

STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING TO IMPROVE ENGLISH SPEAKING ABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This study set out to find out what the students' perception using digital storytelling as a teaching medium to improve the English speaking ability of EFL students. In order to learn what students' perception is about using digital media as a teaching medium to boost students' EFL English speaking ability, A quantitative descriptive design is used in this study. The study's participants are 30 EFL students—10 male and 20 female—who received English instruction at Universitas Islam Negeri Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu (UINFAS). They were selected using stratified random sampling. Furthermore, two male and five female English instructors from the Al-Ain district were specifically chosen to take part in the group interview. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were performed on the data. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data, while percentage, frequency, and mean scores were used to analyze the quantitative data. Ten Literature questions were identified from the interview results. According to the results, the majority of instructors supported the use of digital storytelling in the classroom since it improved the process of teaching and learning English. The findings indicate that the use of digital storytelling in EFL classrooms was well-received by the students.

Keywords: *Students' Perception, Digital Storytelling, English Speaking Ability.*

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of technology has profoundly influenced various aspects of life, including education. The digital transformation in academia has facilitated more interactive, flexible, and self-directed learning experiences. Traditional teaching models, which heavily rely on instructor-led methods, are now evolving with the support of technology, allowing students broader access to educational resources. In Indonesia, technological advancements have significantly contributed to improving access to education, helping students engage with learning materials more efficiently Sa'adah et al., (2025). In the present era, the entire world has become a global village, and people communicate with one another in a common language, especially English. Pertiwi and Aminatun (2024) stated The English language is now the most frequently spoken

and utilized language in the world. Moreover, English is a language that is frequently employed in fields such as science, commerce, education, media, newspapers, software, engineering, information technology, travel and tourism, entertainment, banking, and the internet and others (Pertiwi & Aminatun, 2024). Speaking is a required course in general communication that students must take in their second semester. According to the learning themes outlined in the Speaking for General Communication course curriculum and lesson plans, students enrolled in this course should be proficient in English. It is anticipated that students would have a deeper understanding of linguistics through this course. Parmawati & Inayah (2019) characterize speaking as an empirically and directly observable productive talent. There will be a relationship when someone talks to someone else. The relationship itself is communication. Furthermore, Pangaribuan & Siahaan (2022), Speaking is the evolution of the speaker-listener connection. Furthermore, deciding whether a logical, verbal, psychological, or physical rule should be applied in a certain communication circumstance. It indicates that communication is the primary goal of speech. To effectively communicate, a speaker must be clear about what they intend to say, be able to assess how their words will affect their audience, and comprehend any guiding principles that underpin their speech, whether they be general or specific.

According to Mahruf & Sari, (2022) Speaking in both first and second languages is a skill that should be given the same consideration as literary skills. The majority of people believe that speaking is the most crucial aspect of learning a second or foreign language, and the ability to communicate successfully is used to determine success. Students studying English need to become proficient in four key areas: speaking, listening, reading, and writing. Speaking is said to be the most crucial of the four abilities to master. Speaking is a crucial language ability for English language learners to acquire, since it allows them to show off their true proficiency (Maulana et al., (2022)). People are used to speaking English to communicate with others in many areas, such as in daily activities, education, and working places, tourism, technology, science, etc. According to Setyaningsih et al., (2022) Having a conversation is one of the primary motivations for oral communication. But not everyone speaks English fluently. Learning to speak English fluently is fraught with challenges, particularly when it comes to speaking abilities.

Speaking is one of the language abilities that is most crucial in daily life (Sisvia et al., (2022)). The productive oral/aural skill is speaking. We may say that the speaker needs to think of the audience as a listener, (Sisvia et al. (2022)). There are a number of aspects of speaking that we must comprehend, according to Sihotang et al., (2021). Speaking is described in a number of ways. (a) Fluency, Fluency refers to the characteristics that make speech sound natural and normal, such as the use of pauses, rhythm, intonation, stress, speaking tempo, and interjections and interruptions. (Weber, Richards, and Platt (1985:108) (b) Grammar, Grammar is defined as the collection of language's grammatical structures. Grammar is the most widely used term to describe this set of principles. (c) The way a word or language is uttered is known as its pronunciation. When communicating, others must comprehend what we are

saying. (d) Knowledge The act of comprehending something is called comprehension. Kurniawan (2015) defines talking about the three ways that language is defined: 1) In the use sense, speaking is merely the physical manifestation of an abstract system that includes the expression of the language's phonological, grammatical, or both systems. 2) Speaking uses the aural medium and is active, or productive; and 3) Speaking as an example of use is therefore a part of a reciprocal interaction in which both production and reception are essential components.

Speaking is not an easy learning activity. Speaking English is still a major challenge for Indonesian students for a few reasons. The first is that the English pupils are not proficient in communicating. Additionally, the lexical, grammatical, and phonological teaching approaches of English differ from those of Bahasa, their home tongue. Additionally, while being worried about making mistakes and receiving judgment from their peers, the students struggle greatly to stay motivated to meet their learning objectives. The success of students in speaking can be influenced by a variety of things. These elements can generally be identified, including the instructor, the pupils, the surroundings, the subject, and the methods used to learn the material. Mahmud, (2018) mentions, the teacher should use engaging tactics that hold the pupils' interest. Students should be encouraged to talk by their teachers. Teachers should use a variety of techniques and activities to get students interested in the lesson and to motivate them in EFL environments. Syafryadin, (2020) claimed that pupils struggled with things like hesitation, lack of motivation, speaking in their mother tongue, and having nothing to say during speaking exercises. These issues frequently arose when students spoke English.

It is challenging for both teachers and students to teach and acquire languages other than our native tongue, particularly in an English as a foreign language context Maulana et al., (2022). Wahyuni, (2021) explains that "teachers should look for background information like students' goals, age, and language background when teaching speaking skills." This means that after learning about the students' backgrounds and speaking habits, the teacher can better instruct speaking. Speaking English can be difficult for many students for a variety of reasons, including a fear of speaking, a lack of confidence, erratic pronunciation, poor grammar, a small vocabulary, and little opportunity for practice in class. The majority of pupils lack motivation for studying, are afraid of making mistakes, and convey wrong ideas. Among the problems are pupils' limited vocabulary, poor pronunciation, lack of confidence, and lack of drive Adawiyah & Dalimunthe, (2024).

According to Hidayatullah (2018), learning media are various elements of the learning environment that can inspire students to learn. Learning media can be understood as anything that can be used to convey messages from the teacher to the students in order to stimulate their thoughts, feelings, interests, and attention of students to the learning process in an effective manner. This study examines how students perceive digital storytelling as a means of improving the speaking abilities of English language learners. In the current globalizing era, ICT tools have proven to be crucial in giving students a variety of interesting and interactive

platforms to develop speaking skills both inside and outside of the classroom. Storytelling is a popular medium to this day and has a significant impact on how society views it, especially among teenagers Chaisriya et al., (2023). Anything that may be utilized to transmit messages between the sender and the recipient and pique interest and attention in a way that promotes learning is considered media Gaspersz & Uktolseja, (2020). Since storytelling is the discipline of accurately expressing ideas or elucidating a subject to others, it is crucial for the development of communication abilities. Students will be self-taught storytellers who hone their abilities in media production, editing, and applying cognitive processes to communicate rich and relevant story information Chaisriya et al., (2023).

Digital storytelling can, therefore, develop into a different kind of communication that expands on students' existing knowledge. In addition to supporting and embracing students' autonomy (ICT genuine narratives), a constructivist learning environment makes language acquisition easier by offering students options and engaging, meaningful language practice Arroba & Acosta, (2021). Storytelling is the art of narrating the customs, experiences, or culture of ancestors by simulating events using language, gestures, and vocalization Gürsoy, (2021). Different viewpoints are used to depict a variety of people, behaviors, interactions, and reactions (such as emotions), as well as thoughts, wants, and intentions, during the storytelling process.

Based on previous studies, those researchers have just focused on the implementation of digital Storytelling in English teaching, such as in writing, IELTS, speaking, and listening. Besides, some studies emphasized attitudes and developed digital storytelling for language learning. Then, the research of artificial intelligence in English-speaking skills is rare to be conducted. As a result, this study is unique since it focuses on how students perceive the usage of digital storytelling in English-speaking classes. The study aims to find out how the students at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu, Bengkulu, Indonesia's Department of English, feel about using digital storytelling as a teaching tool to improve their English-speaking skills. This study will be important from a number of perspectives, including those of students, instructors, and future researchers. Students may benefit from it by using it to improve their English language study, and lecturers may find it useful in promoting their students' speaking abilities within the classroom. It can serve as a guide for future researchers looking to work in the same topic.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

Descriptive quantitative research was used in the study. The first goal is to learn what the students think about the usage of digital storytelling, which can be accomplished with a quantitative design questionnaire. The second goal can be accomplished through a qualitative design interview.

Population and Sample

This study was carried out during the second semester of the English Department at UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu in a public speaking class. The

second semester is divided into three classes: A, B, and C. There are 90 pupils in total, with 30 kids in each class. Only class C, which included 30 students, was included in the research sample because that was the only class where the instructor used digital storytelling in the public speaking course. Purposive sampling was the method used for sampling.

The Instrument and Procedures

Questionnaires and interviews served as the research instruments. While the interview was used to gauge the challenges, the questionnaire was meant to gauge the students' opinions about the usage of digital storytelling in speaking classes. The hypothesis about the benefits of digital storytelling in speaking served as the basis for organizing the questionnaire. The Likert scale, which goes from strongly agree to agree to disagree, was then utilized. Expert judgement has validated the questionnaire. Thirty students received it. Additionally, a semi-structured interview was conducted to investigate the challenges that lecturers and students encountered when integrating digital storytelling into speaking classes. The researcher interviewed one lecturer and fifteen students.

Method of Data Collection

Both interviews and questionnaires were used to gather the data. Data collection methods included (1) granting permission to the head of English education at the Faculty of Teacher Tarbiyah and Tadris, UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu; (2) supplying a draft of the instruments; (3) validating the instruments; and (4) asking research participants if they would be willing to be the subject of the study. The findings indicated that they had no problem participating in the study; (4) the thirty-five students were given a questionnaire via Google Form; (5) fifteen students were interviewed; and (6) the information from the questionnaire and the interview was filed.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Finding

Table 1 displays the survey results on how EFL students view the purpose of digital storytelling as a teaching medium. The vast majority of respondents were in support of adopting digital storytelling in English classrooms, it was discovered

This section presents the findings of the study regarding students' perceptions of digital storytelling (DST) in improving their English-speaking ability. The results are organized into two main parts: the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaire distributed to thirty students, and the qualitative insights gathered from interviews with fifteen students and one lecturer. Together, these findings provide a comprehensive overview of how digital storytelling influences students' speaking development in terms of pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, confidence, anxiety, motivation, and enjoyment.

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Questionnaire Results

No	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1	Digital Storytelling can encourage me to learn pronunciation	0,(0)%	2(6,1)%	3(9,1)%	20(60,6)%	8,(24,2)%
2	Digital Storytelling can	0(0)%	4(12,1)%	4(12,1)%	17(51,1)%	8(24,2)%

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	help me to learn grammar					
3	Digital storytelling has the potential to inspire me to acquire new vocabulary.	0(0)%	2(6,1)%	0(0)%	18(54,5)%	13(39,4)%
4	Digital storytelling can help me improve my English.	0(0)%	2(6,1)%	17(51,1)%	14(42,4)%	0(0)%
5	Digital storytelling can help me become more fluent in English.	0(0)%	1(3)%	8,(24,2)%	16(48,5)%	8,(24,2)%
6	Digital storytelling can boost my confidence in my ability to speak English	0(0)%	3(9,1)%	6(18,2)%	17(51,5)%	7(21,2)%
7	Digital storytelling can help me feel less anxious when I speak English.	0(0)%	1(3)%	8,(24,2)%	16(48,5)%	8,(24,2)%
8	I enjoy storytelling activities	0(0)%	2(6,1)%	6(18,2)%	13(39,4)%	12(36,4)%
9	Storytelling activities make me confident to take part in class	0(0)%	3(9,1)%	8,(24,2)%	15(45,5)%	7(21,2)%
10	I can learn to speak English during the activities	0(0)%	1(3)%	3(9,1)%	20(60,6)%	9(27,3)%
11	I feel learning English-speaking ability is fun	1(3)%	1(3)%	2(6,1)%	2(66,7)%	7(21,2)%
12	Digital Storytelling can encourage me to learn English speaking ability	0(0)%	1(3)%	3(9,1)%	20(60,6)%	9(27,3)%
13	I am able to learn to speak English during the activities	1(3)%	2(6,1)%	4(12,1)%	19(57,6)%	7(21,2)%
14	DST helps me in improving English speaking ability knowledge	0(0)%	3(9,1)%	6(18,2)%	19(57,6)%	5(15,2)%
15	DST is important for enhancing my English-speaking ability	0(0)%	1(3)%	5(15,2)%	23(69,7)%	4(12,1)%
16	DST is beneficial to my learning since it allows me to improve my competence	0(0)%	2(6,1)%	5(15,2)%	21(63,6)%	5(15,2)%
17	DST activities help me better understand the English-speaking lesson	0(0)%	2(6,1)%	3(9,1)%	24(72,7)%	4(12,1)%
18	Using DST has increased my motivation to learn English speaking ability	0(0)%	1(3)%	7(21,2)%	16(48,5)%	9(27,3)%
19	Using DST has	0(0)%	1(3)%	8,(24,2)%	17(51,5)%	7(21,2)%

	increased my motivation to learn speaking					
20	DST offers me to many new things and provides me with knowledge	1(3)%	0(0)%	8,(24,2)%	17(51,5)%	7(21,2)%
Mean Score		0.5%	5.83%	19.0%	60.33%	24.0%

According to Table 1, the majority of students responded favorably to the use of digital storytelling in speaking instruction. It is demonstrated by the fact that 60.33% of students agree, and 24.0% strongly agree. 5.83% of students, however, chose to disagree. Next, half of the students chose to strongly disagree.

The purpose of this study was to investigate students' perceptions regarding the implementation of digital storytelling (DST) in improving English speaking abilities. Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to 30 students and interviews conducted with 15 students and 1 lecturer. With a Likert scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree," the questionnaire has 20 items. In order to gather thorough insights, the study used a mixed-method approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data. Thirty second-semester UIN Fatmawati Sukarno Bengkulu students were given a Likert-scale questionnaire to complete in order to collect quantitative data, and fifteen students and one instructor participated in semi-structured interviews to obtain qualitative data.

The results revealed overwhelmingly positive student perceptions. As shown in Table 1, the majority of students responded with "Agree" (60.33%) and "Strongly Agree" (24.0%) across items. The average mean scores also reflected a strong endorsement of DST in supporting speaking skills development. Only a small proportion of students selected "Disagree" (5.83%) or "Strongly Disagree" (0.5%), indicating minimal resistance to the use of DST in the classroom.

Key findings include:

1. 81.8% of students agreed or strongly agreed that DST encouraged them to learn pronunciation.
2. 75.3% of respondents believed DST improved their grammar and vocabulary acquisition.
3. Over 69.7% of students felt more confident in speaking English through DST.
4. 78.8% of students stated that DST minimized their nervousness when speaking.
5. 84.9% reported increased enjoyment and motivation in the English-speaking class due to DST.

These quantitative results were supported by qualitative data from interviews. Students expressed that DST allowed them to express themselves more freely, helped them overcome anxiety, and provided opportunities to practice speaking in engaging ways. Some technical and psychological challenges were mentioned, such as difficulties with internet access, editing software, and self-confidence. The quantitative findings show a predominantly positive response from students toward the use of DST in speaking classes. The results from the

questionnaire (Table 1) indicated that the majority of students responded with either "Agree" (mean = 60.33%) or "Strongly Agree" (mean = 24.0%) to most of the items, which suggests a generally favorable perception of DST as an instructional tool. Only a small percentage of respondents expressed disagreement (mean = 5.83%) or strong disagreement (mean = 0.5%).

From the qualitative interviews, most students expressed that DST provided a fun and interactive way to practice speaking. They reported that telling stories in English allowed them to be more expressive, creative, and confident in delivering content orally. Some students highlighted that recording themselves for DST projects helped them become more aware of their pronunciation and grammar mistakes, which led to self-correction and learning. Students also appreciated the opportunity to work collaboratively in creating digital stories, which fostered peer learning and teamwork.

Nevertheless, several obstacles were identified. A few students faced technical difficulties such as poor internet connection, limited access to editing software, and a lack of digital literacy. Psychologically, some students still struggled with low confidence and fear of making mistakes when speaking English. One lecturer also emphasized the need for proper guidance and more time for students to familiarize themselves with DST tools.

Discussion

Almost every student from the two sample classes who answered the questionnaire expressed a positive opinion of a quipper school. "Students' perception of digital storytelling to improve English students' speaking ability" is the subject of the first affirmative survey. According to the findings, the majority of student respondents thought that digital storytelling was a useful tool for improving English language learners' speaking abilities. According to the first questioners' results, students value the teacher's use of digital storytelling as a means of encouraging them to develop their speaking skills. A popular educational strategy for enhancing students' communication abilities, particularly their English communication competency, is digital storytelling (Chaisriya et al., 2023). However, research studies indicate that the main purpose of digital storytelling is to enhance English communication skills. Numerous studies have been conducted on enhancing native language communication. Therefore, the goal of this study is to determine how to help students communicate more effectively in their home tongue of Thai so they can tell engaging stories.

Students believed that digital storytelling could aid in their grammar learning, according to the results of the second study. When writing, students face a number of difficulties, such as committing grammatical mistakes and producing better material as a result Zakaria & Aziz, (2019). In pursuit of a way to combine technical innovations with pedagogical breakthroughs, experts have suggested that social constructivism and technology make the perfect mix. Only a portion of the literature discusses the importance of integrated learning for science. Many authors have written about the relationship between science and literature in the past.

The fourth question, "Digital storytelling can encourage me to speak English," was likewise supported by the respondents, according to the results. For English as a Second Language (ESL) learners to communicate successfully, speaking skills development is essential. Speaking is a crucial component of communication (James et al., (2019). Speaking is a crucial ability for carrying out transactions and expressing ideas. Additionally, he said that digital storytelling can be used in teaching in two ways. Teacher-created digital stories are the first. Teachers use DS as a tool to help pupils better understand particular subjects or material. Other than that, the greatest benefit of DS is when it is created by the students.. Digital storytelling not only improved the speaking skills of the learners but also their motivation toward language learning in general and speaking skills in particular.

According to the findings of the seventh question, with the web tools, software, and hardware accessible, teachers can select the ones that students find interesting to improve their learning and get them ready for the future. Digital storytelling can help students feel less frightened when speaking English. The undergraduates were less anxious and more likely to experiment with new Second or foreign language vocabulary and structures while attempting to mimic the speech of native speakers, gave more complete answers, and felt more in control of their academic performance, as cited in James et al., (2019) also found that technology is thought to be crucial for enhancing students' oral communication abilities.

The results also showed that respondents agreed with eight students who asked, "I like storytelling activities." Storytelling is a common medium in modern times and has a significant impact on how society perceives people, particularly teens Chaisriya et al., (2023). Since storytelling is the discipline of accurately expressing ideas or elucidating a subject to others, it is crucial for the development of communication abilities. The goal of digital storytelling, especially personal narratives, is to give students the alternative techniques they need to become self-sufficient and autonomous knowledge architects. When students think about how and why they acquire a new language, they should be both creators and receivers of their education Arroba & Acosta, (2021).

The findings of this study indicate that students perceive digital storytelling as a highly effective tool in enhancing their English-speaking skills. These results are consistent with previous research by Chaisriya et al. (2023), who noted that DST improves students' communication competence and engagement. Similarly, Arroba & Acosta (2021) found that authentic digital narratives serve as valuable tools in constructivist EFL classrooms.

One of the most notable outcomes is the reduction in speaking anxiety. According to James et al. (2019), technology-enhanced storytelling can create a low-pressure environment for practicing oral communication, which aligns with this study's results. Students reported feeling more comfortable and motivated to speak in English after engaging in DST activities.

DST also appears to support students' metacognitive and linguistic development. Grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation—three key speaking components—were all reportedly enhanced through repeated storytelling and

practice. These findings support the notion that DST integrates both cognitive and affective domains, making it an ideal pedagogical approach in EFL contexts.

However, this study also uncovered several limitations, including technical barriers (e.g., internet issues, limited access to software), psychological obstacles (e.g., fear of judgment), and limited classroom implementation. These challenges were also mentioned by Zakaria & Aziz (2019), who emphasized the need for proper guidance and resources when integrating digital media in language classrooms.

While previous studies have explored DST in writing or listening, this research contributes uniquely by focusing specifically on speaking and on students' perceptions. It demonstrates that DST not only enhances technical speaking skills but also plays a vital role in increasing learner autonomy, confidence, and motivation.

Another key area of impact is in language development, particularly pronunciation, vocabulary acquisition, grammar usage, and fluency. Students reported that DST activities helped them become more conscious of their language use and improved their speaking accuracy. Listening to their recorded voices and re-editing stories allowed them to engage in reflective learning, which is essential in developing oral proficiency. This finding is supported by the work of Chaisriya et al. (2023), who noted that digital storytelling promotes metacognitive development and helps students internalize correct language usage.

Moreover, the collaborative aspect of DST was highlighted by students as beneficial for building confidence and peer support. Group projects encouraged communication among classmates and allowed for mutual feedback. This aligns with the social constructivist approach to language learning, which emphasizes learning as a social process. According to Zakaria & Aziz (2019), DST projects can serve as community-building exercises that foster trust, creativity, and shared learning objectives.

Despite the overall positive results, the study also brought to light some challenges. The most commonly mentioned barriers were technical in nature, including poor internet access, difficulty using editing software, and limited technological support. These issues are consistent with previous studies (e.g., Mahmud, 2018; Wahyuni, 2021), which found that successful integration of technology in the classroom requires sufficient infrastructure and digital literacy training. Furthermore, students who lacked confidence or who were shy tended to participate less actively in DST activities, indicating the continued presence of psychological barriers to speaking in English.

The lecturer interviewed in this study emphasized that although DST has potential, its effectiveness depends heavily on implementation. Teachers need to be adequately trained in using digital tools, and lesson plans must integrate DST in a structured and pedagogically sound manner. Simply assigning storytelling tasks without providing sufficient scaffolding or modeling may lead to confusion and frustration among students. Therefore, as also pointed out by Gürsoy (2021), teacher preparedness plays a crucial role in the successful adoption of DST.

Additionally, the current study focused only on one class in one semester, which limits the generalizability of the findings. A more diverse sample across

different educational settings could offer broader insights into how different groups of learners perceive DST. Furthermore, the study concentrated primarily on students' perceptions and did not quantitatively measure improvements in speaking proficiency over time. Future research could incorporate pre- and post-tests to assess actual language gains attributable to DST use.

Lastly, while this study explored the impact of DST in speaking activities, it did not delve deeply into how specific elements of DST (e.g., scripting, visual design, editing) contribute differently to language learning. Future researchers might consider breaking down the DST process to investigate which stages are most beneficial for linguistic development.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

In summary, students responded favorably to the use of digital storytelling in speaking instruction. He benefited from it. However, a number of students encountered difficulties using it to learn how to talk, including issues with language proficiency, psychological factors, and technical issues. This study is restricted to a single second-semester class. But that semester, there were three classes. Furthermore, the researcher did not offer a remedy to the difficulties; instead, the study solely concentrated on perception and issues. Consequently, a number of recommendations are required for additional research. These include a large sample size, sophisticated tools, and investigating potential solutions to the issues with employing digital storytelling applications to improve English speaking skills. Subsequently, it is preferable for lecturers to offer students a digital storytelling tool that is fully functional and user-friendly.

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