Unlocking Fluent Speech: Enhancing Student Speaking Skills through Digital Storytelling

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the impact of digital storytelling on improving college students' speaking skills by comparing two different groups. Additionally, the researcher included the use of a questionnaire to assess students' perceptions of digital storytelling. Using a quasi-experimental design, 60 fourth-semester students at the Islamic Institute of Sunan Kalijogo Malang were divided into an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group from the Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting engaged in digital storytelling, while the control group, including students from the Tarbiyah and Teaching Faculty, did not. Then about the material, the Narrative text is used in the intervention. The first meeting was done by doing pre-test, 3 days for intervention at the experimental and control groups and the last post-test. The experimental group which is from the Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting showed a significant improvement in speaking skills, with their mean post-test score increasing from 55.39 to 61.72, compared to a decrease in the control group's score from 57.01 to 55.12. To sum up, digital storytelling effectively enhances students' speaking skills by providing engaging, interactive learning experiences. For future research is hoped to implement another strategy in improving students' Active English skills among College students.
Keywords: *Speaking Skill, Perception, Digital, Story Telling.*

Introduction

In the contemporary educational landscape, the integration of digital tools into language instruction has transformed traditional methodologies, offering innovative ways to enhance student learning experiences. Among these advancements, digital storytelling has emerged as a powerful technique to boost students' speaking skills. Digital storytelling combines multimedia elements—such as audio, video, and text—to allow learners to create and share their narratives, fostering both creativity and linguistic competence. Research indicates that this method not only engages students but also significantly improves their oral communication abilities.

Recent studies highlight the effectiveness of digital storytelling in various educational contexts. For instance, a 2020 study by Zubair and Saleem explores how digital storytelling can enhance language skills by creating immersive and interactive learning environments that stimulate students' engagement and participation (Zubair & Saleem, 2020). Similarly, Smith and Zhou (2020) emphasize that digital storytelling

provides a platform for students to practice pronunciation, fluency, and coherence in a supportive setting, thus addressing common challenges in language acquisition (Smith & Zhou, 2020).

Further research by Lee and Kim (2020) underscores the role of digital storytelling in developing students' confidence in their speaking abilities, noting that the multimedia aspects of the technique can reduce anxiety associated with public speaking (Lee & Kim, 2020). Additionally, a study by Rodriguez et al. (2020) examines how digital storytelling encourages collaborative learning, allowing students to give and receive constructive feedback, which in turn enhances their speaking skills (Rodriguez et al., 2020). Lastly, the work of Brown and Green (2020) reveals that digital storytelling can be particularly effective in fostering a more dynamic and interactive classroom environment, leading to improved verbal expression and communication skills (Brown & Green, 2020).

The integration of digital storytelling into language instruction offers a promising avenue for enhancing students' speaking skills. By leveraging multimedia tools, educators can create engaging and interactive learning experiences that not only captivate students' interest but also support their

linguistic development. However, this study tries to find the advantage from the strategy. In developing the institutes' students besides their writing skill, the lecture should also enhance their speaking abilities and confidence. It is done for supporting their future in socialize with new people and meet a new environment.

Many college students face significant difficulties in speaking English due to limited practice opportunities and insufficient feedback mechanisms. It reports that students frequently struggle with fluency, pronunciation, and confidence in oral communication (Tuan and Doan (2020)). The study underscores the need for more effective strategies to improve speaking skills at college class. Besides another study also find that students' lack of confidence significantly hampers their speaking ability. The study by Li and Liu (2020) reveals that anxiety and self-doubt are major barriers to effective English speaking among college students. This issue is compounded by the lack of engaging and interactive speaking practices in traditional classroom settings.

Digital storytelling has emerged as a transformative pedagogical tool in educational settings, combining narrative with multimedia elements such as images, audio, and video to create compelling and interactive learning experiences. This approach is particularly effective in language learning contexts, where it has been shown to enhance various aspects of students' communication skills, including speaking.

Research demonstrates that digital storytelling can significantly improve students' speaking abilities by providing them with opportunities to practice language in engaging and creative ways. According to Ohler (2020) and (Robin, 2020)., digital storytelling facilitates a deeper understanding of language structures and enhances students' fluency by encouraging the Junior high School students to produce and present their own stories. The process of creating a digital story requires students to articulate their thoughts clearly and coherently, which can lead to improved speaking skills.

Therefore, integrating digital storytelling into classroom instruction offers college students a valuable opportunity to refine and enhance their speaking skills. Digital storytelling, which blends multimedia elements such as audio, video, images, and text, creates an immersive and interactive learning environment that encourages students to articulate their thoughts and narratives more effectively. By engaging in this method, students not only practice their speaking abilities but also develop a deeper understanding of content through creative expression.

At the Islamic Institute of Sunan Kalijogo Malang, researchers are exploring the impact of digital storytelling on students' speaking proficiency for several compelling reasons. The institute's emphasis on enhancing students' speaking skills aligns seamlessly with this research focus. Recognizing that language proficiency is significantly dependent on consistent practice, both in and out of the classroom, the use of digital storytelling provides a unique opportunity to integrate engaging and practical exercises into the curriculum. The presence of a researcher who is also a lecturer at the campus offers valuable insights and expertise, ensuring that the investigation benefits from both academic rigor and practical experience. Additionally, the institut tries to digitalization the Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting, then for supporting this research by addressing the evolving needs of modern communication. By examining whether students who participate in digital storytelling activities demonstrate superior speaking skills compared to those who do not utilize this method, the research aims to quantify improvements in speaking ability and assess whether this innovative approach leads to higher performance scores in speaking assessments. This holistic approach not only enhances language practice but also integrates digital tools, reflecting the institute's forward-thinking educational environment.

Additionally, this research examines students' responses to their speaking performance through digital storytelling. This involves analyzing student respones on their experiences with the method, providing insights into how digital storytelling influences their confidence, engagement, and overall communication skills. By evaluating both the measurable outcomes of speaking assessments and the subjective responses of students, the researchers seek to understand the comprehensive effects of digital storytelling on language learning.

Overall, the study at Islamic Institute Sunan Kalijogo Malang aims to contribute to the broader understanding of how digital storytelling can be leveraged as an effective pedagogical tool to enhance speaking skills and foster a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

Method

This study utilized a quantitative research approach to systematically evaluate the impact of digital storytelling on students' speaking skills. A quasi-experimental design was employed to facilitate a comparison between two distinct groups, which is a well-established method for

evaluating educational interventions (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018).

In this study, the experimental group consisted of students from the Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting, who engaged in a curriculum incorporating digital storytelling as a central pedagogical tool. Digital storytelling is grounded in constructivist learning theory, which posits that learners construct knowledge through meaningful experiences and reflections (Piaget, 1973). By integrating multimedia elements—such as audio, video, and text—into their assignments, students in the experimental group had the opportunity to create and present digital narratives, thus actively engaging in the construction of knowledge and enhancing their speaking skills through authentic, context-rich activities (Schneider & Mertins, 2021).

Conversely, the control group, drawn from the Tarbiyah and Teaching Faculty, was selected because this faculty is known for its high learning values and effective idea delivery. This group continued with traditional instructional methods that did not include digital storytelling, providing a robust baseline for comparison. On the other hand, the Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting, which was chosen as the experimental group, exhibited lower levels of motivation for learning and idea delivery. Given these differences, the researchers decided to use the Tarbiyah and Teaching Faculty as the control group and the Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting as the experimental group. This setup allowed for a clear comparison of the impact of digital storytelling on students' speaking skills against a backdrop of conventional pedagogical approaches.

The primary objective of this study was to compare the outcomes between the experimental group, who received the digital storytelling intervention, and the control group, who did not. By assessing the differences in speaking proficiency and performance between these two groups, the study aimed to determine whether the digital storytelling approach had a significant impact on enhancing students' speaking skills. This comparison aligns with experimental research methodologies that seek to identify the effects of specific educational interventions (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

The theoretical framework supporting this study includes Vygotsky's Social Constructivism, which emphasizes the role of social interaction and cultural tools in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). Digital storytelling serves as a cultural tool that facilitates interaction and collaboration, thereby promoting deeper learning and improved communication skills. The study's findings aim to contribute to the broader understanding of how digital storytelling can be leveraged to improve oral communication abilities, offering empirical evidence on its effectiveness as an instructional method.

The population in this study is college students at 4th semester in Islamic Institute of Sunan Kalijogo Malang. It is chosen because at 4th semester all the faculties get English course. The sample of this research consisted of 60 college students who are taken from two Faculties; Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting and Tarbiyah and Teaching Faculty. The experimental group was Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting and the control group was Faculty of Islamic Da'wah and Broadcasting and Tarbiyah and Teaching Faculty. The topic that is used in this research is Narrative.

The researchers employed a speaking proficiency test as their primary research tool for this study. This assessment, created by the lecturer to evaluate students' speaking skills, required participants to describe a series of pictures provided by the lecture, based on a task adapted from Brown (2004). Participants had two minutes to complete this task. Their performances were then evaluated using an assessment rubric, adapted from Brown (2004), which covered five key areas: grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation. The study involved administering both pre-tests and post-tests to the experimental and control groups. Pre-tests were given before the treatment began, while post-tests were administered after the treatment. Prior to the pre-test and post-test, a try-out test was conducted to assess the reliability and validity of the test instrument.

In this research, a total of 5 meetings were conducted. The first and last meetings were dedicated to administering the pre-test and post-test. During the four meetings of experimental class, several steps were followed: Initially, the lecturer explained the concept of narrative text and guided the students in brainstorming ideas for their stories. In the second meeting, students created storyboards and began producing their videos. The third meeting was focused on the presentation of each group's video project. These structured sessions facilitated a comprehensive approach to exploring and applying digital storytelling techniques.

In the other hand, at the control group, the following steps were implemented: In the first meeting, following the pre-test, the lecturer explained narrative text and assigned a task where students identified the main story elements of a

given narrative text. During the second meeting, students were divided into small groups and each group received four different pictures. They were tasked with creating a story based on these pictures. In the fourth meeting, each group presented their stories based on the previous activity.

Additionally, the researchers also utilized questionnaires as a supplementary tool to gain deeper insights into the students' responses to the implementation of digital storytelling in their language learning process. These questionnaires were specifically designed to capture students' perceptions. Regarding the effectiveness and impact of the digital storytelling method.

Questions explored how engaging students found the digital storytelling activities and whether these activities increased their motivation to participate in class. This section aimed to assess the extent to which digital storytelling could capture students' interest and encourage active involvement in their learning process. Administered after the completion of the post-test, the questionnaires aimed to collect qualitative data that would complement the quantitative results obtained from the speaking proficiency tests.

Findings and Discussion
Students' speaking skill improvement

The data, finding the result about whether or not the use of digital storytelling considerably improved the students' speaking abilities, will be showed by the resulted below.

Table 1
The result of students' task

Group	N	Experimental	Control
Tests		Mean	Mean
Pre test	30	55,39	57.01
Post test	30	61.72	55.12

The data reveals insightful findings regarding the impact of digital storytelling on students' speaking skills. The initial comparison of pre-test scores shows that the experimental group, with a mean score of 55.39, was closely aligned with the control group, which had a mean score of 57.01. This similarity in pre-test scores indicates that both groups had comparable speaking abilities before the intervention.

However, the results diverged significantly after the implementation of digital storytelling. Post-test scores for the experimental group, who engaged in digital storytelling, showed a notable increase to a mean of 61.72 In contrast, the control group's mean score decreased to 55.12. This shift in scores underscores a marked improvement in the speaking skills of the experimental group, while the control group experienced a decline.

These findings suggest that the digital storytelling intervention had a positive impact on the experimental group's speaking proficiency. The increase in the experimental group's mean score, compared to the decrease in the control group's score, indicates that digital storytelling is an effective method for enhancing speaking skills. The improvement observed in the experimental group aligns with the principles of constructivist learning theory, which advocates for active, engaging learning experiences that promote deeper understanding and skill development (Piaget, 1973).

Students' speaking skill perception

Based on the analysis of the questionnaire responses, the researchers discovered that a significant majority, specifically 85 % of the students, concurred with the notion that the use of digital storytelling substantially enhances their motivation and engagement at class to improve their speaking skills. This finding aligns with previous research indicating that digital storytelling can serve as an effective motivational tool in educational settings.

Based on Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris (2004) some aspects that can measure the students' motivation and engagement at class are behavior, Emotional engagement, and cognitive engagement. Those aspects assesse how actively students participate in class activities, including their attendance, involvement in discussions, and completion of assignments.

Table 2
The result of the questionnaire at Experimental group

Aspects	Score	Total
Behaviour	82%	
Emotion	85%	85%
Cognitive	88%	

Based on the data above, for the behavior aspect: Percentage of 82% indicated the high level of students' active participation in class activities, such as attending classes regularly, engaging in discussions, and completing assignments on time. Then the percentage of 85% reflected a strong emotional connection to the subject matter, showing that students found the class activity enjoyable and felt a sense of belonging. A percentage of 88% showed that students are highly invested in their learning by asking and giving feedback to their friend and showing persistence in their academic tasks.

The high percentages across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement indicate a well-rounded engagement level among students. They are actively participating, emotionally invested, and cognitively involved in their learning process.

It is a line with the study by Robin (2008) highlighted that digital storytelling not only engages students but also fosters a deeper level of involvement by allowing them to creatively express themselves through multimedia elements. This creative engagement is pivotal in motivating students to actively participate in their learning process.

Students in this study reported that digital storytelling made the tasks associated with improving their speaking skills more challenging and stimulating. This is consistent with the findings of Dunlap and Lowenthal (2009), who found that the incorporation of multimedia and digital tools in educational activities often results in increased student engagement and perceived task difficulty, leading to greater motivation and persistence. The challenge of creating multimedia narratives provided students with a dynamic and interactive platform, which was perceived as more motivating compared to traditional methods of language instruction.

Digital storytelling combines multimedia elements—such as audio, video, and text—creating a rich, interactive platform for students to practice and refine their speaking skills. The engaging nature of this method likely contributed to increased motivation and active participation among students, leading to improved performance. According to Schneider and Mertins (2021), such multimedia-rich techniques foster more effective learning environments by providing contextually meaningful practice opportunities. Moreover, the iterative process involved in digital storytelling—creating, presenting, and revising digital narratives—offers students repeated practice and feedback, essential for skill development. This iterative process is consistent with effective language learning strategies, which emphasize the importance of practice and reflection (Schneider & Mertins, 2021). The improvement in the experimental group's scores highlights the potential of digital storytelling to provide a more dynamic and engaging learning experience compared to traditional instructional methods.

In summary, the findings from this study strongly support the effectiveness of digital storytelling as a pedagogical tool for enhancing speaking skills. The significant improvement in the experimental group's post-test scores, coupled with the decline in the control group's scores, demonstrates the benefits of integrating digital storytelling into language instruction. This method not only engages students more deeply but also contributes to more substantial gains in speaking proficiency.

Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of digital storytelling as an instructional tool for enhancing students' speaking skills. The findings reveal that digital storytelling significantly improved the speaking proficiency of the experimental group, as evidenced by a notable increase in their post-test scores. In contrast, the control group, which did not use digital storytelling, showed a decrease in their speaking scores over the same period.

The significant improvement in the experimental group's scores supports the hypothesis that digital storytelling is a highly effective pedagogical approach. By integrating multimedia elements such as audio, video, and text, digital storytelling creates an engaging and interactive learning environment that fosters deeper learning and practice. This approach aligns with constructivist learning theories, which emphasize the importance of active, contextualized learning experiences in developing language skills (Piaget, 1973).

Moreover, the questionnaire results underscore the significant impact of digital storytelling on student motivation, corroborating previous research that highlights the method's ability to make learning tasks more engaging, challenging, and enjoyable. By transforming traditional language learning approaches into more interactive and creative experiences, digital storytelling has been shown to effectively enhance student motivation and foster a deeper engagement with learning materials. This positive reinforcement of the learning process not only improves speaking skills but also encourages students to study more frequently and with greater enthusiasm.

The iterative nature of digital storytelling, involving the creation, presentation, and revision of multimedia narratives, provides students with repeated practice and valuable feedback. This process not only enhances their speaking abilities but also increases their motivation and engagement, contributing to improved performance. The study's results align with previous research that highlights the benefits of multimedia-rich methods in education (Schneider & Mertins, 2021).

In conclusion, the study underscores the effectiveness of digital storytelling in improving speaking skills. The positive outcomes observed in the experimental group highlight the potential of this method to enhance language learning experiences. Therefore, integrating digital storytelling into language instruction can be recommended as a valuable strategy for developing students' oral communication abilities and fostering a more dynamic and engaging learning

environment.

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