



The Importance of Digital Literacy in Improving Students' Skills in English



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Abstract

Pandemic Indonesia believes that Indonesians still experience "technology stuttering", especially in the education sector, where technology is scarce due to the availability of technological equipment. The phenomenon of pandemic situations makes online learning difficult for teachers and students because they do not have enough skills to implement online learning. This affects the quality of the learning process and the results of students in school, especially in English subjects. The purpose of this study is to observe the digital literacy skills of high school students in Bengkulu. This study was based on descriptive qualitative semi-structured interviews to investigate 21 students. The use of digital literacy in learning English was used in those interviews, and the results of the interviews are discussed in the journal. Digital literacy is a student's ability to search for information on the Internet. In addition, digital literacy allows students to choose information carefully. This study shows the student's ability to find appropriate information in their English material. In addition, this study explains the importance of digital literacy, especially for ESL students, and how to use English digital literacy in the post-pandemic situation in Indonesia.

Keywords: digital literacy, learning English

Abstrak

Pandemic Indonesia meyakini bahwa masyarakat Indonesia masih mengalami "gagap teknologi", terutama di bidang pendidikan, di mana teknologi menjadi langka karena ketersediaan peralatan teknologi. Fenomena situasi pandemi membuat pembelajaran daring menjadi sulit bagi guru dan siswa karena tidak memiliki keterampilan yang cukup untuk melaksanakan pembelajaran daring. Hal ini mempengaruhi kualitas proses pembelajaran dan hasil belajar siswa di sekolah khususnya mata pelajaran Bahasa Inggris. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mengamati kemampuan literasi digital siswa SMA di Bengkulu. Penelitian ini didasarkan pada wawancara deskriptif kualitatif semi-terstruktur untuk menyelidiki 21 siswa. Penggunaan literasi digital dalam pembelajaran bahasa Inggris digunakan dalam wawancara tersebut, dan hasil wawancara tersebut dibahas dalam jurnal. Literasi digital adalah kemampuan siswa untuk mencari informasi di internet. Selain itu, literasi digital memungkinkan siswa untuk memilih informasi dengan hati-hati. Studi ini menunjukkan kemampuan siswa untuk menemukan informasi yang tepat dalam materi bahasa Inggris mereka. Selain itu, penelitian ini menjelaskan pentingnya literasi digital, khususnya bagi siswa ESL, dan bagaimana menggunakan literasi digital bahasa Inggris dalam situasi pasca pandemi di Indonesia.

Kata Kunci: literasi digital, pembelajaran bahasa Inggris

Pendahuluan

The pandemic situation in Indonesia forced educational institutions to engage in online learning. Online learning is a huge change in our education system. Implementation of online learning in Indonesia is still rare and weak due to equipment and infrastructure. During the pandemic, teachers, students and parents are not sufficiently prepared for online learning at home. In addition, due to government regulations, distance or online learning

between teachers, students and parents should be implemented to prevent the spread of the COVID 19 virus in Indonesia. Therefore they have to follow the rules given by the government. The sudden adoption of e-learning experienced by teachers and students is not progressing well and there are many problems such as loading problems, connectivity and difficulties in accessing the e-learning platform. This happens because they lack the knowledge and skills of online learning.

The university that has been successfully implemented online so far is Universitas Terbuka. The university is fully organized online learning through online schools. At the same time, other institutions and schools (national or international) never fully adopted e-learning, but only provided e-learning and websites to task and information provider schools and institutions (Hariati, 2021). Therefore, the pandemic situation will bring significant changes to our education in Indonesia. In addition, it has a positive effect on all people. For example, Indonesians have begun to bring technological devices with them and integrate them into learning activities. Based on the data, almost all Indonesians are digital natives and proficient in the use of technology. But they don't know how to use technology properly. Indonesians, especially students, prefer to use technology for entertainment and negative things (Harmoko, 2021). Indonesians can consider the positive application of the Internet as an obstacle to reduce the negative access to the Internet (Eryansyah et al., 2019). Advances in technology and the internet make learning more difficult and delay the completion of assignments. Students are distracted which makes them concentrate while studying. This affects their learning outcomes and achievements.

According to Shopova (2014), digital literacy is the ability and knowledge of using technology to build long-term activities and support society in the pandemic situation of COVID 19. It is an important skill today, and digital literacy includes different literacy such as information literacy, computer literacy, media literacy, communication literacy, visual literacy and technology literacy. These skills can help young people access information sources related to digital technology and help students deal with the challenges of massive technological advances. Previous research explains the development of digital literacy and the factor

that determines the level of digital literacy of students. In this study, the researcher addresses the implementation of digital literacy of high school teachers and students. Digital literacy is one's ability to use Internet technology as a means of communication and as a source for finding important information. According to UNICEF (Nascimbeni and Vosloo, 2019), digital literacy refers to a person having opportunities, skills and rights to use or not to use, which allows people to benefit from digital content and avoid its negative problems in all areas of the Internet. When a person understands how to use the Internet properly, they also understand the positive and negative effects of each platform and know what equipment and capabilities are used on each platform. According to Bawden (therefore Hariati, 2021), digital literacy has four levels: basic literacy (reading and writing), background knowledge, mastery of ICT skills, and attitudes and perspectives. These factors play an important role in supporting online learning, but the acquisition of digital literacy is not achieved overnight. But it will take time and it will be controlled. In addition, digital literacy has the following four levels:

a) Basic literacy skills

Basic literacy skills are reading, writing, understanding signs and counting numbers. However, in the context of online learning, this ability includes understanding online content, reading and interpreting information, transforming text into an online community and sharing information through digital (online) platforms such as Facebook, blogs and Twitter.

b) Background information

Background information is basic information that helps to gain new information and understand existing information in depth. In online learning, background knowledge explains the ability to search online information through

online platforms such as Google, Wikipedia and other search engines. After that, the user can select the information related to the online learning material needs.

c) ICT skills

ICT skills are the ability to create and collect digital content using technical tools. This is an important skill in digital literacy and involves gathering information. In online learning, this is the ability to link documents or research papers as learning outcomes to support online learning.

d) User attitudes and perspectives

The attitudes and opinions of users are related to behavior, use of digital technology and transmission of information from other sources. In the context of online learning, this ability to borrow resources from other information sources using citation rules

The development of modern technology makes technology a part of our lives. This can be seen in the younger generation who are already familiar with the digital world. The digital world is not intended for children under the age of 17, where there is a lot of content unsuitable for children under the age of 17 on the internet (Amanta, 2021). Therefore knowledge of the digital world must be recognized at an early age and is known as digital literacy. Digital literacy has several advantages: students have the ability to think critically, know reliable information from the Internet, and accept and believe it. In addition, teachers can use different images and resources to support online learning when students have already acquired digital literacy and can attract students interested in online learning (van Laar et al., 2020)

Indonesian society ranks 8th in internet usage. This is seen by users from Indonesia. According to Chips (as Amanta, 2021), internet users have increased by 22 percent. At the same time, there are significant

changes in the number of Internet users of people living in urban areas. However, this does not mean that people use the Internet correctly and sufficiently, because the use of the Internet is increasing. Based on the evidence, it is important to promote digital literacy. In addition, there are several ways to promote digital literacy in Indonesia as follows (UNICEF, 2020):

a) Promote parents' awareness of digital learning

One possible step is to familiarize parents with the definition of digital literacy and why digital literacies are necessary for children to grow. Government or school can teach parents to use digital literacy skills to help their children during online learning. The government can create an online portal about digital skills and how they can support their children. In addition, the school can make visitor lists related to the development of children during online learning.

b) Strengthening of school infrastructure as an investment

School is a place where students can transfer knowledge through the learning, direct observation and play activities. That is why it is important that schools have an Internet connection that introduces the Internet, explains its correct use and makes it possible to use the Internet. Also online, students can have different experiences in learning tasks such as depth perception and cross-cultural understanding. That's why an internet connection is an investment for schools. It is not only useful for students, but also teachers can use different resources for teachers to help students learn.

c. Includes digital literacy and 21 requirements in teacher training

Digital literacy and the demand for 21st century skills should be introduced in teacher education. To promote and develop students' digital literacy, teachers should undergo training to apply digital literacy to

students. Developing and maintaining digital literacy takes time because digital literacy is still new in Indonesia. Many teachers, educators and students do not understand the importance of digital literacy in Indonesia.

Metode Penelitian

This study uses a qualitative descriptive data method where the data collection process describes the implementation of digital literacy in post-pandemic situations to support online learning through a semi-structured interview (Creswell, 2019). The purpose of this study is to identify the understanding and importance of digital literacy in post-pandemic situations. This study involved 21 participants who are high school students in Bengkulu and use digital literacy in online learning. Participants were randomly recruited from three classes in SMA Negeri 4 Bengkulu. This study uses a semi-structured interview method. This interview uses Indonesian. When determining the research informants, the informant who uses online platforms the most in the post-pandemic study on COVID 19 will be considered. The material was analyzed by transcribing the recordings; Subcategories within the interview question were observed, noted and discussed through the texts.

Hasil Penelitian Findings

The level of digital literacy involves how teachers and students conduct online learning. Most students and teachers use online platforms (Google Classroom, Webex and Zoom) for online learning, where teachers and students implement online learning to support the learning process. This is due to the enforcement of social distancing regulations from the government. Therefore, students and teachers must replace offline learning with online learning. When implementing e-learning, teachers and students face several challenges, such as difficulties in accessing e-

learning platforms (Google Classroom and Zoom). Many teachers use alternative methods such as social media or communication tools to connect with students. One of the students felt the teacher's confusion in the transition from offline to online learning, explained:

Some teachers were confused when the government decided to introduce online learning in schools. Due to the sudden change, there was a lack of information about using the application for online meetings (Google Meet, Zoom). The teachers decided to use social media (Whatsapp, Line and Facebook) to implement online learning (Laila, students, January 8, 2022). In terms of providing learning resources, teachers prefer to use hard books as learning resources and assignment tools. After completing the task, students must send the task to the teachers through social media or communication used by the teacher. Also, the teacher does not provide alternative sources such as youtube videos and recommended websites when implementing online learning. This was supported by the explanation of two participants:

I had several difficulties when I had to look for other sources and videos about English on the Internet to get more explanations about the school material." (Frans, Students, January 8, 2022). As a high school student, I didn't know. About websites. Which fully provide additional resources and became confused while observing the virtual classroom. Because the teacher did not explain the material clearly." (Rama, students, 8 January 2022).

The Importance Of Digital Literacy

The Importance of Digital Literacy explains how digital literacy can help students learn English online. Students gain experience in finding additional material in English during online learning. Many websites help the online learning. Especially

when asked to produce an English text, students find an example text and study the text as a reference study. The following can be seen from the presentation interview of the three participants:

Learning English becomes a fun activity because the learning can be carried out through several online platforms (Google, Tiktok and Youtube). I felt that each platform has a different activity and I became more motivated." (Gabriel, students, January 8, 2022). I think that learning is now a fun activity, the teacher uses many platforms to learn English. It makes the activity versatile and not monotonous." (Azaria, students, 8 January 2022). The teacher asked the students to search for English material, but sometimes I did not know how to find suitable English material on Google. I'm confused because I haven't googled regularly. I played with my friends on the phone." (Veronika, Students, 01.08.2022). Based on the results of the interview, the school gives students an important experience in their learning. Students know the second function and can realize real life. Teachers can also update their skills in both teaching style and technology, according to UNICEF (UNICEF, 2020), schools play an important role in introducing students to digital literacy. Schools are not only learning communities, but also places where soft skills are trained to perform 21st century skills. However, the teacher cannot access and use Internet technology appropriately. Therefore, the government must upgrade and facilitate internet access in schools by providing adequate infrastructure such as laptops and internet. Implementing digital literacy training for teachers is also one way to develop students' digital competence

Promotion Of Digital Literacy

The government's role in promoting digital literacy should be to provide adequate equipment for students who lack technological devices (such as cell phones or

laptops) and Wi-Fi connectivity. Based on UNICEF data (UNICEF, 2020). Many students do not take online education because they do not have enough technology such as mobile phones, laptops, or enough information about quotas, although the Indonesian government has provided services such as free quota and equipment to support online learning. However, several challenges include insufficient technology and websites to support online English learning. The result of the interview can be explained by:

The writer hope the government will provide students with the main website as study material to use in the future. Although many websites offer study materials in English, they do not provide them entirely in English and are not reliable." (Mutiara, students, 8 January 2022).

Pembahasan

The phenomenon of Covid 19 has a great impact on teachers and students. Dynamic changes in the learning process cause many difficulties for teachers and students. Based on the results of the research, difficulties are related to technological ability, content, main actor (teachers and students). Regarding technology, the results show that both teachers and students apply digital literacy in offline or online learning. However, all students are adapting to using smartphones in daily life. The main issue here is that students are not instructed to use cell phones as part of their studies. The data shows that Indonesia ranks 61st out of 100 countries in terms of education and internet readiness. This is also due to the fact that the technological skills of teachers are still weak and affect the digital literacy of students. Academic success comes not only from the students, but also from the environment, motivation and student interaction. Kebritchi (Kebritchi et al., 2017) also maintains that in order to improve the performance of students' online learning, the teacher should consider

the relationship between cognitive complexity and intellectual stimulation, which focuses on the students' environment and the teacher's approach to teaching. Students another difficulty is English content on the internet, especially in Indonesia. Most students say that it is difficult to find information related to English material on the Internet. However, the reason is that the student's knowledge level is not sufficient. It can be seen that students are not able to find and select all the information on the Internet. The third difficulties are the main actors in the learning process: teachers and students themselves. When implementing online learning, it is not possible to fully implement digital literacy and proper use of online services between the teacher and students.

Kesimpulan

Digital literacy plays an important role in Indonesia's online learning system, because in the learning process, both students and teachers use the online platform as a place for the learning process and also as a means to search for other sources in English. However, online learning has been going on for two years now, but high school students in Bengkulu still do not have sufficient digital literacy. The goal of digital literacy is for the student to be able to use the Internet correctly and effectively and to benefit from the Internet. In addition, digital literacy aims to make students aware that the Internet can help develop their potential and is not just a tool for entertainment and communication.

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