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Teachers' and Students' Perceptions towards Digital Humanities in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Teaching and Learning

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ABSTRACT

Education is starting to move from the conventional to the digital world. One form of this change is the presence of DH in the world of education. Digital humanities can provide many benefits, especially in English teaching and learning. This study aims to investigate teachers' and students' perceptions towards digital humanities in the EFL classes. This study was conducted with 103 teachers and students from various schools and universities in Indonesia. In a quantitative phase, a survey questionnaire was distributed to collect the data. The 63-question questionnaire items are divided into 6 parts: demographics, experiential learning, multimodal communication, digital ethics & critical inquiry, collaborative learning, and AI for language teaching and learning. Moreover, a semi-structured interview was obtained to get details about digital tools and technologies implementation in the EFL teaching and learning. Finally, the study revealed that the use of digital humanities positively impacts EFL teaching and learning.

Keywords: Digital Humanities (DH), Teachers and Students Perceptions, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), EFL Teaching and Learning;

INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of digital tools and technology has changed the advancement in various sectors. One form of evaluation in the education sector is the existence of Digital Humanities (DH). Digital Humanities combines scientific methods with humanistic reflection, fostering collaborative, transdisciplinary, and computationally-engaged research, teaching, and publishing (Menses & Furuta, 2018). Digital humanities (DH) combine traditional humanities with digital technologies, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration and enhancing the value and practice of humanities in a digital world (Stampa et al., 2020). Similarly, the concept of analyzing the conception, action, involvement in using digital media, including teaching, writing, and investigation by using technology as well known as Digital Humanities (Kumaran

et al., 2023). From its definition, Digital Humanities can be defined as the digital tools and technology integration to support teaching, learning, and research in the humanities field. With these benefits in mind, Digital Humanities can be seen as a potential media to enhance the development of EFL teaching and learning.

The integration of digital humanities in the EFL classroom provides many opportunities to enhance teaching and learning language. The digital humanities allow students to explore many cultures and information across-country without limitations. They can just easily access all the information through the internet, only by using their mobile phone or laptops. By facilitating the students to have interaction with people across cultures, it will improve their cognitive and communication skills. Intercultural communication in language learning contributes to the interiorization of new knowledge, social activity, creativity, and mobility of students, increasing motivation and effectiveness in a multicultural environment (Orekhova et al., 2021). The digital platform also facilitates students to work online collaboratively by joining or creating an open discussion through an online community. These online communities can be in the form of online writing workshops, virtual book clubs, or collaborative language learning programs. Establishing a virtual language community can help learners bond, develop trust, feel comfortable, share information, and set goals together, benefiting both students and instructors (Lomicka et al., 2020).

Different scholars reported similar findings on digital humanities in teaching and learning. The previous study showed that the application of DH had a positive impact in teaching and learning. The previous study by Brohus et al. (2022) examined the digital tools usage in Problem-Based Learning (PBL) programmes within life science education. The result showed that digital tools offer a new and alternative means to implement PBL-based university teaching. Digital tools facilitate sharing media, including recorded lectures, notes, information, charts, and guides. Similarly, Yao Ping-Peng et al. (2023) investigated how mobile learning's perceived ease of use and students' inherent curiosity towards new technologies influence their continued use of m-learning platforms. The findings revealed that perceived usefulness has a positive impact on perceived ease of use, as well as on students' attitudes towards using m-learning. Additionally, a significant positive relationship exists between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, positive attitudes, and the overall intention to continuously use m-learning.

In a similar vein, Nunvarova et al., (2023) seek students' view on digital storytelling and their preferences for teaching methods. The result revealed that the students' perceived digital storytelling as a motivational tool and a method to support their learning. Another

research by Ozer Sandal., (2023) investigates the effects of digital storytelling games supported with reciprocal activities related to reading comprehension, reading motivation, and reading anxiety for science texts. The study showed that the digital games supported by reciprocal activities¹⁹ had a positive impact on the readers' reading comprehension performance and reading motivation and reduced reading anxiety for science texts. In light of how digital humanities show positively impacted and enhanced teaching and learning processes.

This study aims to fill the gaps to investigate the teachers' and students' point of view on the implementation of digital humanities in EFL teaching and learning. The present research will specifically focus on how DH as a teaching and learning media can support experiential learning, multimodal communication, digital ethics & critical inquiry, collaborative learning, and the use of AI in EFL Classroom. In the end, the study aims to investigate the perceptions²⁶ of teachers' and students' in digital humanities implementation to enhance EFL teaching and learning.

METHOD

The researcher used a mixed-method study. This study aims to study the Teachers' and Students' Perceptions²⁰ towards Digital Humanities in English Foreign Language (EFL) Teaching and Learning. The questionnaire was adapted from Hermawati et al. (2014),¹² Lukitasari et al. (2022), Hermawati et al. (2024), Kwiatkowska et al. (2022), and Shamsuddinova et al. (2024). The digital humanities questionnaire consists of 63 question items: 6 background items and 57 Likert scale items administered to all participants. The data⁹ collected through the questionnaire was to obtain a detailed point of view of Students and Teachers to Digital Humanities (DH). Moreover, semi-structured interviews with 3 students and 1 teacher were conducted to find more on Experiential Learning, Multimodal Communication, Digital Ethics and Critical Inquiry, etc.

This study was conducted at¹⁵ the English Education study program in various Universities and Schools in Indonesia. The reason for choosing the participants from this study program is because English education study programs offer skills and components of English, pedagogical, and micro-teaching. The teacher participant in this study is an English teacher in primary school in Indonesia. To validate the instrument, a pilot study was conducted involving 20 students of English Education at Universitas Brawijaya.

Percentage Range	Interpretation
3.68 - 5.00	High degree of digital humanities usage
2.34 - 3.67	Moderate degree of digital humanities usage
1.00 - 2.33	Low degree of digital humanities usage

RESULT

Experiential Learning in the EFL Classes

Table 2. Experiential Learning

No.	Question Items	Mean	Level
1.1	I can publish various English digital content, such as videos, files, articles, and blogs/websites articles on various online media platforms.	3,42	Moderate
1.2	I can host online discussion by using English via zoom or Google meet, organize and give permission to participants to enter and leave the room	3,37	Moderate
1.3	I can host, moderate, and mute all participants to run online discussions by using English smoothly via zoom or Google Meet.	3,16	Moderate
1.4	I can choose the appropriate keywords when searching English learning materials on google	3,56	Moderate
1.5	I can find the appropriate and safe English learning materials on google	3,53	Moderate
1.6	I can search and access data, information, and content on digital media which use English language	3,63	Moderate
1.7	I can store data, information, and content in digital media which use English language	3,63	Moderate
1.8	I can avoid appearing "ads spam" (pop up) when using the google search by using English language	3,07	Moderate
1.9	I can do a survey using Google forms which uses English language	3,68	High
1.10	I can create "links" to share English digital content.	3,63	Moderate
1.11	I can rename the "title/link name" I created by using	3,57	Moderate

English language			
1.12	I can share learning materials and articles on social media like Whatsapp and other digital platforms to support online classes which use English language.	3,65	Moderate
1.13	I can create suitable hashtags in social media captions according to the purpose of the uploaded content by using English language	3,56	Moderate
Total		3,5	Moderate

Based on the quantitative data from **Table 2. Experiential Learning**, it reveals that the experiential learning had a mean score of 3.5. This showed that the participants had a moderate level of experiential learning of using digital humanities in the EFL classes. The majority of the participants are able to use many types of digital tools and technology as a daily use in supporting their English teaching and learning such as for publishing their own digital content, searching and storing inspiring learning materials and media from various sources, creating suitable hashtags, and moderating and operating the English online meeting smoothly. This digital tool mastery will be very beneficial for teachers and students. Digital tools can enhance student soft skills mastery by improving enjoyment, motivation, satisfaction, engagement, and participation in teaching and learning sessions (Smwati et al., 2022). In the same vein, social media can increase student engagement, build professional and peer networks, and develop their social media skills in the classroom (Dragseth, 2020). However, the participants haven't mastered some digital applications they don't use as daily support. So, they need more practice in using some applications in the EFL teaching and learning.

The differentiation of capacity, preference, and frequency of each student in using digital tools and technology has been mentioned by the participants in the interview session. The participants stated that:

“I can and have published video content, such as videos of me teaching which I later uploaded to various media platforms such as Blog, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube. I usually publish 3-4 videos per year for voluntary teaching and being a part-time English teacher”

“ I understand how to publish content on online media platforms, but for some media, I am still not familiar with the settings so I need help from friends”

It can be seen that the frequency and the needs of using digital tools and technology influences participants' ability. The more they need to use social media, the more skills they have. Time spent on tools positively influences performance, with increased use in learners with high critical thinking (Collazo et al., 2015).

Multimodal Communication

Table 3. Multimodal Communication

No.	Question Items	Mean	Level
2.1	I participate in English online discussion forums by providing encouraging comments on classmates' work and the information shared	3,06	Moderate
2.2	I respond to discussions by actively providing feedback in online discussion forums by using English language	2,95	Moderate
2.3	I write responses to assignments in good English through online discussion forums	3,14	Moderate
3.1	I use presentation software (MS PowerPoint, storyline, video and the like) to do assignments and supporting lectures by using English language	3,68	High
3.2	I use writing software (MS words and the like) to do assignments and supporting lectures which use English language	3,73	High
3.3	I read important information from digital contents (online newspapers, research publications, blogs or videos) which use English language	3,46	Moderate
3.4	I know how to use cell phones and laptops in order to read English e-books, journals or news portals.	3,71	High
3.5	I am able to find digital content from various sources (Example: YouTube, google/Mozilla, research gate, sage, etc.) which use English language	3,75	High
3.6	I look for all the lecture materials I need trough contents on the Internet which use English language	3,48	Moderate
3.7	I use games and music applications which use English in my spare time.	3,46	Moderate

Total	3,46	Moderate
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Based on **Table 3. Multimodal Communication** showed that the mean score of the participants' communication skills is 3,6. This showed that the participants had a moderate degree in using digital tools and technologies as a multimodal communication. Based on the information above, it can be seen that participants use English digital platforms and other applications as a source of information and as a tool to support their teaching and learning activities. They usually use presentation and writing software to do assignments and supporting lectures. Then, they also search digital content and information from various sources by using their mobile phones and laptops. All this convenience is very helpful to support the English teaching and learning activities. It is also supported by Alkhalaf (2023) stated that social media supports EFL teaching by facilitating idea sharing, communication, collaboration, and sharing of learning materials. Similarly, integrating social media in higher education classrooms enhances learning by increasing collaboration, active student participation, and collaborative learning, improving performance and satisfaction (Lahuerta-Otero et al., 2019).

Besides, from the interview results, it reveals that the use of digital media affects students' confidence in commenting on the material being learnt. One of the participants stated that:

“I am quite active in commenting on my friend's assignments, but sometimes I hesitate and am afraid that my words will offend my friends”

It turns out that by doing assignments online, students pay more attention to speech in commenting on their friends' assignments. Politeness in communication helps build a good relationship, social interaction, and comfortable communication between teacher and students, avoiding conflict (Ginting et al., 2023). Additionally, effective communication strategies and politeness factors can build harmonious relationships during online learning, making formal teaching and learning sessions more appealing to students (Mashudi, 2022).

Digital Ethics and Digital Inquiry

Table 4. Digital Ethics & Critical Inquiry

No.	Question Items	Mean	Level
4.1	I can communicate well with the English teacher by using message via WhatsApp by using English language	3,43	Moderate
4.2	I always maintain the procedure for speaking to the teacher when the online video conference classes are running by using English language	3,49	Moderate
4.3	I always read the privacy statement (rights and obligations) before using English online learning platforms.	2,96	Moderate
4.4	I understand my rights and obligations when using Google Classroom or other learning platforms which use English language	3,37	Moderate
4.5	I always filter data, information, and content which use English language according to what I need	3,48	Moderate
4.6	In the EFL classroom, I do not share information containing hate speech, hoaxes, and slander	3,62	Moderate
4.7	I adjust my English communication styles for different people	3,3	Moderate
4.8	I know how to report harmful content that occurs on social media posts by using English language	3,47	Moderate
4.9	I can turn on the location/GPS option to share my position by using English language	3,59	Moderate
4.10	I do not upload any personal data which are using English language on social media	3,23	Moderate
4.11	I can set a password on my mobile phone or laptop.	3,74	High
4.12	I can download and install antivirus on my device (mobile or laptop) which use English language	3,27	Moderate
4.13	I always compare information which use English language from various sources to check the clarity of the information before sharing it with others	3,42	High
Total		3,41	Moderate

Table 4. Critical Inquiry and Digital Ethics showed that the awareness of participants toward data privacy had a mean score of 3,41. This table showed that the participants had a

moderate degree in critical thinking and ethics of using digital humanities in the EFL classes. The questionnaire reveals that the highest score among the statements is how the participants secure their personal data by setting passwords on their devices such as laptops and mobile phones and comparing information from various sources to check the clarity before sharing it. It means that the participants are concerned about their privacy and avoiding spreading hoax information to others, so they rarely have problems using digital platforms. These findings are in line with Cranor et al. (1999) stated that people are concerned about internet privacy for various reasons, including potential invasion of privacy, loss of personal information, and negative impact on their reputation. Moreover, people who are more concerned about their online privacy share slightly less personal information and have more negative attitudes toward information sharing (Dikenalin et al., 2019).

In addition, from the interview session the participants explain in increasing their privacy data safe, they also download and install an antivirus on their laptops.

“I usually download antivirus applications on my laptop, such as Smadav and Windows Defender, while for mobile phones I don't install anything because an automatic warning appears”

“For my mobile phone I don't use antivirus, but for my laptop I use McAfee”

It is known that participants install more antivirus on laptops because they are more vulnerable to data theft than mobile phones. It is also supported by the findings from Chang et al. (2015) revealed that laptops are more prone to data theft than mobile phones due to the fact that they store sensitive data and are more mobile. This in line with Prakash et al. (2021) stated that laptops are more prone to data theft than mobile phones due to the presence of decryption key within the stolen laptop, which can be retrieved by hardware experts. In short, with all the convenience offered by digital tools and technology, participants must still pay attention to the security of their data and devices by always understanding the privacy statement and installing additional security applications when using English digital platforms.

Collaborative Learning

Table 5. Collaborative Learning

No.	Question Items	Mean	Rating of Digital Humanities Usage Level
5.1	By implementing educational team tasks using the internet in the EFL classes, I am an active and committed person.	3,18	Moderate
5.2	In the EFL classroom, I am more willing to communicate with other people than exchange documents	2,99	Moderate
5.3	In the EFL classroom, I feel comfortable sharing my ideas when working online with others on a project.	3,09	Moderate
5.4	Clear instructions and understanding my role make me more confident collaborating online English learning.	3,51	Moderate
5.5	In the EFL classroom, I demonstrate a high level of participation in online collaborative learning.	3,08	Moderate
6.1	Online English learning involves a lot of tasks, and working with others takes the most time.	3,26	Moderate
6.2	A significant online English learning activity is an activity that requires interaction with others.	3,04	Moderate
6.3	English online courses don't usually involve students checking each other's work	2,8	Moderate
Total		3,16	Moderate

In Table 5, it revealed that the participants in the collaborative learning had a score 3,16. This table showed that the participants had a moderate level in collaborating in English online teaching and learning activities. Although the English digital tools and technology can be seen as flexible teaching and learning tools, it revealed that online English learning involves a lot of tasks with more time usage and requires more interaction with others. Online learning requires more time and interaction than offline, as it correlates with decreased time-on-task, average grades, and test scores (Ngoc et al., 2020). In the similar vein, online learning requires more time to study and complete assessments, and introduces higher stress levels for computing students (Wijanto et al., 2020).

In addition to the need for interaction and good time management, the participants also think that in doing tasks, it is better to discuss first than directly exchanging documents. It can be seen from the statement:

“I prefer to have a discussion first, because we can exchange ideas and complement each other”

“I prefer to discuss so that everyone has the same concept of understanding, so that there is no miscommunication”

By discussing with friends, we will not only think alone so we will gain a lot of knowledge and new perspectives. In addition, exchanging documents directly can lead to miscommunications and the possibility of plagiarism. Collaboratively running an honor system by students and faculty can reduce plagiarism and improve academic settings (Thompson, 2006).

AI for language teaching and learning

Table 6. AI for language teaching and learning

No.	Question Items	Mean	Rating of Digital Humanities Usage Level
7.1	Lightening English administrative tasks.	3,33	Moderate
7.2	Efficient and timesaving in the EFL classes.	3,43	Moderate
7.3	Differentiation and personalization of English instruction.	3,44	Moderate
8.1	Lack of understanding, experience and usage in the EFL classes.	2,97	Moderate
8.2	Limited access and number of available AI tools in EFL classes.	2,91	Moderate
8.3	Insufficient support and training in EFL classes.	2,84	Moderate
8.4	Gap between learner and teacher usage in the EFL classes.	2,83	Moderate

8.5	Inhibiting social-cultural factors in the EFL classes.	2,74	Moderate
9.1	Academic dishonesty in the EFL classes.	3,1	Moderate
9.2	Unreliability of detection system in the EFL classes.	2,92	Moderate
9.3	Irrelevance of uninformed teachers in the EFL classes.	2,71	Moderate
9.4	Inequitable and unethical use in the EFL classes.	2,82	Moderate
10.1	AI knowledge bank (Avatar of teacher) in the EFL classes	3,12	Moderate
10.2	Innovation in the EFL classes	3,51	High
10.3	Teacher-students relationships (trust) in the EFL classes.	3,37	Moderate
Total		3,07	Moderate

From the **Table 6. AI for language teaching and learning**, it revealed that the participants had a score 3.07 on their knowledge of using AI for Education purposes. It means that the participants had a moderate degree of their knowledge and ability of using AI for language teaching and learning. ⁸ The use of AI in the EFL classes brings a lot of benefits for the EFL classroom. The AI integration can lighten English administrative tasks, differentiate and personalize English instructions, and timesaving in the EFL classes. AI-powered Intelligent Virtual Agents (IVAs) ²² have the potential to enhance the learning process and personalize automation in teaching, impacting L2 learners' academic achievement in EFL settings (Katsarou et al., 2023). Similarly, AI in EFL classes can help students write meaningful content in authentic contexts, improve writing quality, and enhance cohesion and consistency (Hwang et al., 2033).

In a qualitative phase, the participants had the same idea about ²⁴ the use of AI in the EFL teaching and learning are very helpful in lightening their English administrative tasks. They think that by using AI as paraphrasing, summarizing, and plagiarism checking tools, it really saves their time.

“ I think, the use of AI in the EFL Classroom very helpful because we can use various kinds of AI to make our work easier, such as summarizing material, checking plagiarism, and paraphrasing”

“ By using AI for English teaching and learning, it is easier for us to search various sources easily and quickly. We can just access all the information just by one click without need to search for it one by one”

It can be concluded that AI is perceived as a useful tool and provides quick and complete information just by one click in the EFL classes. AI in education can make learning more personalized, engaging, and efficient, leading to better student outcomes and increased efficiency (Harry, 2023). AI in education has improved learners' experience and overall quality of learning by streamlining administrative functions, customizing curriculum, and personalizing content based on students' needs (Chen et al., 2020).

DISCUSSION

From the results, it can be concluded that the EFL teachers and students have a positive attitude with DH implementation in their EFL Classroom. Digital tools and technologies such as social media, learning media platforms, and online video conferences in the EFL classroom have proven as a supporting tool to enhance English teaching and learning. Social media (TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube) are usually used as a media for searching inspiring content, English learning materials, and sharing English digital content. It is supported by Islam (2022) stated that social media enhances English language proficiency by providing engaging, interactive, and social learning experiences, fostering collaboration, and providing valuable insights into language acquisition. Similarly, digital technologies in language learning promote practices, deliver instructional content, facilitate interactions, and restructuring teaching approaches, with overall positive impacts (Zang & Zhou, 2020). Moreover, online video conferences such as Zoom Meeting and Google Meet help students to learn how to manage and operate the discussion using English smoothly. By using online video conferences, it can encourage students to practice their English speaking skills and expand their vocabulary. Using speaking video recordings effectively improves students' English speaking skills by increasing their motivation, vocabulary, and self-confidence (Suadi, 2020). So, by understanding the types and the function of the digital tools and technology it helps them to gain knowledge without limitations.

As a media of communication, the participants used various types of applications of digital tools in the EFL classes. They utilize various online English media to find and share information to support their teaching and learning. Another benefit also mentioned by another study, stated that using digital tools in language teaching helps students engage with the language, enhance their motivation to learn, develop their language learning skills, and improve their intercultural communicative competence (Gagic et al., 2023). The examples of applications that can be used as a communication tools mentioned by the participants are: 1) to find news or information related to their lectures and learning materials they often use online news portals (NGO, Discovery, and CNN International on X), 2) to find online article journal (researchgate and google scholar), 3) to make a presentation slide they used presentation software (Canva, Peardeck, Google Slides, and PowerPoint), and 4) to support their writing they used writing software (MS Word, Google Document, Notes, and WPS). From this study, It was found that students and teachers prefer to use apps that are popular and that they are familiar with. Most of the participants have used digital tools and technologies as communication tools since they're in secondary school.

To keep their privacy and their personal data safe when using English digital media and platforms, the participants always pay attention to read and understand the privacy statement of the platforms because it is important to avoid error problems when using the media. In some participants who went through the interview process, they mentioned that they would only read the privacy statement on the application they were about to use, while on the application they were used to, they did not care about the contents of the application's privacy statement. However, reading privacy policies is important for understanding how private data is collected and used by companies (Krumay et al., 2020). Reading privacy policies in digital tools helps users easily understand how their data will be handled and reduces the gap between service providers' policies and user expectations (Kanamori et al., 2022). From the results, it revealed that the participants already understand about the “manner” in using digital media, for example how to communicate properly, do's and don'ts in using digital media, and how to keep privacy and safe our personal data.

Then, the participants also showed a high positive attitude in participation and initiation in working online collaboratively. The majority of the participants are confident with their activeness and commitment during the English group tasks. It was found that by meeting virtually, students are more comfortable in working and sharing their ideas with their friends in the class. Factors motivating students' comfort in online discussions include more time to refine ideas, less nervousness, and flexible access to online discussion boards (Majid et al.,

2014). Most of the participants think that doing online group tasks will require more time and interaction than the offline one. Additionally, communication is a crucial part in working group tasks, so they prefer to discuss it first instead of exchanging documents directly.

Furthermore, the use of AI for Education purposes will be very helpful for teachers and students in language teaching and learning. It was found that the use of AI can help to timesaving and customize personalized English teaching and learning easily. However, what must be considered is that the use of appropriate technology must be supported by adequate facilities and work resources. For the senior teachers, some of them might find it difficult to adjust with today's technology. So, they need more facilities and training programs to support them. Senior citizen teachers need support in adjusting today's technology due to challenges like lack of gadgets, poor internet connection, sudden power interruption, and lack of basic knowledge in gadget operation (Gamboa, 2022). It also found that the use of AI influences students and teachers' relationship. Using AI in EFL classes can increase teacher and student relationships, if both teachers and students can help each other in using AI. Students can help the teacher about how to use the media and the teacher can guide them with their knowledge. Besides, it also indicates that AI potentially decreases teachers' and students' relationship, because there are a lot of academic dishonesty in the EFL classroom. In addition, AI can assist teachers as a bank of knowledge.

CONCLUSION

Digital tools and technology can be used in language teaching and learning in order to support their experiential learning, communication skills, data privacy and critical thinking, collaborative learning, and maximize the use of AI in the EFL classes. There are a lot of applications and websites available on the internet that can be accessed easily and efficiently. We can choose the types of digital tools based on our preferences. For students, they can use it to enhance their English learning such as looking for English materials or references, making presentation slides and writing assignments, communication tools with people in and across the country, and sharing their authentic English digital content. While for teachers, it may help them to design teaching materials and media, customize teaching materials with students' needs, and as a media to learn up-to-date teaching methods. Using online learning media can be very useful in helping maximize EFL teaching and learning, if teachers and students can work together to use it wisely. To conclude, this study revealed that teachers and students have positive views in the use of digital humanities in the EFL classroom. Further research can explore the opportunities and challenges of using Digital Humanities in specific English skills.

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