Students Perception on Digital Storytelling in Speaking

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the implementation and impact of digital storytelling in improving students' speaking skills in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class. As speaking remains one of the most challenging language skills for EFL students, various creative teaching strategies have been developed to address these challenges, one of which is digital storytelling. The research was conducted as a case study involving students of the English Study Program at Kuningan University. Through qualitative descriptive methods, data were collected using observations, interviews, and documentation. The results indicate that the digital storytelling process involves several stages: scriptwriting, voice recording, collecting supporting media, and video editing, with lecturers acting as facilitators. The implementation of this technique proved effective in enhancing students' confidence, fluency, pronunciation, and vocabulary. Additionally, it fostered students' creativity, motivation, and independent learning attitudes. The study also highlights some obstacles, such as students' limited video editing skills and the time-consuming nature of the process. Nevertheless, the findings support previous research that digital storytelling offers an engaging, interactive, and adaptable learning environment, making it a valuable tool in EFL classrooms to improve speaking ability. Therefore, it is recommended that this method be integrated regularly into speaking courses with proper technical guidance provided for students.

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1. INTRODUCTION

One of the essential components of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is speaking ability. This ability is essential for communicating in academic and professional settings as well as in everyday life. However, many EFL students face a number of challenges that hinder their progress in speaking skills. These include lack of confidence, fear of making mistakes, lack of exposure to English, and anxiety when speaking in public. This condition demands a more innovative, creative, and relevant learning approach to the needs and characteristics of today's learners.

Digital Storytelling (DST) is a learning method that has become increasingly popular in recent years and has great potential to improve students' speaking skills. DST are complemented by digital media such as music, images, videos, and audio. This method provides space for students to express themselves creatively and build their speaking skills in a more flexible and less stressful environment. Several previous studies have shown that

the use of DST in learning can increase students' self-confidence, speaking fluency, and critical thinking skills and digital literacy (Xu, 2020; Nisa, 2023).

However, the fact is that many students prefer to avoid speaking English. It is stated in (Auliya, 2022) that this is due to a lack of anxiety and lack of motivation when having to speak in front of many people. Students assume that speaking performance is an unpleasant right. They feel unprepared because they are afraid of making mistakes and feel high social pressure. This journal also states that many students have low sEFL-confidence and motivation when speaking English, this is due to the lack of mastery of understanding that the students understand. This is because students find it difficult to pronounce the sentences they want to say, are not used to speaking English, and students tend to be more accustomed to speaking in their mother tongue.

In this study, the Department of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at Kuningan University examines the impact of implementing digital storytelling on students' speaking skills. This study focuses on how digital storytelling is implemented, how it affects students' speaking abilities, and if using it is beneficial or detrimental.. Thus, this study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions in the development of more effective and contextual technology-based learning models. This research is important because it can enrich academic discussions on the use of digital technology in language teaching and offer alternative speaking learning methods that are innovative, flexible, and appropriate to the demands of 21st century education.

1.1 Digital Storytelling

The development of information and communication technology has had a major impact on various aspects of life, including in the world of education. Learning innovations that integrate technology are becoming increasingly important, especially in supporting interactive and interesting teaching and learning processes. One of the technology-based learning approaches that is currently widely used in the world of education is digital storytelling.

Digital storytelling is a technique for conveying stories with the help of digital media, such as images, videos, audio, text, and music, which are packaged in the form of digital narratives. According to Nisa (2023), digital storytelling is a combination of traditional storytelling art with sophisticated multimedia technology. Through this technique, students not only learn to compose stories, but also develop creativity, critical thinking skills, and technical skills in using digital applications to create story presentations.

In the context of learning English as a foreign language (EFL), digital storytelling can be used as an effective teaching strategy to improve students' speaking skills. Students are given the opportunity to express their ideas and experiences through digital stories delivered in English. This process involves various stages, from scriptwriting, voice recording (voice over), selection of visual media, to the editing and publication process. Each stage in digital storytelling directly trains students to use English in meaningful and enjoyable contexts.

Several previous studies have shown that the application of digital storytelling can increase students' learning motivation, strengthen their memory of the material, and create a more flexible and stress-free learning atmosphere (Xu, 2020). In addition, through digital storytelling, students can learn independently, repeat the recording process to correct mistakes, and build self-confidence without having to speak directly in front of the class.

1.2 Speaking Ability

Speaking ability is one of the productive skills in language learning that is very important to develop, especially in an EFL environment. Speaking is not just about pronouncing words or sentences, but includes the ability to convey ideas, argue, respond, and interact effectively in the context of real communication. In today's global world, speaking skills are the main capital for students in supporting academic, social, and professional activities.

However, developing English speaking skills is not easy for most EFL students. Many of them experience obstacles such as anxiety in public speaking, fear of making mistakes, lack of confidence, and limitations in mastering vocabulary and sentence structure. According to Auliya (2022), one of the reasons for students' low speaking ability is because they feel uncomfortable and unprepared to appear in front of an audience. Psychological factors such as shyness and social pressure make students tend to avoid speaking activities in English.

To overcome this problem, a learning approach is needed that can reduce the pressure of speaking while providing a safe space for students to practice. Digital storytelling offers an interesting solution to this challenge. By allowing students to speak through voice recordings in digital stories, this method can help reduce fear and increase self-confidence gradually. The flexible recording process allows students to repeat speaking exercises until they are satisfied with the results. In addition, by using a pre-written script, students can focus on pronunciation, intonation, and fluency without worrying about losing ideas in the middle of the road.

Furthermore, the activities of composing stories, recording, and editing videos directly train more

authentic speaking skills because students are involved in the process of meaningful communication. Through this experience, they not only learn to speak, but also learn to convey messages in a creative and interesting way. Therefore, in the context of EFL learning, speaking skills have great potential to be improved through adaptive learning strategies such as digital storytelling.

2. STUDENTS PERCEPTIONS OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN SPEAKING

This study aims to determine how the implementation process of digital storytelling is carried out in EFL students' speaking learning, the impacts it causes, and its advantages and disadvantages based on the direct experience of six-semester students in the English Language Education Study Program at Kuningan University. Data were obtained through open interviews with six respondents who were directly involved in the digital storytelling-based learning project.

In general, the implementation process of digital storytelling takes place through six main stages, namely:
1) Choosing a story theme,
2) Writing a script,
3) Recording sound,
4) Collecting visual elements (images, music, short videos),
5) Editing videos, and
6) Publishing works to digital platforms. All students completed this project independently, with guidance from lecturers in terms of script structure and technical implementation.

Students were given the freedom to choose a story theme according to their personal interests so that the process of compiling the script became easier. After writing the script in English, students recorded their voices as narrators, which were then combined with images, videos, and background music. This project was completed using editing applications such as CapCut or Canva Video Editor.

The implementation of this method has a number of positive impacts on students' speaking skills. One of the most dominant is increased self-confidence. Students feel more comfortable practicing speaking without direct pressure from the audience because the recording process can be done repeatedly until the results are satisfactory. In addition, the process of composing scripts and reading with the right intonation encourages an increase in aspects of fluency and pronunciation.

Students also said that they became more creative in conveying ideas because they were free to determine the storyline, supporting visuals, and appropriate music. This creates a dynamic, fun, and more personal learning experience. On the other hand, they also acknowledged the challenges in the work process, especially related to technical skills such as video editing and internet network constraints when uploading video results to digital platforms.

To clarify the interview results, the following is a summary of direct statements from six respondents in table form:

Respondents	Key Statement
Respondent 1	*"Saya pilih cerita tentang pengalaman liburan karena lebih gampang disusun dan diucapkan."*
Respondent 2	*"Kalau sudah ada skripnya, pas ngomong jadi nggak bingung. Bisa lebih lancar karena tahu urutannya."*
Respondent 3	*"Kalau lewat video bisa diulang-ulang sampai hasilnya bagus, jadi lebih pede."*
Respondent 4	*"Waktu ngedit awalnya bingung, tapi setelah dicoba ternyata seru. Jadi bisa belajar edit video juga."*
Respondent 5	*"Cari gambar dan musik jadi bikin tugasnya lebih menarik dan nggak ngebosenin."*
Respondent 6	*"Upload video ke YouTube kadang lama kalau sinyal jelek, apalagi kalau ukurannya gede."*

From the results above, it can be concluded that digital storytelling is able to create a more flexible and contextual learning experience in developing students' speaking ability. In addition to helping from the technical side of speaking ability, this method also trains students' independence, creativity, and digital literacy. Despite the technical challenges, overall students feel helped in honing their speaking skills through this media.

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION
3.1. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of digital storytelling in speaking learning has a significant positive impact on students' speaking skills in EFL classes. This finding is in line with various theories and previous research results which state that digital storytelling is an effective method in learning a foreign language, especially to improve students' speaking skills, self-confidence, and motivation.

In terms of the implementation process, this study found that digital storytelling is carried out through six main stages, namely determining the theme, writing the script, recording sound, collecting visual elements, editing videos, and publishing the work. This process is in accordance with the digital storytelling model described by Xu (2020), where these stages help students practice speaking in a structured and systematic manner. Student involvement in all stages of digital story production plays an important role in building a more enjoyable active learning experience and improving their speaking skills.

Digital storytelling actually provides a space to practice speaking in a non-pressuring atmosphere. In line with that, Nair and Subramaniam (2021) stated that one of the advantages of this method is that students can record their voices independently without fear of making mistakes in front of an audience. Students can repeat the recording process until they get the best results, so that their confidence in speaking increases over time. This finding is reinforced by the results of a study by Putri, Rahmawati, and Sari (2022) which stated that EFL students who learned speaking through digital storytelling experienced significant improvements in pronunciation and fluency because they were used to composing scripts and reading texts repeatedly.

In addition to the technical aspects of speaking, this study also found that digital storytelling has a positive impact on students' learning motivation. Students feel more enthusiastic about participating in speaking lessons because this method gives them the freedom to determine the theme of the story and choose interesting visual elements. Kristian (2023) stated that an adaptive and creative learning atmosphere through digital storytelling can encourage students to be more active in the learning process. This is evident in this study, where students enjoy the process of making storytelling videos more than conventional learning methods.

Digital storytelling also provides additional benefits in the form of improving students' digital skills. In the process of making videos, students learn to use editing applications, choose appropriate images and music, and upload their work to digital platforms. Xu (2020) emphasized that digital-based learning like this is important for building students' digital literacy, which is an important competency in today's digital era.

However, this study also found several obstacles in implementing digital storytelling, such as the long processing time, limited video editing skills among students, and internet network constraints during the process of uploading work. This condition is in accordance with the findings of Nair and Subramaniam (2021), which stated that digital storytelling requires readiness of technological infrastructure and simple technical training for students so that the assignment process runs smoothly.

Overall, the results of this study support previous theories which state that digital storytelling is an effective and relevant method to be applied in speaking learning in EFL classes. This method not only helps students improve their technical speaking skills but also encourages their self-confidence, creativity, learning motivation, and digital skills. Thus, digital storytelling can be an interesting alternative learning method to be applied in higher education environments, especially in English language learning.

3.2. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the application of digital storytelling has a positive and significant impact on improving the speaking ability of English students at Kuningan University. This method allows students to undergo a more structured, enjoyable, and flexible learning process, which consists of several stages: starting from story planning, script writing, voice recording, collecting visual elements, video editing, to publishing their work.

The most noticeable improvement was seen in students' self-confidence. The ability to record their own voices without having to speak directly in front of an audience made students feel more comfortable and confident in using English orally. In addition, the process of writing and reading the script repeatedly also improved their speaking skills and pronunciation accuracy.

Students also showed increased creativity and motivation to learn, because they were given the freedom to choose the story theme and adjust the images and music according to their own wishes. This created a more personal and enjoyable learning environment. In addition, editing and publishing videos also stimulated students' digital skills, which are very important in today's era of technology-based learning. Despite some

technical limitations, such as limited video editing capabilities and limited internet connection when uploading their work, students generally found digital storytelling very useful in improving their English speaking skills.

Therefore, digital storytelling can be recommended as one of the effective, innovative, and relevant alternative learning methods to improve students' speaking skills in the context of English learning. In order for its implementation to be optimal, it requires basic technical training support and adequate digital facilities in the university environment.

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