

# **ESL TEACHER COMPETENCE IN INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY WITH ESL INSTRUCTION: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE SECTOR IN-SERVICE ESL STUDENT-TEACHERS**

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**Abstract:** The rapid development of technology has significantly introduced new capabilities across different fields, including education. It has left a remarkable mark on English language teaching, especially in English as a Second Language. In Sri Lanka, English being the second language, it is essential to integrate technology into the teaching practices to enhance the language learning. Yet, the technological competence of ESL teachers is questionable. Thus, this study focused on a comparative exploration of the technological competence of ESL teachers from government and private sectors in integrating technology with ESL instruction. This study utilized a quantitative approach and a case study design. The study sampled 30 in-service student-teachers following Bachelor of Education in English Language Teaching in a technological university in Sri Lanka. A questionnaire was used as the main data collection tool for the study. The findings indicate that they are competent in terms of basic computer and device operation skills, MS Office suite operation skills and internet and online resource utilization skills, while they are somewhat competent in digital tools and content creation skills. It is further revealed that private-sector ESL teachers are highly competent, while government-sector ESL teachers are competent in integrating technology with ESL instruction.

**Keywords:** ESL teachers, Technology integration, Technological competence.