speaking, vocabulary, and acing job interviews.	Philippines
English Lesson via Skype	high-level grammar, advanced vocabulary, and idioms	American	Sahil Seekho	vocabulary, idioms, and phrases used Bollywood celebrity for a South Asian audience	Indian
VOA Learning English	real-world news stories, documentaries, and interviews from VOA's broadcast journalism	American	Syed Yeamin	Practical ways of learning English, accent master, real stories	Bangladesh
Aussie English with Amanda	pronunciation and comparison Australian and American English centered on real-life scenarios.	Australian	<p>If one finds British English challenging to comprehend, he can explore channels offering American, Australian, Indian or Bangla YouTube videos. If understanding grammar through listening seems difficult, one can also use ChatGPT, Gemini, or simply perform a Google search to get a clarification of a grammar section with accurate examples in written communication. Besides, vlern.elearning, and SpellingCity.com help learners enhance their spelling and vocabulary</p>		
Jennifer ESL	grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, and conversational skills for particularly beginners and	American			

through engaging interactive games and activities.

Learners often struggle with memorizing vocabulary, complaining that they learn many words but do not use them when speaking. A strategic solution to this is to first determine one's current proficiency level using a free online test from reputable sources like Cambridge English or the British Council. Once their level is identified, for example, as A2, they should focus on learning the vocabulary for the next level up, which would be B1. This ensures that the words they learn are relevant and timely for their language development. Another way of recalling words is to play Word Bingo, Grammar auctions, Quiz games (e.g., Kahoot, Quizizz). Such interactive ways are the best digital solution for skill building.

The key to effective vocabulary acquisition lies in distinguishing between two types of words:

- **Active Vocabulary:** These are the words a learner knows well enough to use spontaneously in speaking and writing. To become a fluent speaker, the goal is to build a strong active vocabulary.
- **Passive Vocabulary:** These are words that a learner can understand when they hear or read them, but they do not use them themselves.

Ultimately, fluency is not about memorizing a vast number of words but

about building a strong active vocabulary that can be used effectively for spontaneous communication.

Speaking and Technology

Technologies have drastically flourished speaking skills by providing ample scopes for practicing pronunciation and oral interaction in the target language. Below are the main categories of tools and platforms, which learners' can choose according to their goals:

Websites (Institutional & Structured)

Examples: British Council, BBC Learning English, VOA Learning English

Features: Backed by governments or official institutions, structured lessons aligned to CEFR (A1–C2), exam-oriented content (IELTS, Cambridge, TOEFL prep), videos, listening exercises, grammar, vocabulary and speaking practice

Strength: Formal, academic, and trustworthy.

Limitation: Less interactive, limited real-time speaking.

AI Tutors (Personalized Speaking Coaches)

Examples: ChatGPT, ELSA Speak, Talkpal, SmallTalk2Me, LOLA Speak, Gemini, Vocal Image

Features: Simulated real conversations with AI, instant feedback on pronunciation, grammar, fluency,

personalized lessons based on learner's level, voice recognition and speaking drills

Strength: Accessible anytime, adaptive to the learner.

Limitation: May feel artificial.

Tutoring Platforms (Human Teachers)

Examples: Cambly, Preply, Outschool, Speaking Club

Features: 1-to-1 or group classes with real teachers, live corrections, feedback, exam prep, pay-per-session or subscription model

Strength: Authentic interaction, confidence building.

Limitation: Costly compared to free apps.

Exchange Apps (Peer-to-Peer Practice)

Examples: Tandem, HelloTalk

Features: Connect with native or fluent speakers worldwide, free text, voice, and video chats, cultural exchange while learning

Strength: Natural, real-life communication.

Limitation: No structured lessons, depending on partner quality.

Gamified Apps (Fun & Engaging Practice)

Examples: Duolingo, Memrise, FluentU, Promova, Lingo, RealLife English

Features: Game-like design with points, levels, streaks, vocabulary, listening, pronunciation drills, Fun animations and short lessons

Strength: Motivating, daily habit building.

Limitation: Shallow speaking practice, less advanced conversation.

Speaking-Focused Self-Study Website

Example: TalkEnglish.com

Features: Self-paced, audio-based practice, thousands of dialogues, conversations, and shadowing exercises, focused almost only on speaking, listening, and conversation practice, no live teachers or AI feedback

Strength: Great for independent learners who want intensive audio practice.

Limitation: No interactivity, no personalized feedback.

The studies of Ahmad et al. (2025); Huda & Rahmawati (2024) shows astounding effectiveness of ESLA Speak, Duolingo and Hello English apps to improve pronunciation and speaking skills. It's important to note that some individuals may hesitate to converse with others due to cultural differences or shyness. In these cases, AI that mimics human voice and demeanor prove to be a valuable resource for conversation practices. The advantage of using AI as an assistant is that if a beginner or lower-intermediate learner makes errors or struggles to articulate

their thoughts clearly, AI responds politely and offers constructive suggestions for improvement without criticizing the learner. Thus, for many, conversing with AI can be more comfortable than speaking with another person. Acknowledging the pedagogical potential of Gemini, Barrot (2025) highlights its ability to deliver real-time updates, its human-like conversational quality, and its broad generative capabilities, including text creation, translation, coding, and responding to complex questions. The inclusion of voice command support further enhances its accessibility and user-friendliness. Given these features, Gemini can serve as a valuable tool for practicing all four language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—for learners across all proficiency levels, from A1 to C2.

Listening and Technology

Today, with technology the worldwide access to authentic audio and video content boosts students to improve their listening competencies. Podcasts and YouTube videos are particularly beneficial for improving listening abilities. The online English Language Teaching (ELT) community offers a wide range of podcasts tailored to different proficiency levels, from beginner to advanced. Regularly engaging with at least one podcast and taking notes on vocabulary and phrases can significantly enhance a learner's skills in just three months, as these podcasts feature genuine conversations with native speakers.

Table 2: Tools & platforms for enhancing listening skills

Category	Example	Features
Official Websites & Podcasts	VOA Learning English, BBC Learning English, Oxford Online English, Minute English, Learn English Online (British Council)	Provide structured lessons, slow/clear audio, transcripts; train comprehension of both British & American English; exam-focused (IELTS, TOEFL).
General English Podcasts	English Podcast Zone, Speak English Smartly, Podcast Speak English, English Fluent Podcast	Offer real conversational English; improve listening to everyday dialogues, accents, and natural speech patterns.
Personal/Teacher Podcasts	Luke's English Podcast, Rachel's English, Kate English, English	Blend storytelling, grammar, and real-life communication; often

	Speaking Success	include transcripts & exercises to support listening + speaking practice.
YouTube Educational Channels	Smashing English, JForrest English, English with Kris Amerikos, Speak English with Vanessa, ESL Teacher 365, English with Lucy	Present lessons on vocabulary, idioms, Business English; learners listen to native and near-native speakers; strong input for pronunciation & accent training.
YouTube Knowledge & Media	TEDTalks, BBC Learning English, BBC Earth, Joe Rogan Experience, Animal Planet, TLC, MasterChef, Big Bash League (CPL T20 Cricket), History Channel, National Geographic	Authentic content; exposes learners to diverse topics, fast speech, different registers, and real-world English.

A Proposed Lesson Plan

This lesson plan is designed for autonomous tertiary-level and adult learners in Bangladesh to enhance their English language proficiency. It sets clear learning objectives and incorporates interactive activities (Rauf et al., 2023; Verbeem, 2023) to foster the development of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

As the plan integrates digital resources, digital competence is a fundamental prerequisite for effectively using online tools and platforms. Equally important is digital citizenship (Ayar, 2023), which involves responsible and ethical participation in online environments, including respecting copyright, protecting privacy, and evaluating the credibility of digital content. Learners' sensory preferences, daily routines, and personal comfort play an important role in selecting suitable learning formats. For example, visual learners often benefit from videos that include body language, graphics, subtitles, and demonstrations, while auditory learners may prefer listening to podcasts or audio materials that allow multitasking during activities such as commuting or exercising.

Once learners determine their current proficiency level, they can systematically work to improve each skill area. Although language acquisition is a

gradual process, a structured and goal-oriented lesson plan—combined with persistence—can enable learners to reach their desired proficiency within a few months. This process reflects the principles of self-regulated learning (Fan et al., 2023), where motivation initiates the effort but discipline sustains consistent progress.

Necessary equipment:

- A computer/tablet/laptop or even android phone with internet access
- Headphones/earbuds (for listening activities)
- Notebook and pen/digital document (for writing)
- Dictionaries (online or physical)
- A reliable internet connection

Aim: After the lesson, learners will be able to demonstrate they can:

reproduce specific words, chunks, expressions memorized from the text in later speaking and writing.

read texts to find specific types of information

share written information expressing action or awareness

Age and level: Above 20 at CEFR B1

Time: approximately 45-minute

Reading Activity:

Material: Suppose you read “Changing ideas of beauty” on TeachingEnglish, British Council or choose a topic from BBC Learning English, Breaking News English, or Voice of America news stories, or

explore any of the other sites listed earlier. These articles typically come with accompanying exercises, and they are categorized by difficulty, including simplified news articles for easier comprehension.

Procedure:

1. Read the article thoroughly.
2. Don’t panic if you don’t understand many words at first.
3. Highlight/underline the words or phrases that are new or unfamiliar to you.
4. Look up the definitions of these words using an online dictionary (e.g., Oxford Learner’s Dictionaries or Cambridge Dictionary) and write them down along with a short example sentence using the word. You must notice their parts of speech, connotations, collocations and synonyms. Noticing all these and making your own sentences is a must to memorize new words and keeping them in mind to reproduce at a later time.
5. Reread the article, focusing on how these new words are used in context.
6. Write a short summary of the article in your own words and try to use the words you just memorized. (5-7 sentences).
7. To receive immediate feedback, you can write or paste your summary on ChatGPT or Gemini, and ask them to correct your script. With an instant response and clarification

from AI, you can work on your mistakes. You can also paste the content on AI and ask to create a summary for you. This time you can compare your script and the one produced by AI. If you think AI has created a better version of summary, you can carefully judge what words and structures AI has used to write it. This regular observation and attention to the choice of words and the way of presenting the concept helps you improve your proficiency.

Vocabulary Building:

- Resource: Quizlet, LearnEnglish by British Council, ExamEnglish.
- Task: Create a Quizlet set using the new vocabulary from the article. Include the word, definition, and your own example sentence. Practice the flashcards regularly throughout the week. LearnEnglish and ExamEnglish have interesting and engaging ways to learn and practice vocabulary.
- Search for vocabulary lists related to the topic you just read on the mentioned site to expand your vocabulary further.

Listening Activity (Focus: Podcasts/Video & Summarization)

Matching Features

Activities

1. Listening Part 1 practice
2. Building vocabulary skills through synonym recognition

Aim: to develop students' awareness of the use of rephrasing and synonyms

Age and level: Aged 20 and adult learners at CEFR B1

Time: approximately 45-minute

Material

Resource: Choose a B1-level podcast from VOA Learning English, 6 Minute English episode or any podcast mentioned in the listening section about a preferred topic.

Procedure:

- Listen to the audio/video once without taking notes. Just try to get the general idea.
- Listen a second time, this time taking notes. Focus on key ideas, dates, places, and any opinions expressed. Try to write down just the most important information.
- Listen a third time, to fill in any gaps in your notes and/or correct any spelling.
- Using your notes, write a brief summary (7-10 sentences) of the podcast/video.
- Listen a fourth time and follow along with the transcript. This is the basic practicing method. Thus, to improve listening as well as speaking, learners must listen to podcasts or YouTube videos a lot and follow along with the transcript.

Task

- **Vocabulary Review:** Review the vocabulary, phrases and collocation, expressions. Try to think of synonymous words. Use a dictionary if needed. Follow the way to memorize vocabulary mentioned in the Reading Task.

In Bangladesh, English learners typically receive instruction from local teachers who often lack exposure to foreign countries and have minimal contact with native speakers. The primary authentic sources of English they encounter are English-language movies, which can be too fast-paced and difficult to understand. As a result, these learners often develop a local accent in their English pronunciation and seldom achieve native-like fluency. Therefore, slow-paced YouTube videos and podcasts have emerged as transformative resources for listening to and practicing authentic English.

Writing & Grammar (Focus: Email Writing & Conditional Sentences)

Activities

1. Describe the journey to reach the place, the place itself, and the reasons for choosing it. Include your mental state and feelings experienced there, as well as the lasting impact it had on you as a traveler.

Aims

- To develop students' writing skills through personal narrative and descriptive language.

- To practice the structure and style of informal emails.
- To encourage the use of vocabulary related to travel and places.
- To enhance students' ability to express opinions and experiences.

Learning outcomes

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

1. Construct an informal email with appropriate greeting, body, and closing, using correct email conventions.
2. Use descriptive vocabulary related to travel and destinations to create vivid and engaging narratives.
3. Organize ideas logically using connectors and transition words to improve coherence and flow.
4. Express personal opinions and feelings about travel experiences or aspirations clearly and effectively.

Age and level: Above 20 at CEFR B1

Time: approximately 40 minutes

Task: Write an email to a friend (real or imagined) about a recent trip you took or a place you'd like to visit.

Resource: If you are unsure on how to format the email. Search for "B1 level email writing template" or "email format example".

Grammar Focus:

Topic: Conditional Sentences (e.g., If I go to Italy, I will eat pasta.)

Resource: Search for online grammar exercises on conditional sentences:

British Council LearnEnglish: Offers grammar lessons and exercises.

Perfect English Grammar: Has explanations and quizzes.

Task:

Review the rules for first and second conditional sentences.

Complete at least 2-3 online exercises on conditional sentences.

In your email from the writing activity or your summary from reading activity, try to incorporate at least 2-3 conditional sentences.

Speaking & Pronunciation (Focus: Role-Play & Recorded Practice)

Speaking Activity:

Task: Role-play a conversation related to travel. Possible scenarios:

At a restaurant: Ordering food, asking about the menu, paying the bill.

Age and level: Above 20 at CEFR B1

Time: approximately 20 minutes

Resources:

Pre-Prepared scenarios: Look for “B1 English role-play travel scenarios.” Websites like eflideas.com, twinkl.com, teach-this.com and British Council offer

ESL role-play ideas and instructions. You can partner with a friend to act out the roles suggested on these sites. Additionally, you can explore various apps found in the speaking section that utilize AI. These platforms present numerous topics from which you can choose to engage with the AI assistant. Occasionally, you might also consider hiring a native speaker to practice authentic English conversation, which can be both enjoyable and motivating.

Pronunciation Practice:

Resource: Cambridge or Oxford dictionary.

Task:

Look up some of the key vocabulary words from your role-play on Forvo by the British Council. Listen to how native speakers pronounce them. The online Cambridge dictionary also provides both UK and US pronunciation.

Record yourself saying the words and compare your pronunciation to the recordings in any dictionary.

Focus on sounds that you find difficult.

Record yourself doing the role-play through the apps TALK English speaking practice. Listen back to identify areas where you can improve your pronunciation, fluency, and intonation.

Notice and memorize the way of expressing something.

Important Considerations for a Learner:

- **Consistency:** Aim to study every day, even if it's just for 30 minutes. Regular practice and revision are key.
- **Adaptability:** Adjust the plan to fit your learning style, interests, and available time. Don't be afraid to switch things up or repeat activities if needed.
- **Patience:** Learning a language requires patience and dedication. Be kind to yourself and celebrate your progress.
- **Motivation:** Select topics that you are genuinely passionate about. This will make the learning process more enjoyable and help you stay motivated.
- **Seek feedback:** Try to get feedback on your writing and speaking from a teacher. You can also contact the YouTube content creators by replying to their videos.
- **Use of a notebook:** Use a notebook or digital document to write down new words, grammar rules, and your own ideas. This will help you to review and remember what you have learned.
- **Active Participation:** Don't just passively read or listen. Actively engage with the material by taking notes, asking questions, and trying to use new vocabulary and grammar in your own sentences.

This lesson plan provides a structured framework, but remember to make it your own!

CONCLUSION

This investigation provides a significant contribution to the literature by examining the integration of modern technologies into English language education, offering a detailed study of their potential to enhance educational outcomes within individualized learning environments. Distinguishing itself from traditional pedagogical approaches, the study presents a practical, resource-based lesson plan for autonomous adult learners, thereby addressing the growing appeal of personalized learning in today's digital landscape. Unlike recent works by Tarannum et al. (2025) and Howlader et al. (2025), which reveal a largely positive perception of ChatGPT among university students and teachers but also note significant concerns, this study offers a novel perspective on the practical integration of technology in education. It moves beyond perception-based research by providing a detailed list of skill-specific digital tools and platforms, a comprehensive lesson plan, and an analysis of the specific challenges associated with ChatGPT's usage. The findings provide a robust foundation for future research in this domain.

Our research demonstrates that leveraging technology provides a valuable supplement to traditional classroom instruction, particularly for tertiary-level and adult learners in Bangladesh, by

allowing them to enhance their skills at their own pace. Through the balanced utilization of curated tools, applications, and educator-developed platforms, learners can enhance their skills at their own pace, addressing common limitations of formal instruction, such as fear to ask questions, dissatisfaction with course content, or unmet learning objectives. Furthermore, this approach offers broader access to diverse and credible instructional resources from global contexts, fostering more personalized and inclusive learning experiences. Nonetheless, Bastian (2025) argues that self-paced learners may encounter certain challenges, such as fewer chances for direct conversation and difficulty with keeping up momentum. As this plan relies heavily on learner autonomy, sustained engagement and motivation are essential for success. To address the lack of interactive communication, learners are encouraged to seek opportunities through peers, mentors, English language Facebook groups, or AI communicative assistants.

It is important to note that this paper does not endorse the tools and sites mentioned above as the only appropriate choices; rather, it provides a digital guide for self-study. Although it may be challenging to progress all four skills, vocabulary, and grammar simultaneously, these domains are interrelated and, when practiced with consistency and patience, can lead to notable improvements within a three-month period. The lesson plan is adaptable and can be tailored to align with

individual learner needs and priorities, recognizing that not all learners require equal emphasis across all language domains. Thus, this study breaks away from the traditional “one-size-fits-all” model to provide an in-depth exploration of both the benefits and the real-world challenges of independent, technology-driven learning.

In the context of Bangladesh, the incorporation of technology into ELT holds significant promise for improving language learning outcomes and expanding access to quality educational resources. This study provides a strategic roadmap for the effective integration of technology into pedagogical processes. This approach not only highlights the opportunities afforded by AI-supported learning but also addresses its limitations, thereby contributing to a more responsible and effective integration of these technologies into educational practices. Future research should empirically test the effectiveness of this lesson plan in real-world learning environments. In this context, conducting more comprehensive and interdisciplinary research to measure the synergistic or conflicting effects of autonomous learning on academic skill development will contribute to the development of more in-depth understandings.

However, the study is not without limitations. It relies on currently available digital resources, which may quickly become outdated as new technologies

emerge. Moreover, the effectiveness of the proposed lesson plan has not been empirically tested in real-world learning environments, limiting conclusions regarding its practical impact. Future research should implement this lesson plan with diverse learner populations to evaluate its effectiveness in promoting autonomous learning and improving language proficiency.

Acknowledgements

This study was not supported by grants from funding bodies in the public, private, or not-for-profit sectors.

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