

Enhancing EFL Vocational Students' Narrative Speaking Performance Through Digital Storytelling: Evidence from Classroom Action Research

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to explain the use of digital storytelling to enhance students' narrative speaking performance and to explain students' responses to the use of digital storytelling as media. This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) design that conducted in two cycles and involved tenth grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran as the research participants. The data were collected through observation, pre-tests, post-tests, and questionnaires. The results showed a significant enhancement in students' spoken narrative text, represented by the scores from pre-tests and post-tests in both cycles. This can be seen in the pre-test result, where the average students score of 37.6 jumped to 79.8 in the post-test results in the cycle II. In addition, students' responses collected through questionnaires revealed highly positive responses towards the use of digital storytelling. The questionnaire results showed there was an improvement in various aspects of student learning: the cognitive aspect by 100% including speaking skill and convey ideas, in terms of the affective aspect, 93.3% of students felt that digital storytelling reduced their shyness, boosted their self-confidence, and motivated them; and in terms of the psychomotor aspect, 60% of students agreed that digital storytelling made them more active in the learning process. These findings demonstrate that the digital storytelling served as an effective learning media for students' spoken narrative text.

Keywords: digital storytelling, spoken narrative text.

INTRODUCTION

Speaking is one of the abilities that allows speakers and listeners to engage in oral communication for the purpose of transferring and sharing information and developing long-term relationships (Reffalleo, 2024). Extremely speaking is one of the skills that people use every day to communicate with others in order to form a bond or relationship with speaking, people can express their ideas to others. The problem at SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran. Students at SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran also have the same problem with their limited speaking ability in learning. Based on observations made at SMK Muhammadiyah, students experience two problems in speaking related to their psychomotor and cognitive factors. Coupled with teacher-centered learning. At SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran, the English teacher also tended to give material to students, the teacher did not think about learning media and learning strategies that support students so that students were interested and can develop their speaking skills in the learning process. Jager et al., (2017), mentions that digital storytelling is a work of audio- visual display with a duration of 2-5 minutes using digital media. If someone has told a story with a duration of 2 to 5 minutes, it can be said to be digital storytelling by applying digital media as a medium.

The above statements is also supported by Abdul (2018), that the use of digital storytelling in narrative text learning has a positive impact on students' speaking development. Students experience development with the support of digital storytelling learning media. This means that teachers need to prepare learning media that are suitable for students' needs, especially in learning speaking. The above statement is also supported by research from Sinaga (2021) found that digital storytelling changed students' pronunciation in speaking learning. Initially, students' pronunciation was not correct before using learning media, but after the teacher applied digital storytelling in speaking learning, students could practice correct English pronunciation. Therefore, storytelling can be a bridge for students' speaking learning. Based on the success of previous studies, it can be concluded that using digital storytelling is an effective teaching media in English language teaching, particularly in enhancing students' spoken narrative text. As a result, this study aims to describe the use of the digital storytelling and to explore the students' responses towards its use in teaching speaking narrative text.

METHOD

This research used Classroom Action Research (CAR) as a research design. For field data, used four research instruments. Observation and tests in each cycle were used to ensure an enhancement in students' spoken narrative text. Besides, the data collection technique used expert judgment. Additionally, a questionnaire was distributed to identify students' responses regarding the use of digital storytelling media for spoken narrative text. The subjects of this research were the tenth-grade students at SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran in the 2025/2026 academic year who became participants and total 15 students in the class with the 12 females and 3 males. The located at Jl. Bakah, Km. 0.5, Kunduran, Bakah, Blora, Central Java 58255.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are to answer the purpose of this study the implementation and students' responses about the use of digital storytelling.

The Implementation of Digital Storytelling

Based observations were conducted during the learning process in cycle I at SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran. These observations were carried out by filling out observation sheets by observers during the learning process, which used digital storytelling media. The observation sheets in cycle I showed that students did not pay attention to the material provided by the teacher. In addition, they often joked around with their friends. Then, when asked about the material, the students were still confused about how to answer. These observation sheets were also used to determine the students' responses, whether they were active or not during the learning process.

Based on the observation sheets from meetings 1 and 2, it can be concluded that the Visual Communication Design 2 students have demonstrated a positive attitude toward learning narrative texts through digital storytelling. This is evident from the students' responses in terms of their interest. Between 12 and 15 students out of a total of 15 showed enthusiasm, enjoyment, and focus while watching the digital storytelling videos presented. Additionally, student engagement—including note-taking on key points and active participation in group discussions—was also high during the two sessions in cycle I. However, in this cycle I, there was a need to improve students' independent comprehension, their ability to retold

the material, and their confidence in spontaneously expressing opinions during learning, as on average only 9–11 students actively participated. Thus, there were still some students who have not yet demonstrated their full potential. It means that need reflection in the next cycle. Those data observation in cycle I also supported by the result of pre-test and post-test in the cycle I, that in the cycle I needed to cycle II for enhanced in cycle II.

Table 1:
The Result of Pre-Test and Post-Test Cycle I

Pre-test	Post-test
37,6	48,8

Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test in Cycle I, students showed an enhancement in spoken narrative text after the use of digital storytelling. The average score increased significantly from 37,6 to 48,8. These findings indicate that the use of digital storytelling in Cycle I had a positive impact on students' spoken narrative text. However, further improvement is still needed to achieve better learning outcomes in the next cycle.

In this second cycle of observation, focused on helping students get the most out of their learning. In the cycle I, there were still some students who had not yet maximized their potential in the learning process. In cycle II, I encouraged and guided students who were less active-those who were hesitant to share their opinions in front of their classmates.

In Cycle II, based on the observation sheets from Meetings 3 and 4, there were positive signs or an improvement in student responses compared to Cycle I. The most notable improvement in Cycle II was in the areas of student participation and focus. Specifically, during Meeting 4, all 15 students were focused on listening to the digital storytelling material presented by the teacher during the lesson. Furthermore, student interaction through question-and-answer sessions, the ability to explain concepts independently, as well as interaction and active participation in group discussions also showed a consistent improvement. Student responses across both Cycle I and Cycle II also demonstrated high enthusiasm. In conclusion, the shortcomings identified in Cycle I were addressed in Cycle II, and this is evidenced by the fact that issues present in Cycle I were resolved in Cycle II. This indicates that digital storytelling is not only effective in improving students' academic achievement but also successfully creates a learning environment that is creative, interactive, enjoyable,

and engaging for students. Beside of the result of observation, the enhancement of students' can be seen in result of pre-test and post-test in the cycle II. Below the result of pre-test and post-test cycle II.

Table 2:
The Result of Pre-Test and Post-Test Cycle II

Pre-test	Post-test
59,06	79,8

Based on the results of the pre-test and post-test in Cycle II, students showed further enhancement in their spoken narrative text after the use of the digital storytelling. The average score also improved from 59,06 to 79,8. Moreover, these findings indicate that the use of digital storytelling in Cycle II was effective in improving students' spoken narrative text. The improvement in students' scores showed that the learning objectives had been successfully achieved.

Students' Responses About Digital Storytelling

Students' responses about the use of digital storytelling divided into three indicators. The first indicators were cognitive indicator, including the mental activity in the classroom. Second were affective factor about the students' politeness, and the third were psychomotor including the students' physical skills. Below the result of questionnaire.

Table 3:
The Result of Questionnaire

Statements	SD	D	A	SA
A. Cognitive Indicator				
Digital storytelling helps improving skill	0%	0%	100%	0%
Digital storytelling helps to convey ideas when practice speaking	0%	6,7%	80%	13,3%
Choose digital storytelling to accompany in learning speaking	0%	0%	60%	40%
B. Affective Indicator				
Digital storytelling makes more confident when practice speak	0%	0%	93,3%	6,7%
Digital storytelling reduces fear of speaking.	6,7%	6,7%	66,7%	20%
Digital storytelling reduces of shyness when speak.	0%	0%	93,3%	6,7%
Digital storytelling motivates to study more in speaking.	0%	6,7%	73,3%	20%

Digital storytelling affect interest in learning speaking.	0%	0%	73,3%	26,7%
C. Psychomotor Indicator				
Digital storytelling encourage to be more active in speaking.	0%	0%	40%	60%
Digital storytelling helps doing assignments.	0%	0%	80%	20%

(SD= Strongly Disagree; D= Disagree; A= Agree; SA= Strongly Agree)

The conclusion from the table above, based on the indicator aspects, was that regarding the cognitive indicator, the majority of students agreed and responded positively to the use of digital storytelling as a media for learning spoken narrative texts. This is demonstrated by the statement that “digital storytelling can improve students’ speaking skills,” which received a 100% agreement rate. Furthermore, regarding the affective factor, it successfully reduced students’ psychological barriers. A total of 93.3% of students agreed that digital storytelling increased their self-confidence and reduced their shyness. Meanwhile, regarding students’ psychomotor indicators, the used of digital storytelling increased student engagement in speaking activities. 60% of students strongly agreed that digital storytelling was an effective learning media for them. Thus, it can be concluded that digital storytelling as a media for teaching spoken narrative texts can improve several indicators of student success, namely in the psychomotor, affective, and cognitive aspects.

The Implementation of Digital Storytelling

Using digital storytelling in spoken narrative text learning, teachers need to prepare the tools and media in advance. In the use of digital storytelling media in cycle I, many obstacles were encountered due to unsupportive tools and inactive students. In cycle I, students still had difficulty retelling the stories presented in digital storytelling, whether in terms of expression, pronunciation, limited vocabulary, or other factors such as shyness, fear, and anxiety when speaking. This was because students had their own individual abilities. However, in cycle II, students were interested and dared to try retelling a narrative text. This was supported by a statement from that digital storytelling is an interesting learning medium that also helps overcome students’ shyness, difficulties, and anxiety in speaking with the different abilities that students have.

The Students' Responses About Digital Storytelling

The students' response to the use of digital storytelling media was very positive. All 15 students of DKV 2 SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran felt more confident, reduced their shyness when speaking, improved their speaking skills, and developed ideas through digital storytelling. This was confirmed by Sumartiningsih (2025) that students had no difficulty in learning to speak using digital storytelling and that students also responded positively because digital storytelling is interactive. This was proven by the results of a questionnaire, with 80% of students agreeing.

In addition, the use of digital storytelling also significantly improves students' speaking skills, according to Arroba et al (2021). This finding is supported by the results of a student questionnaire, in which 100% of the students agreed that digital storytelling improves the speaking skills of 10th-grade Visual Communication Design students. Furthermore, the use of digital storytelling can also enhance several aspects of students' skills, such as expanding their vocabulary and improving their pronunciation. This is confirmed by the findings of (Cahyani et al., 2023). With digital storytelling, which incorporates both visuals and audio, students can more easily practice pronunciation by following the audio in the digital storytelling content.

Based on the above discussion, it can be concluded that the use of digital storytelling in teaching spoken narrative text to students has a positive impact on students' spoken narrative text learning. In addition, there are differences between this study and previous studies. In previous studies, some used digital storytelling as a speaking learning strategy, but in this study, digital storytelling as a learning media.

CONCLUSION

The use of digital storytelling in teaching spoken narrative texts in DKV 2 SMK Muhammadiyah Kunduran ran smoothly and successfully. This can be seen in the observation sheets according to the meetings that have been held. The opening activities of the lesson also ran smoothly. After the class began, the teacher also carried out this activity related to narrative text material. In addition, there was also a closing activity. All three activities went smoothly. This can also be seen in the results of the pre-test and post-test conducted by students in cycle I and cycle II. So, the conclusion was that the use of digital storytelling in student speaking learning activities was successful and went smoothly.

Several questions were shared with students to determine their response to the used of digital storytelling media in learning narrative speaking texts. The results obtained regarding student response were that they were more confident in practicing speaking in front of their friends, felt less shy, and 100% agreed that they could improve their speaking skills. Therefore, it can be concluded that digital storytelling is a technology-based learning media that can assist students in the learning process.

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