

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of this thesis aims to elaborate some sub- discussions and each sub- discussion has its own segment on expanding the beginning part of the present research. This section focuses on providing the research background, problem identification, research scope, research questions, research objectives and research significance. Here is a brief overview of them.

1.1 Research Background

The recent development of digital technology has changed how people communicate and learn. This transformation can also be seen in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom in which the excessive use of a single textbook and teacher- centered learning has been considered as traditional teaching and has been replaced by integrating digital tools and platforms to support the language teaching and learning. According to Indriani et al. (2024) found that many applications have been popular to use nowadays, such as online dictionaries are used as standard tools for vocabulary comprehension, and to make English teaching & learning more engaging, attractive and student-centred prefer the use of interactive games, educational videos and websites. These Digital resources offer different learning materials that motivate student to select their own learning styles.

Indonesian senior high school students are exposed nowadays to English not only in the classroom but also through digital resources. This changing is turning them from passive students who absorb simply the knowledge from textbook into active participants who create and express their ideas creatively and meaningfully. This transformation is especially noticeable in technology- equipped schools like SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar, where students regularly use smartphones, learning apps, and social media to support their studies. A shift in modern education is reflected through the usage of these digital tools, signaling that digital literacy is now considered an essential pillar of high-quality instruction (Ghozali et al., 2024). Meanwhile, as Giroth et al. (2024) note, Digital literacy is more than just technical competence; It involves effective, critical, and ethical use

of digital platforms for learning. Furthermore, Maulana (2024) highlighted that the capacity to apply ethical principles and critically assess information is the "key" to using technology wisely. Without these skills, students can use technology frequently but be unable to select or generate accurate and accountable information.

The students' habit in using digital tools are supported by applications make the way they do communication and learning increasingly. The applications are used as a space where students can practice writing and speaking English, not only with their friends, classmates, or even native speakers. Supporting this perspectives, Li et al. (2021) found that when digital learning tools or games are well-designed, they help students get "in the zone". When a language app matches a student's skill level perfectly, it is not too hard or too easy but it reduces anxiety and helps them learn vocabulary much more effectively.

Even though many students have easy access to digital tools, their ability in using these technology effectively for learning and creative activities can be different from one student to the others. This skill is known as digital literacy. Digital literacy involves more than just knowing how to operate the devices, but it is a combination of organizing information, creating content, communicating effectively, solving problems and staying safe online (Eshet-Alkalai, 2004). He supports this by defining digital literacy as a mix of thinking skill, technical, and social skill that enable students to use digital world effectively. This aligns with UNESCO's (2018) definition, which emphasizes being able to use technology to safely access, manage, and create information. To comprehensively measure digital literacy within the language learning context, this study synthesizes Eshet-Alkalai's (2004) cognitive-psychological model with UNESCO's (2018) practical competence framework as its guiding dual grand theory. While Eshet-Alkalai (2004) provides the cognitive depth required for critical evaluation and information synthesis, UNESCO (2018) supplies the functional standards for digital execution, safety, and content creation. Integrating these two grand theories establishes a unified, multidimensional model that captures both the thinking and operational skills necessary for modern EFL learners. This approach emphasizes that being digitally literate involves not just technical proficiency but also successful communication and content creation. However, many students still enjoy using

digital tools for entertainment or quick translations, without using these tools to really dive deeper into their learning creatively (Zeng, 2023).

Creative language use, based on Torrance's Theory of Creativity, happens when students use their imagination to express ideas in new and original ways, sharing what they think and feel personally, meaningfully and creatively (Torrance, 1966). In the context of this study, creative language use is specifically operationalized through students' English writing skills, where learners demonstrate ideational productivity, flexibility, originality, and elaboration in producing written text through digital writing platforms. According to Giroth et al. (2024), digital literacy is a broad skill that fosters better communication and personal growth. However, daily internet use does not guarantee that people have good skill digitally. As Fauziyah et al. (2024) pointed out that many young people still struggle with complex assignments, such as writing creative narratives. Conversely, students with advanced digital literacy possess a distinct advantage, as they can participate in creative written projects, such as digital storytelling, blogging, and descriptive writing tasks, that allow them to practice written English in authentic contexts. For those students whose digital skills are better will have big advantages because they are able to engage in creative projects like digital storytelling, blogging, making videos, or chatting with friends online. These activities give them an opportunity to practise English in the real context of situation. Several previous studies have investigated these variables to understand their separate impacts on language learning. Regarding digital literacy, Stockwell (2013) found that it significantly helps students navigate online platforms, while Giroth et al. (2024) stated that digital literacy is essential for students to operate in the digital world effectively, critically, and ethically. Additionally, Indriani et al. (2024) observed that digital tools like interactive games and videos connect with more active and student – centred in English learning. In terms of creative expression, the study of Parra (2021) found that students who have good skills in combining digital tools with creative language use relate to the ability in generating authentic written idea. Similarly, the study of Winnaandhini and Santosa (2025) found the strong digital skills, such as digital storytelling, have a positive correlation with creative language use in writing

task. These studies highlight that there is a positive correlation between Digital Literacy and Creative Language Use.

Other studies have focused on students' efficacy in English learning. The study of Saab et al. (2022) found that students' self-efficacy in learning English significantly increases when they are good at using digital tools. Similarly, a study of Nguyen et al. (2022) focused on how students' self-efficacy plays a key role in their language learning. It highlighted that students with higher confidence align with better task performance. Another study by Istifci and Goksel (2022) found that students who are better at using digital technology tend to be better at managing their own learning, meaning that more skilled students have better planning in their studies, stay motivated, and possess better problem-solving skills, resulting in better academic performance.

These examples show that while some individual relationships have been explored, there is still a limited research of how these three variables exist simultaneously. To close this research gap, the current study investigates the simultaneous correlation among all three variables. Examining these variables together is necessary because they are highly interconnected in a modern digital classroom. Digital literacy acts as an important tool. When students know how to use digital tools effectively, they can find diverse ideas for creative language use. Furthermore, based on Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy, this ability to express ideas creatively using technology correlates with a strong sense of competence, and higher confidence. Therefore, the objective of this study is to investigate how digital literacy relates simultaneously to both self-confidence in learning English and creative language use among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.

Understanding how digital skills help students express themselves while increasing their self-confidence is important in modern education. Learning English involves more than simply memorizing the language; it requires critical thinking and independent learning (Qomaruddin, 2023). At SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar, students use digital tools regularly. Exploring how digital literacy relates to students' creativity and confidence could help teachers design more effective and inspiring lessons. This study focuses on Grade 11 students whose ages are between

16–17 years old because of their readiness cognitively and academically to complete more difficult English tasks. Piaget's theory of cognitive development mentions that there are four stages of children's cognitive levels (sensorimotor, pre-operational, concrete operational, and formal operational). Students between 16–17 years old are included in the formal operational stage, where they develop deeper ways of thinking, can understand abstract ideas, solve difficult problems, and evaluate what they learn easily (Woolfolk, 2016). This means that at this age, Grade 11 students have the critical thinking needed for doing creative English assignments, having more confident feeling, and having good digital skills. By having these capacities, students have better preparation for tasks that require creativity, problem-solving, and independence (Eshet-Alkalai, 2004). For these reasons, Grade 11 students are an ideal sample to examine how digital tools can correlate on their creativity and confidence in English learning improvement.

Moreover, SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar is a school that has good technological facilities to support the learning process. This environment encourages teachers and students to use technology in the learning process specifically, Grade 11 students in this school are often asked to give presentations and find learning materials in the internet. These conditions make them the ideal participants for this research to understand the correlation between Digital Literacy, Creative Language Use, and Self-Efficacy in English language learning. As a private, digital-ready school in Denpasar, SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar represents many Indonesian high school situations where teachers combine digital tools with traditional methods in the learning process. This blended learning environment makes the school an ideal setting to study the correlation of Digital Literacy, Creative Language Use and English learning efficacy among EFL students.

Over the years, teachers have adapted to various changes in teaching methods through hands-on classroom experience. In this context, English teachers play an essential role in observing how importance the digital tools is to students' creative language use and their efficacy in English learning. Their perspectives provide valuable insights on how students connect their experience in using digital tools into meaningful English practice. A study by Pratolo et al. (2023) mentioned

that many Indonesian English teachers see that students become more creative and actively involved in their English learning process because of digital tools, but on the other hand, teachers also concern themselves with gaps in students' digital skills and their preparedness. Because of this, exploring teachers' perspectives along with students' data helps develop an understanding of how digital habit align with student creativity and confidence in the classroom.

Building on the importance of understanding how digital literacy correlates to students' creative language use and their efficacy in English learning, this study uses an embedded mixed-methods design, where qualitative interview insights are embedded within primary quantitative data. This combined approach enables a comprehensive understanding of how digital literacy correlates with both student creativity and confidence simultaneously in English learning. Ultimately, the study aims to inform better teaching strategies, close digital skill gaps, and improve students' English language outcomes.

1.2 Problem Identification

Based on the background of the research, there are some problems that can be identified in this research, such as:

1.2.1 The Transformation of Students' English Learning Methods

Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar have shifted from conventional learning methods to digital-based learning. This transformation requires further study to understand how modern instructional tools impact their language learning process.

1. 2. 2 High Student Reliance on Informal Digital Resources

Students frequently use digital applications (e.g., online dictionaries, YouTube, and learning websites) for independent study. However, relying on these informal resources without structured guidance may influence the quality and accuracy of their English skills.

1. 2. 3 Digital literacy is crucial, but many students still face challenges in applying it to their English learning

Digital resources are easy to find, but not everyone feels confident using them. Some students of Grade 11 in SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar face many challenges in using it because they have less skill, such

as: feeling hard to get the information needed and selecting it whether it is fake or real. On the other hand, even though they know how to use digital tools, when it comes to English learning, those students do not get enough help in using them, because they learn English through hard-copy books. Lack of teachers' skill in using technology make the students have lack experience in integrating technology in learning English in the classroom, and it becomes the other challenge of students face.

1. 2. 4 Students have various levels of Digital Literacy

The students in Grade 11 at SMA SLUA Saraswati 1 Denpasar have different levels of digital literacy, which make some students find difficult to learn English by using digital tools. This makes them difficult to be more creative and confident in using the language.

1. 2. 5 Limited possibilities for creative Language use even with digital access

Digital technologies are often used by students, but they are not always used for creative language activities such as creating original material, telling digital stories, or writing. Many of them prefer to use it just for simple translation or reading. The biggest issue is how to help students move from passive digital technology users to active and innovative English communicators. Besides, the various levels of students' digital literacy might also make this challenging.

1. 2. 6 Various Confidence levels of the students in learning English

Digital technology can boost students' confidence, but in learning English, they still have a feeling that their confidence has different level. This shows that having digital tools is not enough to improve confidence in learning English. The matter is how skilled they are in using it. This is what is called digital literacy. When students have good digital literacy, they are more likely having good confidence and believe to be succeed in learning English.

According to problem identification, this study is specifically designed to investigate the correlation between Digital Literacy, Creative Language Use, and Self-efficacy in English learning among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA)

Saraswati 1 Denpasar. It focuses on measuring the correlation between students' digital literacy, creative language use, and self-efficacy, while incorporating qualitative data to provide context on how digital tools are integrated into their English learning process.

1.3 Research Scope

Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati during the academic year of 2025- 2026 become the focus of this study, which examines three main areas, such as:

1. 3. 1 Digital Literacy

The study investigates Digital Literacy, referring to how proficiently students locate, assess, and apply digital tools and content to improve their English learning. Additionally, it analyzes the statistical correlation between digital skills, creative language use, and self-efficacy.

1. 3. 2 Creative Language Use

The study examines Creative Language Use by evaluating students' ability to generate original and imaginative English text, specifically through descriptive writing, and assesses its correlation with their Digital Literacy levels and Self-Efficacy.

1. 3. 3 Self - Efficacy in English Learning

This study assesses students' Self-Efficacy in English Learning, referring to their self-perceived confidence and belief in their capability to learn English, and investigates its correlation with their Digital Literacy and Creative Language Use.

Digital literacy is measured through students' technical skills, information literacy, digital communication abilities, and digital content creation skills (Eshet-Alkalai, 2004; UNESCO, 2018). Creative language use includes both traditional forms of creativity in English and digital forms of creative expression (Torrance, 1966). Self-efficacy in English learning is assessed through students' confidence in their capabilities to organize and execute actions required to achieve learning goals, specifically regarding task persistence, effort, and mastery beliefs (Bandura, 1997). In this study, these three variables are examined simultaneously to determine how

students' digital literacy and self-efficacy collectively correlate with their creative language use in English learning.

1.4 Research Questions

To address the problem identified in the background of this study, the following questions guide this research:

- 1.4.1 Is there any significant positive correlation between digital literacy and creative language use in English among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar?
- 1.4.2 Is there any significant positive correlation between digital literacy and self-efficacy in English language learning among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar?
- 1.4.3 Is there any significant simultaneous correlation between digital literacy and students' creative language use and English learning self-efficacy among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar?
- 1.4.4 What are teacher's opinions about the correlation between students' digital literacy, creative language use, and self-efficacy in English language learning at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar?

1.5 Research Objectives

This study is conducted to achieve the following objectives:

- 1.5.1 To examine the correlation between digital literacy and creative language use among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.
- 1.5.2 To investigate the correlation between digital literacy and self-efficacy in English language learning among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.
- 1.5.3 To investigate the simultaneous correlation between digital literacy, creative language use and self-efficacy in English language learning among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.
- 1.5.4 To describe the teacher's opinion about the correlation between digital literacy, creative language use, and self-efficacy in English language learning among Grade 11 students at SMA (SLUA) Saraswati 1 Denpasar.

1.6 Research Significances

This research is important for the same reasons and is expected to bring benefits to some people and group.

1.6.1 For teachers

An English teacher at SMA Saraswati 1 Denpasar and other schools will better understand how students' digital literacy relates to their creativity in English and their overall success in learning. The findings will help teachers see how to make the most of students' digital skills to boost their creativity with language and improve their English learning results. Teachers will also be able to identify their students who need extra help with digital literacy. Additionally, by exploring the teacher's opinion on how digital tool relates to the way students in learning English will give valuable insight about how effectively digital tools integrated in the classroom. The English teacher with their various experiences in teaching through many changes of teaching methods, will offer critical reflections on the way students interact with technology in learning English.

1.6.2 For school administration

School leaders will get valuable research- based insight in guiding them to make decisions relating to digital literacy program and how to integrate it to English language teaching. This information helps them in using the resources wisely and creating policies that support both digital skills and English learning objectives, particularly among students acquiring English in an EFL context.

1.6.3 For parents

Having a clearer understanding of how their children's academic improved connecting with the digital technology use, and be smarter in using their screen time and digital activities are the reasons why this study is important.

1.6.4 For future research

This investigation serves to further inform the rising discourse on digital literacy and language learning, especially in Southeast Asia. It will

lay the foundation for future research and help identify the areas where we still need to learn more.

