

Exploring the Tenth Grade Students' Attitudes toward the Use of Digital Technology in Learning English at SMA Negeri 16 Palembang

A Thesis by

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LATTER OF STATEMENT

Saya menyatakan dengan sebenar-benarnya bahwa seluruh data, informasi, interpretasi serta pernyataan dalam pembahasan dan kesimpulan yang disajikan dalam karya ilmiah ini, kecuali yang disebutkan sumbernya adalah merupakan hasil pengamatan, penelitian, pengelolaan, serta pemikiran Saya dengan pengarahan dari pembimbing yang ditetapkan.

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ABSTRACT

This research aimed to explore tenth-grade students' attitudes toward the use of digital technology in learning English at SMA Negeri 16 Palembang, identify the most positively perceived Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) construct, and examine whether there was a significant difference in students' attitudes toward digital technology usage based on gender. This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design. The sample consisted of 176 tenth-grade students selected through cluster random sampling. The data were collected using a closed-ended questionnaire self-developed by the researcher, consisting of 36 valid items. This questionnaire measured 5 constructs of TAM proposed by Davis (1989). The data were analyzed using mean score analysis, frequency analysis, and the Mann-Whitney U Test. The findings revealed that students generally had positive attitudes toward the use of digital technology in learning English, with 51.14% categorized as very positive and 44.32% as positive. In addition, Perceived Usefulness (PU) was identified as the most positively perceived TAM construct. Furthermore, the results of the Mann-Whitney U-test indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female students' attitudes toward the use of digital technology in learning English. The findings indicate that digital technology usage is positively accepted and has become an important part of students' English learning activities.

Keywords: *Students' Attitudes, Digital Technology, English Learning, Technology Acceptance Model (TAM).*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, the limitations of the problem, the formulation of the problem, the objectives of the study, and the significance of the study.

1.1 Background of Study

The rapid advancement of digital technology in the 21st century continues to transform education into a system driven by information, innovation, and global skills (Anwar, 2024). This transformation highlights the increasing importance of adapting to technological changes in the field of education. English as the global lingua franca enables students to access a variety of digital learning resources, the majority of which will be available in that language (Narendran, 2025). In this case, English is not only used as a subject in school but also as a tool to support students in accessing global information. This indicates that mastering English is closely related to students' willingness to face global challenges in the future.

In ELT contexts, digital technology can function as learning media, learning tools, and learning resources. The use of online learning platforms, educational videos, language-learning applications, online dictionaries, translation tools, and internet-based materials provides students with greater flexibility in accessing learning resources (Getenet, 2024). These technologies help students learn more independently, manage their learning more effectively, and interact with learning materials in more

engaging ways (Ningrum, 2025). In addition, students can access authentic English resources such as online articles, podcasts, educational videos, and other digital content that support contextual language learning (Syafei, 2024). As a result, digital technology is not only a supporting tool but also an integral part of modern English language learning.

The integration of digital technology into English language learning provides various benefits for both the learning process and learning outcomes. In terms of the learning process, digital technology encourages active participation, increases engagement, supports learner autonomy, and promotes independent learning. Learning through digital technology enables students to take greater control of their own learning and increases their autonomy (Zhuzeyev et al., 2025). Moreover, interactive and personalized learning experiences contribute to higher student motivation (Rahmanda, 2024), while digital applications increase engagement and encourage more active participation in learning activities (Dewi, 2025). These findings indicate that technology can create a more dynamic and student-centered learning environment.

In terms of learning outcomes, previous research by Behroozian and Sadeghoghli (2017) found that digital technology contributes positively to students' academic achievement and language development. The use of digital technological tools can improve students' reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills (Sakkir et al., 2025). Similarly, Octaberlina (2023) found that audio and video resources can enhance students' speaking and listening abilities. These multimedia resources help students understand learning materials more clearly and make learning more

meaningful. Furthermore, digital technology contributes to higher academic performance and better learning outcomes throughout the learning process (Piro, 2025). Therefore, digital technology plays an important role in supporting effective learning processes and successful learning outcomes.

Despite these benefits, the use of digital technology also presents several challenges. Excessive use of technology may create a dependency that disrupts learning activities (Stepani, 2023). Students who experience technology dependency often have difficulty controlling their use of digital devices and tend to prioritize digital activities over academic responsibilities (Wei et al., 2025). Consequently, they may delay completing assignments, experience difficulties managing study time, and become less focused on learning tasks (Tulubas, 2023). Furthermore, technology can increase distractions through notifications, social media, and other digital entertainment, which may reduce concentration during learning activities (Le et al., 2025). In some cases, excessive technology use may even lead to addiction and lower academic performance (Piro, 2025). These challenges indicate that digital technology does not always contribute to positive outcomes and may influence students' experiences during the learning process.

The benefits and challenges associated with digital technology can influence students' attitudes toward its use in learning. Students' experiences with technology may shape how they think, feel, and behave when using digital technology in educational contexts. Positive experiences may encourage favorable attitudes, whereas negative experiences may result in less positive perceptions. According to

Svenningsson et al. (2022), students' attitudes toward technology consist of interconnected cognitive, affective, and behavioral components. This suggests that students' evaluations of digital technology are not only related to knowledge and understanding but also involve emotions, interests, and behavioral tendencies. Therefore, understanding students' attitudes is important because attitudes may influence how students respond to and utilize digital technology in learning activities.

To better understand students' attitudes toward digital technology, a theoretical framework is needed. One of the most widely used frameworks is the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) proposed by Davis (1989). TAM explains that technology acceptance is influenced by users' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. These perceptions subsequently influence attitudes, intentions, and actual technology use (Al-Emran et al., 2018). In educational contexts, TAM helps explain how students evaluate digital technologies and how these evaluations affect their attitudes and learning behavior (Wu, 2023). Therefore, TAM is considered an appropriate framework for examining students' attitudes toward the use of digital technology in English language learning.

Many previous studies have investigated students' attitudes toward the use of digital technology in English language teaching (ELT) contexts. Behroozian and Sadeghoghli (2017) found that Iranian ESL students generally demonstrated positive attitudes toward the use of technology in second language learning because it enhanced their understanding of learning materials, increased engagement, and provided greater flexibility in accessing learning resources. Similarly, Kartika et al. (2024) reported that

Indonesian secondary school students generally had positive perceptions toward mobile technology in English language learning. Their findings revealed that Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) significantly influenced students' acceptance of digital technology based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). Likewise, Winarti and Putro (2024) found that students demonstrated positive attitudes toward the use of digital media in English language learning because it enhanced learning motivation, facilitated access to learning resources and promoted independent learning despite several challenges related to digital literacy and technology access. Furthermore, Moeketsi and Lata (2025) reported that students generally exhibited positive attitudes toward educational technology. Their study also highlighted that students' attitudes were influenced by several factors, including access to technology, digital literacy, teacher support, and perceived usefulness, suggesting that these factors played an important role in technology acceptance.

Despite the findings of previous studies, several differences distinguish the present study from earlier research. First, most previous studies employed qualitative or mixed-methods approaches, whereas the present study adopts a quantitative research design to provide measurable evidence of students' attitudes toward digital technology. Second, previous studies generally focused on students' attitudes without specifically examining whether attitudes differ based on gender, while this study investigates gender differences using statistical analysis. Third, several previous studies explored students' attitudes toward educational technology in general, whereas this study specifically focuses on the use of digital technology in English language learning.

Finally, previous studies were conducted in different educational contexts and countries; therefore, this study provides evidence from the tenth-grade students at an Indonesian senior high school, namely SMA Negeri 16 Palembang.

Based on interviews with students at SMA Negeri 16 Palembang, digital technology was already part of the learning process, including in English classes. Students reported that teachers used devices such as computer labs, smartphones, and projectors to support learning. They also utilized digital resources such as online dictionaries, translation applications, and educational videos on YouTube. However, some students reported that digital technology was not always used optimally because it was sometimes used for non-academic purposes. In addition, differences in digital skills among students and limited internet access occasionally hindered the learning process. The findings from the interviews indicated the need for further investigation into students' attitudes toward the use of digital technology in English language learning, particularly within the local context of SMA Negeri 16 Palembang. Therefore, this study aimed to explore students' attitudes toward the use of digital technology in English language learning.

From the explanation above, this research aimed to explore student attitudes toward the use of digital technology in English language learning, specifically “Exploring the Tenth Grade Students’ Attitudes towards the Use of Digital Technology in Learning English at SMA Negeri 16 Palembang.” Therefore, this research was expected to provide a deeper understanding of the tenth-grade students' attitudes toward using digital technology in learning English.

1.2 The Problem of the Research

1.2.1. The Limitation of the Research

This research was limited to investigating students' attitudes toward the use of digital technology in English language learning. It involved examining students' overall attitudes toward digital technology in learning English, identified which TAM constructs aligned with specific students, and analyzing gender differences in their attitudes.

1.2.2. The Formulation of the Research

Based on the limitations and the background, the main problems of the study were stated as follows:

- 1) What was the overall attitude of the tenth-grade students toward digital technology in learning English?
- 2) Which Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) construct was perceived most positively by the tenth-grade students in relation to their attitude toward digital technology in learning English?
- 3) Were there any significant differences in students' attitudes toward digital technology in learning English based on gender?

1.3 The Objectives of the Research

Based on the research problems of the study above, the objectives of the study were stated as follows:

- 1) To describe the overall attitude profile of the tenth-grade students toward digital technology in learning English.
- 2) To identify which TAM construct is perceived most positively by the tenth grade students attitude toward digital technology in learning English.
- 3) To examine a significant difference in students' attitudes toward digital technology in learning English based on gender.

1.4 The Significance of the Research

The results of the study hopefully contribute positive and valuable inputs or significance for the following groups:

a) For Students

For students, this study is expected to help increase awareness and understanding of the importance of digital technology in learning, enabling students to utilize digital technology more optimally while avoiding ineffective or excessive use.

b) For Teachers

This study provides teachers with valuable insights into the fact that students possess varying attitudes toward the use of digital technology. It highlights that students do not always automatically accept or embrace digital tools in the classroom. By

recognizing these diverse perspectives, teachers are better equipped to assist students and create a more conducive learning atmosphere.

c) For Researcher

This study hopefully helps the researcher herself to gain experience in writing thesis and conducting scientific research, and researcher can better understand current student attitudes in using technology in learning, what influences it, and whether there are differences in use between genders.

d) For Other Researchers

In conducting this research, this research is expected to help future researchers further investigate students' attitudes toward the use of technology in other contexts

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