

INTEGRATION OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING AS AN ENGLISH LEARNING MEDIUM TO IMPROVE JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS AND DIGITAL LITERACY.

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ABSTRACT:

The integration of digital technology in English language learning offers opportunities to enhance students' communication skills and digital competence. This study aims to investigate the integration of digital storytelling as a learning medium to improve junior high school students' speaking ability and digital literacy. The study employed a quasi-experimental design using a pre-test and post-test approach. The participants were junior high school students enrolled in an English class. Data were collected through speaking tests, a digital literacy questionnaire, and classroom observations. The findings indicate that the implementation of digital storytelling improved students' speaking performance in terms of pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence in delivering oral narratives. In addition, students demonstrated improved digital literacy through their ability to create and present digital stories using multimedia tools. These results suggest that digital storytelling can serve as an effective technology-based learning strategy to support speaking development and digital literacy in English language classrooms.

Keywords: *digital storytelling, speaking skills, digital literacy, English learning, EFL students*

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has significantly influenced various sectors, including education. The integration of digital technology in learning has become an essential strategy to improve the quality of teaching and learning processes in the 21st century. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, the use of digital media can create more interactive, engaging, and meaningful learning environments that encourage students to actively participate in language learning activities. Technology-enhanced learning also supports the development of important competencies such as communication skills, creativity, and digital literacy, which are increasingly required in modern education. Among the four language skills, speaking is considered one of the most important competencies in learning English because it enables students to express ideas, share information, and interact effectively in various communicative situations. However, many students still face difficulties in developing their speaking skills. These difficulties are often related to limited vocabulary, lack of confidence, anxiety when speaking in front of others, and insufficient opportunities to practice speaking in authentic contexts. Therefore, innovative learning media that can facilitate active student participation and provide meaningful speaking practice are needed in English language classrooms.

One instructional approach that has gained increasing attention in recent years is digital storytelling. Digital storytelling refers to the practice of combining traditional storytelling with digital multimedia elements such as images, audio, text, and video to create engaging narratives. Through the process of designing and producing digital stories, students are encouraged to organize ideas, practice pronunciation and fluency, and present their stories orally. Previous studies have shown that digital storytelling can enhance students' motivation, creativity, and communication skills in language learning (Robin, 2016; Yang & Wu, 2012). More recent studies also suggest that integrating digital storytelling into language learning can support students' speaking development and increase their engagement in technology-enhanced learning environments.

In addition to improving speaking skills, digital storytelling also has the potential to enhance students' digital literacy. Digital literacy refers to the ability to access, evaluate, create, and communicate information using digital technologies effectively and responsibly (Ng, 2012). When students create digital stories, they engage in various activities such as writing scripts, recording narration, editing multimedia content, and presenting their work using digital tools. These activities help students develop both language competence and technological skills that are essential for learning in the digital era. Although previous studies have highlighted the benefits of digital storytelling in language learning, research that simultaneously examines its role in improving speaking skills and digital literacy among junior high school students remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the integration of digital storytelling as a learning medium in English language teaching to enhance students' speaking ability and digital literacy at the junior high school level. The findings of this study are expected to contribute to the development of innovative technology-based English language learning practices in schools.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quasi-experimental research design using a pre-test and post-test approach to examine the effectiveness of integrating digital storytelling in English language learning. The design was chosen because it allows researchers to measure the impact of an instructional intervention on students' learning outcomes by comparing their performance before and after the treatment. In this study, digital storytelling was implemented as a learning medium to improve students' speaking skills and digital literacy.

Research Participants

The participants of this study were junior high school students enrolled in an English class. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, considering that the selected class had relatively similar English proficiency levels and had access to digital learning facilities. The participants were involved in a series of learning activities that integrated digital storytelling into the speaking learning process.

Research Instruments

Several instruments were used to collect data in this study:

Speaking_Test

The speaking test was administered as a pre-test and post-test to measure students' speaking ability before and after the implementation of digital storytelling. The assessment focused on several aspects of speaking performance, including pronunciation, fluency, grammar, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Digital_Literacy_Questionnaire

A questionnaire was used to measure students' level of digital literacy. The questionnaire included items related to students' ability to access digital tools, evaluate information, create digital content, and use technology responsibly in learning activities.

Observation_Sheet

Classroom observations were conducted during the learning process to record students' participation, engagement, and interaction while creating and presenting their digital stories.

Research Procedure

The research was conducted in several stages:

Pre-test

At the beginning of the study, students were given a speaking test to assess their initial speaking ability.

Implementation of Digital Storytelling

During the treatment phase, students were introduced to digital storytelling as a learning activity. They worked individually or in groups to create digital stories by writing scripts, recording narration, and combining multimedia elements such as images, audio, and video.

Presentation of Digital Stories

Students presented their digital storytelling projects in class. This activity provided opportunities for them to practice speaking and share their stories with classmates.

Post-test

After the learning intervention, students completed a post-test to measure improvements in their speaking ability.

Questionnaire Administration

Students also completed a digital literacy questionnaire to evaluate the development of their digital skills during the learning process.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive and inferential statistics. The speaking test scores from the pre-test and post-test were compared to determine the improvement in students' speaking ability after the implementation of digital storytelling. In addition, the responses from the digital literacy questionnaire were analyzed to describe students' level of digital literacy. The results of the analysis were then interpreted to determine the effectiveness of digital storytelling as a learning medium in improving students' speaking skills and digital literacy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study describe the impact of integrating digital storytelling as a learning medium in English language learning, particularly in improving students' speaking ability and digital literacy. The findings were obtained from the analysis of the speaking test results, the digital literacy questionnaire, and classroom observations conducted during the implementation of the learning activities. The analysis of the speaking test results indicated that the integration of digital storytelling contributed to an improvement in students' speaking ability. The comparison between the pre-test and post-test scores showed that students demonstrated better performance in several aspects of speaking, including pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary use, and confidence in delivering spoken narratives. During the digital storytelling activities, students were required to prepare story scripts, practice their narration, and present their stories using multimedia elements. These activities provided students with meaningful opportunities to practice speaking in a more engaging and contextual learning environment. As a result, students became more confident in expressing their ideas orally and were more willing to participate in classroom discussions.

Classroom observations also revealed that students were more actively engaged during the learning process when digital storytelling was implemented. Students showed greater enthusiasm when working on their digital stories, particularly when selecting images, recording their voices, and editing their storytelling projects using digital tools. The collaborative nature of the activity also encouraged interaction among students as they exchanged ideas, discussed story development, and provided feedback to one another. This finding suggests that digital storytelling can promote a more student-centered learning environment that supports active learning and communication practice.

In addition to improving speaking ability, the findings of the study also indicated that digital storytelling contributed to the development of students' digital literacy. Based on the results of the digital literacy questionnaire, students demonstrated increased familiarity with digital tools and improved ability to use technology to create and present digital content. Through the process of producing digital stories, students learned how to search for visual materials, organize multimedia elements, and use digital applications to produce a coherent narrative. These activities helped students develop essential digital skills such as information selection, multimedia integration, and responsible use of technology.

The results of this study are consistent with previous research indicating that digital storytelling can enhance students' language learning experiences by integrating creativity, technology, and communication. The storytelling process allows students to connect language learning with meaningful expression, while the digital component encourages them to engage with technology in productive ways. Furthermore, digital storytelling supports the development of multiple competencies simultaneously, including linguistic, cognitive, and technological skills. Overall, the findings suggest that integrating digital storytelling as a learning medium in English language classrooms can provide significant benefits for students. The approach not only supports the improvement of speaking ability but also promotes the development of digital literacy,

which is an essential competence in contemporary education. Therefore, the integration of digital storytelling can be considered an effective strategy for creating more interactive and technology-enhanced English language learning environments at the junior high school level.

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