

Digital Storytelling in English Language Learning: A Literature Review on Its Impact on Speaking Skills and Digital Literacy Among Efl Learners

Moh.Syifauddin¹, Ach.Fawaid as'ad², Siti Mutiatun³

^{1,2,3}Universitas Trunodjoyo Madura, Indonesia

mohsyifauddin90@gmail.com

Abstract: The rapid development of digital technology has transformed educational practices and encouraged the adoption of innovative teaching strategies in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Among various technology-enhanced learning approaches, digital storytelling has gained considerable attention due to its ability to integrate language learning with digital competence development. This study aims to review previous research regarding the impact of digital storytelling on speaking skills and digital literacy among EFL learners. The study employed a literature review method by analyzing peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2021 and 2026. The reviewed studies were obtained from Scopus-indexed journals, DOAJ-indexed journals, and other reputable academic databases. The findings indicate that digital storytelling contributes positively to the improvement of pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary mastery, confidence, and communicative competence. Furthermore, digital storytelling promotes digital literacy through multimedia production, information management, critical evaluation of digital resources, and technology-based communication. Despite several implementation challenges, including technological limitations and varying levels of digital competence, digital storytelling remains an effective pedagogical approach for integrating language learning and twenty-first-century skills. The review concludes that digital storytelling offers significant benefits for EFL education and should be further integrated into language teaching practices.

Keywords: digital storytelling; speaking skills; digital literacy; EFL learners; literature review

Abstrak: Perkembangan teknologi digital yang pesat telah mengubah praktik pendidikan dan mendorong penggunaan strategi pembelajaran inovatif dalam pembelajaran Bahasa Inggris sebagai Bahasa Asing (EFL). Salah satu pendekatan pembelajaran berbasis teknologi yang mendapat perhatian luas adalah digital storytelling karena mampu mengintegrasikan pembelajaran bahasa dengan pengembangan kompetensi digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji berbagai penelitian terdahulu mengenai dampak digital storytelling terhadap keterampilan berbicara dan literasi digital peserta didik EFL. Penelitian menggunakan metode kajian literatur dengan menganalisis artikel jurnal yang diterbitkan pada periode 2021–2026. Artikel yang ditelaah berasal dari jurnal bereputasi yang terindeks Scopus, DOAJ, dan basis data akademik lainnya. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa digital storytelling berkontribusi positif terhadap peningkatan pengucapan, kelancaran berbicara, penguasaan kosakata, kepercayaan diri, dan kompetensi komunikatif peserta didik. Selain itu, digital storytelling juga meningkatkan literasi digital melalui aktivitas produksi multimedia, pengelolaan informasi, evaluasi sumber digital, dan komunikasi berbasis teknologi. Meskipun terdapat beberapa kendala implementasi, digital storytelling tetap menjadi pendekatan pedagogis yang efektif dalam mengintegrasikan pembelajaran bahasa dan keterampilan abad ke-21. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa digital storytelling memberikan manfaat yang signifikan bagi pembelajaran EFL dan perlu diintegrasikan secara lebih luas dalam praktik pembelajaran bahasa.

Kata Kunci: *digital storytelling*; keterampilan berbicara; literasi digital; pembelajar EFL; kajian literatur

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed educational practices worldwide. Educational institutions increasingly integrate technology into teaching and learning processes to improve learning outcomes and prepare students for the demands of the twenty-first century. Within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education, technology-enhanced learning environments have become essential in supporting communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking

skills. Speaking is widely recognized as one of the most important language skills in English language learning because it enables learners to communicate ideas, express opinions, and participate actively in social interactions. However, speaking remains one of the most challenging skills for EFL learners. Many students experience difficulties related to pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary mastery, anxiety, and self-confidence. Consequently, educators continuously seek innovative instructional approaches that can create meaningful opportunities for speaking practice while maintaining student engagement. One promising pedagogical approach is digital storytelling. Digital storytelling combines traditional storytelling with multimedia technologies such as audio recordings, videos, images, animations, and digital applications. Through digital storytelling activities, learners create narratives by integrating language production with multimedia design. This approach allows students to practice speaking in authentic contexts while simultaneously developing creativity and technological competence.

Previous studies have demonstrated that digital storytelling positively influences language learning outcomes. Numerous researchers have reported improvements in speaking performance, learner motivation, classroom engagement, and communication skills following the implementation of digital storytelling activities. In addition, digital storytelling supports the development of digital literacy by encouraging students to search for information, evaluate digital resources, create multimedia content, and communicate using technology. Despite the growing body of literature, several gaps remain evident. First, many studies primarily focus on speaking performance while giving limited attention to digital literacy outcomes. Second, studies examining the simultaneous contribution of digital storytelling to both speaking skills and digital literacy remain relatively scarce. Third, research findings are often dispersed across different educational contexts, making it difficult to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the dual impact of digital storytelling among EFL learners.

Therefore, this literature review aims to synthesize previous empirical findings concerning the impact of digital storytelling on speaking skills and digital literacy. Specifically, the study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. How does digital storytelling influence speaking skills among EFL learners?
2. How does digital storytelling contribute to the development of digital literacy?
3. What pedagogical implications can be derived from the implementation of digital storytelling in EFL classrooms?

The findings are expected to provide educators, researchers, and policymakers with a comprehensive understanding of the educational value of digital storytelling in contemporary language learning environments.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a literature review design. The review focused on empirical and theoretical studies discussing digital storytelling, speaking skills, and digital literacy in EFL contexts. The literature search was conducted through several academic databases, including Scopus, DOAJ, Google Scholar, ERIC, and Crossref. Keywords used in the search process included "digital storytelling", "speaking skills", "digital literacy", "English language learning", and "EFL learners". The inclusion criteria were: (1) studies published between 2021 and 2026; (2) peer-reviewed journal articles; (3) studies discussing digital storytelling in EFL settings; and (4) studies reporting findings related

to speaking skills or digital literacy. Studies that lacked methodological clarity, conference abstracts, and non-English publications were excluded. The selected articles were analyzed using content analysis. The analysis focused on research objectives, participants, methodologies, major findings, and educational implications. The reviewed studies were then synthesized into thematic categories addressing speaking skill development, digital literacy enhancement, learner engagement, implementation challenges, and pedagogical implications.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

a. Digital Storytelling and Speaking Skills Development

The reviewed literature consistently demonstrates that digital storytelling contributes positively to speaking skill development. Through the process of creating and presenting digital stories, learners engage in repeated speaking practice, script development, narration, pronunciation rehearsal, and oral presentation activities.

Table 1. Synthesis of Previous Studies on Speaking Skills

Authors	Year	Method	Findings
Nair & Yunus	2021	Systematic Review	Improved speaking proficiency and communication skills
Mardhiah et al.	2024	Case Study	Increased confidence and speaking engagement
Miao & Li	2024	Literature Review	Enhanced oral communication and motivation
Dhini et al.	2025	Mixed Methods	Improved fluency and speaking coherence
Aman et al.	2026	Quasi-Experimental	Significant improvement in pronunciation and fluency

The reviewed studies reveal that digital storytelling provides meaningful contexts for language use. Students become active participants in the learning process rather than passive recipients of information. The multimodal nature of digital storytelling encourages learners to organize ideas systematically, develop narratives, and communicate messages effectively. Furthermore, repeated recording and editing activities enable learners to self-monitor their language production. This process contributes to improved pronunciation accuracy, vocabulary use, and speaking confidence. Consequently, digital storytelling supports both linguistic development and communicative competence.

b. Digital Storytelling and Digital Literacy Development

Besides language improvement, digital storytelling plays a significant role in enhancing digital literacy.

Table 2. Contributions of Digital Storytelling to Digital Literacy

Digital Literacy Dimension	Learning Activities
Information Literacy	Searching digital resources
Information Evaluation	Selecting credible information
Content Creation	Producing digital stories
Communication	Sharing digital narratives
Collaboration	Group project development
Technology Skills	Using multimedia applications

Students engaged in digital storytelling activities are required to identify relevant information, evaluate online resources, edit multimedia elements, and produce digital content. These activities align closely with contemporary digital literacy frameworks. The reviewed studies indicate that digital storytelling promotes students' ability to use technology responsibly and creatively. Students learn not only how to consume digital information but also how to create meaningful digital content. Such competencies are increasingly important in the digital era.

c. Learner Engagement and Motivation

A recurring theme across the reviewed studies is increased learner engagement. Digital storytelling integrates visual, auditory, and textual elements, making learning activities more enjoyable and interactive. Students often perceive digital storytelling as less intimidating than conventional speaking tasks because they have opportunities to rehearse, revise, and refine their oral performances before presentation. This flexibility contributes to increased confidence and willingness to communicate. Additionally, collaborative storytelling projects encourage peer interaction and social learning. Learners exchange ideas, provide feedback, and collectively solve problems throughout the storytelling process.

d. Challenges in Implementing Digital Storytelling

Despite its benefits, several implementation challenges were identified.

Table 3. Challenges of Digital Storytelling Implementation

Challenge	Description
Limited Technology Access	Inadequate devices and internet connectivity
Digital Competence	Variations in students' technological skills
Teacher Readiness	Limited technological pedagogical knowledge
Time Constraints	Extended production process
Technical Problems	Software and hardware difficulties

These challenges suggest that successful implementation requires institutional support, teacher training, and adequate technological infrastructure.

e. Pedagogical Implications

The findings suggest that digital storytelling aligns with several educational theories, including Constructivist Learning Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Multimodal Learning Theory. The approach supports student-centered learning by encouraging active participation, creativity, and collaboration. Digital storytelling also supports the development of twenty-first-century competencies, including communication, critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and digital literacy. Therefore, educators should consider integrating digital storytelling into EFL curricula as part of broader efforts to prepare students for digital society.

CONCLUSION

This literature review demonstrates that digital storytelling is an effective pedagogical approach for enhancing speaking skills and digital literacy among EFL learners. The reviewed studies consistently report improvements in pronunciation, fluency, vocabulary mastery, confidence, and communicative competence. In addition, digital storytelling promotes digital literacy by engaging learners in multimedia production, information evaluation, technology-based communication, and collaborative learning. Although implementation challenges remain, the benefits of digital storytelling outweigh its limitations. The approach offers meaningful opportunities for integrating language learning and digital competence development within contemporary educational contexts. Future research should explore longitudinal impacts of digital storytelling, investigate its implementation across different educational levels, and examine the integration of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and immersive learning environments.

REFERENCES

- Adiningrum, L. P., Drajadi, N. A., & Sumardi. (2024). "I felt struggle but I did it!": EFL pre-service teachers' struggles and solutions during digital storytelling creation to promote digital literacy. *IDEAS: Journal on English Language Teaching and Learning, Linguistics and Literature*, 13(1).
- Aman, N. H. A., Ruslin, R., & Syam, H. (2026). Enhancing EFL students' speaking skills through digital storytelling: A quasi-experimental study.
- Dhini, U. R., Andayani, E. S., Ghozali, S., & Palupi, M. E. (2025). The power of digital storytelling: Strengthening speaking skills among secondary EFL learners.
- Mardhiah, A., Kamaliah, N., Helmiyadi, H., & Lathifatuddini, L. (2024). Enhancing Indonesian EFL learners' speaking skills through digital storytelling based on local folktales.
- Miao, X., & Li, L. (2024). Digital storytelling in EFL education: Learning outcomes and methodologies.
- Nair, V., & Yunus, M. M. (2021). A systematic review of digital storytelling in improving speaking skills. *Sustainability*, 13(17), 9829.
- Shen, X., Shen, X., & Peng, J. E. (2023). Digital storytelling: A literacy-building tool to promote willingness to communicate in a second language. *Language Teaching Research*.

- Usmani, S., Ali, E. H. F., & Kottaparamban, M. (2025). The impact of digital storytelling on EFL learners' speaking and writing skills. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, 7(4), 816–831.
- Wati, A., Anita, A., & Yulianawati, I. (2025). Investigating EFL students' perception on the use of digital storytelling in learning to speak English.
- Zuraini, Z., Hayati, R., Meilinar, F., & Marzuki, M. (2024). The effect of digital storytelling on students' reading literacy to EFL learners.