

Students' Experiences in Using the "Eng Venture" Application to Enhance Digital Literacy Skills

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Abstract. The development of digital technology has increased the need for digital literacy among students, including in English language learning. This study aims to describe the experiences of ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto using the “Eng Venture” application, an English-language learning application based on problem-based learning designed to develop digital literacy in an integrated manner. The study employed a descriptive case study approach involving 73 students as participants. Data collection was done via a web-based questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The data collected via questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics, whereas the data collected via interviews were analyzed using the framework suggested by Miles et al. Three key aspects were analyzed: students' experiences with the application, the application features that contributed most to digital literacy, and the difficulties students faced. The findings indicate that students' overall experience was positive, with an average satisfaction score of 3.84 on a five-point scale. Navigation features, automated learning recommendations, interactive multimedia content, games, and quizzes were the aspects that contributed most to students' development of digital literacy. However, several challenges were encountered, including differences in students' initial digital readiness and the low relevance of some problem-based learning content to students' real-life experiences. Despite these challenges, students demonstrated good adaptability,

supported by the application's adaptive features and their sustained motivation to learn.

Keywords: digital literacy, Eng Venture application, PBL

1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has significantly transformed the field of education, particularly in how students acquire and process information. In the age of digital literacy, the ability to access, analyze, and apply information appropriately across different platforms is not just a bonus but a critical skill that any student should have (Hague & Payton, 2010). Moreover, research by Anggini et al. (2025) underscores the need to integrate digital literacy education with effective teaching techniques to help students develop their navigation skills in the digital world. This has created a need for new approaches to implementing technology in the educational process, especially in the teaching of foreign languages.

Digital literacy in this context encompasses the ability to responsibly find, evaluate, and create information through digital technology, while also involving ethical considerations, critical thinking, and responsibility as members of a digital society (Hague & Payton, 2010; Wingo et al., 2017). In Indonesia, the development of digital literacy is still hampered by limited teacher competencies and regional disparities in infrastructure (Ningsih, 2024; Tarantny et al., 2025). Nevertheless, numerous studies have demonstrated that structured digital learning applications can enhance digital literacy, critical reading, information sharing, and digital social skills (Kale et al., 2021). These findings indicate that students' learning experiences in interacting with digital technology play a crucial role in the successful development of these literacies.

Learning experiences are one of the crucial aspects that affect the efficiency of learning in terms of digital technology usage. As Kolb (1984) stated, meaningful learning experiences are acquired through a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. In app-based learning, learners are involved in discovering and resolving real-world problems, leading to a better understanding than traditional methods (Chuang, 2021). The accessibility of technology greatly motivates students (Heirdsfield et al., 2007), while Android media can foster the development of learning autonomy at the secondary level (Ibrahim & Ishartiwi, 2017). Furthermore, the problem-based learning approach in digital applications fosters students' independence and self-regulation (Loyens et al., 2008). It enables them to engage with authentic scenarios that cultivate critical thinking and collaboration (Thomassen & Stentoft, 2020). The dynamics of this rich learning experience are also relevant to the context of technology-based English language learning, which is the subject of increasing research.

English-learning applications have recently attracted increasing attention from researchers. Zhang and Zuo (2019) state that mobile-assisted English language learning can support student motivation and autonomy through personalized and flexible learning opportunities. Similarly, Talan (2020) suggests that mobile learning can enhance learning outcomes when applications are designed to promote engagement and intrinsic motivation. These findings indicate that mobile applications

may support not only language development but also students' digital literacy practices.

Furthermore, the integration of problem-based learning (PBL) into mobile learning environments has been reported to foster higher-order thinking skills and digital competencies. Cong and Ironsi (2025) found that mobile-PBL integration supports students' problem-solving and critical-thinking abilities, while Riyanti et al. (2023) demonstrated that interactive mobile-based learning environments can contribute to students' development of digital competence.

In Indonesia, smartphone use among teenagers is almost universal, but it is used inefficiently for educational purposes. According to data provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, the level of digital literacy among high school students in several regions of Indonesia, such as Mojokerto, is only 53.95%. This figure indicates that most students do not yet possess adequate digital skills, even though they are familiar with digital devices in their daily lives. This situation points to a gap between the potential of available technology and its pedagogical use in a school setting.

One solution to address this issue is to create problem-based mobile learning applications; one example is the app "Eng Venture" (Krisdiana et al., 2026). This application facilitates English learning while also developing students' digital literacy skills. The features of gamification, the identification of learning styles, a progress dashboard, and interactive content grounded in real-life situations help make this app a medium for transforming how students learn. Nonetheless, no sufficient study has been conducted to understand how students perceive and experience using this app in the learning process.

Previous studies on mobile learning have mainly focused on students' learning outcomes, such as changes in scores or the validity of the instructional medium (Ibrahim & Ishartiwi, 2017; Kale et al., 2021). Although these studies provide important evidence regarding the effectiveness of mobile learning, limited attention has been given to students' actual experiences when engaging with technology-based learning applications. In particular, little is known about how students perceive application features, encounter challenges, and develop learning strategies while using mobile applications that integrate problem-based learning and digital literacy development. Therefore, exploring students' experiences is necessary to understand how such applications function within authentic classroom contexts.

To address this gap, this study employs a qualitative case study approach to investigate students' experiences in using the "Eng Venture" application. This study provides better insight into students' views of the "Eng Venture" app by investigating how they use it. Moreover, the results of this research can help educators, app designers, and policymakers develop digital learning interventions that take into account students' needs and experiences. Therefore, this study focuses on three interrelated main objectives. This study aims to explore the experiences of ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto in using the Eng Venture application for English language learning. Specifically, it identifies the application features perceived to contribute most significantly to enhancing students' digital literacy skills. Furthermore, the study examines the challenges students encountered while using the application, as well as how they responded and adapted to overcome these obstacles.

2. METHOD

This study used a descriptive case study method to provide a systematic, factual description of students' perceptions and experiences of using the "Eng Venture" application for English language learning. A case study was considered appropriate because the research focused on a specific, bounded context, namely the use of the "Eng Venture" application among students in two classes at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto. The descriptive approach was used to examine students' perceptions of the application without manipulating the variables or learning conditions (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Through this approach, the study sought to provide an objective and comprehensive description of the phenomenon as it occurred naturally in the classroom.

This study was conducted at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto, using Class IX B and IX C as the subjects. In this research, 73 students took part, as both classes had been actively using the "Eng Venture" app in their English language learning. The involvement of all students from these two classes enabled the researcher to gather data that reflected reality in the field.

The questionnaire was the primary tool used in this research. Before the questionnaire was administered, its validity was assessed by experts in language education and learning technology. Expert validity was assessed to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the questionnaire items' measurements (Sugiyono, 2014). Once the experts had validated the questionnaire, it was distributed to all participants via Google Forms to enable efficient and effective completion of the questions.

Interviews were also conducted, along with a questionnaire, to collect detailed information about participants' perceptions of the phenomenon under study. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian in a semi-structured manner to allow participants to express their perceptions openly (Sugiyono, 2014). Through this, the researcher gained a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The interview data were analyzed using the data analysis technique proposed by Miles et al. (2014), which consists of data reduction, data display, conclusion drawing, and verification. Conclusions were drawn by identifying patterns and important findings from the displayed data. At the same time, verification was conducted by examining the consistency of the emerging findings with the interview evidence and comparing them with the questionnaire results. This process enabled the researcher to systematically interpret students' perceptions and experiences of using the Eng Venture application.

As a case study, the use of multiple data collection techniques, such as questionnaires and interviews, enabled the researcher to examine the phenomenon from multiple perspectives and develop a more comprehensive understanding of students' perceptions. The combination of quantitative descriptive data from the questionnaire and qualitative information from the interviews provided a more holistic representation of the case within the specific context of SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Results

Data were obtained from an online survey of 73 ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto, comprising 37 females and 36 males, who ranked various features

of using the Eng Venture application on a 5-point scale, ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." Among these features were digital readiness before using the app, the app's ease of use, content quality, problem-based learning, system customization functions, improvement in English language skills, and overall satisfaction. Based on the dataset obtained, the following discussion will touch on three main issues: the experience students gained from using the app, the aspects that helped them increase their digital literacy, and the difficulties they encountered.

Table 1. Summary of Students' Perceptions of Key Aspects of Eng Venture App Usage.

Aspects Evaluated	(Scale 1–5)	of High Scores
The habit of using a smartphone for learning	3,78	60,3%
Ease of using the mobile app in general	3,44	39,7%
Smooth navigation between Eng Venture menus	4,67	91,7%
App features are easy to use	3,78	65,3%
The app is responsive and rarely crashes	3,70	57,5%
The system provides appropriate learning Recommendations	3,90	71,2%
Learning progress analysis is accurate and useful	3,84	64,4%
Audio listening/pronunciation aids comprehension	3,93	68,5%
The problems/scenarios presented are relevant to real life	3,36	38,4%
Improved ability to learn independently	3,59	53,4%
Overall satisfaction with the app	3,84	60,3%
Willingness to recommend the app to friends	3,76	58,3%

3.1.1 The Ninth Grade Students' Experience Using "Eng Venture" Application.

Before discussing students' experiences with the Eng Venture app specifically, it is important first to assess their overall level of digital readiness. The average score for the habit of using smartphones for learning was 3.78, with 60.3 percent (44 out of 73 respondents) stating they agreed or strongly agreed. However, the score for ease of using mobile apps was lower, at 3.44, and 6.8 percent of students admitted they still faced difficulties in this regard. A similar situation was observed regarding internet access at home: only 50.7 percent of students rated their connection as truly stable, and the frequency of their previous use of online learning apps was also moderate, with an average score of 3.45. Thus, the digital readiness of ninth-grade students before being introduced to Eng Venture was quite varied and not yet entirely uniform.

Although initial readiness varied, students' experiences after using the Eng Venture app were far more positive. The app's interface was rated as easy to understand, with an average score of 3.81, and navigation between menus was perceived as very smooth by nearly all students, as evidenced by an average score of 4.67, and 91.7 percent of respondents gave high ratings for this aspect. The app's features were also considered easy to use, with a score of 3.78; the app was quite responsive and rarely encountered errors, with a score of 3.70; and the user guide was rated as clear by the majority of students, with a score of 3.81. These results indicate that the previously observed variations in digital readiness did not significantly hinder students' comfort once they began interacting with Eng Venture.

This technical convenience ultimately led to a high level of satisfaction with the app as a whole. The average student satisfaction score was 3.84, with 60.3 percent

(44 out of 73 students) reporting that they were satisfied to very satisfied, and not a single student gave the lowest rating for this aspect. In line with this, 58.3 percent of students, or 42 out of 73 participants, said they would be willing to recommend Eng Venture to their friends. This high level of satisfaction is undoubtedly linked to the app's features and the way students interact with them.

The results of interviews with several students reinforced the questionnaire findings and provided a richer picture of their learning experiences. The students expressed enjoyment and interest in learning with Eng Venture, and this interest was partly driven by the inclusion of games and quizzes, which made the learning process more enjoyable and less tedious. Additionally, the achievement score feature in the app allows students to gauge their engagement with digital literacy quizzes and independently track their tangible learning progress. Students also noted that the app significantly helps them learn English while improving their digital literacy, and even assists them in identifying their individual learning styles through its features. Furthermore, using Eng Venture encourages students to use their devices more wisely, so the benefits extend beyond simply mastering lesson content to fostering more responsible digital habits. The students' enthusiasm for these features has also opened the door for them to provide feedback, specifically requesting that more digital literacy games be added and that the difficulty levels be increased. Overall, this overview indicates that the experience of ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto in using Eng Venture was generally positive in terms of technical ease of use, personal satisfaction, and their active engagement in utilizing the available features, and that the positivity of this experience is closely linked to specific features of the application that directly contribute to the development of students' digital literacy. This is in line with Kale et al. (2021), who state that digital Edugames enhance students' digital literacy and cognitive aspects, such as higher-order thinking skills.

3.1.2 Application Features Contributing Most to Digital Literacy

A detailed look at the issue makes it clear that students' digital literacy largely depends on how easily they can use the application interface. The highest average score, 4.67, was recorded for ease of navigation between features, indicating that most students do not have difficulty using different features within the application. Indeed, scores of 3.78 and 3.81 for ease of use and user-friendliness, respectively, suggest that students can interact with the digital media learning platform due to their basic technical skills.

One of the skills gained through the interface use is Eng Venture's recommendation and automatic learning analysis features. The learning recommendation system was found to be the best in terms of personalization features, with an average score of 3.90 and 71.2 percent of students having a high opinion of it. Automatic difficulty level adjustment was also very good, with a score of 3.70. Learning progress analysis, on the other hand, was thought to be accurate and useful. These three features require students to read, understand, and interpret digital information about their own learning progress. Hence, their contribution to digital literacy extends beyond technical skills to include the ability to process digital data independently.

In addition to personalization features, interactive multimedia content further enriches students' digital literacy experience. The audio features for listening and pronunciation received the highest score among all content aspects, 3.93, with 68.5

percent of students rating them as very helpful for comprehension. Content presented engagingly and interactively also received a high rating of 3.84, indicating that students are quite accustomed to using digital audio-visual media as a learning tool, rather than just static text. The habit of using this type of media is an important component of digital literacy, as students are trained to access information in various formats rather than just one.

Findings from the questionnaire were further bolstered by the interviews, which made clear the impact of the use of games and quizzes, as well as of achievement scores. The students admitted that while the games and quizzes made learning exciting, they were also key to improving their digital literacy as they overcame the challenges they posed. This is in line with the work of Kale et al. (2021), who stated that mobile learning-based edugames encouraged students to be active and creative learners in overcoming challenges in the games and to improve digital literacy skills.

Another very important aspect is the achievement score component, as it encourages students to actively participate in quizzes and, at the same time, trains them to interpret digital data about their progress. Moreover, the learning style assessment component that was revealed by the interviews shows that Eng Venture not only presents information but also helps students learn how to acquire it in the most effective way possible, which is the component of digital literacy. Consequently, games, interactive quizzes, achievement scores, and the ability to assess one's learning style are additional components of personalization and multimedia content that form the key components for developing students' digital literacy. Nevertheless, the development of digital literacy faces numerous challenges.

This research is consistent with the findings by Cong and Ironsi (2025), who state that mobile learning platforms that provide instantaneous feedback, personalized learning, and progress tracking enable learners to realize their strengths and weaknesses while enhancing critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-learning. In addition, mobile learning environments that feature interactivity and gaming features facilitate learner engagement and empower learners to build knowledge through constant reflection and adaptation.

3.1.3 Students' Challenges, Problems, and Adaptation.

However, one of the problems identified in the analysis is students' readiness to use the application, particularly their digital readiness. Up to 6.8% of students still find it difficult to use mobile applications. It relates to the finding that only 50.7% of students have a stable home Internet connection. The instability of the connection and a lack of experience with digital applications led to inequality at the initial stage of using Eng Venture.

These technical challenges are also reflected in the application's evaluation results. Although 91.7 percent of students rated the navigation as smooth, 8.2 percent of students, or six students, strongly disagreed on this aspect, a fairly sharp discrepancy indicating the presence of a small group of students who genuinely struggled to navigate the app's menus. In addition, 4.1 percent of students reported that the app was unresponsive or experienced errors quite frequently. These two findings show that although the majority of students were comfortable with the technical aspects, a small group still needs additional guidance to use the app effectively.

Another equally important issue concerns the content of the problem-based learning process. The relevance of the problems and cases to students' lives was rated

the lowest, at 3.36, with only 38.4 percent of students giving it a high value, while 8.2 percent gave it a low value. Such a low value suggests that some students still feel that the problems presented in problem-based learning do not relate to their daily lives. As a result, some students may not feel motivated enough to engage in analyzing the problems, but may still go through all the steps of the process.

Despite these challenges, the majority of students have shown good adaptability throughout the learning process. The use of theoretical knowledge in practice was rated quite highly, with a score of 3.73, and no students assessed this factor negatively, meaning that despite the case studies not being entirely relevant, students were able to derive benefits from the activities anyway. Another supporting factor for students' adaptability was the automatic difficulty adjustment feature, which was rated 3.70. This means that no technical or other barriers could interfere with students' motivation. The results of the interviews further demonstrate students' adaptability, as not only have they adapted to the current situation, but they have also provided feedback requesting more features, such as digital literacy games and higher difficulty levels, which is a very important characteristic. Ultimately, the consistently high overall satisfaction score of 3.84, along with the willingness of 58.3 percent of students to recommend this app to friends, proves that the ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto were able to overcome the challenges they faced and continue to experience the positive benefits of using Eng Venture.

In general, findings from 73 ninth-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto, together with findings from direct interviews, reveal three patterns. Their experience using Eng Venture is mostly positive. It includes an easy-to-navigate system, attractive edutainment games and quizzes, and satisfaction, which is consistent with the findings of Kale et al. (2021), who show that mobile learning-based edugames offer an enjoyable and flexible learning environment. The main ways in which the students developed digital literacy were through basic computer skills, system personalization, interaction with multimedia materials, achievement scoring, and identifying students' preferred ways of learning. However, independent learning skills need improvement in the future. As for the problems that emerged, ranging from limited digital readiness and navigation difficulties encountered by several students to the irrelevance of some content to students' real-life situations, the students were generally able to overcome these challenges through the adaptability of the application. This is consistent with Cong and Ironsi (2025), who indicate that, despite technological and implementation hurdles, mobile learning can remain an effective pedagogical tool due to its adaptive and interactive nature.

3.2 Discussions

The findings suggest that the value of Eng Venture extends beyond its role as a medium for English language learning. Its user-friendly interface, multimedia resources, personalization, achievement-tracking features, and interactive activities appear to create a learning environment that supports students' engagement with digital resources. This finding supports Kale et al. (2021), who emphasize the potential of mobile learning-based educational games to promote students' digital literacy and cognitive development. The findings are also consistent with Cong and Ironsi (2025), who highlight the contribution of personalization, feedback, and progress tracking to students' self-learning, problem-solving, and critical thinking. Thus, the positive experience gained by the students cannot be attributed to a single factor but to a

combination of factors that motivate them to interact with digital information related to their learning process.

The findings also indicate the importance of gamification in helping learners become more engaged and improve their digital literacy. Games and quizzes in Eng Venture have been seen as entertaining elements that reduce the dullness of learning and encourage learners to participate actively. This finding is in line with Rzabayeva et al. (2024), who explain that gamification can enhance students' motivation and participation in digital literacy learning by incorporating game elements such as points, rewards, levels, and challenges into educational activities. Similarly, Alnuaim (2024) provides evidence supporting the potential benefits of gamification in enhancing digital literacy education.

In the context of the present study, gamification therefore appears to bridge learning and enjoyment while providing students with opportunities to interact with digital content, overcome challenges, and monitor their learning progress. The integration of gamification with multimedia and personalized features may make Eng Venture a more dynamic environment for supporting the development of digital literacy. At the same time, the findings indicate that the implementation of mobile learning remains influenced by students' technological and contextual conditions. Differences in digital readiness, unstable internet connections, occasional technical difficulties, and the relatively low perceived relevance of some problem-based learning scenarios suggest that technological functionality alone is insufficient to ensure a meaningfully comparable learning experience for all students.

Although the participants demonstrated adaptability and generally positive perceptions of Eng Venture, additional support may be needed for students with lower levels of digital readiness, and learning scenarios should be designed to more closely reflect students' everyday experiences. This scenario is particularly important because Rzabayeva et al. (2024) also highlight the need to maintain an appropriate balance between entertainment and educational objectives when implementing gamification. Thus, Eng Venture shows significant potential as a mobile learning platform for supporting English language learning and digital literacy development. At the same time, its effectiveness could be further strengthened through accessible design, contextually relevant content, appropriate gamification, and greater support for students' independent learning.

4. CONCLUSION

This research establishes three basic aspects of how 9th-grade students at SMP Negeri 3 Mojokerto have experienced the "Eng Venture" application. Firstly, it can be noted that the students' experience has been quite positive, based on the ease of using the user interface (4.67 out of 5), the appeal of the interactive games and quizzes, and a high level of overall satisfaction. In addition, 58.3 percent of students have admitted they would be willing to recommend this app to their friends.

Second, students' digital literacy progresses along several paths. The students' basic technical skills were acquired through constant interaction with the application interface. In contrast, the application's personalization features, including automatic learning suggestions and progress tracking, prompted students to analyze digital information independently. Interactive media, performance scores, and the

identification of learners' styles contribute to this process, helping students become digitally literate in all three dimensions – technical, metacognitive, and critical.

Thirdly, despite the wide range of issues students faced in the learning process, these did not affect the continuous development of the learners. The initial lack of digital readiness among some students, problems with app navigation among a few students, issues with internet availability, and the lack of relevance of problem-based cases to real-life situations are issues that require attention. Nevertheless, the learners' flexibility, as indicated by the automatic difficulty-adjustment function, and their motivation to learn were very high. The active feedback from the learners demonstrates the depth of their participation in "Eng Venture".

Therefore, one can claim that the "Eng Venture" app can serve as a learning medium, helping combine English proficiency development and digital literacy development simultaneously. It is necessary to increase the relevance of problem-based cases to real-life situations and to improve game features, which include digital literacy. Besides, it is important to assist students with the initial lack of digital readiness.

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