

**EMPHASIS ON ONLINE LEARNING HABITS AND
INFORMATION LITERACY AMONG LANGUAGE LEARNER**

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***Abstract:** this thesis explores the relationship between online learning habits and information literacy among English language learners. With the rapid development of digital technology, the process of acquiring, evaluating, and using information has changed significantly. The study analyzes the findings of Deniz, Terry, and Oksana (2021), who conducted a qualitative multiple-case study on ESL students' digital information literacy and online reading practices. The present thesis extends their ideas by connecting them to classroom practices in Uzbekistan and the author's professional experience as an ESL teacher. The findings emphasize the importance of training language learners to critically assess online sources and enhance their digital literacy skills for academic and personal development.*

Introduction

The integration of technology into education has transformed how students learn, communicate, and access information. In the context of language education, these changes are particularly noticeable, as learners now rely heavily on online platforms to practice reading, writing, and communication. Information literacy—defined as the ability to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively—has become a vital skill for English language learners (ELLs). However, many learners still face difficulties distinguishing credible sources from unreliable ones, which limits their academic success.

This thesis focuses on online learning habits and information literacy, drawing insights from Deniz, Terry, and Oksana (2021). Their research highlights the importance of teaching ESL learners how to search, evaluate, and interpret digital texts. By reflecting on this study and connecting it to classroom experience in Uzbekistan, this thesis aims to demonstrate practical strategies for improving students' digital literacy and online learning effectiveness.

Literature Review

Several scholars have examined the impact of digital technology on language learning. According to van Lier (2004), learning occurs through the interaction between individuals and their environment, which provides 'affordances'—opportunities for action and understanding. This ecological perspective emphasizes that learners actively construct meaning while engaging with digital texts. Bourdieu (1991) also argued that literacy practices are socially situated and influenced by cultural and contextual factors.

Afflerbach et al. (2008) differentiated between 'skills' and 'strategies,' suggesting that digital literacy involves more than technical abilities; it also includes critical thinking, adaptability, and self-reflection. Creswell and Poth (2017) further support the use of qualitative methods to explore such complex learning behaviors in authentic contexts.

Methodology

The present thesis builds upon the qualitative multiple-case study conducted by Deniz, Terry, and Oksana (2021). Their study involved five ESL students enrolled in a community college writing course in the northeastern United States. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and e-journals, and

analyzed using within- and cross-case analysis methods. In this thesis, the author interprets those findings through the lens of her professional practice as an ESL teacher in Uzbekistan.

In the classroom at School No. 224, the author observed similar challenges: students often struggle with keyword selection, evaluating online sources, and distinguishing trustworthy materials. These insights contribute to understanding how online learning habits can be shaped by proper training and guidance.

Findings and Discussion

The case study by Deniz et al. (2021) revealed that learners benefit from explicit instruction on how to search and evaluate information. Students who received guidance became more confident in selecting relevant materials and identifying credible sources. In the author's own teaching context, similar improvements were observed when students were introduced to digital tools and evaluation techniques.

The ecological framework provides a useful perspective for interpreting these results. As van Lier (2004) suggested, learning environments rich in affordances encourage learners to explore, reflect, and construct meaning. By integrating digital literacy tasks into ESL lessons, teachers can empower students to become independent, critical readers.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion, online learning habits and information literacy are deeply connected in modern language education. Both research evidence and classroom observations highlight the need to provide ESL learners with systematic training in

digital literacy. Teachers should introduce students to search strategies, evaluation criteria, and digital tools that enhance comprehension and critical thinking.

Future studies should explore how these practices evolve across different educational levels and regions, including the specific needs of Uzbek ESL learners. Strengthening digital literacy not only supports language development but also prepares students for lifelong learning.

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