



DEVELOPING VOCABULARY AND DIGITAL LITERACY IN ENGLISH LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines digital literacy in the EFL classroom and compares it with traditional literacy in vocabulary learning. While traditional literacy focuses on print-based reading and writing, digital literacy emphasizes using technology to communicate, create, and evaluate information.

Introduction. Digital literacy is transforming how students learn vocabulary in English education. Instead of relying only on reading or memorization, learners today benefit from interactive and personalized digital tools that make vocabulary growth more engaging. For teachers, this shift offers new opportunities to design innovative classroom practices that connect with digital-native students. This study explores the core ideas of digital literacy and its role in vocabulary development, focusing on tools such as word walls and interactive platforms. It also provides practical strategies for integrating technology into lessons to create a more dynamic learning environment. At the same time, the growing number of studies on digital literacy highlights both its importance and the challenge of navigating such a vast field. By reviewing existing research, the study seeks to offer clear insights and practical approaches for effective vocabulary teaching in the digital age.

The examination of Key Components of Digital Literacy in EFL classroom. Digital literacy in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom refers to students' ability to use digital technologies to communicate, collaborate, create, and critically evaluate information in English. It plays a vital role in enhancing language learning by offering authentic opportunities for communication and engagement with multimedia resources (Hague & Payton, 2010). Teachers can integrate digital literacy into lessons through project-based learning, online discussions, multimedia presentations, and virtual simulations, which make the learning process more interactive and meaningful (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007). A key component of digital literacy in EFL settings is the ability to communicate effectively via platforms such as email, messaging applications, and video conferencing, while also observing proper online etiquette. Media literacy, as part of digital literacy, enables learners to engage with media-rich environments, participate in public discourse, and advocate for social change (Kellner & Share, 2007). Moreover, developing digital communication skills strengthens students' proficiency in applying English in real-life online contexts. Digital literacy also includes creative practices such as producing multimedia projects and requires awareness of ethical issues like copyright, digital rights, and online safety (Warschauer, 2016). Additionally, it involves understanding how digital technologies both shape and reflect cultural and social contexts (Hargittai, 2010), preparing students for responsible global digital citizenship.

Digital Literacy vs. Traditional Literacy in teaching vocabulary and comparing effectiveness of using both traditional and non-traditional methods. Digital literacy is defined as the ability to access, interpret, evaluate, and produce information through digital technologies (Hague & Payton, 2010). Traditional literacy refers to the capacity to read, write, and comprehend printed text, typically found in books, newspapers, and magazines. Traditional literacy centers on print-based reading and writing skills; digital literacy extends to a broader range of media such as websites, social networks, multimedia materials, and online databases. It involves skills such as navigating digital platforms, conducting online research, assessing information for reliability, and communicating effectively through digital tools. Traditional literacy depends on physical access to printed resources, which may be limited by cost, availability, or location. Digital literacy overcomes many of these barriers because online information can be accessed from almost any place with an internet connection (Hargittai, 2010). Traditional literacy is usually taught in schools and libraries through textbooks and printed resources. Digital literacy can be developed both in academic environments and beyond, using online platforms, interactive tutorials, or educational apps (Livingstone & Helsper, 2007). Traditional literacy remains essential, yet digital literacy has become increasingly significant in modern society. The expansion of digital technologies has created new opportunities for acquiring and sharing knowledge, but it has also introduced challenges such as excessive information, misinformation, and issues of privacy (Warschauer, 2016). Both literacies are indispensable in the contemporary world. Traditional literacy provides the foundation for understanding written text, and digital literacy prepares individuals to engage critically with vast amounts of digital information, enabling success in the digital era. Non-traditional teaching approaches, such as technology-enhanced learning, tend to be more engaging for learners because they include interactive and multimedia features (Prensky, 2001). These approaches are particularly attractive to digital-native students who are accustomed to using technology in daily activities. Research indicates that non-traditional methods can match or even surpass traditional approaches in promoting vocabulary retention (Hulstijn, 2001). Their interactive and multisensory nature strengthens learning processes and supports long-term recall of vocabulary. Both traditional and non-traditional approaches play important roles in vocabulary instruction: traditional methods establish a strong base, and non-traditional methods enhance motivation, retention, and application of vocabulary in real-life contexts.

Conclusion. Digital literacy is reshaping vocabulary learning in English education by moving beyond rote memorization toward interactive and engaging experiences. For learners of English as a second language, digital tools provide personalized opportunities to expand vocabulary effectively. This study examines how technology compares with traditional methods, reviewing useful platforms, modern techniques, and their successful outcomes. It also highlights practical guidelines for teachers and learners on applying digital tools in the classroom. By analyzing literature and online resources, the research shows that digital literacy not only enhances vocabulary growth but also creates more dynamic and creative language-learning experiences.

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