

# Digital Storytelling As A Tool In Second Language Learning

Christopher Santos Vicencio, Ed.D<sup>1</sup> and Christina Dionisio Vicencio, Ph.D<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Bulacan State University- Meneses Campus, Bulakan, Bulacan

[christopher.vicencio@bulsu.edu.ph](mailto:christopher.vicencio@bulsu.edu.ph)

<sup>2</sup>Bulacan State University- Meneses Campus, Bulakan, Bulacan

[christina.vicencio@bulsu.edu.ph](mailto:christina.vicencio@bulsu.edu.ph)

**Abstract:** *This research aims to find out if digital storytelling can be an effective tool in second language learning. There are two variables to consider for assessing digital storytelling as a tool in second language learning. The independent variable is digital and traditional storytelling, and the dependent variable is second language learning, specifically vocabulary and comprehension. The data were collected through the use of test questionnaires. The researchers used three stories suited for the pupils' grade level following the competencies given by the Department of Education. Three stories were taken from the grade 4 English book. The research questionnaires are standardized test from the grade 4 English book. Based on this study, it can be concluded that Digital storytelling is an appropriate tool in learning the second language for the grade 4 pupils-respondents of this study. It shows that digital storytelling is effective tool in second language learning same as the traditional way of handling classes in learning second language, specifically in comprehension and vocabulary. The result of the conducted study shows that there is no significant difference between the test results of the control group and the experimental groups' test results. It reveals that digital storytelling can also be an effective tool in second language learning. The study shows that digital storytelling is recommended tool for second language learning.*

**Keywords**— Digital storytelling, Comprehension, Second Language Learning, Vocabulary

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is remarked as "the nation of storytellers". The country is a culture of oral history passed from word of mouth to another and not through written words. Literacy is a level of competence; on the other hand, reading is a skill. One can be called literate but not necessarily a reader because reading, as a skill requires the development of a habit that must be exercised daily to retain or to enhance. If left unexercised, the skill becomes rusty and can be lost. For the past decades, the Philippines reported having a simple literacy rate in the mid-to-high 90s. In 2017, the simple literacy rate was lower at 93.4 percent for the population at least 10 years of age. With poor reading comes poor learning: Poor reading is also a reflection of poor language proficiency whether it is English or any foreign language. One sees this immediately in the language proficiency of public-school teachers. That's why technology has a great influence on societal trends (Luz, 2007).

Technology has a great impact on the world. In education, technology is viewed as an effective tool in the teaching and learning process. This is used in education to catch students' attention and interest. Teachers said that students will learn easily when they have an interest in the subject matter. By catching students' attention, also increases students' motivation to learn new knowledge and skills (Baskara, 2015).

One of the tools used by the teachers is storytelling. Traditional storytelling became a big part of education (Reinders, 2011). Risang Baskara (2015) also stated that storytelling has a major part and contribution to teaching and learning. Through this, the information, thoughts, or ideas were shared by telling a story. People were used to talking and

tell stories every day; sharing ideas, opinions, and happenings with each other. Commonly people tell a story through oral and written. But through the advance technology, people can make storytelling more interesting and entertaining than the traditional storytelling (Normann, 2011). Presenting storytelling through the use of technology is called "Digital Storytelling". According to Hayo Reinders (2015), he defined digital storytelling as sharing of stories through computer devices. "Teachers have always giving emphasis the learning experiences of their students. They see digital storytelling as a new and effective tool that can be use in teaching and learning process" (Normann, 2011). Digital storytelling was used as an instructional material in the field of education to catch the attention and interest of the students (Robin, 2008). Shahala Nassim (2018), also said that "Application of Digital storytelling in learning can enhances thinking of new ideas". But digital storytelling is not only telling and sharing stories, and instructional materials. It is also a teaching approach use by the teachers to enhance students' learning motivation. It is use as an effective approach because it let students to relate their life in their learning through the use of digital storytelling (Gribsby, Theard-Griggs, & Lilly, 2015).

Digital storytelling became trending in different place and society. It is defined as an effective tool in schools, museums and other places that may benefit to the growth of their institution. DST can easily spread throughout the world, and it is accessible to create and watch with the use of computers, like mobile phones, tablets, and other digital media (B.R. Robin, 2016).

There are some disadvantages that may encounter in using digital storytelling in the classroom setting. The first is the lack of knowledge in using the technology for both teachers and students. People used to upload files on the internet. And some

people can download and copy everything using internet to use it in good ways and in bad ways. So, the teachers must inform their students that their stories are in the safe state. Another one is stories can affect students' emotions. The teachers must appropriately pick the stories; this can be done by asking the students' opinions, suggestions, and personal background (Reinders, 2011).

English is one of the second languages in the Philippines. Most of the Filipinos use English in their job and business and even in their study. In education, English language is one of the mediums of instruction. According to Mike Cabigon (2015), the Philippines is globally known as one of the largest English-speaking countries in the world and most of the Filipinos are fluent in speaking English language. If you will look around and observe the streets signs, names of buildings, commercial posters and tarpaulins and even small things like receipts and Identification cards were written in English language. Moreover 14 million Filipinos speak English making this language as one of the country's official languages. In the field of education English was used as the primary medium of instruction. Emphasizing this language makes education as the fundamental reason on why English is one of the most used languages in the country.

Second language acquisition is about the process of students' learning their second language. It is also the learning of other languages after learning the mother tongue. Second language acquisition can be done in two different ways the "formal and informal way". In a formal way, the learner will learn his/her second language in the process of education. While the in an informal way, the learner will learn his/her second language in adopting the language in the environment. This can be done through communicating, reading, and watching the specific language (Stefánsson, 2013).

The researchers conducted this study to determine if digital storytelling can serve as an effective tool in second language learning. The main objective of this study is to find out if digital storytelling can be used as an effective tool in the second language acquisition of the participants.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

The research's general objective is to determine if digital storytelling is an effective tool in second language learning.

Specific:

1. To define the demographic profile of the respondents.
2. To measure the level of second language learning of control and experimental group of student-respondents in terms of:
  - a. comprehension,
  - b. vocabulary.
3. To determine the significant difference in second language learning and acquisition between the traditional

teaching group and teaching using the digital storytelling group

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Research Design

The researchers used the experimental method. This method has a control group where the researchers assigned subjects randomly on groups. It aims to visualize possibilities (Ayres, 2015). An experiment was conducted to test the effectiveness and the comparison between the traditional and the digital storytelling in second language learning. An experiment is testing of hypothesis that can be done through exploring and performing anywhere and anytime (Helmenstine, 2018).

The participants were divided into two groups to perform the experiment, the first group is the control group that the traditional storytelling was used, and the second group is the experimental group that the digital storytelling was used to measure the participants' second language learning specifically the vocabulary and the comprehension. The participants answered a test after the storytelling was conducted by the researchers. The two groups of participants answered the same question. The result of the test was compared.

### 2.2 Data Gathering Procedures

The researchers requested the consent of the school principals, teachers concerned and parents of the grade 4 pupils from two public elementary schools to conduct the study and gathered information from the pupils as respondents of the study. Request letters were sent to them.

To test the effectiveness of digital storytelling as a tool in the second language learning the researchers used test questionnaires. The research tools were prepared and constructed by the researchers. They used power-point presentations in teaching the three short stories and applied text to speech for the digital storytelling method.

The researchers conducted the test after the traditional storytelling and digital storytelling method. The tests include questions for pupils' comprehension and vocabulary.

This research respected the privacy, dignity, and rights of the pupil-respondents. The researchers did not pose any risk or harm to the pupil-respondents and, they assure them that the data collected in this study are treated with the utmost anonymity and confidentiality.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following shows the results and discussion of the study.

Table 1  
*Demographic Profile of the Control Group*

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	9	45

Female	11	55
TOTAL	20	100

There are 20 pupils in the control group, nine (9) of them are male and eleven (11) are female. They are the pupils who took the traditional storytelling.

Table 2  
*Demographic Profile of the Experimental Group*

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Male	10	50
Female	10	50
TOTAL	20	100

There are 20 pupils in the control group, nine (10) of them are male and eleven (10) are female. They are the pupils who took the digital storytelling.

Table 3  
*Mean Scores of Control and Experimental Groups in Terms of Comprehension and Vocabulary*

Respondents' Group	Comprehension	Mean Scores		
		Descriptor	Vocabulary	Descriptor
Traditional	86.39	Very Satisfactory	85.16	Very Satisfactory
Digital	86.61	Very Satisfactory	86.05	Very Satisfactory

The Table 3 shows the mean scores of control and experimental groups in terms of comprehension and vocabulary. It could be gleaned from the table that the comprehension of respondents' group in traditional teaching of storytelling garnered a mean score of 86.39 with "Very Satisfactory" as descriptor while the digital group has 86.61 mean score interpreted as "Very Satisfactory."

The vocabulary mean scores of two groups in traditional and digital storytelling are 85.16 and 86.16 respectively, both interpreted as "Very Satisfactory." From the data above it is evident that traditional storytelling and digital storytelling are both effective tools for second language learning as the two groups of respondents garnered the scores equivalent to very satisfactory.

A t-test was used to compare the mean of the result of two scores (Kim, 2015). Researchers performed t-test using the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to determine if there is a significant difference between the test results of the control group and the experimental group.

Table 4  
*Independent Samples t-Test Comparing the Pupils' Comprehension and Vocabulary in Digital and Traditional Classes*

Variables	Digital		Traditional		t-value	p-value	Decision
	M	SD	M	SD			
Comprehension	86.61	.359	86.39	.189	.278	.795	Accepted
Vocabulary	86.05	.595	85.16	.598	1.834	.141	Accepted

\*: significant at  $p < 0.05$

Table shows that the mean score of participants in digital storytelling is to some extent higher than the mean score of participants in traditional storytelling. In comprehension, the mean score of participants in digital storytelling is 86.61 ( $M = 86.61$ ) and a standard deviation is .359 ( $SD = .359$ ) and the mean score of participants in traditional storytelling is ( $M = 86.39$ ) and a standard deviation ( $SD = .189$ ). The t-value is .278, and the p-value of two groups in the variable comprehension is .795. The p-value is greater than the level of significance of .05 with 38 degrees of freedom. It indicates that there is no significant difference between the mean scores of the Digital group and the Traditional group, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that digital storytelling is effective tool in second language learning same as the traditional way of handling classes in learning a second language, specifically in comprehension.

In vocabulary, the mean score of participants in digital storytelling is 86.05 ( $M = 86.05$ ) with a standard deviation of .595 ( $SD = .595$ ) to some extent higher than the mean score of participants in traditional storytelling which was 85.16 ( $M = 85.16$ ) with the standard deviation of .598 ( $SD = .598$ ). The t-value is 1.834 and the p-value of two groups in the variable vocabulary is .141. The p-value is greater than the level of significance of .05 with 38 degrees of freedom. Hence, there is no significant difference between the scores of the Digital group and the Traditional group, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that in second language learning the digital storytelling is effective same as the traditional way of handling classes in improving vocabulary.

As stated in the study of May Ali Abdul-Ameer (2016), through the analyzation of data gathered, the experimental group got a higher mean score than the control group. Therefore, she concluded that participants acquired the vocabularies easily through the application of digital storytelling in learning the second language.

The conducted study also proved that digital storytelling improved the reading comprehension and the listening comprehension of the participants.

According in the study of Hamdy (2017), "Digital Storytelling as a Vehicle for Second Language Acquisition", participants from the digital storytelling improve their reading comprehension by comparing their pre-test and post-test of control and experimental group. As a result of post-test of between two groups; the mean of post-test scores of experimental group is 59.06 and for the control group is 53.60. It showed that digital storytelling is an effective tool in enhancing the reading comprehension of the participants.

While in the study of May Ali Abdul-Ameer (2016) "Improving Vocabulary Learning through Digital Stories with Iraqi Young Learners of English at the Primary Level", she used three (3) digital stories in the acquisition of the second language. She used the experimental method design of quantitative research. The result of the post-test in section one (1) and section two (2) of the participants in experimental group was 75 percent and 65 percent. They got a higher score than the control group who gained 40 percent and 30 percent in two sections of the post-test. The study concluded that participants acquired the vocabularies easily through the application of digital storytelling in learning the second language. The conducted study also proved that digital storytelling improved the reading comprehension and the listening comprehension of the participants.

The digital storytelling application did serve its purpose in enhancing vocabulary learning of young learners. In specific, the use of this digital storytelling application enabled the learning of vocabulary implicitly. Moreover, the learners were interested in and motivated to use the application to learn vocabulary with thorough guidance, practice and assessment (hyperlinked vocabulary notes, multimodal glosses, and vocabulary exercises) ensured that vocabulary learning has taken place. The multimedia principle and the modality principle of CTML (Mayer, 2001) incorporated in this application enabled the multimedia elements of texts, visuals and audio to be integrated in this digital storytelling application.

### 3.1 CONCLUSIONS

Based on this study, it can be concluded that, Digital storytelling is an applicable tool in learning the second language for the grade 4 pupils-respondents of this study. It shows that digital storytelling is effective tool in second language learning same as the traditional way of handling classes in learning second language, specifically in comprehension and vocabulary. The result of the conducted study shows that there is no significant difference between the test results of the control group and the experimental group. It reveals that digital storytelling can also be an effective tool in second language learning. The study shows that digital storytelling is recommended tool for second language learning.

### 4. REFERENCES

- [1] Abdul-Ameer, M. A. (2016). Improving Vocabulary Learning Through Digital Stories with Iraqi Young Learners of English at the Primary Level. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, 8 (2), 197-214 Maxwell, J. C. (1892). *A Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism*, 3rd ed., vol. 2. Oxford: Clarendon, pp.68-73.
- [2] Baskara, R. (2015). Facilitating Second Language Acquisition through Digital Storytelling. *Journals of Language and Literature*, 15(2), 148-152. Retrieved from
- [3] Cortes, K.. (2010, June 17). Affective Filter Hypothesis. *Mango Languages Blog* Retrieved from <http://blog.mangolanguages.com/~affective-filter-hypo-thesis>
- [4] Hamdy, M. F. (2017). The Effects of Using Digital Storytelling on Students' Reading Comprehension and Listening Comprehension. *Journal of English and Arabic Language Teaching*, 8(2), 112-123. Retrieved from <http://ejournal.uin-suka.ac.id/index.php/~jealt/article/view/~5072>
- [5] Grigsby, Y., Theard-Griggs, C., & Lilly, C. (2015) "Re-Claiming Voices: Digital Storytelling and Second Language Learners" *Acta Technologica Dubnicae* 5 (1), 60-67. doi: 10.1515/atd-2015-0034
- [6] Loniza, A. F., Saad, A. & Mustafa, M. C. (2018) "The Effectiveness of Digital Storytelling on Language Listening Comprehension of Kinder Garten Pupils". *The International Journal of Multimedia & Its Application*, 10 (6), 131-141. doi: 10.5121/ijma.2018.10611
- [7] Mercurio, M. (2019). Digital Storytelling in English Class: A Multimedia Learning Experience. *Teachers Professional Learning Online Community of Teachers and for Teachers*. Retrieved from <https://www.teac/herph.com/~digital-storytelling-english-class-multimedia-learning-experience/>