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The Effect of AI and Digital Literacy on English for Public Speaking Proficiency

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A B S T R A C T

Integrating technology into English language learning is essential for enhancing public speaking proficiency in the digital era. However, the specific impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools versus general digital literacy on speaking performance remains underexplored. This study aims to analyze the simultaneous and partial effects of digital literacy and AI usage on students' English for Public Speaking proficiency. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 35 second-semester students and analyzed using multiple linear regression. The findings reveal that while digital literacy partially shows no significant effect, AI usage positively and significantly influences speaking skills. Simultaneously, both variables contribute 38.1% to the proficiency model. It is concluded that while digital literacy facilitates access, direct AI-assisted practice serves as the primary driver for improving public speaking competence.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Digital Literacy, English Public Speaking, Speaking Proficiency*

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INTRODUCTION

In the current era of globalization, learning English plays a pivotal role in modern life. English is no longer merely a communication tool; it serves as an international language utilized across various sectors, such as business, technology, tourism, and education. English for Public Speaking course at Tiga Serangkai University equips students, especially non English department students, to speak and communicate fluently during English presentations before an audience. Public speaking is a critical skill, not only for academic presentations but also for students' broader ability to communicate effectively in English-medium contexts (Ayiz' & Tauchid, 2025). Furthermore, in this course, students are required to compose English scripts and deliver them orally.

Several studies exposed students in Indonesia have challenges to face when they do presentation using English language, especially in front of many people. Nababan and Hadiwijaya found that the main difficulties students face when speaking English are caused by linguistic factors, for example: lack of vocabulary, poor pronunciation, and lack of grammatical knowledge (Nababan & Hadiwijaya, 2025). The research also found that non-linguistic factors (psychological factors) affect students difficulties when speaking English, for example: fear of making mistakes, low motivation, shyness, anxiety, use of the mother tongue. Students eventually need to put lot of effort to make English presentation better in order to build their confidence in speaking English and communicating with people. Ismail and Jaya found that beyond building confidence, oral presentations also helped students strengthen communication skills, improve public speaking ability, and manage speaking anxiety through strategies such as preparation and practice (Ismail & Jaya, 2026).

According to Hamalik, learning is a combination comprising human elements, materials, facilities, equipment, and methods that interact to achieve educational goals (Hamalik, 2008). Students who encounter obstacles and require solutions in the English learning process tend to need the assistance of advanced technological tools in the digital era, for instance, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). AI tools have proven effective in strengthening linguistic accuracy and promoting learner independence, positioning them as valuable assets in the writing classroom (Utari et al., 2026).

There are several studies related to the use of Artificial Intelligence in teaching and learning English. According to the study's findings of Capah et all, ChatGPT plays six roles in the writing process. They are gathering ideas, recommending references, identifying the best words and vocabulary, locating an outline or story plot, organizing the writing outcome, and even having discussions on the writing content (Capah et al., 2025). In enhancing vocabulary skill, a study found that with the presence of AI Chatbot application, EFL students are more excited and confident in developing their English vocabulary independently (Oktadela et al., 2023). Meanwhile, a study from Fanania and Priyatmojo found that English department students view AI-based applications, specifically Google Translate, Elsa Speak and Duolingo, as effective and user-friendly tools that provide personalized feedback, repetitive practice, and flexible learning plans. Apart from that, these college students also feel that the apps help them to gain a better understanding about important features like consonants, intonation and stress in studying English pronunciation (Fanania & Priyatmojo, 2025).

Meanwhile, the usage and understanding of digital literacy are also crucial. Gani et all found that the importance of utilizing artificial intelligence and of strengthening digital literacy in the curriculum and learning strategies, creating a higher education ecosystem that is adaptive, innovative, and supports students as independent learners in the digital age (Gani & Mohehu, 2025). The application of technology and digital literacy in language learning and speaking skills enables students to engage in a learning process that is more interactive, compelling, and relevant to their daily realities (Salsabila & Riadi, 2022).

Based on the previous research above, this research focuses on analyzing the effect of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Digital Literacy in college students of Tiga Serangkai University on the subject of English for Public Speaking.

METHOD

This study utilizes a quantitative approach. Quantitative research is characterized by the use of numerical data and statistical analysis, which in this study is conducted using SPSS version 26. Furthermore, this method aims to test theories, establish facts, identify relationships among variables, provide statistical descriptions, and estimate as well as interpret the findings (Suranto, 2000). Fundamentally, quantitative research is a research approach that utilizes numerical data and is analyzed using statistical techniques to test hypotheses, examine relationships between variables, and draw conclusions objectively and measurably. This research aims to explain phenomena through the measurement of specific variables and the testing of cause-and-effect relationships. This research uses multiple linear regression analysis to calculate the effect of the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Digital Literacy on *English for Public Speaking* course. Linear regression is a statistical model used to measure the extent of the influence of independent variables on dependent variables

Respondents

Populasi dan Sampling

According to Sugiyono, a population is a generalization area consisting of objects or subjects with certain qualities and characteristics determined by the researcher to be studied, from which conclusions are then drawn (Sugiyono, 2019). The population in this study is the second-semester college students taking Class of English for Public Speaking in Tiga Serangkai University located in Surakarta, Central Java.

Additionally, this research used purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique based on specific considerations (Sugiyono, 2019). This study uses purposive sampling because the technique is suitable for quantitative research, or research that does not aim to generalize (Sugiyono, 2019). This study involved 35 respondents as sample. The respondents were selected from the second-semester students, comprising a total population of 100 students across 3 classes of English for Public Speaking.

Data Collection

The data used in this research is primary data. Primary data is defined as research data obtained directly from the original source. It includes interviews, questionnaires, and opinion polls from individuals or groups, as well as observation results regarding specific objects, events, or test outcomes (Sugiyono, 2019).

Instruments

Questionnaire

Data collection in this study is conducted using questionnaires. As defined by Sugiyono, a questionnaire involves providing a set of questions or written statements for respondents to answer; in this context, the questions pertain to the research problem at hand (Sugiyono, 2019).

The instrument comprises 22 items distributed to respondents and measured using a Likert scale. This scale was selected to facilitate the measurement of respondents' agreement or disagreement. Likert scale is designed to measure the attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of an individual or group regarding social phenomena (Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, the responses of questionnaire use a score range of 1 to 4, as described below in table 1.

Tabel 1. Questionnaire Measurement

No.	Description	Score
1.	Very Agree	4
2.	Agree	3
3.	Disagree	2
4.	Very Disagree	1

Documentation

Documentation involves direct observation to obtain data relevant to the research topic. According to Sugiyono, documentation study acts as a complement to observation and interview methods in qualitative research (Sugiyono, 2019). In this study, documentation method is used to collect data in the form of final grades in the subject of *English for Public Speaking*.

Data Analysis

Data Analysis Method

The data analysis method in this study applies linear regression statistical calculations. The steps taken for data analysis are as follows:

Reliability Test

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency and stability of data or findings (Sugiyono, 2019). Data can be declared reliable if two or more studies on the same object produce the same data, if the same researcher produces the same data at different times, or if a set of data, when split into two, shows no difference. The reliability of a variable formed from a list of statements is considered good if it has a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.6.

Validity Test

Validity is a key characteristic of research legitimacy. According to Sugiyono, validity is the degree of accuracy between the data occurring in the research object and the data reported by the researcher (Sugiyono, 2019). According to Sugiharto and Sitinjak, validity relates to a variable measuring what it is supposed to measure (Sitinjak & Sugiarto, 2006). Validity in research indicates the degree of accuracy of the measuring instrument regarding the actual content being measured. The validity test is used to demonstrate the extent to which the measuring instrument measures what it is intended to measure.

A test is said to have high validity if it performs its measuring function, or provides precise and accurate measurement results in accordance with the purpose of the test. Conversely, a test that produces data irrelevant to the measurement objectives is said to have low validity. Another aspect of validity is the precision of measurement. A valid measuring instrument can perform its function precisely and possesses high precision. Precision here means the ability to detect small differences existing in the measured attribute.

Validity testing for questionnaires is distinguished into two types: factor validity and item validity. Factor validity is measured when the items are arranged using more than one factor (where there are similarities between factors). This is measured by correlating the factor score (sum of items within one factor) with the total factor score (overall total of factors) (Sugiyono, 2019).

This study used item validity testing. This is demonstrated by the correlation or support for the total item (total score); the calculation is performed by correlating the item score with the total item score. If more than one factor is used, item validity testing involves correlating the item score with the factor score, followed by correlating the item score with the total factor score (sum of several factors).

The correlation calculation yields a correlation coefficient used to measure the validity level of an item and to determine whether an item is suitable for use. In determining the suitability of an item, a significance test of the correlation coefficient is usually conducted at a significance level of 0.05. This means an item is considered valid if it correlates significantly with the total score.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis is conducted to provide a general overview of the research data characteristics, which includes the minimum, maximum, mean, standard deviation, and variance of each variable. This analysis aims to determine the levels of digital literacy, AI usage, and the respondents' proficiency in *English for Public Speaking*.

Classical Assumption Tests

Prior to conducting multiple linear regression analysis, classical assumption tests are performed to ensure the suitability of the regression model. These tests include:

Normality Test

The normality test is conducted to determine whether the residuals are normally distributed. This test is performed using normal probability plot. The model is considered to fulfill the normality assumption if the data points spread around the diagonal line.

Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test is performed to detect the presence of strong correlations among independent variables. The test is conducted by observing the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values. The model is declared free from multicollinearity if the VIF value is < 10. The test results indicate a VIF value of 1.654 for each independent variable; thus, multicollinearity does not occur.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test is conducted to examine the equality of residual variance. The test involves observing the scatterplot between ZPRED and SRESID. The model is considered free from heteroscedasticity if the data points are spread randomly above and below the zero axis.

Autocorrelation Test

The autocorrelation test is performed using Durbin-Watson (DW) value. The model is declared free from autocorrelation if the DW value lies between the limit of du and 4 – d_u. The test results show a DW value of 1.960, which falls within the range of 1.5838 ≤ DW ≤ 2.4162. Therefore, the model is declared free from autocorrelation.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis is used to determine the effect of digital literacy X_1 and AI usage X_2 on *English for Public Speaking* proficiency Y. The regression equation used is:

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e$$

Note:

Y = English for Public Speaking (Proficiency/Score)
a = Constant
b_1 = Regression coefficient for Digital Literacy
b_2 = Regression coefficient for AI Usage
e = Error term

Hypothesis Testing

Partial Test (t-test)

The t-test is used to determine the partial effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The test is conducted by comparing the calculated value of t-value with t-table or by observing the significance value (α = 0,05).

Simultaneous Test (F-test)

F-test is used to determine the simultaneous effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. The test is performed by comparing the calculated value of F count with F-table or by observing the significance value (α = 0,05).

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination serves to quantify the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variables. R Square value forms the basis for concluding the extent of the impact of digital literacy and AI usage on *English for Public Speaking* skills.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Data Description and Instrument Quality

Based on the descriptive analysis conducted on 35 second-semester student respondents, it was found that the average proficiency in *English for Public Speaking* is classified as high, with a mean score of 3.5429. The usage of *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) also demonstrated good intensity with a mean of 3.2486, while Digital Literacy had a mean of 2.9343. Table 2 below shows the result of descriptive analysis in this study

Table 2. Result of Descriptive Analysis

	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
Literasi Digital	35	2.30	1.70	4.00	102.70	2.9343	.50114	.251
Penggunaan AI	35	2.40	1.80	4.20	113.70	3.2486	.45657	.208
English for Public Speaking	35	1.50	2.50	4.00	124.00	3.5429	.39054	.153
Valid N (listwise)	35							

The quality of the research instruments has been proven valid and reliable. All question items for the Digital Literacy (X_1) and AI Usage (X_2) variables were declared valid as their significance values were 0.000 < 0.05. The reliability test also indicated good consistency, with *Cronbach's Alpha* values of 0.770 for Digital Literacy (X_1) and 0.871 for AI Usage (X_2), where both values are above the threshold of 0.6.

Table 3. Result of Reliability Test of X1

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.770	0.772	10

As presented in the table 3, the reliability test for the Digital Literacy variable X_1 yielded Cronbach's Alpha of 0.770, confirming that the items assessing this variable are reliable.

Table 4. Result of Reliability Test of X2

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.871	0.881	10

As presented in Table 4, the reliability test for the AI Usage variable X_2 yielded Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.871, demonstrating that the items measuring Variable X_2 are reliable.

Classical Assumption Tests

The regression model in this study has fulfilled all classical assumption requirements; thus, the model is declared feasible for use: (1) Normality: The residuals are normally distributed, indicated by the spread of data points around the diagonal line on the normal probability plot. (2) Multicollinearity: There is no strong correlation between independent variables, evidenced by *Variance Inflation Factor* (VIF) value of 1.654 (< 10). Table 5 below shows the result of multicollinearity test of this study.

Table 5. Result of Multicollinearity Test

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	lDigital Literacy	0.605	1.654
	I Usage	0.605	1.654

(1) Heteroscedasticity: Heteroscedasticity does not occur, as the data points on the scatterplot spread randomly above and below the zero axis. (2) Autocorrelation: *Durbin-Watson* (DW) value of 1.960 falls within the range of d_u (1.5838) and 4-d_u (2.4162), indicating the model is free from autocorrelation. Table 6 below shows the result of autocorrelation test.

Table 6. Result of Autocorrelation Test

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.617[a]	.381	.342	.31677	1.960

Regression Analysis Results and Hypothesis Testing

Based on statistical calculations using SPSS version 26, multiple linear regression equation is obtained as follows:

$$Y = 1.797 + 0.053X_1 + 0.489X_2$$

This equation indicates that the constant value for speaking proficiency is 1.797 if other variables are zero. The regression coefficients show that AI usage (0.489) has a greater impact on increasing variable Y compared to digital literacy (0.053). The table below represents the regression analysis result of this study:

Table 7. Result of Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.797	0.402		4.472	0.000
	Digital Literacy	0.053	0.139	0.069	0.384	0.704
	AI Usage	0.489	0.153	0.572	3.195	0.003

The hypothesis test results reveal the following findings:

Partial Effect (t-test):

(1) Digital Literacy (X_1): A significance value of 0.704 > 0.05 and a calculated t-value of 0.384 were obtained. This indicates that partially, digital literacy does not have a significant effect on *English for Public Speaking* proficiency. (2) AI Usage (X_2): A significance value of 0.003 < 0.05 and a calculated t-value of 3.195 were obtained. This proves that AI usage has a significant effect on *English for Public Speaking* proficiency.

Simultaneous Effect (F-test):

The F-test is conducted to determine the simultaneous effect of independent variables on the dependent variable. Table below shows the result of simultaneous Test (F-Test).

Table 8. Result of Simultaneous Test

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.975	2	.987	9.840	.000[b]
	Residual	3.211	32	.100		
	Total	5.186	34			

Simultaneously, Digital Literacy and AI Usage have a significant effect on *English for Public Speaking* proficiency, with a calculated F-value of 9.840 (> F-table 3.295) and a significance value of 0.000.

Coefficient of Determination (R_2) and Correlation

Based on the data analysis results, the R Square value obtained is 0.381 or 38.1%. This indicates that the variables of digital literacy and AI usage are able to explain 38.1% of the variance in

English for Public Speaking proficiency, while the remaining 61.9% is explained by other variables not included in the research model.

The following are the results of Coefficient of Determination and Correlation calculations:

Table 9. Coefficient of Determination and Correlation Calculation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.617[a]	.381	.342	.31677	1.960

The multiple correlation coefficient (R) value of 0.617 or 61.7% indicates the correlation between the digital literacy and AI usage variables with *English for Public Speaking* proficiency.

Discussions

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage on *English for Public Speaking*

The findings of this study indicate that the use of AI exerts a significant influence on *English for Public Speaking* proficiency. This aligns with the trend of technology integration in language learning observed in various recent studies.

Specifically, AI's capability to provide instant and personalized feedback acts as a pivotal factor. This is supported by Fanania and Priyatmojo in their article "*Students' Perception on the Use of AI-based Applications to Practice Pronunciation*", who found that AI-based applications (such as ELSA Speak and Google Translate) are perceived as effective and user-friendly by students for practicing pronunciation due to the personalized feedback feature (Fanania & Priyatmojo, 2025). In the context of public speaking, good pronunciation serves as the primary foundation, and AI facilitates intensive independent practice.

Beyond the technical aspect of pronunciation, AI usage has also been proven to enrich vocabulary, which is crucial for drafting speeches. This finding is supported by the study of Oktadela, Elida, and Ismail in "*Improving English Vocabulary through Artificial Intelligence (AI) Chatbot Application*", which concluded that the use of AI Chatbots can enhance vocabulary mastery and foster student creativity in English (Oktadela et al., 2023). Similarly, Hidayah et al. (2025) in their literature review stated that ChatGPT is capable of improving conversational skills and academic writing, both of which are essential elements in public speaking preparation (Hidayah et al., 2025).

Furthermore, Nasution and Arianto in "*Exploring the role of AI Chatbot in English Language Teaching and Learning*" emphasized that teacher guidance in AI usage substantially increases student engagement and motivation (Nasution & Arianto, 2024). High motivation is directly proportional to self-confidence when speaking in public. This is also confirmed by Cantika and Hasnah in their study of EFL teachers in Thailand, noting that AI tools can boost student confidence and support personalized learning, thereby reducing anxiety when performing speech (Cantika & Hasnah, 2025)

Non-Significant Partial Influence of Digital Literacy

An interesting finding in this study is that partially, digital literacy does not significantly affect *English for Public Speaking* proficiency. Although students possess good digital capabilities, this does not automatically guarantee good speaking skills.

This phenomenon can be explained by referring to the research of Ismail and Jaya entitled "*Perceived Benefits of Oral Presentations in Helping Students Improve Their Confidence in Speaking*". They found that the main challenges in public speaking are speaking anxiety, lack of experience, and fear of making mistakes (Ismail & Jaya, 2026). The primary solution to these issues is direct practice and repeated practice strategies, not merely knowledge of technology. In other words, high digital literacy (the ability to operate tools) will not impact speaking skills if it is not converted into actual speaking practice.

Moreover, general digital literacy may not yet touch upon the specific competencies required in public speaking. As alluded to in the study by Utari et al. regarding "*AI-Mediated Digital Formative Assessment*", the digital literacy of teachers and students must encompass ethical competencies and feedback interpretation (Utari et al., 2026). If students are merely

"able to use" technology but do not utilize it for deliberate practice (such as speech simulation), then the impact on public speaking proficiency remains minimal.

Simultaneous Implications

Although digital literacy is not significant partially, simultaneously (together with AI usage), these two variables contribute 38.1% to the outcome. This indicates that digital literacy acts as a facilitator.

Students require digital literacy to access and operate AI tools (as discussed by Hidayah et al. regarding the necessity of AI literacy). However, it is the tool itself (AI) that directly impacts skill improvement through advanced features such as grammar correction and idea suggestions (paralleling the findings of Capah et al. in "*The Role of ChatGPT in EFL Writing*", which mentions AI's role in gathering ideas and recommending references).

Therefore, the combination of technological understanding (literacy) and the usage of smart features (AI) creates an effective learning ecosystem to enhance public speaking proficiency, similar to the learning model suggested by Hidayanti. The research shows that speaking practice requires stages of "reading", "memorizing", and "delivering", which can now be assisted by technology (Hidayanti, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the data analysis and discussion conducted, the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) The Effect of Digital Literacy: Partially, digital literacy does not have a significant effect on *English for Public Speaking* proficiency among second-semester students at Tiga Serangkai University. This is evidenced by the t-test significance value of 0.704, which is greater than 0.05. (2) The Effect of AI Usage: There is a positive and significant influence from the use of *Artificial Intelligence* (AI) on *English for Public Speaking* proficiency. This is indicated by a significance value of 0.003, which is well below 0.05, as well as a positive regression coefficient of 0.489. The use of AI tools is proven effective in enhancing students' speaking competence. (3) Simultaneous Effect: Simultaneously, digital literacy and AI usage significantly influence *English for Public Speaking* proficiency, with a contribution of 38.1%. This demonstrates that although digital literacy does not significantly affect the outcome independently, the combination of digital understanding and the usage of AI tools plays a vital role in developing students' speaking skills.

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