

DIGITAL LITERACY IN ENGLISH LEARNING FOR GENERATION ALPHA: A CASE STUDY AT SMP ISLAM AL AZHAAR TULUNGAGUNG

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Submitted: 2025-01-01

Accepted: 2025-07-03

Abstract: This article discusses the results of qualitative research on the application of digital literacy in English language learning for Generation Alpha students at SMP Islam Al-Azhaar Tulungagung. The research aims to explore the technology-based learning methods implemented at the school, as well as its impact on the teaching-learning process. As information technology advances, digital literacy has become an essential skill for students to access, evaluate and utilize information effectively. Some of the innovative approaches identified in this study include the use of digital libraries, learning apps and interactive platforms to enhance the learning experience. The results show that the integration of digital literacy in learning not only creates a more enjoyable and varied learning atmosphere but also increases students' engagement in the learning process. In addition, digital literacy is able to prepare students to face global challenges in the future. However, this study also found some significant challenges, such as limited access to technology, lack of teacher training, and different levels of understanding of technology between students and educators. Despite the obstacles, the implementation of digital literacy has great potential in improving the quality of learning at Al-Azhaar Tulungagung Islamic Junior High School, especially in creating a more competent generation in the digital era.

Keywords: Digital literacy, Generation Alpha

INTRODUCTION

Prensky, (2001) identifies the current generation of learners as “digital natives,” individuals who have been immersed in digital technologies from an early age. Building on this perspective, I argue that digital literacy is not merely an added competence but a foundational skill for students, particularly those belonging to Generation Alpha born between 2010 and 2025 who are growing up in an environment saturated with information technology. This pervasive exposure to digital devices requires a corresponding ability to engage with technology critically and effectively, particularly in the context of language learning.

As Mayuni et al.,(2022) emphasize, digital literacy enhances English language learning by facilitating access to diverse online learning materials, enabling participation in digital forums, and supporting the use of interactive educational applications. From this standpoint, I believe digital literacy does not only modernize the learning process but also contextualizes it, making it more relevant and engaging for students. At SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung, such integration has become a pedagogical focus, aimed at preparing students for the demands of globalized communication and knowledge exchange.

Furthermore, digital literacy encompasses the ability to not only retrieve information but to evaluate and utilize it judiciously. In language education, this skill is critical for understanding the cultural, social, and pragmatic dimensions of English. Son, Park, and (Son et al., 2017) contend that technology-mediated language learning environments foster students' engagement in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in more interactive and learner-centered ways. This aligns with the need to provide multimodal, student-driven learning opportunities that mirror authentic language use.

In practice, SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung has begun implementing various technology-integrated instructional strategies, including the use of mobile applications, instructional videos, and social media for collaborative learning. However, I recognize that such efforts face challenges, particularly regarding equitable access to technology and teachers' proficiency in digital pedagogy. Zellatifanny & Mudjiyanto, (2018) note that the effectiveness of digital literacy initiatives depends significantly on institutional support and educators' digital competencies.

Given these dynamics, this study aims to investigate how digital literacy is applied in English language instruction for Generation Alpha students at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung. Through a case study approach, the research seeks to identify best practices and effective strategies in integrating digital literacy into English teaching. The findings are expected to inform not only the ongoing pedagogical practices at the focal institution but also contribute insights for other educational settings seeking to improve instructional quality in the digital era.

METHOD

The research method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative approach, which aims to systematically and factually describe the reality that occurs in the field without variable manipulation or hypothesis testing. This approach was chosen because it is in accordance with the main objective of the study, namely to explore the application of digital literacy in English learning at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung. Qualitative descriptive research focuses on an in-depth understanding of the phenomena studied based on the subject's experience, as well as utilizing non-numerical data such as words, narratives, and images Subandi, (2011).

The informants in this study consisted of five people, namely a librarian, an English teacher, and three students. Informants were selected using the purposive sampling technique, namely a technique for selecting participants intentionally based on certain criteria that have been set in accordance with the objectives of the study (Sodik & Siyoto, 2015). These criteria include the informant's direct experience in learning activities involving digital technology. The interviews explored several important issues, including: students' perceptions of the use of digital media in English learning, teachers' strategies in integrating technology into teaching and learning

activities, and the role of librarians in supporting access to digital resources. These issues were chosen because they are highly relevant in assessing the extent to which digital literacy has been integrated into the educational context and what challenges are faced.

The data obtained were analyzed using the thematic analysis technique, which is a method for identifying, organizing, and interpreting important patterns or themes in qualitative data. The first step in this process is to transcribe the interview results verbatim. Next, the researcher coded, which is labeling pieces of data that have important meaning. The interrelated codes were then grouped into several major themes, such as ease of access to digital sources, student learning motivation, obstacles in using technology, and teacher responses to digital media integration. The analysis was carried out inductively, by building understanding based on field findings, not from predetermined theories. To strengthen the findings, the researcher also compared the interview results with relevant literature or previous research. Thus, this method allows researchers to fully describe how digital literacy is applied in English learning for Generation Alpha students.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This part showed the result of research. The research result could be added with tables, Based on the results of interviews and observing the phenomena in the field, researchers found facts in schools and the application or use of digital literacy in learning that focuses on English subjects, schools must make new breakthroughs related to learning methods and teachers discuss working together to create a learning method that is appropriate for today's students who are the alpha generation. The following are some learning methods using digital literacy for alpha generation students at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung:

a. Digital Library

According to Masnezah (2002), a digital library is a collection of large and organized large and organized collection of information, digitized in various forms (a combination of text, images, sound and video) that allows (a combination of text, images, sound and video) that allows the search for information anytime and anywhere through the concept of communication networks. Search for information anytime and anywhere through the concept of a global communication network and the maximum use of information technology (Prabowo, 2013).

The implementation of a digital library at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung offers various benefits that support students' learning and literacy development. This video briefly explains the implementation of a digital library at SMP Islam Al-Azhaar Tulungagung, including the benefits and challenges faced by the school in the process of digitizing its library

system:

<https://youtu.be/PdSjE7Ecial?si=tIGDfk275gUKWFh> Source: <https://www.youtube.com/@smpmediaalazhaartulungagun3831> Digital Education Documentation (accessed on June 30, 2025). By providing access to various types of learning resources, such as textbooks, articles, journals, and other learning materials in digital format, students can easily access reading materials that suit their academic needs. Through the digital platform, students can search for learning materials anytime and anywhere, without being limited to physical books in the library. An efficient search system makes it easier for students to find relevant information according to the topics they need, increasing efficiency in searching for learning materials.

In addition, the implementation of digital libraries also serves to improve students' digital literacy skills. Students not only learn about academic content, but also develop the ability to search, assess, and utilize information available online. Thus, students are not only equipped with knowledge, but also the skills to manage information in the increasingly developing digital era. This skill is important, considering the increasing number of sources of information available in cyberspace, which requires precision in filtering and processing it.

Digital libraries also support collaboration between students in learning activities. Features such as discussion forums or sharing rooms allow students to discuss the material they find with each other, improving their understanding and honing their social skills. In addition, digital libraries provide students with the flexibility to access learning materials and books at any time, both at school and at home, allowing them to study independently and more intensively. With efficient management, digital libraries make the learning process more organized and easily accessible to all parties involved.

b. Audio Content

According to (Kotler et al., 2016) in the book *Marketing Management*, audio media is one of the effective communication channels in marketing because it is able to convey emotions and information through voice intonation and music. Audio content is also an important tool in learning due to its flexibility to be accessed at any time without requiring full visual attention. The application of audio content in English subjects at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung can have a significant impact on improving students' ability to understand and use English. Audio content, such as conversation recordings, podcasts, and other audio materials, can help students strengthen their listening skills *Figure 1*. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1pIPCsKAXQOG1vEpeuLIIvMP0771VgoEo/view?usp=driv>

[esdk](#) .By listening to content in English spoken by native speakers or recordings of relevant conversations, students can improve their pronunciation, intonation, and understanding of words and phrases in a more natural context. This is very useful, considering that listening is one of the basic skills that need to be mastered in language learning.

In addition, the use of audio content can also enrich students' learning experiences, especially by integrating various types of materials such as audiobooks, interactive dialogues, or lecture recording in English (Cárdenas, 2020) . This allows students to become familiar with the variety of accents and speaking styles in English. By listening to a variety of audio content, students can improve their understanding of sentence structures, vocabulary, and expressions used in different situations. Audio content can also be used for more interactive conversation practice, where students listen to conversations and then imitate or answer related questions, which strengthens speaking skills.

The application of audio content in English learning at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung also provides opportunities for independent learning, where students can listen to materials anytime and anywhere. With audio content that can be accessed via devices such as smartphones, tablets, or computers, students can study outside of formal class hours, prepare for exams or improve their language skills in a more flexible way. The use of audio can also be integrated with tasks such as listening and recording information, which helps students practice listening and writing skills simultaneously. Thus, audio content not only enriches English learning, but also motivates students to be more active in learning the language independently.

c. Creating video content

The implementation of video making in English subjects at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung can be an effective method in improving students' speaking, writing, and creativity skills. By making videos, students can practice composing and conveying their ideas in English in a more structured way *figure 2*. <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wd19qTTawrX9zj1hzE0xzaAUwMEoOjv/view?usp=sharing>. Video making allows students to develop their speaking skills, either through monologues, dialogues, or presentations. They can talk about certain topics in English, which increases their confidence in using the language in everyday situations. In addition, students also learn to organize information clearly and interestingly, which helps them improve their writing and argumentation skills.

In addition to improving speaking skills, video production also provides an opportunity to integrate students' creative skills. They can create videos in a variety of formats, such as presentations, skits, or interviews, which require them to use a variety of vocabulary and expressions in a more creative context. By using video editing tools and applications, students can develop technical skills, such as using video editing software, which can enhance their digital skills. It also teaches students how to convey messages visually and verbally, improving their overall communication skills.

The application of video production in English learning also increases student engagement in the learning process. Video projects provide opportunities for students to work in groups, which improves their ability to collaborate and communicate in English. They learn to listen to classmates' opinions, negotiate ideas, and work together to produce a good product. In addition, the resulting videos can be presented in class, giving students the opportunity to share their work and receive constructive feedback. Thus, video production not only enriches English learning but also motivates students to be more active and involved in the learning process.

d. Digital School Books (DSB)

Digital School Books (DSB) is a program from the Indonesian Department of National Education which aims to distribute textbooks in digital form for all levels of education. The Digital School Book application provides more than 2,500 school books that can be downloaded for free via tablet or smartphone. Every book available in this application has been officially copyrighted by the author or publisher concerned by the Ministry of National Education, and then converted into a digital book format (ebook) (Cavanaugh, 2014).

The practical and complete Digital School Book application can not only be obtained for free, but also through the website www.bukusekolahdigital.com . This application can also be downloaded through the App Store, Google Play, and Windows Store. By installing this application on a smartphone, tablet, or laptop, all students in Indonesia can study anywhere and anytime. Even in remote areas where school book distribution is difficult to reach, they can still get access to learning according to national education standards. Teachers can also use this application to provide the materials needed by students. This application provides a complete collection from elementary school to high school/vocational school students.

The implementation of digital school books in English subjects at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung can provide various benefits in improving the effectiveness and quality

of learning. Digital school books provide easy and fast access for students to obtain learning materials without being limited by space and time. Students can access English textbooks anytime and anywhere, using devices such as laptops, tablets, or smartphones. This allows them to learn independently and flexibly, and to study the material more deeply outside of formal class hours.

In addition, digital school books also allow the integration of various learning media, such as images, audio, video, and animation, which can enrich students' learning experience (Gan et al., 2015). For example, in English learning, digital books can include recorded conversations, explanatory videos, or interactive exercises that help students understand vocabulary, grammar, and the use of English in real contexts. These digital books can also contain interactive exercises that provide immediate feedback to students, which accelerates the learning process and increases students' motivation to continue learning.

The implementation of digital school books also supports more efficient learning management for teachers. Digital books allow teachers to update teaching materials quickly without having to reprint physical books. In addition, digital books allow teachers to monitor student progress through tracking features available in several digital book applications. Students can work on assignments and exercises in digital books, and teachers can directly assess the results and provide feedback more quickly. In this way, digital school books not only improve students' learning experiences but also increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the teaching process in the classroom.

e. Interactive Power Point

According to (Mayer, 2024) in his book *Multimedia Learning*, the element of interactivity in presentations can increase audience engagement and aid in the comprehension process as it allows the audience to explore the material according to their needs. *fig 3.* <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16U4KiYzU9KDDo1ExU1vsfFIhSWuXLWZ>

The implementation of interactive PPT in English subjects at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung can increase student engagement and understanding through more dynamic and interesting learning methods. PowerPoint (PPT) that is converted into interactive provides an opportunity for students to actively participate in the learning process. For example, teachers can create slides containing interactive quizzes, puzzles, or multiple-choice questions that allow students to answer directly using clicks or navigation buttons on the slide. This changes the usually static PPT into a more interesting tool and increases student interaction in learning.

In addition, interactive PPT can facilitate the use of multimedia, such as audio, video, and animation, which helps students understand English materials in a more contextual and enjoyable way (Amin et al., 2018). For example, teachers can insert clips of English conversations, learning videos, or animations that depict real-life situations where English is used. This not only helps improve students' listening skills, but also makes them more familiar with different accents or ways of speaking in English, so that they can understand the language in a wider variety of contexts.

Interactive PPTs can also be used to improve speaking and writing skills. Teachers can add slides with speaking tasks that require students to record themselves answering questions in English or having a simulated conversation based on the topic being studied. In addition, interactive PPTs can include writing exercises where students are asked to complete sentences or paragraphs with the correct words or phrases. Thus, the use of interactive PPTs can make English learning more fun, participatory, and effective, while improving students' technological skills in using presentation applications such as PowerPoint.

The application of various digital media in English learning at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung certainly brings many benefits, but also presents several challenges. Therefore, the right solution is needed to overcome problems such as limited access to technology, lack of skills, limited time, and adaptation to change. With careful planning, adequate training, and support from all parties, these challenges can be overcome to maximize the benefits of digital media in English learning.

CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the importance of integrating digital literacy into English learning at SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung, especially to prepare Generation Alpha students who grow up in the technological era. Today's students face unique challenges, where the ability to understand and use technology effectively is crucial. Through the implementation of various technology-based learning methods, such as digital libraries, audio content, video creation, and digital school books, students are given wider access to interactive and engaging learning resources. The results of the study indicate that digital literacy not only improves students' language skills but also encourages active participation in the learning process. Students who are exposed to innovative learning technologies tend to be more motivated and engaged in learning activities, so they can develop their speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills more effectively. However, despite the significant

benefits, challenges remain, such as limited access to technological devices, varying understandings among teachers regarding digital literacy, and resistance to new methods. To overcome these challenges, strong collaboration between schools, teachers, and parents is needed in providing adequate access and necessary training. In addition, it is important to implement the right pedagogical approach that integrates technology in a way that suits the needs of students. With these steps, SMP Islam Al Azhaar Tulungagung can be an example for other schools in an effort to improve the quality of learning in the digital era. Thus, the integration of digital literacy will make a significant contribution in preparing students to become competent individuals and ready to face global challenges in the future.

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