



English Teachers' Readiness in Integrating CTL and Learning and Deep Learning into Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to describe English teachers' readiness in integrating Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and deep learning into English language teaching at the junior high school level. The research participants were ten junior high school English teachers from different schools, selected purposively as research informants. This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. The primary research instrument was a semi-structured interview, supported by documentation of teaching and learning materials. Data were analyzed qualitatively through data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that English teachers demonstrated a sufficient level of readiness in integrating CTL by connecting learning materials with students' real-life contexts. In addition, teachers showed readiness in applying deep learning principles through discussion activities, project-based learning, and collaborative tasks that encouraged students' critical thinking and communication skills. Supporting factors included the availability of school facilities and teacher collaboration, while challenges involved limited instructional time, differences in students' language proficiency, and students' low confidence in using English. The study concludes that the integration of CTL and deep learning has strong potential to enhance the quality of English language teaching when supported by continuous professional development for teachers.

Keywords: English teacher readiness, CTL, deep learning, language teaching

Kesiapan Guru Bahasa Inggris Mengintegrasikan CTL dan Deep Learning ke dalam Pengajaran Bahasa Inggris

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan kesiapan guru Bahasa Inggris dalam mengintegrasikan Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran Kontekstual (CTL) dan pembelajaran mendalam ke dalam pengajaran Bahasa Inggris di tingkat SMP. Partisipan penelitian adalah sepuluh guru Bahasa Inggris SMP dari sekolah yang berbeda, yang dipilih secara purposif sebagai informan penelitian. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain deskriptif. Instrumen penelitian utama adalah wawancara semi-terstruktur, didukung oleh dokumentasi materi pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Data dianalisis secara kualitatif melalui reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa guru Bahasa Inggris menunjukkan tingkat kesiapan yang memadai dalam mengintegrasikan CTL dengan menghubungkan materi pembelajaran dengan konteks kehidupan nyata siswa. Selain itu, guru menunjukkan kesiapan dalam menerapkan prinsip-prinsip pembelajaran mendalam melalui kegiatan diskusi, pembelajaran berbasis proyek, dan tugas kolaboratif yang mendorong pemikiran kritis dan keterampilan komunikasi siswa. Faktor pendukung meliputi ketersediaan fasilitas sekolah dan kolaborasi guru, sedangkan tantangannya meliputi keterbatasan waktu pembelajaran, perbedaan kemampuan berbahasa siswa, dan rendahnya kepercayaan diri siswa dalam menggunakan Bahasa Inggris. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi CTL dan pembelajaran mendalam memiliki potensi besar untuk meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran bahasa Inggris bila didukung oleh pengembangan profesional berkelanjutan bagi para guru.

Kata kunci : guru bahasa Inggris, CTL, deep learning, pengajaran bahasa Inggris

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INTRODUCTION

English language learning at the junior high school level faces increasingly complex challenges in line with the demands of the 21st century. Teachers are not only required to teach language skills, but also to develop students' critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills. Evidence shows that much language learning is still oriented towards mastery of structure and vocabulary memorization, so that the context of language use in real life is not yet fully integrated in an optimal way (Nisha, 2024; Thornbury, 2003; Muskitta et al., 2023).

The Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach is considered relevant to bridge the gap between language material and the context of students' lives. CTL emphasizes the connection between learning material and students' real experiences, making learning more meaningful (Amaniarsih, 2024). However, the implementation of CTL in English language learning still faces various obstacles, especially those related to teachers' readiness to consistently design, implement, and evaluate contextual learning.

Along with the development of learning paradigms, the concept of Deep Learning has also become an important concern in the world of education. Deep learning emphasizes deep conceptual understanding, interconnections between concepts, and the ability to transfer knowledge to new situations (Taufik et al., 2025; Ariyani et al., 2025; Syafril & Junaidin, 2025). In the context of language learning, deep learning enables students to not only understand language superficially, but also to use language reflectively and meaningfully in various communication situations. The integration of CTL and deep learning in English language learning requires teachers to be prepared in terms of pedagogical knowledge, professional attitudes, and skills in designing innovative learning. Teacher readiness is an important variable (dependent variable) that is influenced by understanding of CTL and deep learning as independent variables. Therefore, a study of the readiness of junior high school English

teachers in integrating CTL and deep learning is important to provide an empirical picture of the actual conditions of language learning in schools. Based on this background, the research questions in this study are as follows:

1. To what extent are junior high school English teachers prepared to integrate Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) into English language learning?
2. To what extent are junior high school English teachers prepared to apply the principles of deep learning in English language learning?
3. What factors influence junior high school English teachers' readiness to integrate Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) and deep learning in an integrated manner?

This study aims to: 1. describe the readiness of junior high school English teachers in integrating the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach into English language learning. 2. identify the level of readiness of junior high school English teachers in applying the principles of deep learning in language learning. 3. analyze the factors that influence the readiness of junior high school English teachers in integrating CTL and deep learning in an integrated manner.

The benefits of this research are expected to contribute to: for English teachers, this research can be used as material for professional reflection to improve their readiness and pedagogical competence in integrating CTL and deep learning; for schools, the results of this research can be used as a basis for designing teacher professional development programs oriented towards contextual and deep learning; for future researchers, this research can be used as empirical and theoretical reference for the development of similar research in the field of language education. Teacher readiness refers to the psychological and professional conditions that reflect teachers' abilities, willingness, and confidence in implementing learning innovations (Zaini, 2024; Samsudin et al., 2023; Darling-Hammond, 2021).



This readiness includes pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, and attitudes toward change. CTL is a learning approach that links academic material to the real-life contexts of students, making learning more meaningful (Melinda, 2020). CTL emphasizes the construction of knowledge through experience, collaboration, and reflection. This concept is in line with the constructivist view that emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing knowledge (Hidayatullah, 2024). Deep learning in education is defined as a learning process that emphasizes deep understanding, interconnections between concepts, and the ability to transfer knowledge to new situations (Fullan et al., 2018). In language learning, deep learning encourages students to understand the meaning, function, and use of language in context, rather than simply mastering linguistic forms.

Several relevant studies show that integrating contextual approaches and deep learning has a positive impact on the quality of language learning. Research by Marpaung (2023) in a language education journal found that the application of CTL increased student engagement in junior high school English learning.

Another study by Sudarmono et al. (2025) reported that deep learning-based learning was able to significantly improve students' critical thinking skills and understanding of English texts.

In addition, international research by Aridan et al. (2025) in a language learning journal showed that teacher readiness is a key factor in the successful integration of innovative approaches, including CTL and deep learning, in foreign language learning.

METHOD

This study was conducted by following flexible qualitative research procedures that were continuously developed throughout the research process. This flexibility is a key feature of qualitative research, which allows researchers to adjust their research steps according to the data that emerges and the conditions in the field. This

research began with preliminary investigations aimed at understanding the context of English language teaching and learning at the junior high school level. This initial stage also focused on identifying existing phenomena related to the readiness of English teachers to integrate the CTL and deep learning approaches into classroom teaching practices.

After the preliminary study, the next stage involved determining research informants. The research informants consisted of ten junior high school English teachers from different schools, who were selected using purposive sampling. This technique was used to ensure that the selected informants were English teachers who had experience, knowledge, and direct involvement in the implementation of English language teaching. The selected teachers were considered capable of providing rich and meaningful information about their readiness to integrate CTL and deep learning in language teaching. Once the informants were determined, the researchers developed semi-structured interview guidelines as the main research tool. These guidelines were carefully designed to explore key aspects of teacher readiness, including pedagogical knowledge, professional attitudes, and teaching skills.

The data collection stage was conducted through in-depth interviews with research informants. All interviews were conducted in person and audio recorded with the informants' consent to ensure data accuracy and completeness. In addition to interviews, documentation techniques were also used to support the primary data. The documents collected included lesson plans, teaching modules, and other teaching materials used by teachers. The use of both interviews and documentation aimed to strengthen the credibility of the findings through data triangulation.

Data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection, which is a common practice in qualitative research. The analysis followed an interactive model consisting of three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion

drawing. During the data reduction stage, interview transcripts were carefully examined, selected, and organized based on their relevance. The data was then coded to identify recurring patterns and key themes related to teachers' readiness to integrate CTL and deep learning. In the data presentation stage, the organized information was presented systematically to facilitate interpretation and deeper understanding.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, several validation strategies were applied. These included source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking, in which the interview results were reviewed and confirmed by the informants. The final results of the analysis were presented in the form of comprehensive narrative descriptions, supported where necessary by tables, to provide a clear and holistic portrayal of junior high school English teachers' readiness to integrate Contextual Teaching and Learning and deep learning into English language instruction.

RESULT

This section of the research presents findings obtained from in-depth interviews with junior high school English teachers. The presentation of results focuses on answers to the research questions and is organized based on the main themes that emerged from the interview data. This section does not include theoretical discussion or interpretation.

1. Teacher Readiness in Integrating CTL

The first research finding relates to the readiness of junior high school English teachers to integrate the CTL approach into English language learning.

a. Teachers' Ability to Relate material to Students' Real Lives

Teachers demonstrated their ability to connect English material with students' daily experiences and interests. In their teaching, teachers linked topics such as descriptive texts to objects familiar to students, such as their favorite places around their homes, their school environment, or their idols. This

approach made the learning material more relevant and meaningful to students.

b. Use of local context and student experiences in learning

Teachers utilize local context as a learning resource to help students understand English material. Students' personal experiences are used as a starting point in learning activities so that students can more easily express their ideas and thoughts in English.

2. Teacher Readiness in Implementing Deep Learning

The second finding relates to teachers' readiness to apply deep learning principles in English language teaching.

a. Implementation of learning activities that encourage deep understanding

Teachers not only emphasize vocabulary memorization or grammar structure, but also give assignments that encourage students to use the language actively. The learning activities implemented include group discussions, poster-making projects, short videos, and simple presentations in English.

b. Developing students' critical thinking and communication skills

Teachers involve students in discussions on simple topics that are relevant to their lives, such as the impact of social media. These activities encourage students to express their opinions, provide logical reasons, and dare to communicate in English.

3. Supporting Factors for Teacher Readiness in CTL and Deep Learning Integration

The third finding shows that there are factors that support teachers' readiness to integrate CTL and deep learning.

a. Support from school facilities and infrastructure

Schools provide several learning support facilities, such as LCDs, projectors, Chromebooks, internet access, and digital



teaching materials. These facilities help teachers relate learning materials to the real-life contexts of students.

b. Collaboration among teachers in learning communities

Teachers actively discuss and collaborate with colleagues in the school's learning community. This collaboration takes place in routine evaluation activities and the joint preparation of teaching tools to design more contextual and meaningful learning.

4. Challenges for Teachers in Implementing CTL and Deep Learning

The fourth finding relates to the challenges faced by teachers in integrating CTL and deep learning in the classroom.

a. Low student confidence in using English

Teachers revealed that many students still feel afraid of making mistakes when speaking or writing in English. This condition causes some students to tend to be passive in learning activities that require deep thinking.

b. Differences in language abilities among students

Differences in basic English language skills among students pose a challenge in implementing critical thinking activities. Students with low basic skills find it difficult to participate in discussion and deep learning-based project activities.

5. Teachers' Needs to Improve Learning Readiness

The fifth finding relates to the need for teachers to improve their readiness to integrate CTL and deep learning. The need for ongoing training and mentoring, teachers conveyed the need for continuous training and mentoring related to the application of contextual and deep learning. Teachers expected training that was not only theoretical, but also provided real-life examples, direct guidance, and evaluation of the learning that had been applied.

DISCUSSION

1. Teacher Readiness in Integrating CTL

The results show that junior high school English teachers are quite ready to integrate CTL by consistently relating learning materials to students' real-life experiences. In classroom practice, teachers attempt to connect English learning content with situations that are familiar to students, such as their daily activities, local environment, and personal interests. This approach allows students to perceive English not merely as an abstract school subject, but as a functional tool that can be applied in meaningful contexts. This finding is in line with Sembiring & Yusnaldi (2025) view that contextual learning helps students relate academic knowledge to their daily experiences, thereby making learning more meaningful. From a constructivist perspective, teachers' practices that utilize students' personal experiences and local contexts show that the learning process has provided space for students to actively construct knowledge (Putri et al., 2024; Niswanti et al., 2023; Dewi et al., 2025; Razak et al., 2020). However, from another perspective, the effectiveness of CTL implementation cannot be separated from the teacher's level of creativity, pedagogical competence, and consistency in designing learning activities. While contextual connections can increase student engagement, poorly planned CTL activities may limit learning outcomes. Without careful instructional planning, CTL risks becoming a pseudo-contextual approach, where real-life examples are used superficially without fostering deeper conceptual understanding or critical thinking. In such cases, contextual elements may function only as introductory activities rather than as integral components of the learning process. Therefore, the successful integration of CTL requires teachers to possess not only an understanding of contextual principles but also the ability to systematically design learning activities that align learning objectives, content, and assessment. This highlights the importance of continuous professional development to support

teachers in implementing CTL effectively and sustainably in English language classrooms.

2. Application of Deep Learning in English Language Learning

Research findings related to the application of deep learning indicate that English teachers have made conscious efforts to encourage students not only to memorize vocabulary and grammatical structures, but also to actively use English through meaningful learning activities such as classroom discussions and project-based learning. These activities require students to apply language knowledge in authentic contexts, express ideas, and collaborate with peers. This is in line with the concept of deep learning, which emphasizes deep understanding, conceptual connections, and the ability to transfer knowledge to real-life situations (Sulasmı, 2025). From one perspective, the implementation of discussion-based activities and creative projects reflects teachers' pedagogical readiness to foster students' critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. Through project-based learning, students are encouraged to analyze information, make decisions, and present ideas in English, which supports higher-order thinking and active language use. Such learning experiences allow students to move beyond surface learning and engage more deeply with language content. However, from another perspective, the effectiveness of deep learning is challenged by students' limited basic language skills. Insufficient vocabulary mastery, weak grammatical understanding, and low speaking confidence can restrict students' participation in discussion and project-based activities. Darancık (2018), asserts that deep learning in a foreign language requires adequate basic linguistic skills so that students can participate actively. Therefore, while deep learning holds strong potential for enhancing English language learning, its successful implementation requires a balance between developing students' basic language proficiency and providing cognitively demanding learning tasks. This finding

suggests that teachers need to carefully scaffold learning activities to ensure that deep learning can be accessed by students with varying levels of language ability.

3. Factors Supporting Teacher Readiness in CTL and Deep Learning Integration

The results of the study indicate that infrastructure support and collaboration among teachers play a crucial role in improving teachers' readiness to integrate Contextual Teaching and Learning and deep learning. The availability of technological facilities, such as projectors, digital learning resources, and internet access, enables teachers to create more authentic learning environments that are closely connected to students' real-life contexts. Through the use of technology, teachers are able to present learning materials in more engaging and meaningful ways, which can enhance students' motivation and participation in English language learning. These findings are in line with the research by Matongo & Goronga (2025), which states that the availability of resources and a collaborative environment contribute positively to the successful implementation of innovative learning. From the perspective of teacher professionalism, collaboration within school-based learning communities strengthens reflective teaching practices and encourages the exchange of effective instructional strategies among teachers. Regular discussions, peer sharing, and joint lesson planning allow teachers to learn from one another's experiences and improve their pedagogical competence collectively. Such collaborative practices foster a culture of continuous improvement and professional growth, which is essential for sustaining innovative teaching approaches. However, despite these positive conditions, limitations in facilities and unstable access to technology remain significant challenges. Inadequate infrastructure and inconsistent internet connectivity can restrict teachers' ability to fully implement technology-supported and context-based learning activities. These constraints



highlight the need for greater attention from school leaders and policymakers to ensure equitable access to educational resources. Without sufficient institutional support, teachers' readiness and efforts to implement innovative learning approaches may not be optimally realized.

4. Challenges for Teachers in Implementing CTL and Deep Learning

Research findings reveal that students' low confidence in using English and the wide differences in language abilities among students constitute major challenges in the implementation of contextual and deep learning approaches. Many students experience anxiety when speaking or writing in English, which often leads to reluctance to participate actively in classroom activities. From a psychological perspective, fear of making mistakes can inhibit students' active participation in language learning (Salihodlu, 2024). From another perspective, these challenges place additional pedagogical demands on teachers. Teachers are required to apply differentiated learning strategies to accommodate students with diverse levels of language proficiency. Differentiation may include adjusting task complexity, providing varied forms of support, or offering alternative ways for students to demonstrate understanding. Such strategies are essential to ensure that all students, regardless of their language ability, are able to participate and benefit from learning activities. Thus, teacher readiness is not solely determined by the ability to design innovative and engaging learning activities, but also by the capacity to manage classroom diversity effectively. Teachers must be able to create a supportive learning environment that reduces students' anxiety, encourages risk-taking, and fosters confidence in using English. This finding highlights that effective integration of CTL and deep learning requires not only instructional creativity, but also strong classroom management skills and sensitivity to students' psychological and linguistic needs.

5. Strengths and Limitations of the Study

This study has several strengths, particularly in terms of data depth, as it employs a qualitative approach through in-depth interviews. This approach enables the researcher to explore teachers' experiences, perceptions, and professional reflections in a comprehensive and meaningful manner. By allowing participants to express their views in detail, qualitative interviews provide rich and nuanced insights into teachers' readiness to integrate Contextual Teaching and Learning and deep learning. Consequently, this method offers a contextual understanding of instructional practices that is often difficult to capture through quantitative research designs, which tend to focus primarily on numerical trends rather than lived experiences.

Despite these strengths, the study also has certain limitations that need to be acknowledged. One limitation concerns the relatively small number of informants involved in the research, as well as the focus on English teachers at the junior high school level only. These factors limit the generalizability of the findings to broader educational contexts or to teachers at other educational levels. In addition, although in-depth interviews provided valuable insights, the data analysis did not include direct classroom observations. As a result, the findings may not fully represent actual teaching practices as they occur in real classroom settings, but rather reflect teachers' self-reported experiences and perceptions. Based on these strengths and limitations, it is recommended that future research involve a larger and more diverse group of informants to enhance the breadth of perspectives. Furthermore, combining interview data with classroom observations and other data collection techniques, such as reflective journals or student feedback, would allow for a more comprehensive and triangulated understanding of teachers' instructional practices. Such methodological enhancements could strengthen the validity of future studies and provide deeper insights into the

effective integration of contextual and deep learning approaches in English language education.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study indicates that junior high school English teachers are generally well prepared to integrate CTL and deep learning into English language teaching. Teachers have demonstrated the ability to connect instructional materials with students' real-life contexts and to promote meaningful and deep learning through a variety of learning activities, such as discussions, project-based learning, and collaborative tasks. These practices suggest that teachers possess a sufficient level of pedagogical readiness to implement contextual and deep learning approaches in English classrooms.

Nevertheless, this readiness is not without challenges. Teachers continue to face several constraints, including limited instructional time, differences in students' language proficiency levels, and students' low confidence in using English. These challenges may hinder the optimal implementation of CTL and deep learning if they are not addressed systematically. Therefore, continuous support in the form of professional training, pedagogical mentoring, and sustained professional guidance is essential to strengthen teachers' instructional competence. In addition, the provision of adequate learning facilities and institutional support is necessary to ensure that teachers can implement CTL and deep learning effectively and sustainably.

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