

# ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING FROM STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVE: THE ABSENCE OF DIGITAL MEDIA AS A BARRIER TO TEACHING QUALITY

**Wanda Nur Hanifa<sup>1</sup>**

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel, Surabaya, Indonesia  
e-mail: [wandaaisyah0308@gmail.com](mailto:wandaaisyah0308@gmail.com)

**Rakhmawati<sup>2</sup>**

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel, Surabaya, Indonesia  
e-mail: [rakhmawati@uinsa.ac.id](mailto:rakhmawati@uinsa.ac.id)

**Budi Widjajati<sup>3</sup>**

SMPN 13 Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia  
e-mail: [13dwibudi@gmail.com](mailto:13dwibudi@gmail.com)

**Muhtarom<sup>4</sup>**

Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Ampel, Surabaya, Indonesia  
e-mail: [mmuhtarom@yahoo.com](mailto:mmuhtarom@yahoo.com)

## **Abstract**

The integration of digital media in English language teaching (ELT) has been widely recognized for improving students' motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. However, few studies have examined how students perceive the absence of such media in their classrooms. This study investigated the perceptions of eighth-grade students at SMPN 13 Surabaya regarding the lack of digital media in English language learning. Guided by the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, this quantitative study employed a structured 20-item questionnaire involving 48 participants. Data were analyzed using validity and reliability tests, descriptive statistics, and Pearson correlation in SPSS version 29. The results showed all items were valid and reliable (Cronbach's Alpha: 0.824 for Media Use; 0.956 for Teaching Quality). Students generally viewed their teachers' performance positively ( $M = 3.11$ ) despite the infrequent use of digital media ( $M = 3.00$ ). The correlation between media use and teaching quality was positive but very low and not statistically significant ( $r = 0.168$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), possibly due to the small sample size and teachers' adaptability to conventional methods. These findings highlight that while teacher competence remains central to teaching quality, integrating digital media can further enrich classroom engagement and learning effectiveness.

**Keywords:** *Students' Perspective, Teaching Quality, Digital Media, Quantitative Research, English Language Learning.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The integration of digital media into English language teaching (ELT) has transformed classroom practices from traditional, teacher-centered instruction toward more interactive, engaging, and student-centered learning environments (Gilakjani, 2017; Yunus et al., 2019). Digital media in this context includes

tools such as videos, online quizzes, multimedia presentations, interactive games, and mobile-assisted learning platforms that enhance communication, provide authentic input, and support all four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Chapelle & Jamieson, 2008; Warschauer, 2011). These tools also enable students to learn

at their own pace, revisit lessons independently, and receive immediate feedback, thereby fostering greater motivation and autonomy (Selwyn, 2011).

In the Indonesian context, the Ministry of Education has continuously promoted the integration of such media to improve students' language proficiency and meet 21st-century learning demands (Yuliana, 2020). Numerous studies have confirmed that digital media enhances student motivation, facilitates collaborative learning, and allows for differentiated instruction tailored to individual learner needs (Rahman & Wulandari, 2019; Setyawan et al., 2022). Effective teaching in this setting requires not only delivering content but also engaging students and adapting instruction to their learning styles (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Thus, digital media has become an essential component in maintaining teaching quality and sustaining student engagement in ELT.

Despite these advantages, integrating digital media into English language classrooms in Indonesia remains inconsistent. Many schools still face barriers such as poor infrastructure, unstable internet access, limited devices, insufficient funding, and inadequate teacher training in digital pedagogy (Putri & Santosa, 2021; Widodo, 2018). Importantly, these challenges are not limited to rural or under-resourced areas. Even in urban schools with sufficient facilities, digital media may still be underutilized due to issues like curriculum alignment, time constraints, or teacher preferences (Sari & Pratama, 2021). SMPN 13 Surabaya, an urban public school with access to adequate technological infrastructure, represents such a case. Although facilities are available, English instruction is not always supported by digital media

integration, providing a relevant context to explore how students experience this absence.

Most previous research has focused on the benefits of using digital media in ELT, such as improving comprehension and retention (Ryan & Muhamad, 2024) and fostering creativity and communication (Yunus et al., 2019). However, far fewer studies have examined the reverse condition how students perceive learning English without the presence of digital media. Existing studies in Indonesia often center on rural contexts or schools with resource constraints (Putri, Setyaningsih, & Putra, 2021), leaving a gap in understanding how students in better-equipped environments respond when digital tools are not employed.

This study seeks to address that gap by investigating Grade 8 students' perceptions at SMPN 13 Surabaya regarding the absence of digital media in English learning. Drawing on the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006), this research conceptualizes the absence of digital media as a missing technological component that potentially weakens the synergy between content, pedagogy, and technology. When technology is not integrated, one dimension of TPACK becomes underdeveloped, which may affect teaching innovation, student engagement, and overall learning quality.

Therefore, this study aims to explore to which students perceive the lack of digital media as a barrier to effective English language teaching. By focusing on student perspectives rather than teacher readiness or institutional factors, this study contributes new insights into how learners experience non-digital classrooms and offers implications for

future pedagogical practices and policy decisions in Indonesian education.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital media has significantly transformed how English is taught and learned. Tools such as videos, online quizzes, interactive games, and learning platforms have been shown to enhance language acquisition by providing authentic materials, real-time feedback, and varied learning modalities (Warschauer, 2011). These tools support the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in engaging ways (Chapelle & Jamieson, 2008). Moreover, digital media allows individualized learning students can learn at their own pace, revisit lessons, and strengthen their understanding. Such flexibility not only enhances comprehension but also fosters motivation and learner autonomy. Understanding these benefits is essential to contextualize how the absence of digital media might limit these opportunities in English classrooms.

Teaching quality is closely tied to the strategies and resources teachers employ. High-quality teaching involves more than content delivery; it includes engaging students, responding to diverse learning needs, and fostering an encouraging learning environment (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). In this regard, digital media can enhance teaching quality by diversifying methods and promoting active participation. When digital tools are not incorporated, however, lessons may become more static, potentially reducing students' engagement and perceived instructional effectiveness. Hence, exploring how students experience learning in the absence of digital tools provides a valuable perspective on teaching quality in English language learning.

The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework, developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), provides a useful lens for understanding the role of technology in teaching. It highlights three interrelated forms of teacher knowledge: technological (TK), pedagogical (PK), and content knowledge (CK). Effective technology integration requires a balance of all three components. When digital media is absent, the technological dimension becomes underdeveloped, weakening the synergy of TPACK and potentially reducing innovation and student engagement in classroom practices. Therefore, examining contexts where digital tools are missing offers insight into how the absence of technology influences overall teaching effectiveness.

Despite national efforts to encourage technology use, many Indonesian schools continue to face barriers in integrating digital media effectively. Challenges include limited infrastructure, unstable internet connections, insufficient devices, and a lack of teacher training in digital pedagogy (Putri & Santosa, 2021; Widodo, 2018). Even in urban schools with available infrastructure, these resources are sometimes underutilized or inconsistently applied (Sari & Pratama, 2021). This situation suggests that the issue is not merely technological readiness, but also pedagogical adaptation and institutional support factors that directly affect how students perceive their learning experiences without digital media.

Student perception plays a central role in understanding classroom effectiveness. Davis (1989) noted that learners are more engaged when instructional methods align with their preferences and familiarity. Similarly, Selwyn (2011) found that digital tools

boost motivation and participation, while their absence can make learning feel less interactive and meaningful. Investigating students' perceptions, therefore, provides insight into how the lack of technology influences engagement, satisfaction, and the perceived quality of English teaching.

While much of the existing literature emphasizes the benefits of digital media and the challenges of integration, few studies have explored how students perceive learning English in the absence of such media. This study addresses that gap by examining how junior high school students in Indonesia experience and interpret non-digital classroom environments. By situating this exploration within the TPACK framework, the research contributes a novel understanding of how the absence of digital resources affects teaching quality and engagement, particularly in schools where infrastructure exists but utilization remains limited.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach to examine eighth-grade students' perceptions of the absence of digital media in English language learning at SMPN 13 Surabaya. The research was grounded in the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework developed by Mishra and Koehler (2006), which emphasizes the integration of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge as key components of effective teaching. In this study, however, the absence of digital media provides an opportunity to explore how the lack of technological support may influence teaching quality and student engagement in English classrooms.

The participants of this study consisted of 48 eighth-grade students at SMPN 13 Surabaya. This number

represents approximately one full grade level, making it a practical and contextually relevant sample size for classroom-based quantitative research. Eighth-grade students were chosen because they are developmentally capable of reflecting on their learning experiences while still actively engaged in foundational English language acquisition. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure representation of students with varying academic abilities and exposure to both traditional and limited-digital learning environments. All participants were briefed on the study's objectives, and participation was voluntary. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, and anonymity, were strictly observed throughout the research process.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher based on the TPACK framework and prior studies on technology use and teaching quality. The instrument consisted of 20 statements grouped into four domains: (1) perceived teaching effectiveness, (2) student engagement, (3) ease of understanding lessons, and (4) preference for learning aids. Teaching quality in this context was operationalized through indicators such as clarity of instruction, teacher support, and lesson organization. Each item was rated using a four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).

The questionnaire was originally designed in English and then translated into Bahasa Indonesia to ensure comprehension and cultural relevance. To maintain linguistic accuracy, a back-translation procedure was conducted with assistance from two bilingual experts in English education. Before full administration, a pilot test involving 10 students was conducted to evaluate the

clarity, readability, and reliability of the items. Expert validation was sought from two English language education lecturers and one digital learning specialist to ensure content validity. The internal consistency of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient before proceeding with the main data collection.

Quantitative data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores, frequencies, and standard deviations, were used to summarize students' overall perceptions. Reliability testing using Cronbach's alpha determined the internal consistency of each construct. To examine the relationship between media use and teaching quality, Pearson's correlation analysis was performed. The results were then interpreted through the lens of the TPACK framework, focusing on how the absence of digital media influences pedagogical effectiveness and student engagement in English language learning.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Validity

**Table 4.1** Validity Test Results

| Variable                            | Item range | r-value range | r-table (N=48) | Result    |
|-------------------------------------|------------|---------------|----------------|-----------|
| Perceived Lack of Digital Media (X) | X1–X10     | 0.35 – 0.82   | 0.284          | All valid |
| Teaching Quality (Y)                | Y1–Y10     | 0.53 – 0.91   | 0.284          | All valid |

*Note. Data processed using SPSS version 29.*

The validity of the research instrument was examined using corrected item-total correlations in SPSS version 29. With 48 respondents, the critical r-table value at a 5% significance

level was 0.284. All ten items measuring Perceived Lack of Digital Media (Variable X) and all ten items measuring Teaching Quality (Variable Y) exceeded this threshold, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.35 to 0.91. These results indicate that all items were valid and suitable for further analysis. This finding is consistent with the general criterion that an item is valid if its correlation coefficient exceeds the r-table value (Sugiyono, 2013), and aligns with prior educational studies emphasizing the importance of instrument validation (Rahmawati, 2019; Astuti, 2021).

### 4.2 Reliability

**Table 4.2** Reliability Test Results

| Variable                            | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha | Result   |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|------------------|----------|
| Perceived Lack of Digital Media (X) | 10              | 0.824            | Reliable |
| Teaching Quality (Y)                | 10              | 0.956            | Reliable |

*Note. Reliability is considered acceptable if  $\alpha > 0.70$  (Nunnally, 1978; Ghazali, 2016).*

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha to determine internal consistency. The reliability coefficients were 0.824 for Perceived Lack of Digital Media (X) and 0.956 for Teaching Quality (Y). Both exceed the 0.70 threshold commonly accepted for social science research (Nunnally, 1978; Ghazali, 2016), indicating strong internal consistency. These results confirm that the instrument is reliable for measuring both constructs.

### 4.3 Descriptive Statistics

**Table 4.3** Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Lack of Digital Media (X)

| Item | Mean | SD    | Interpretation |
|------|------|-------|----------------|
| X1   | 2.79 | 0.824 | Low            |
| X2   | 3.21 | 0.617 | Moderate       |
| X3   | 3.38 | 0.570 | Moderate       |
| X4   | 2.85 | 0.772 | Low            |
| X5   | 3.29 | 0.544 | Moderate       |
| X6   | 3.25 | 0.565 | Moderate       |
| X7   | 2.54 | 0.874 | Low            |
| X8   | 3.21 | 0.651 | Moderate       |
| X9   | 3.27 | 0.574 | Moderate       |
| X10  | 3.25 | 0.526 | Moderate       |

*\*Interpretation based on 4-point Likert scale: 1.00–2.49 = Low, 2.50–3.24 = Moderate, 3.25–4.00 = High.*

Descriptive statistics showed that students' perceptions of digital media use ranged from low to moderate, with mean scores between 2.54 and 3.38. The lowest mean ( $M = 2.54$ ) indicated that teachers rarely integrated digital media into English lessons, while the highest mean ( $M = 3.38$ ) reflected students' preference for visual learning aids such as videos and animations. Overall, students recognized the potential of digital tools but reported that their classroom use was inconsistent and infrequent.

Meanwhile, Teaching Quality was rated consistently high, with mean scores ranging from 3.06 to 3.25. Students perceived teachers as clear in their explanations (highest mean = 3.25) and attentive to learning needs, though some noted limited variety in instructional strategies. Despite minimal technology use, the overall mean (3.11) suggests that students viewed teaching quality positively, emphasizing strong pedagogical competence.

**Table 4.4** Descriptive Statistics of Teaching Quality (Y)

| Item | Mean | SD    | Interpretation |
|------|------|-------|----------------|
| Y1   | 3.25 | 0.565 | High           |
| Y2   | 3.15 | 0.505 | High           |

|     |      |       |      |
|-----|------|-------|------|
| Y3  | 3.06 | 0.561 | High |
| Y4  | 3.08 | 0.577 | High |
| Y5  | 3.17 | 0.429 | High |
| Y6  | 3.08 | 0.577 | High |
| Y7  | 3.10 | 0.472 | High |
| Y8  | 3.13 | 0.531 | High |
| Y9  | 3.06 | 0.633 | High |
| Y10 | 3.06 | 0.598 | High |

*\*Interpretation based on 4-point Likert scale: 1.00–2.49 = Low, 2.50–3.24 = Moderate, 3.25–4.00 = High.*

### 4.4 Correlation Analysis

**Table 4.5** Correlation between Perceived Lack of Digital Media and Teaching Quality

| Variables                                                  | r     | Sig. (1-tailed) |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Perceived Lack of Digital Media (X) – Teaching Quality (Y) | 0.168 | 0.127           |

*Note.  $p > 0.05$  indicates no significant correlation.*

The Pearson correlation analysis showed a positive but non-significant relationship between Perceived Lack of Digital Media and Teaching Quality ( $r = 0.168$ ,  $p = 0.127$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This indicates that while the presence or absence of digital media shows a weak relationship with teaching quality, it is not statistically significant. In other words, students' perceptions of teaching quality were not substantially influenced by the level of digital media integration.

### 4.5 Discussion

The study found that the absence or limited use of digital media in English classrooms did not significantly influence students' perceptions of teaching quality. Despite minimal exposure to digital tools, students consistently rated their teachers highly, highlighting clear explanations, supportive attitudes, and effective classroom management as the main

strengths. This suggests that teaching quality in SMPN 13 Surabaya depends more on pedagogical competence than on technological integration.

These findings align with the TPACK framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006), which emphasizes that effective teaching arises from the interplay of technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge. In this study, the technological element was underrepresented, yet the pedagogical and content components remained strong enough to sustain positive learning outcomes. This reflects that while technology can enhance instruction, it cannot replace sound teaching practices or teacher student interaction.

The results also echo previous research. Rahmawati (2019) found that teacher competence can sustain learning outcomes even in low-technology settings, while Astuti (2021) emphasized that technology's impact on learning is maximized only when paired with effective pedagogy. Similarly, this study demonstrates that technology serves as a supporting tool, not the core determinant of teaching quality.

From a practical perspective, these findings imply that schools and teachers should aim for balanced integration maintaining strong pedagogical foundations while gradually incorporating digital tools to enhance engagement and accommodate diverse learning preferences. Even in resource-limited environments, teachers can still achieve high teaching quality by focusing on interactive, student-centered approaches supported by appropriate technological elements when available.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study explored Grade 8 students' perceptions of the limited use of digital media in English language learning at SMPN 13 Surabaya. Findings

showed that while digital tools such as videos and animations were used infrequently, students still perceived their teachers' overall instructional quality positively. The questionnaire was found to be valid and reliable, confirming the accuracy and consistency of the data.

Descriptive results revealed that students preferred visual and interactive materials, yet they valued their teachers' clear explanations, responsiveness, and engaging classroom interaction even more. The correlation analysis indicated a positive but non-significant relationship between media use and teaching quality ( $r = 0.168$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ), suggesting that strong pedagogy can sustain effective teaching even when technology use is limited. This supports the TPACK framework, which emphasizes that effective teaching arises from a balanced combination of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge. In this context, robust pedagogical competence compensated for the limited technological integration.

This study contributes to the growing literature by shifting attention from technology adoption to contexts where media use remains inconsistent. It highlights that while good teaching can stand on its own, consistent and meaningful use of digital tools can further enrich learning experiences.

From a practical standpoint:

1. Teachers should strengthen pedagogical practices while gradually integrating digital tools that align with curriculum goals and student interests.
2. Schools need to provide sufficient resources and encourage creative, consistent use of technology in classrooms.
3. Policymakers should support professional development that

combines technical proficiency with pedagogical innovation.

Future research could compare schools across urban and rural contexts, explore variables such as motivation or achievement, or use mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights. Such work can further clarify how varying levels of digital media use shape English language teaching quality in Indonesia and beyond.

## REFERENCES

- Ang, W. S., & Yunus, M. M. (2021). A systematic review of using technology in learning English language. *International Journal of Academic Research in Progressive Education and Development*, 10(1), 470–484.
- Chapelle, C. A., & Jamieson, J. (2008). *Tips for teaching with CALL: Practical approaches to computer-assisted language learning*. New York: Pearson Longman.
- Chien, Y.-T., Chang, Y.-H., & Chang, C.-Y. (2016). Do we click in the right way? A meta-analytic review of clicker-integrated instruction. *Educational Research Review*, 17, 18–37.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2015.10.003>
- Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319–340.  
<https://doi.org/10.2307/249008>
- Ertmer, P. A. (1999). Addressing first- and second-order barriers to change: Strategies for technology integration. *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 47(4), 47–61.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02299597>
- Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research*, 74(1), 59–109.  
<https://doi.org/10.3102/00346543074001059>
- Mishra, P., & Koehler, M. J. (2006). Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge: A framework for teacher knowledge. *Teachers College Record*, 108(6), 1017–1054.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9620.2006.00684>
- Pourhossein Gilakjani, A. (2017). A review of the literature on the integration of technology into the learning and teaching of English language skills. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(5), 95–106. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v7n5p95>
- Putri, Y. S., Setyaningsih, E., & Putra, K. A. (2021). Investigating urban and rural students' practice and challenges in distance learning. *Proceeding AISELT (ELT in a Globalized World: The Boundaries and Beyond)*, 6(1), 224–233. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.30870/aiselt.v6i1.12512>
- Rahman Hz, B. I., & Daulay, E. (2021). Online Learning Media: English Education Department Students' Perspective. *Metathesis: Journal of English Language, Literature, and Teaching*, 5(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.31002/metathesis.v5i1.3604>
- Rochmawati, D. (2020). The nursing students' need of learning media. *Jurnal BASIS*, (Vol/No), pages. Retrieved from

- <https://ejournal.upbatam.ac.id/index.php/basis/article/view/1816>
- Sari, R. P., & Pratama, H. (2021). Challenges in integrating digital media in English classrooms: Teachers' and students' perspectives. *Journal of English Language Teaching and Research*, 6(2), 145–156. <https://doi.org/10.1234/jeltr.v6i2.2021>
- Siringoringo, R. G., & Alfaridzi, M. Y. (2024). Pengaruh Integrasi Teknologi Pembelajaran terhadap Efektivitas dan Transformasi Paradigma Pendidikan Era Digital. *Jurnal Yudistira: Publikasi Riset Ilmu Pendidikan dan Bahasa*, 2(3), pp. 66–76. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.61132/yudistira.v2i3.854>
- Sukmawati, R. (2020). Analisis kesiapan mahasiswa menjadi calon guru profesional berdasarkan standar kompetensi pendidik. *Jurnal Analisa*, 5(1), pp. 95-102. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.15575/ja.v5i1.4789>
- Warschauer, M. (2011). Learning in the cloud: How (and why) to transform schools with digital media. *Language Learning & Technology*, 15(2), 11–36. <http://dx.doi.org/10.125/44213>
- Wulandari, A. R., Masturi, & Fakhriyah, F. F. (2021). Pengaruh media pembelajaran berbasis YouTube terhadap hasil belajar IPA siswa di sekolah dasar. *EdukAtif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan*, 3(6), pp. 3779–3785. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.31004/edukatif.v3i6.1251>
- Wulandari, M. (2019). Improving EFL Learners' Speaking Proficiency through Instagram Vlog. *A Journal on Language and Language Teaching*, 22(1), 111–125. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.24071/llt.2019.220111>
- Yuliana, Y. (2020). Internet-based learning media in the digital era of EFL learning in English Education Master Program. *Journal of English Educational Study (JEES)*. Retrieved from <https://jurnal.stkipppersada.ac.id/jurnal/index.php/JEES/article/view/1491>

