

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DIGITAL STORYTELLING THROUGH VLOGGING IN ENHANCING EFL STUDENTS' SPEAKING SKILLS: A QUASI-EXPERIMENTAL STUDY

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Abstract

This study investigated the effectiveness of digital storytelling through vlogging in enhancing EFL students' speaking skills. A quasi-experimental design was employed involving 30 eighth-grade students, consisting of 15 students in the experimental group and 15 students in the control group. The experimental group was taught through digital storytelling via vlogging, while the control group received traditional speaking instruction. The research instruments included a speaking pre-test, a speaking post-test, and an analytical speaking rubric assessing five aspects of speaking performance: pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Mann–Whitney U Test. The results revealed a statistically significant difference between the experimental and control groups ($U = 32.000$, $Z = -3.383$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the null hypothesis was rejected. Furthermore, the effect size analysis showed a large practical effect ($r = 0.618$). The experimental group demonstrated greater improvement in speaking performance than the control group, with the highest gains observed in content (0.87) and fluency (0.80). These findings indicate that digital storytelling through vlogging is an effective instructional strategy for improving EFL students' speaking skills. Integrating digital media with storytelling activities provides meaningful opportunities for language practice and supports the development of students' overall speaking performance.

Keywords: digital storytelling; vlogging; speaking skills; EFL students; quasi-experimental research

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui efektivitas digital storytelling melalui vlogging dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa EFL. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain quasi-experimental dengan melibatkan 30 siswa kelas VIII yang terbagi menjadi 15 siswa pada kelompok eksperimen dan 15 siswa pada kelompok kontrol. Kelompok eksperimen memperoleh pembelajaran menggunakan digital storytelling melalui vlogging, sedangkan kelompok kontrol memperoleh pembelajaran berbicara secara konvensional. Instrumen penelitian meliputi pre-test berbicara, post-test berbicara, dan rubrik penilaian berbicara analitis yang menilai lima aspek, yaitu pengucapan, kelancaran, kosakata, tata bahasa, dan isi. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif dan Mann–Whitney U Test. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya perbedaan yang signifikan antara kelompok eksperimen dan kelompok kontrol (U

$= 32,000$; $Z = -3,383$; $p < 0,001$), sehingga hipotesis nol ditolak. Analisis effect size juga menunjukkan pengaruh yang besar ($r = 0,618$). Kelompok eksperimen mengalami peningkatan keterampilan berbicara yang lebih tinggi dibandingkan kelompok kontrol, terutama pada aspek isi ($\text{gain} = 0,87$) dan kelancaran ($\text{gain} = 0,80$). Dengan demikian, digital storytelling melalui vlogging terbukti efektif sebagai strategi pembelajaran untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara siswa EFL melalui penyediaan kesempatan berbicara yang bermakna dan mendukung peningkatan performa berbicara secara keseluruhan.

Kata kunci: digital storytelling; vlogging; keterampilan berbicara; siswa EFL; quasi eksperimental

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1. Introduction

Speaking is one of the essential language skills that enables learners to communicate ideas, express opinions, and participate effectively in academic and social interactions. In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, however, speaking remains one of the most challenging skills for students to master. Many learners experience difficulties due to limited vocabulary, inadequate grammatical knowledge, pronunciation problems, low self-confidence, and fear of making mistakes. These challenges often reduce students' willingness to participate in classroom communication and limit their opportunities to develop oral proficiency. Furthermore, conventional speaking activities, which mainly rely on repetition, memorization, and teacher-centered instruction, frequently provide limited opportunities for authentic communication and meaningful language use (Brown, 1994).

The rapid development of digital technology has encouraged English teachers to integrate technology into language learning to create more engaging and student-centered learning environments. One instructional approach that has received increasing attention is digital storytelling (DST), which combines traditional storytelling with multimedia elements such as images, audio, video, and narration (Robin, 2006). Through planning, scripting, recording, and presenting stories, students actively construct knowledge while simultaneously practicing their language skills. This process reflects the principles of constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes meaningful

learning through active participation. In addition, Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory explains that learners develop language more effectively through scaffolding, collaboration, and social interaction, making digital storytelling an appropriate strategy for speaking instruction.

Among various forms of digital storytelling, vlogging provides learners with opportunities to practice speaking in authentic and meaningful contexts. Students are encouraged to organize ideas, rehearse their performances, evaluate their recordings, and revise their speaking before producing the final video. This process promotes repeated speaking practice, self-reflection, and greater learner autonomy. Consequently, vlogging has the potential to improve pronunciation, vocabulary use, grammatical accuracy, fluency, and content organization while simultaneously reducing speaking anxiety and increasing learners' confidence (Chen & Hashim, 2022).

Previous studies have consistently reported positive contributions of digital storytelling to English language learning. Anugrawati and Prabawati Rum (2022) found that digital storytelling significantly improved students' speaking fluency. Likewise, Anggraeni and Palupi (2025) reported improvements in learners' creativity, vocabulary, fluency, and self-confidence through digital storytelling. Similarly, Astuti and Chakim (2023) demonstrated that digital storytelling effectively enhanced junior high school students' speaking ability. Despite these promising findings, several research gaps remain. Previous studies mainly focused on senior high school or vocational high school students, examined limited speaking components, or employed qualitative approaches. Consequently, quantitative evidence regarding the effectiveness of digital storytelling in improving multiple dimensions of speaking performance among junior high school EFL learners remains limited.

To address these gaps, this study investigated the effectiveness of digital storytelling through vlogging in enhancing eighth-grade EFL students' speaking skills using a quasi-experimental design. Unlike previous studies, this research evaluated students' speaking performance comprehensively across five assessment components: pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content. By providing quantitative evidence from a junior high school EFL context, this study contributes to the

growing literature on technology-enhanced language learning and offers practical pedagogical implications for English teachers seeking effective strategies to improve students' speaking performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Speaking Skills

Speaking is one of the essential language skills and plays a central role in English language learning, as it enables learners to communicate ideas, express opinions, and participate in meaningful interactions. Brown (1994) defines speaking as an interactive process of constructing meaning through producing, receiving, and processing information. This definition emphasizes that speaking involves not only language production but also comprehension and interaction between speakers and listeners.

In English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learning, speaking proficiency develops through continuous practice in authentic communicative contexts. According to Savignon (2002), learners improve their speaking ability when they actively use language for meaningful communication rather than merely learning linguistic forms. Through regular speaking practice, learners gradually develop fluency, expand their vocabulary, improve grammatical accuracy, and gain confidence in expressing ideas. Similarly, Derakhshan et al. (2016) argue that communicative speaking activities encourage learners to practice English more frequently, thereby enhancing their speaking accuracy, fluency, and self-confidence.

Speaking performance in this study was assessed using five components adapted from Brown (2004): pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content. These components provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating students' oral communication and were used to measure the effectiveness of digital storytelling through vlogging in improving EFL students' speaking skills.

2.2 Digital Storytelling through Vlogging

Digital storytelling (DST) integrates traditional storytelling with digital media, such as images, audio, video, and text, to create meaningful and engaging learning experiences. Robin (2006) defines digital storytelling as the integration of various forms of digital media that encourage creativity, reflection, and active learning. In English Language Teaching (ELT), DST provides students with authentic opportunities to practice language skills by planning, creating, revising, and presenting their own stories through technology.

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of digital storytelling in improving students' speaking skills. Nuriyah et al. (2024) reported that DST significantly enhanced learners' grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and self-confidence compared to conventional speaking instruction. Similarly, Murad et al. (2023) found that digital storytelling increased students' motivation and participation by providing meaningful opportunities for repeated speaking practice. Rahayu et al. (2023) also observed that students became more actively engaged in speaking activities through the process of creating and presenting digital stories.

One form of digital storytelling commonly implemented in ELT is vlogging, which allows students to record and present their ideas through video. According to Chen and Hashim (2022), vlogging provides authentic speaking practice by encouraging learners to organize ideas, apply appropriate vocabulary and pronunciation, and communicate in realistic contexts. The recording process also enables students to review their performances, identify weaknesses, and improve their speaking through self-reflection and repeated practice. Consequently, vlogging has been shown to increase learners' confidence, reduce speaking anxiety, and promote greater participation in English speaking activities (Anissa Indriyanti & Ulfa, 2025).

The integration of digital storytelling and vlogging therefore creates a student-centered learning environment that encourages creativity, meaningful communication, and continuous speaking practice. By engaging learners in planning, recording, revising, and presenting digital stories, this approach provides authentic opportunities to improve various aspects of speaking

performance, making it an appropriate instructional strategy for enhancing EFL students' speaking skills.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The use of digital storytelling via vlogging within this research study has been rooted on three theoretical bases, namely, Constructivist Learning Theory, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). All these theories stress that language acquisition is most effective when learners construct meaning, communicate, and interact.

Constructivist Learning Theory posits that learning is an active process, whereby learners construct knowledge through personal experiences as opposed to passive acquisition of information. In digital storytelling lessons, learners construct ideas, create the content of stories, shoot videos and assess their performance as speakers. Through this process, learners are encouraged to be more independent and creative in building their speaking skills.

Further elaboration of language development according to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory states that language development occurs through social interaction and scaffolding within the ZPD (Vygotsky, 1978). With digital storytelling using vlogging, scaffolding takes place in the form of guidance from the teacher and feedback from peers as well as repetition of speaking. In addition, the act of recording and reflecting on the process helps learners assess their speaking performance.

These concepts have much in common with the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) methodology, as it focuses on communicative practices of using language for meaning in authentic situations (Savignon, 2002). Using vlogs, learners are communicating their thoughts, organizing facts and telling stories through the medium of English to real audiences not just doing some language exercises. Thus, the digital storytelling through vlogging is an approach that can help to develop speaking skills of ESL learners.

3. Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental research design with a non-randomized pre-test–post-test control group design to investigate the effectiveness of digital storytelling through vlogging in enhancing EFL students' speaking skills. Two intact eighth-grade classes were assigned as the experimental and control groups. The experimental group received instruction through digital storytelling-based vlogging, while the control group was taught using conventional speaking instruction. Both groups completed the same pre-test and post-test to measure students' speaking performance before and after the treatment. Students' speaking skills were assessed using an analytical speaking rubric covering pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content. The collected data were analyzed quantitatively using IBM SPSS Statistics. Since the data did not fully meet the assumption of normality, the Mann–Whitney U test was employed to examine the difference in speaking performance between the two groups.

3.2 Data and Data Source

The data consisted of students' speaking performance collected through pre-test and post-test assessments administered before and after the instructional treatment. The participants were two intact eighth-grade classes from a public junior high school in Sidoarjo, Indonesia, comprising an experimental group and a control group, with 15 students in each group. The experimental group received instruction through digital storytelling using vlogging, while the control group was taught using conventional speaking instruction. Students' speaking performances were assessed using an analytical speaking rubric covering pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content, and all performances were audio-recorded to ensure consistent scoring and data analysis.

3.3 Data Collection

Data were collected through pre-test and post-test speaking assessments administered to both the experimental and control groups before and after the instructional treatment. The pre-test was conducted to determine students' initial speaking proficiency, while the post-test measured their speaking performance following the intervention. Both tests required students to complete oral speaking tasks aligned with the learning objectives and were administered under similar conditions. Students' performances were evaluated using an analytical speaking rubric adapted from Brown (2004), which assessed five speaking components: pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content. The resulting scores were used to measure students' speaking improvement and to examine the effectiveness of digital storytelling through vlogging.

3.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed quantitatively using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics, including the mean and standard deviation, were used to summarize students' pre-test and post-test speaking scores. Prior to hypothesis testing, the data were examined using the Shapiro–Wilk test for normality and Levene's test for homogeneity of variance. Since the data did not fully satisfy the assumption of normality, the Mann–Whitney U test was employed to compare the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups. Statistical significance was determined at the 0.05 level. To determine the practical significance of the treatment, the effect size was also calculated.

4. Results

This part showed the findings obtained from the results of the pre-tests and post-tests performed by the experimental group and the control group. The analysis of the data included descriptive analysis, assessment of normality and homogeneity, testing of the hypotheses, effect size analysis, and improvement in each speaking aspect to examine whether there was a statistically

significant difference in speaking skills between the students who used digital storytelling and those who performed traditional speaking.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Students' Speaking Scores

Group	Test	N	Mean	SD
Experimental	Pre-test	15	15.33	2.35
Experimental	Post-test	15	19.07	2.19
Control	Pre-test	15	14.93	2.22
Control	Post-test	15	15.60	2.17

Table 1 shows that the experimental group obtained a mean score of 15.33 in the pre-test and 19.07 in the post-test, resulting in an improvement of 3.74 points. Meanwhile, the control group obtained a mean score of 14.93 in the pre-test and 15.60 in the post-test, indicating an improvement of only 0.67 points. These results suggest that students who learned through digital storytelling via vlogging experienced greater improvement in speaking performance compared to students who participated in traditional speaking activities.

4.2 Test of Normality

A normality test was conducted using the Shapiro-Wilk test to determine whether the data were normally distributed. Since each group consisted of fewer than 50 participants, the Shapiro-Wilk test was considered appropriate.

Table 2
Results of the Shapiro–Wilk Normality Test

Variable	Group	Statistic	df	P
Pre-test	Experimental	.919	15	.186
Pre-test	Control	.966	15	.792

Post-test	Experimental	.881	15	.049
Post-test	Control	.937	15	.342

The results indicate that the significance value of the experimental group's posttest score was 0.049, which was lower than 0.05. Therefore, the post-test data of the experimental group were not normally distributed. Since the assumption of normality was not fully met, a non-parametric statistical test was employed to test the research hypothesis.

4.3 Test of Homogeneity

A homogeneity test was conducted using Levene's Test to determine whether the variances of the two groups were equal.

Table 3
Results of Levene's Test for Homogeneity of Variance

Variable	F(1,28)	P
Post-test Speaking Score	0.086	.772

Note. The homogeneity assumption was met because $p > .05$.

The significance value obtained from Levene's Test was 0.772, which was greater than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that the variances of the experimental and control groups were homogeneous.

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Because the normality assumption was not fully satisfied, the Mann-Whitney U Test was employed to compare the post-test scores of the experimental and control groups.

Table 4
Results of the Mann-Whitney U Test

Statistic	Value
Mann-Whitney U	32.000

Wilcoxon W	152.000
Z	-3.383
P	<.001

Note. Grouping variable = Group.

The results of the Mann–Whitney U Test revealed a Mann–Whitney U value of 32.000 and a significance value of less than 0.001. Since the significance value was lower than 0.05, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) was accepted.

These findings indicate that there was a statistically significant difference in speaking performance between students who learned through digital storytelling via vlogging and those who participated in traditional speaking activities.

Therefore, digital storytelling through vlogging was found to be more effective in enhancing students' speaking skills than traditional speaking activities.

4.5 Effect Size Analysis

To determine the magnitude of the treatment effect, an effect size analysis was conducted using the following formula:

$$r = \frac{|Z|}{\sqrt{N}}$$

where Z represents the standardized test statistic obtained from the Mann–Whitney U Test, and N represents the total number of participants.

Based on the Mann–Whitney U Test results, the obtained value was $Z = -3.383$, with a total sample size of 30 students. The effect size was calculated as follows:

$$r = \frac{|-3.383|}{\sqrt{30}} = \frac{3.383}{5.477} = 0.618$$

According to Cohen's (1988) interpretation, an effect size of 0.618 indicates a large effect. This finding suggests that digital storytelling through vlogging had not only a statistically significant effect on students' speaking skills but also a substantial practical effect.

Table 5
Effect Size Analysis

Statistic	Value
Z	-3.383
Total participants (N)	30
Effect size (r)	0.618
Interpretation	Large effect

Note. Effect size was calculated using $r = |Z|/\sqrt{N}$.

4.5 Improvement in Each Speaking Aspect

To examine the improvement in each speaking aspect after the implementation of digital storytelling through vlogging, the mean scores of fluency, vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, and content were compared between the pre-test and post-test in both the experimental and control groups.

Table 6
Improvement in Each Speaking Aspect

Speaking Aspect	Experimental Pre-Test	Experimental Post-Test	Gain	Control Pre-Test	Control Post-Test	Gain
Fluency	3.27	4.07	0.80	3.20	3.33	0.13
Vocabulary	2.87	3.60	0.73	2.80	2.87	0.07
Grammar	2.87	3.60	0.73	2.80	2.87	0.07
Pronunciation	2.80	3.40	0.60	2.80	3.13	0.33
Content	3.53	4.40	0.87	3.33	3.40	0.07

The data in Table 6 indicate that the experimental group demonstrated improvement across all five speaking components after participating in digital storytelling through vlogging. The greatest

improvement was observed in content (gain = 0.87), followed by fluency (gain = 0.80), while vocabulary and grammar each increased by 0.73. Although pronunciation showed the smallest gain (0.60), it still reflected positive progress. In contrast, the control group demonstrated only marginal improvement, with gain scores ranging from 0.07 to 0.33 across all speaking components. These findings suggest that digital storytelling through vlogging contributed more effectively to the development of students' speaking skills than conventional speaking instruction, particularly in improving students' ability to organize ideas and express them more fluently.

5. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that digital storytelling through vlogging significantly enhanced students' speaking performance compared with conventional speaking instruction. The statistically significant difference identified by the Mann–Whitney U test, together with the large effect size, indicates that the treatment produced both statistical and practical improvements in students' speaking achievement. These findings support the view that technology-integrated speaking activities can create more meaningful opportunities for authentic language use and active learner engagement.

The improvement observed in the experimental group can be explained through the principles of Communicative Language Teaching (CLT). According to Savignon (2002), language learning becomes more effective when learners use language to communicate meaningful messages rather than merely practicing isolated linguistic forms. Throughout the digital storytelling process, students generated ideas, organized information, recorded videos, and communicated messages through English, enabling them to use the language in purposeful communicative contexts. This learning experience encouraged greater participation and reduced dependence on teacher-centered instruction.

The findings also support constructivist learning theory and Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Students actively constructed knowledge while planning, recording, reviewing, and revising their digital stories. Throughout these activities, teacher guidance, peer collaboration, and feedback functioned as scaffolding within the Zone of Proximal Development, gradually enabling students to

perform speaking tasks more independently. Such learning experiences encouraged students to develop confidence while continuously refining their oral performance.

Among the five speaking components, content and fluency demonstrated the greatest improvement. This result suggests that vlog production encouraged students to organize ideas logically before speaking while providing repeated opportunities to rehearse and evaluate their performances. The recording process enabled learners to identify weaknesses, revise their delivery, and produce more coherent and fluent oral presentations. Although pronunciation demonstrated the smallest gain, it still improved after the intervention, indicating that repeated self-recording and self-evaluation also supported pronunciation development.

The present findings are consistent with previous studies reporting the effectiveness of digital storytelling in improving EFL speaking skills. Similar to the findings of Anugrawati and Prabawati Rum (2022), Astuti and Chakim (2023), and Chen and Hashim (2022), this study confirms that integrating digital storytelling into speaking instruction enhances students' oral performance. However, this study extends previous research by examining junior high school EFL learners through a quasi-experimental design and by evaluating five speaking components simultaneously. Consequently, the findings provide additional empirical evidence supporting the pedagogical value of digital storytelling through vlogging in developing students' speaking skills.

6. Conclusion

This study investigated the effectiveness of digital storytelling through vlogging in enhancing the speaking skills of eighth-grade EFL students at a public junior high school in Sidoarjo. The findings indicate that students who participated in digital storytelling-based vlogging demonstrated significantly greater improvement in speaking performance than those who received conventional speaking instruction. The improvement was evident across all assessed speaking components, namely pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and content, suggesting that integrating digital storytelling into speaking instruction provides meaningful opportunities for students to practice and develop their oral communication skills.

These findings highlight the pedagogical value of digital storytelling through vlogging as an innovative and student-centered instructional strategy for EFL speaking classrooms. By engaging students in planning, recording, revising, and presenting digital stories, this approach encourages active participation, repeated speaking practice, and greater learner confidence. Therefore, English teachers are encouraged to incorporate digital storytelling-based activities into classroom instruction to create more engaging and authentic speaking experiences.

This study was limited to one public junior high school in Sidoarjo, involved a relatively small number of participants, and focused on descriptive text instruction. Future studies are recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples, investigate different text genres or educational levels, and examine the long-term effects of digital storytelling on students' speaking development.

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