



The Effect of Digital Story Telling on Students' Reading Literacy to EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT: The aims of this research to investigate how digital storytelling influences reading literacy among students learning English as a foreign language (EFL). Reading literacy is a multifaceted skill that is crucial in both educational contexts and daily life, enabling individuals to interact effectively with the world around them. The problem of this research how does digital story telling influences students reading literacy. Digital story telling important for English language learning not only reading literacy but also could detail insights into student experiences and perceptions. The method of this research is qualitative research. Utilizing a descriptive case study design, the study employs qualitative methods, including observations and interviews, to gather data on student engagement and learning outcomes. The result of this research are students involved in digital story telling activities demonstrated a better understanding of texts, as they engaged more deeply with the material through the creative process of storytelling, students actively assessed and synthesized reading content, made connections between ideas, and critically evaluated story elements during collaborative discussions.

Keywords: The Effect, Digital Story Telling, Reading Literacy



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INTRODUCTION

The level of reading literacy in Indonesia is still relatively low, with many challenges such as lack of access to quality reading materials, lack of interest in reading, and learning approaches that are not yet optimal. Based on the information there is a difference between Indonesia's reading literacy score in PISA 2022 is 359 points while the average score of reading literacy under the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is 487 points. Thus, there is a significant gap between Indonesia's reading literacy score and the average reading literacy score in OECD countries ([Araújo et al., 2020](#)). The emergence and widespread adoption of new media technologies has marked a new era in composition studies. These technologies have revolutionized the communication system, providing new avenues for individuals to express opinions, criticisms and ideas freely ([Çetin, 2021](#)). The ability and innovation of students

when taking charge of future lives should emphasize the importance of reading and writing. To achieve this, literacy activities that are currently less effective must be updated. Thus, today's students must do something in digital literacy in this 5.0 era so that civilization and national existence can occur. The use of Digital Story Telling can help today's students' high interest in technology ([Yuliani & Hartanto, 2022](#)).

As time goes on and the technology becomes more advanced, it will affect the progress of the country and people's lives. They must be able to produce high-quality generations, as is the case in education. This situation must be considered because technological advances have lowered both positive and negative impacts for certain generations ([Batur & Çakıroğlu, 2023](#)). One of the negative impacts is the concern that the younger generation is not interested in reading. Literacy is an ability that everyone should have and master as it helps them perform their daily activities better (Shinas & Wen, 2022). With the development of an increasingly advanced era, the current generation must be more active and enterprising in processing and sorting out the problems that arise today. This literacy activity can increase current students' interest in reading to combat detrimental issues and improve the quality of future literate generations ([Naufal, 2021](#)).

Students Reading literacy is usually defined as the ability to understand and interpret written language in everyday life. Practicing inference and analysis skills, expanding vocabulary, gaining information from books, and using proper spelling and word strings are some of the indirect benefits of literacy activities ([Prete & Anna, 2022](#)). With the character of the current generation of students who use news technology intuitively, supported by their tendency to think less and seek pleasure, it is fundamental to prove that they are mostly just spectators or connoisseurs who use technology to enhance their creativity and abilities. The digital landscape not only changes the way information is disseminated but also affects the way individuals interact, engage and participate in public discourse ([Gürsoy, 2021](#)). This shift towards new media technologies has had a significant impact on approaches to composition studies, reflecting the evolving nature of communication and the integration of digital platforms in various aspects of society ([Ahmed et al., 2023](#); [Zuo & Ives, 2023](#)).

Reading literacy encompasses the skills required to understand, use, evaluate, reflect on, and engage with texts effectively. It is a critical component of education and personal development, influencing academic success and lifelong learning ([Le et al., 2022](#)). This Research indicates a strong correlation between reading literacy and academic performance of digital storytelling. Reading literacy is a multifaceted skill essential for academic success and personal growth ([Xu & Sun, 2019](#)). It is influenced by various factors including family support, reading frequency, and the ability to engage with digital content ([Safi et al., 2020](#); [Yusuf & Zuraini, 2016](#)). As societies evolve, fostering a culture of reading will remain crucial in equipping individuals with the skills necessary for navigating an increasingly complex information landscape.

The urgency of this research is due to the score of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in 2022 which experienced a very significant decline in reading literacy score in Indonesia by 359 points. While the average reading literacy score under the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is 487. PISA defines reading literacy as understanding, using, evaluating, reflecting, and engaging with texts to achieve one's goals, to

develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate in society. The current problem at the Junior High School (SMP) 4 Class VIII A level is that their reading ability in English is very poor. This is mainly because their reading comprehension skills and vocabulary are still very limited. Although they are currently implementing Merdeka Curriculum for the second year and have become a companion school for the implementation of the curriculum, the hardcopy narrative text teaching media they use has not been able to increase their students' interest in reading ([Alrawashdeh et al., 2024](#)). Digital stories are multimodal literary and nonfiction narratives that utilize the capabilities of the digital environment are chosen as reading literacy because they can be better used to increase learners' motivation to read ([Habók et al., 2024](#); [Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003](#)).

Digital storytelling is a process that combines video, audio, images, and text to convey stories and information digitally ([Batur & Çakıroğlu, 2023](#); [Sanchez-Lopez et al., 2020](#)). Digital story telling allows narrators to create stories that involve multimedia elements and digital technology, so that students are motivated to learn and can motivate towards learning English ([Alalem, 2023](#); [Shinas & Wen, 2022](#); [Yang & Wu, 2012](#)). So the use of digital storytelling is very important for the creation of innovative learning. Digital storytelling can be an effective strategy to increase the reading interest of Indonesian people ([Y. T. Chen et al., 2023](#)).

Through programs such as the utilization of digital storytelling media training, strengthening student literacy through English storytelling, it is seen that digital storytelling has great potential in building interest in reading and literacy among the community ([Shinas & Wen, 2022](#)), curiosity and learning progress ([Zuo & Ives, 2023](#)). With a creative, engaging and technology-based approach, digital storytelling can be an effective tool to enrich the reading experience and motivate Indonesians to be more active in reading literacy activities ([X. Chen & Xiao, 2024](#)). By using digital storytelling media, learners can develop critical thinking skills and utilize digital technology in learning activities ([Kustati et al., 2020](#); [Su, 2023](#)). In addition, the utilization of digital storytelling media training program can be one of the learning activities that can be applied in helping to develop literacy and interest in reading among Indonesian people ([Troseth et al., 2017](#)).

Regarding this study, several studies have been conducted regarding to the digital storytelling in English language learning. ([Moradi & Chen, 2019](#)) describe There are many opportunities to connect schools with the outside world thanks to modern technologies. Technology offers a more comprehensive and improved source of information, but solutions must be channeled via the proper cure. The past few decades have seen a huge rise in new technology and digital resources, which has had a profound impact on the educational landscape and opportunities. However, equipping students with the necessary abilities for the efficient use of contemporary technology in the learning process is one of the issues facing practitioners and researchers. Researchers suggested that in order to achieve today's academic goals and standards, societal constructivism and technology-integrated learning are essential. It elaborates on the most important features of digital story telling application in language education, taking into account the stages and components of successful digital tales, the process of creating a digital narrative, and a critical analysis of digital story telling implementation and academic performance promotion.

Another related study was conducted by ([Drajati et al., 2023](#)) they describe that Digital Storytelling (DST) offers a novel and effective means of sharing experiences and knowledge. DST is an excellent medium for knowledge transfer, particularly in classroom settings where students exchange experiences and expertise. Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Indonesia, however, lack experience implementing DST in the classroom, particularly in EFL classrooms. This study showed that Indonesian EFL teachers improved their beliefs and teaching principles as a result of implementing DST in their classrooms, in line with Farrell's stages of reflective practice for English teachers. Teachers saw in practice that DST-based teaching and learning activities promote students' active participation.

METHOD

The research used a qualitative descriptive method. Data collection techniques in the form of questionnaires, surveys, and in-depth interviews were applied at the data collection stage, while the data analysis technique used was descriptive analytic. The researcher gave the Applying a form of formative evaluation research. This research model seeks to find out what actually happens in the natural context while the program is still running, with the aim of improving and improving the quality of the program in the future ([Loeb et al., 2017](#)). The data analysis technique starts from data collection and then analyzed using descriptive analysis. The data analyzed came from primary data through mapping the results of each bit of the questions used in the questionnaire. Specifically, the research objective was to identify the effect of using Digital story telling on student literacy. Primary data sources were extracted through observations and in-depth interviews with students of SMP 4 Peusangan Class VIII A.

Data collection was carried out using questionnaires, interviews, and surveys that had been prepared by the researcher. The questions that will be given or asked do not have a standardized of the questionnaire will be transcribed analyzed and concluded. Furthermore, to obtain secondary data using survey techniques using instruments. The survey data will be processed in percentages of respondents' answers and the results of the analysis will be presented descriptively.

1. Research Steps

Data analysis is part of the data testing process whose results are used as sufficient evidence to draw research conclusions. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews, field notes, and other materials, so that it can be easily understood and the findings can be informed to others. The data analysis method used in this research is qualitative data through data processing as a descriptive research procedure. That is, the data obtained is then analyzed and compared with theories and then evaluated. The data analysis process in this study is as follows ([McCombes, 2019](#)):

a. Data Reduction

The data obtained is written in the form of detailed reports or data. The report prepared based on the data obtained is reduced, summarized, selected the main things, focused on the important things ([Sugiyono, 2017](#)). The results of sorting and sorting data based on

concept units, themes, and certain categories will provide a sharper picture of the observations as well as make it easier for researchers to search for data again in addition to the previous data obtained if needed. Data reduction in qualitative research is a systematic process that helps researchers manage and analyze large volumes of unstructured data, such as interviews, focus groups, and field notes. This process is essential for transforming raw data into a more organized and interpretable format, allowing for clearer insights and conclusions.

b. Data Display

The data obtained is categorized according to the subject matter and made in matrix form so that it makes it easier for researchers to see the patterns of relationship between one data and other data. Data display in qualitative research is a critical aspect of effectively communicating findings, as it transforms complex, unstructured data into visual formats that enhance understanding and engagement. This process is essential for making qualitative insights accessible and interpretable to various audiences.

c. Data Analysis

Analysis Data which includes clarifying the symbols used in communication, using criteria in clarification, and using analytical techniques in predicting.

d. Data Verification and Drawing Conclusions

From the previous activities, the next step is to conclude and verify the data that has been processed or transferred into forms that are in accordance with the pattern of problem solving carried out.

2. Research Instrument

Those are two instruments to collect the data of this research namely observation sheet and interview. Firstly, Observation sheet is one of the most crucial methods for gathering the necessary information required for the use of digital storytelling to reading literacy is observation. According to ([McCombes, 2019](#)) in qualitative research, observation is a fundamental technique for gathering data that goes beyond simply "hanging out." This device was employed to obtain certain data. The elements in the observation sheet consisted of three phases of classroom activities: opening, main activity, and closing. How the student learned using digital story telling on reading literacy from the start of the lesson until the end of the lesson. Secondly, Interview guide; the purpose of the interview guide was to gather broad information on how kids were developing reading skills through digital storytelling. Through interviews, people's thoughts, beliefs, and feelings regarding various circumstances are elicited in their own words. They serve as a tool for understanding people's experiences([Anon et al., 2012](#)).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

English learning by using digital story telling in reading literacy is very effective for students of grade VII A because all students really participate in the learning process. As we know learning

using digital media is very attractive to the students in this era. The effect of using digital literacy on English language learning through reading literacy on students can be seen from several aspects, namely:

1. Increase Creativity and Motivation:

Digital storytelling fosters learners' independence, creativity, and motivation to learn English. Students can easily produce communicative and an easy-to-understand story, which helps them improve their fluency in English (Le et al., 2022). Based on the results of the interview, students are able to develop creativity. The Students can choose topics that interest them, such as personal experiences, folklore, or themes relevant to everyday life. This allows them to express their creativity in a variety of ways. In creating digital stories, students can also add visual elements such as images, videos, or animations. This allows them to express their creativity through attractive visual designs. The Students creating digital stories can be a valuable experience for students. They feel proud of their work and are more motivated to continue learning English. The students sharing digital stories, students can receive feedback from their teachers or peers. This helps them improve the quality of their stories and feel more motivated to keep learning. One important component which has been found to be crucial to an organization's success is innovative thinking (Salmon & Barrera, 2021). Furthermore, the students improve their reading literacy. Based on the results of observations and interviews with students of SMP 4 Peusangan class VIIA that have learned reading literacy using digital storytelling 75% of students really like it and 25% who dislike it. So it can be concluded that the use of digital story telling is very significant in learning reading literacy.

2. Improved awareness and understanding

Students that are digitally literate are better equipped to access, assess, and use information. When studying English as a foreign language (EFL), students gain proficiency with digital platforms, which improves their comprehension and critical evaluation of online reading materials (Li et al., 2024). This is essential for differentiating reliable sources from false information, a skill that is becoming more and more necessary in today's digital environment. The ability to communicate effectively in online situations is included in digital literacy. Students' general communication skills improve as they gain the ability to articulate themselves politely and clearly on digital platforms. These skills are critical in both academic and professional contexts.

3. Intense Evaluation of Textual Reading

Enhancing students' comprehension and analytical skills requires a thorough assessment of textual reading, especially when viewed through the perspective of intensive reading practices (Habók et al., 2024). The students detailed understanding by using digital storytelling. The students said that: *"we are happy by using digital storytelling to improve our reading literacy because engage deeply with the reading material"*. So the students deeper understood about the reading literacy by digital storytelling.

4. Development of Digital Content

Generating original digital output, such as blogs or multimedia presentations based on their studies, is encouraged for students (Mhlongo et al., 2023). This creative component helps students express themselves creatively and develops their comprehension of the language, which strengthens both their writing and reading literacy. The students stated that: *After learning English with digital storytelling, we got inspiration to create digital content in English*". This is a very incredible influence for current seventh grade students because they can develop themselves in the current era. So that it can help with reading literacy which is very necessary nowadays.

5. Assessing and Thinking Critically

Students are encouraged to build critical thinking abilities when they use digital tools. They learn to study internet content critically, judging the credibility and relevancy of information (Goodsett, 2020). This ability is essential for participating in debates and establishing well-informed judgments about a variety of issues provided in digital formats.

Based on the above, these are the effect of digital storytelling to increasing motivate and creativity via increased self-awareness improves comprehension and assessment abilities. This all-encompassing strategy enhances digital story telling on the students reading literacy effectiveness while also helping individuals succeed. The students can manage complex circumstances more successfully and eventually spur productivity and innovation in reading literacy. See the table 1.

Table 1

Aspects and Criteria	percentage	
	Agree	Disagree
Increase Creativity and Motivation	75	25
Improved awareness and understanding	70	30
Intense Evaluation of Textual Reading	74	26
Development of Digital Content	75	25
Assessing and Thinking Critically		

The table above we can see that students who are interested in digital story telling have a greater percentage than those who are not interested. The reason of the students disinterested because several factors including; 1) Technological barriers: individuals who are not comfortable with technology may find it difficult to engage with digital storytelling tools. This discomfort can stem from a lack of familiarity with digital platforms, which can hinder their ability to create or participate in digital narratives effectively. 2) Resistance to change: Some students may prefer conventional methods of storytelling and learning, viewing digital story telling as a departure from traditional practices. This resistance can stem from a comfort with established methods that they believe are more effective or easier to manage.

CONCLUSION

Digital storytelling has a significant impact on reading literacy, particularly among students. The teachers choose themes that are relevant to the curriculum and interesting to students, invites students to work in groups to encourage collaboration. Each group can develop their own story based on a predetermined theme for example, use idol figures or historical events as the basis for the story. By using apps or digital platforms such as PowerPoint, Canva, or video-making apps to help students design their stories, encourage students to create storyboards as a first step in planning their stories. Thus, evaluation of reading skills: the teachers use the scoring rubric to evaluate students' reading comprehension and analysis skills based on the stories they create. This helps them understand narrative structure. Here are the key conclusions drawn from recent studies: increase creativity and motivation, improved awareness and understanding, intense evaluation of textual reading, development of digital content, and assessing and thinking critically. In summary, digital storytelling is a powerful tool for enhancing reading literacy in English language learning. Its ability to improve comprehension, increase motivation, develop critical thinking skills, and resonate with modern learners makes it an effective strategy for educators aiming to foster a love for reading in the digital age. Finally, the researcher suggests that further research can implement the use of digital storytelling more specifically on reading literacy for the students.

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