MULTIMODAL STORYTELLING TO IMPROVE SPEAKING SKILL OF THE NINTH GRADE STUDENTS AT SMP 9 DENPASAR

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ABSTRACT

This classroom action research tries to improve the students' speaking skills through the use of multimodal digital storytelling. Within several cycles, the researchers recorded students' progress particularly in retelling stories with the help of digital media. The subjects of this study were the ninth-grade students of SMPN 9 Denpasar. The media used differ in each cycle, making sure that students were exposed to different modality of retelling stories. After each cycle, the students were given post-test to demonstrate their speaking skills in the form of performance assessment. The main data was the students' speaking score from pre-test, post-test 1 and post-test. Another supporting data was also gathered through questionnaires to see students' responses about the implementation of multimodal storytelling. The data presented quantitatively with qualitative description and explanation. The result showed that there was improvement in terms of students' speaking score after the implementation of multimodal storytelling. The students were also showing positive responses toward the variety of media they were being introduced to.

Keywords: multimodal storytelling, speaking skills

ABSTRAK

Penelitian tindakan kelas ini mencoba meningkatkan kemampuan berbicara siswa melalui penggunaan multimodal digital storytelling. Dalam beberapa siklus, para peneliti mencatat kemajuan siswa terutama dalam menceritakan kembali cerita dengan bantuan media digital. Subjek penelitian ini adalah siswa kelas sembilan SMPN 9 Denpasar. Media yang digunakan berbeda di setiap siklus, memastikan bahwa siswa terpapar modalitas yang berbeda untuk mampu menceritakan Kembali alur cerita yang telah disusun. Setelah setiap siklus, para siswa diberikan post-test untuk menunjukkan kemampuan berbicara mereka dalam bentuk penilaian kinerja. Data utama adalah nilai berbicara siswa dari pre-test, post-test 1 dan post-test. Data pendukung lainnya juga dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner untuk melihat tanggapan siswa tentang implementasi multimodal storytelling. Data disajikan secara kuantitatif dengan deskripsi dan penjelasan kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa ada peningkatan dalam hal nilai berbicara siswa setelah implementasi bercerita dengan bantuan multimodal media digital. Siswa juga menunjukkan respon positif terhadap variasi media yang digunakan.

Kata Kunci: multimodal storytelling, kemampuan berbicara

PENDAHULUAN

In an increasingly interconnected world, proficiency in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has become a crucial asset, facilitating communication, academic advancement, and career opportunities. Mastery of spoken English, in particular, holds paramount importance, as it serves as the primary mode of communication in various social and professional contexts. (Ur, 1991; Turk, 2003). Despite the recognition of its significance, many EFL learners encounter challenges in developing their speaking skills, often impeding their overall language acquisition and fluency.

The classroom environment plays a pivotal role in fostering speaking

proficiency among EFL learners. However, traditional methods of instruction often fall short in engaging students and providing opportunities for meaningful language practice. Recognizing the need for innovative approaches to address this issue, educators are turning to multimodal storytelling as a promising avenue for enhancing speaking ability.

Storytelling has been revered across cultures and ages as a powerful means of communication, fostering empathy, imagination, and cultural understanding. By incorporating multimodal elements such as visuals, audio, and gestures, storytelling transcends linguistic barriers, providing a holistic and immersive learning experience. This approach not only captivates learners but also stimulates their cognitive processes, facilitating language acquisition and retention (Balaman, 2018). With the use of social media, multimodal digital storytelling is made even more easy. Belmonte et.al. (2020) argues that multimodal digital story telling is an expanding activity by which people combine narrative voice with images, sometimes a musical soundtrack.

Moreover, storytelling offers a natural and authentic context for language production, encouraging learners to express themselves creatively while practicing grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation in a meaningful context. Through storytelling, learners not only improve their speaking skills but also develop essential language competencies such as listening, comprehension, and narrative construction. Multimodal storytelling has emerged as a promising pedagogical approach for enhancing speaking ability and promoting language acquisition in EFL instruction. Rooted in the principles of constructivist learning theory and sociocultural perspectives on language acquisition, multimodal storytelling integrates various modes of communication, including visual, auditory, gestural, and spatial elements, to create rich and immersive learning experiences (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001).

Studies investigating the effectiveness of multimodal storytelling in language education have reported positive outcomes across various linguistic domains, including speaking proficiency, vocabulary acquisition, and cultural awareness (Baltova, 1999; Jones & Carter, 2012). By combining verbal and nonverbal modes of communication, multimodal storytelling accommodates diverse learning styles and preferences, catering to the individual needs and interests of learners (Chun & Plass, 1996).

Furthermore, multimodal storytelling promotes collaborative learning and interaction among students, fostering a sense of community and shared meaning-making in the classroom (Kress, 2010). Through collaborative storytelling activities, learners engage in negotiation of meaning, peer feedback, and co-construction of narratives, thereby enhancing their communicative competence and intercultural communicative skills (Thorne, 2006).

In light of these considerations, this research aims to explore the effectiveness of multimodal storytelling as a pedagogical tool for enhancing speaking ability in EFL instruction. By investigating the impact of storytelling interventions on student engagement, language proficiency, and confidence in speaking, this study seeks to contribute valuable insights to the field of language education and inform instructional practices aimed at empowering EFL learners worldwide.

RESEARCH METHOD

The design of this research is a Classroom Action Research. Burns (2010) states that action research is part of a broad movement that has been going on in education generally for some time. Further he states that the central idea of action research is to intervene in the deliberate way in the problematic situation in order to bring about changes and even better improvement. Meanwhile, Bogdan & Bilken (2007) believe that classroom action research is a systematic collection of information designed to bring about social change. According to Cohen (1989: 118), the objectives of implementing Classroom Action Research are 1) as a means to enhance or improve a previously diagnosed situation, 2) as a form of training that equips teachers with new methods and skills, which are able to hone analytical abilities and increase self-awareness 3) as a form of injecting innovation into the teaching and learning process, 4) as a means of improving communication between educators and academic researchers, 5) providing other alternatives with a more subjective approach to problem solving in the classroom. Thus, the main function of doing action research is to make the improvement of subjects' skill by using an appropriate teaching technique. The data collection is done through two different instruments namely, speaking performance test and questionnaire. The data then analysed quantitatively and then described qualitatively as it is.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Result

There were two different data gathered in this research namely the writing achievement and questionnaire. This research was carried out in two different cycles, where each cycle ended up with a single post-test. The speaking achievement data resulted from the two post-tests and one pre-test. Meanwhile the questionnaire was quantified to see the overall response of the students toward the implementation of multimodal storytelling.

Before the implementation of multimodal storytelling, the speaking score was gathered to know the initial ability of the student. The students were involved in two cycles of treatment where they were exposed to various media to help them in retelling the story. At the end of every cycle the students were given speaking test as a post-test.

The first media in the first cycle is a simple picture series made through the app called Storyboard that, and Pixton comic. Through these two platforms, the students were given the freedom to design the scene that will help them in retelling their stories.

The second medium is called Flip. This platform allows students to share their story in the form of video recording. The whole class then can give comments and vote for the best performance. Through this platform the students can freely edit and choose the display that they like to help them retell the stories.

From the Figure 1, it can be seen that the variety of media involved in retelling stories positively helps students in their performance. Other than the progressing mean score of the students in speaking performance, they were also given questionnaire to know the students' perception in the implementation of multimodal storytelling.

The subjects were given a questionnaire consisting of 9 questions. The questions were about the implementation of multimodal storytelling and how the students feel about it. The questions tried to

depict the students' views on how multimodal story help them create the story and bring the story more alive.
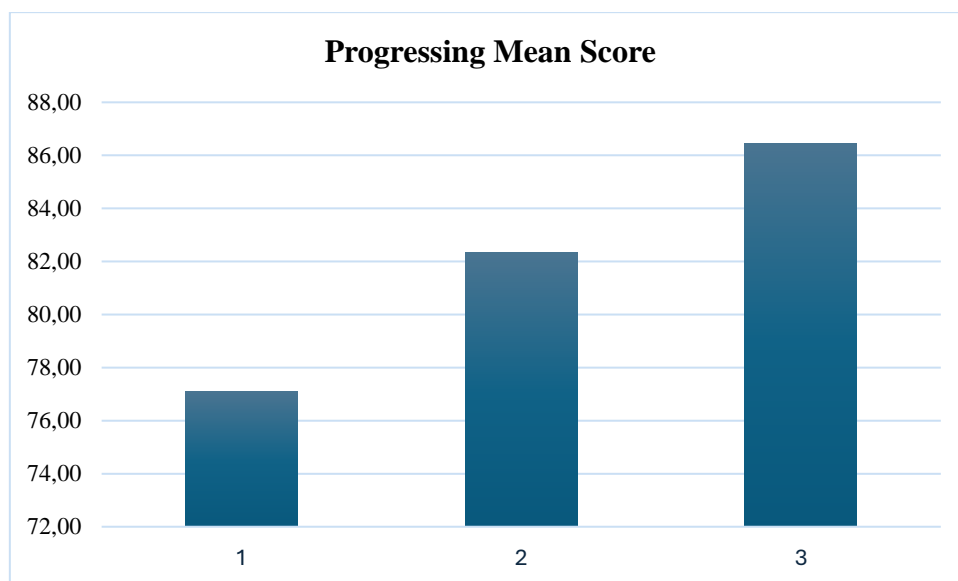

Figure 1. Progressing Mean Score in Every Cycle

Description:
1 = *Precycle*
2 = *Cycle 1*
3 = *Cycle 2*

From the 26 students being the respondents, all of them agree that the use of multimodal media helps them in retelling the story. 73.1% of the respondents chose 'strongly agree' to the statement that multimodal media ease them in retelling stories. While 23.1% of the respondents chose 'agree' and 3.8% felt undecided.

In terms of speaking performance, the students felt that using multimodal media in storytelling helps their fluency, accuracy and confidence. 53.8% respondents agreed that multimodal media made them more fluent in retelling stories. In addition, 34.6% strongly agreed that the media affect their fluency positively.

Regarding accuracy, 46.2% and 38.5% of the sample chose 'agree' and 'strongly agree' that with the use of multimodal

media they were more accurate in retelling the story. This media helps them in presenting the whole story in accurate order. Another 7.7% of the sample stayed undecided and disagreed with the statement.

Speaking and presenting a story in front of others requires confidence. Through the questionnaire, the respondents showed that multimodal media boosts their confidence in performing storytelling. Around 69.3% of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that by utilizing multimodal media, they can deliver their story more confidently. Meanwhile, 26.9% of respondents were undecided and 3.8% disagreed.

Discussion

This research tries to describe the implementation of multimodal storytelling to improve speaking. This multimodal indicates the use of variety of media to assist students in their speaking performance. The activity of creating and designing the media to support them in retelling stories boosts not only their critical thinking but their confidence as well (Appleton, et al., 2006, Arends, 2010).

First of all, variety of media in multimodal storytelling lets the students to engage in a more active way to design and brings their story into visual media (Chun and Plass, 1996; Jones and Carter, 2012). The interaction they made during designing what to put into display makes them understand more the sequence of events happening in the story. They also agreed that the activity of designing through the help of platform is quite interesting and fun.

Furthermore, the decision that they make during the designing process nurture their critical thinking. They need to wrap their story in just a few meaningful scenes. This process challenges their critical thinking to be able to present the intact story without missing necessary moments.

Based on the result of the questionnaire, it can be seen that most of the students agreed that the use of varied media helps them in retelling story more fluently and accurately. With the media assisting them in retelling the story, therefore they are more confidence in presenting the whole story.

CLOSING
Conclusion

The main aim of this research was to record the experiences of students with the implementation of multimodal storytelling. The students' initial ability in speaking was compared to the post-test performances after the students were exposed to different types of media and platforms. It can be seen that the multimodal storytelling helps students in their speaking performance seen from the progressing mean score from pre-test and post-test. Furthermore, from the result of the questionnaire, the majority of respondents agreed that the implementation of multimodal storytelling helps boost their critical thinking and confidence. It also improves their accuracy and fluency in retelling stories.

Suggestion

From the result of this research some suggestions can be drawn. First of all, teachers involved in teaching speaking can start integrating different media not only to help them understand the story better, but also to retelling it in a smooth way. Second of all, further research in the related field of speaking and multimodal media is encouraged to give a more diverse result in improving speaking ability.

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