



RESEARCH PAPER

The Impact of Digital Storytelling on Speaking Skill of Intermediate Level EFL Students in District Mansehra

Sharif Ullah¹ Dr. Imdad Ullah Khan² Dr. Abdul Hamid*³

1. Lecturer, Department of English, Hazara University Mansehra, KP, Pakistan
2. Assistant Professor, Department of English & FL University of Swat, Swat, KP, Pakistan
3. Assistant Professor, Department of English & FL University of Swat, Swat, KP, Pakistan

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***Corresponding
Author**

abdulhamid@us
wat.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

In the wake of globalization and the growing importance of English as a lingua franca, greater emphasis is placed on English learning. Various techniques are employed to enhance ESL learners' proficiency in the four language skills. Speaking English is often prioritized, and different pedagogical strategies are used to support ESL learners speak English effectively. One recent technique is Digital Story Telling (DST). The following study explores DST's effectiveness as it is used with intermediate level ESL learners in the district of Mansehra, Pakistan. Using convenient random sampling, this experimental study aims to gauge how DST makes a difference in EFL learners' speaking skills. The study reveals that DST stands out as an innovative, effective teaching strategy that enhances ESL learners' interest in speaking English. It successfully keeps the students' attention span towards teaching longer than other more traditional strategies. Findings suggest that stories be selected commensurate with the students' proficiency level and interest; that digital gadgets be used effectively to engage ESL learners.

Introduction

In the current digitization era, several approaches have been used to make words better and extemporize an influential course on one's speaking abilities. For instance, unlike in the past, stories encrypted on pages can be altered and conveyed verbally to get the best of listeners' emotions and reactions. Usually, any information, either biographical or moral, is transmitted to the audience in the form of a story. It can be described as an illustration of any particular event, autobiography, or science. The genre can vary widely from fiction, romance, science fiction, horror, and adventure. In a nutshell, the sole purpose of a story is to amuse

audiences, promote ethnic literacy, peace, harmony, and polish reading and comprehension skills.

Story Telling

Storytelling has an impact on a child's self-concept (Mello, 2001). It is an innovative way to educate the students. It plays a vital role in teaching English to EFL students. The selection of stories is based on the age, interest, and level of the students. This technique helps to boost the interest of the students to learn English. One of the primary purposes of storytelling is to develop language skills apart from the stimulation of perception and thoughts. Storytelling is a procedure that provides privileges to practice organized and categorized information simultaneously, which carries out to predict, summarize, compare and contrast information (Mello, 2001). At the undergraduate or graduate level, the students occasionally concentrate on English through narrating methods. Using the latest technology, simple storytelling may not be sufficient to raise the interest in learning English among undergraduate students. For this purpose, the introduction of technology in EFL classrooms is quite fruitful. It increases the interest of students in learning English. The use of technology occasionally causes entertaining diversions, which motivate students during learning. To meet the learning world's challenges, DST can be used as a tool to develop the competing and understanding power of students in EFL training. Another fascinating instrument chosen in this review is "Digital Storytelling," affecting understudies' oral capability and inspiration with innovation assistance. Besides, this tool is an invention of technology that brings the students closer to the technology in their early education stages.

Storytelling Mechanism

Narrating a story is a self-characterized variable in the learning stage, which can be portrayed as an autonomous variable insider savvy. Computerized innovation and instruments affect the narrating systems' perspective from customary to advanced courses in the learning associations (Dyson & Genishi, 1994). Specialists have displayed a hypothesis on the storytelling method by showing the meaning of narrating. The deliverer depicts his considerations and creative energy to the gathering of people by using the foreign dialect. With the assistance of verbal and non-verbal criteria and clarifying his contemplations in dynamic behavior to the crowd, he expects an indistinguishable reaction from the group of onlookers. Likewise, it relates alternate components with each other simultaneously. It gives an efficient association to the coach and deliverer (Dyson & Genishi, 1994) to make digital storytelling techniques convenient for foreign language learners. This mechanism can be shown diagrammatically as below:

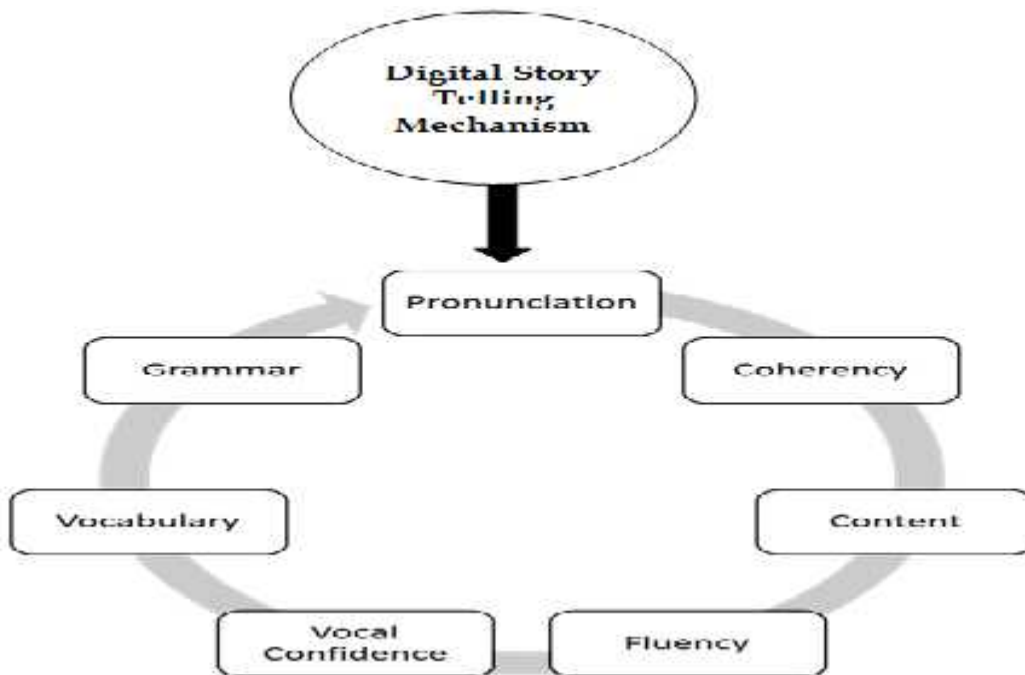


Figure 1: Presentation of variables in the form of a loop

Literature Review

Learning has a strong relationship with the human cognition system. Cognition helps to make improvements in remarkable fluency study (De Jong & Perfetti, 2011). Concerning understanding, stories are generally voiced on continuous levels to children in so many different ways during their educational period. The concept of storytelling has been so popular that it has fundamentally acquired a permanent place in the school curriculum in many states across the world. To take one step forward from aloud storytelling, digital storytelling is adopted, which incorporates an attractive voice and supports computer graphics, and holds perfection in the art of expressing stories altogether (Yildirim, Ozden & Aksu, 2001). Through digital storytelling or multi-media digital narratives, the individuals perceive and build meaning not only from the language but from multiple types of semiotics like graphics, sounds, and text (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2001; Bou-Franch, 2012; Meadows, 2003). In this type of storytelling method, multimodal digital storytelling mechanism merges with the traditional way of learning, such as learning through documentaries from television, research reports, and video games and research reports conducted by various methods (Hartley & McWilliam, 2009). Certainly, digitized media has made everything reasonably easy to comprehend over the years. Storytelling, too, is officially issued as one of its most resourceful tasks. Instructors have revealed that this deliverance mode has proved very beneficial to gain pupils' interest and attention.

As quoted by Michalski, Hodges & Banister (2005), "digitized storytelling includes delivering experience using software-based technologies, forming a ground

for scholars to place their views and opinions together, visually, morally, and kinesthetically" (Michalski et al., 2005). The web is a global town, and email, programming, sight, and sound, advanced camera and sound guides have possessed the home on the planet on an extra level of development. It has been supplementary to build up the aids with verbalized dialect (Garrett, 2006). The relationship of strategies is more practicable and less demanding because of computerized use of the phones and web; however, these techniques help exchange the interchanges and effectively give in the storyteller's time. Computerized storyteller animated the vulnerability of the understudy as well as it upsurges their approaching aptitudes to subordinate with the individuals in the development keeping in mind the end goal to hear them out, to interconnect with them, to take gatherings to shape the multipurpose individuals and to include with the method of narrating (Bennett, 2003; Garrett, 2006).

Researchers believe that the concepts of students gained by stories have directly affected their intercultural understanding. So the use of digital storytelling mechanisms must be usefully employed in the classrooms. Computer skills are mandatory during the course and computer skills experiments because students get new ways of exploring information through the internet, which expands their creative power. Computerized innovation and instruments affect the narrating systems' point of view from customary to advanced courses in the learning associations (Dyson & Genishi, 1994). By utilizing the computerized narrating devices, the students build their insights and learning in instruction and other reasonable life territories. English proficiency can be improved using digital storytelling (Kim, 2014), increasing students' eagerness to learn the target language (Lambert, 2013). Choosing a story to illustrate what is to be learned helps students contemplate insights, requests, spirits, and practices that secure the entire story and gaining positive outcomes (Liu, Tong Zhou, Lu & Sun, 2014).

Material and Methods

This study was experimental. A quasi-experimental design was used to collect data that strived to find the influence of applying digital storytelling techniques on the speaking skill of intermediate-level students of two different colleges of Mansehra. The colleges selected were Tamir-e-Millat Hazara Public School and College and Fatima-tu-Zohra Post Graduate College, Mansehra, KP, Pakistan. The age limit of the selected students under analysis ranged from 16 to 18 years. The IELTS speaking test (Cambridge University Press, 2010) was used as a pre-test to select homogeneous groups. After the pre-test, the treatment in the form of digital storytelling was given to the experimental group. They attended 12 sessions, each session lasting for 1 hour.

In each session of the storytelling course, the experimental group participated in a course in front of a computer screen. They would read a short story, and the teacher would monitor them during their story reading. After reading the students' story, the teacher would ask questions to determine the students' understanding of

the story. After that, the students would retell the story. This method was assumed very useful in teaching the students and develop their interest in reading and retell English stories. In the 1st session, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and the DST course concept comprehensively. From the 2nd session up to the 12th session, the contents were taught to the students in the experimental group in the following way: the teacher had a warm-up session first, and then he described some new words of the new story and also presented some examples. After that, the students read one story from "story bird." After reading the story, the students would restate what they have read to rehearse for speaking. Chapelle (2001) used various websites like Story bird, Story Jumper, and Tikatok; the present study used the website 'Story bird' to apply the treatment. The control group was taught through traditional methods. A parallel version of the test was used as a post-test to look for the digital storytelling technique's impact on the participants' progressive improvement after treatment. The test was interactive, being as close to a realistic circumstance as a test could be. In this test, the respondents had a discussion session with the examiner.

The session had a duration of 11-14 minutes, consisting of 3 parts. In Part I, the respondents had to tell about their personal information. In Part II, a topic was given to respondents with 1 minute to prepare what to say about the topic. Then the respondents had to speak for 1 to 2 minutes on the topic given. In Part III, there was a lengthy discussion on the topic given in Part II. The speaking tests, the pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content, and fluency were analyzed as speaking skills. The purpose was to encourage the students to practice the categorization and organization of the information to summarize, compare, predict, and contrast the knowledge and information—the relational abilities of the student-created clarified thought through the extended type of narrating display. The data was analyzed through paired sample T-test to find the difference between the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental group and the control group.

Results and Discussion

Paired Sample T-test

Paired sample T-test was used in the current study to examine the results gathered before and after the digital storytelling. The assumptions are fulfilled, i.e., the data is usually distributed, and data is also continuous. After checking the assumption, data is now useable for analysis to test the hypothesis. Two hypotheses are developed because thereof two groups to study in this research.

Hypothesis I

HO: There is no significant difference between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test.

H1: There is a significant difference between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test.

Table 1
Paired Samples Test Paired Differences experimental group

		Mean	Std.Deviation	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pre_test	-.68400	.29930	-10.220	19	.000
	Pos_test					

Table 2
Paired sample statistics experimental group

		Mean
Pair 1	Pre_test	2.5940
	Pos_test	3.2780

The result from Table 1 indicates that there is a significant difference between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test, $t(df = 19) = -10.220$, $p(0.000) < 0.05$ so, we will accept our research hypothesis. Table 2 mean values indicate that student motivation towards speaking skill increases after digital storytelling i-e $M = 3.2780$ increased from $M = 2.5940$.

Hypothesis II

HO: There is no significant difference between the control group's pre-test and post-test

H1: there is a significant difference between the control group's pre-test and post-test.

Table 3
Paired samples test paired differences control group

		Mean	Std.Deviation	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Pair 1	Pre_test -	-.03400		-1.485	19	.154
	Pos_test					

Table 4
Paired sample statistics control group

		Mean
Pair 1	Pre_test	2.7200
	Pos_test	2.7540

The result from Table 3 indicates that there is no significant difference between the control group's pre-test and post-test, $t(df = 19) = -1.485$, $p(0.154) > 0.05$ so, we will accept our null hypothesis. Table 4 mean values indicate that student motivation towards speaking skill does not change after oral storytelling, i.e., $M = 2.7200$ from $M = 2.7540$.

The above results and analysis after applying paired sample t-test on the experimental group (pre-test and post-test) and control group (pre-test and post-test) indicate that hypothesis I is verified, i.e., there is a significant difference between the experimental group's pre-test and post-test. Hypothesis II, i.e., there is a significant difference between the control group's pre-test and post-test so, it is clear that our main research hypothesis i.e. There is a positive long term impact of digital storytelling as an extrinsic force to achieve the intrinsic motivation on speaking skills of EFL intermediated level learning is accepted and proved.

Results of Experimental Group of the Study

In this study, the data is obtained from two different colleges' students, and the test for the present study is formulated from the international speaking test named "IELTS." The test is analyzed briefly, and the outcome from each research question is given below in the following figures:

The mean scores of question number 1 are shown in Figure 2:

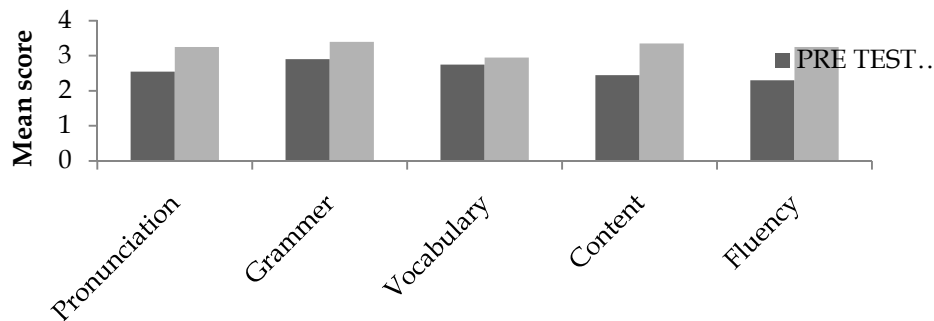


Figure 2: Mean scores of experimental group's question 1 tell me something about yourself?

The figure 2 shows the mean scores of question 1 of experimental group. The knowledge and usage of pronunciation, grammar, content and fluency increased among students after the test i.e. $M = 3.25$ from $M = 2.55$, $M = 3.4$ from $M = 2.9$, $M = 3.35$ from $M = 2.45$ and $M = 3.25$ from $M = 2.3$ respectively. There is a slight increase in vocabulary of students after the test i.e. $M = 2.95$ from $M = 2.75$.

The mean scores of question number 2 are shown in Figure 3.

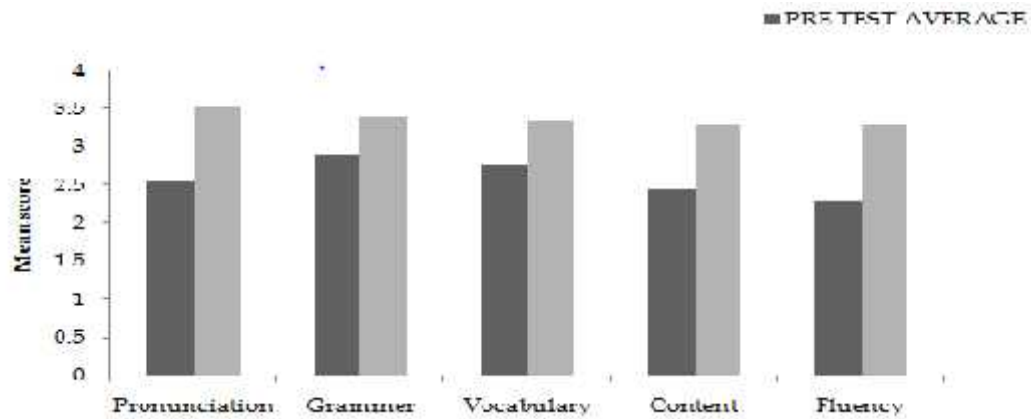


Figure 3: Mean scores of experimental group's question 2 describe a problem that affects the environment in the area where you live?

The figure 3 shows the mean scores of question 2 of experimental group. While answering question 2 students showed more knowledge and usage of all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency after the test i.e M = 3.55 from M = 2.55, M = 3.4 from M = 2.9, M = 3.35 from M = 2.75 and M = 3.3 from M = 2.45 and M = 3.3 from M = 2.3 respectively.

The mean scores of question number 3 are shown in Figure 4:

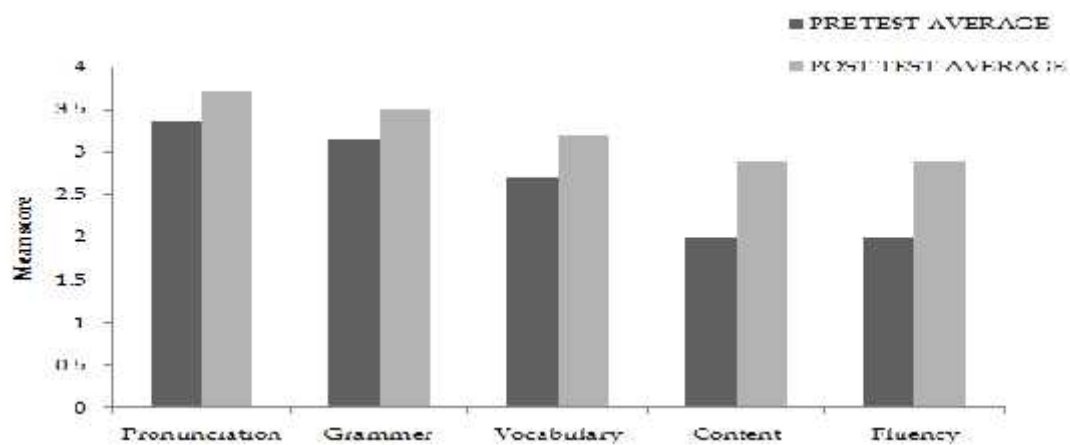


Figure 4: Mean scores of experimental group's question 3 in what ways your friends are important to you?

The figure 4 shows the mean scores of question 3 of experimental group. While answering question 3 students also showed increase in their abilities of all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency after the test i.e M = 3.7 from M = 3.35, M = 3.5 from M = 3.15, M = 3.2 from M = 2.7 and M = 2.9 from M = 2 and M = 2.9 from M = 2 respectively.

The mean scores of question number 4 are shown in Figure 5:

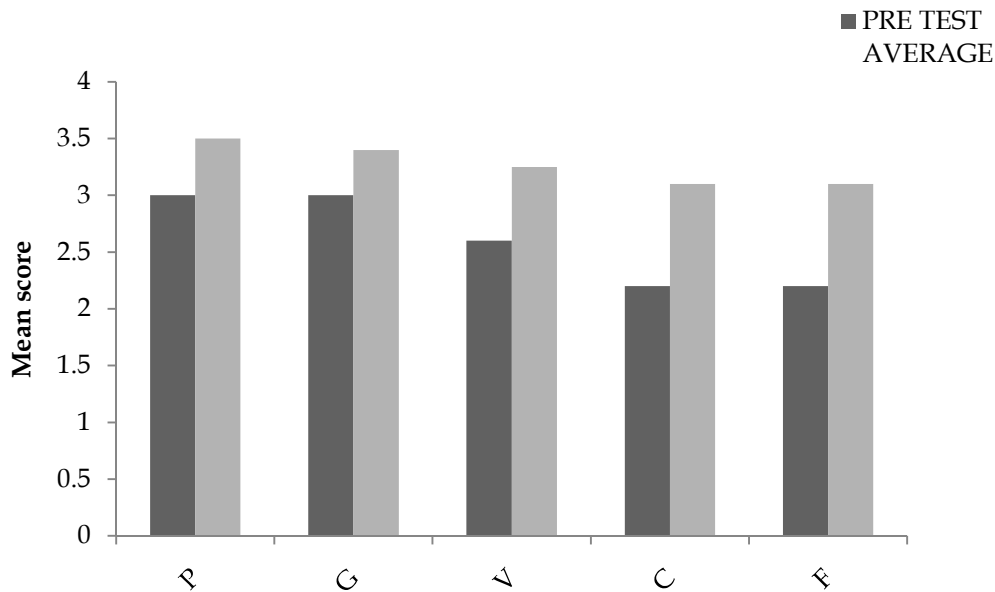


Figure 5: The mean scores of the experimental group's question 4 describe a film or TV program which has made a strong impression on you.

The figure 5 shows the mean scores of question 4 of experimental group. While answering question 4 students also showed more knowledge and usage of all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency after the test i-e M = 3.5 from M = 3, M = 3.4 from M = 3, M = 3.25 from M = 2.6 and M = 3.1 from M = 2.2 and M = 3.1 from M = 2.2 respectively.

The mean scores of question number 5 are shown in Figure 6:

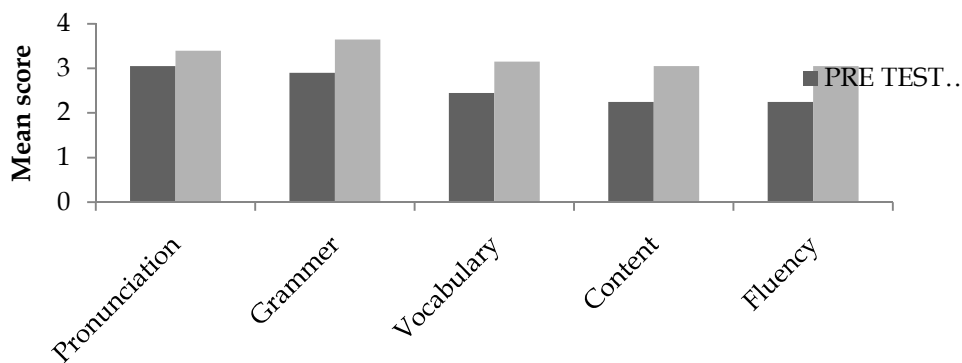


Figure 6: Mean scores of experimental group's question 5 do you think festivals are important for a country?

The figure 6 shows the mean scores of question 5 of experimental group. While answering question 5 it is clearly shown that student's knowledge and usage of all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency increased after the test i-e M = 3.4 from M = 3.05, M = 3.65 from M = 2.9, M = 3.15 from M = 2.45 and M = 3.05 from M = 2.25 and M = 3.05 from M = 2.25 respectively.

The following tables are the accumulated averages of both pre-test and post-test of the experimental group.

Table 5
Experimental group pre-test averages

	Average Q1	Average Q2	Average Q3	Average Q4	Average Q5	Total Pre-test average
Pronunciation	2.55	2.55	3.35	3	2.05	2.9
Grammar	2.9	2.9	3.17	3	2.9	2.97
Vocabulary	2.75	2.75	2.7	2.6	2.45	2.65
Content	2.45	2.45	2	2.2	2.25	2.27
Fluency	2.3	2.3	2	2.2	2.25	2.21

Table 6
Experimental group post-test averages

	Average Q1	Average Q2	Average Q3	Average Q4	Average Q5	Total Pre-test average
Pronunciation	3.25	3.55	3.7	3.5	3.4	3.48
Grammar	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.65	3.47
Vocabulary	2.95	3.35	3.2	3.25	3.15	3.18
Content	3.35	3.3	2.9	3.1	3.05	3.14
Fluency	3.25	3.3	2.9	3.1	3.05	3.12

The graphical representation of experimental group pre-test and post-test values are given in Figure 7 below.

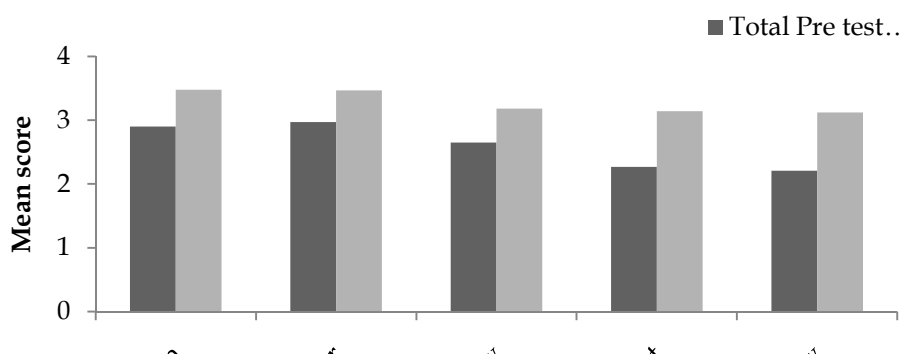


Figure 7: Graphical representation of experimental group pre-test & post-test values

The study has compared the pre-test and post-test results of the Experimental group shown in table 5 and table 6, and a graphical representation of these results is shown in figure 7. During the analysis of the results, the average mean score of pronunciation's post-test (3.48) was significantly higher than the average mean score of pronunciation pre-test (2.9). The mean scores of grammar were 2.97 from 3.47 increased considerably. Vocabulary mean scores also increased from 2.65 to 3.18. Content means scores increase with a good ratio, too, i.e., 3.14 from 2.27. The fluency value has improved from 2.21 to 3.12. The study has found noteworthy variances in their outcomes after making a comparison. It shows that the Digital Story-telling technique facilitated the students of colleges to increase their English speaking skills. It is observed that a large number of students in the group are now more confident to practice their spoken abilities with computers rather than practicing their spoken skills in face to face interactions. They are more comfortable pronouncing words more frequently without any hesitation and conscious of mistakes happening.

Results of Control Group of the Study

The second group of the present study is the controlled group, which is also selected randomly by using a draw method. The usage of storytelling resoundingly is finished by the instructor in the classroom as this was the treatment for the control group of the study. In Each class, they participated in a 30-minute class movement in which they tuned in to a short story and fathomed it. The instructor read a story out loud, and the understudies listened painstakingly to the instructor. In the later session of the class, students had to re-narrate the story. The following figures show each question's graphical representation and are measured according to five parameters prescribed in this study.

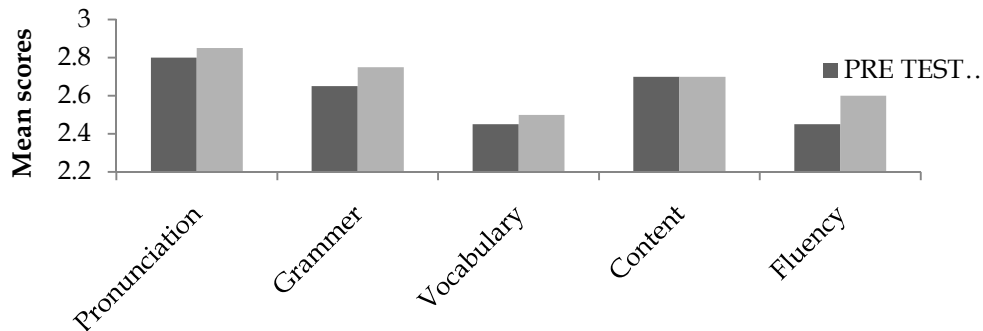


Figure 8: Mean scores of control group's question 1 tell me something about yourself?

The figure 8 shows the mean scores of question 1 of control group. The abilities of students does not increased (either mean scores remained same or increase with a very minute difference) in control group's after test (orally story

telling) on all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency. i-e M = 2.85 from M = 2.8, M = 2.75 from M = 2.65, M = 2.5 from M = 2.45 and M = 2.7 from M = 2.7 and M = 2.6 from M = 2.45 respectively.

The mean scores of question number 2 are shown in Figure 9

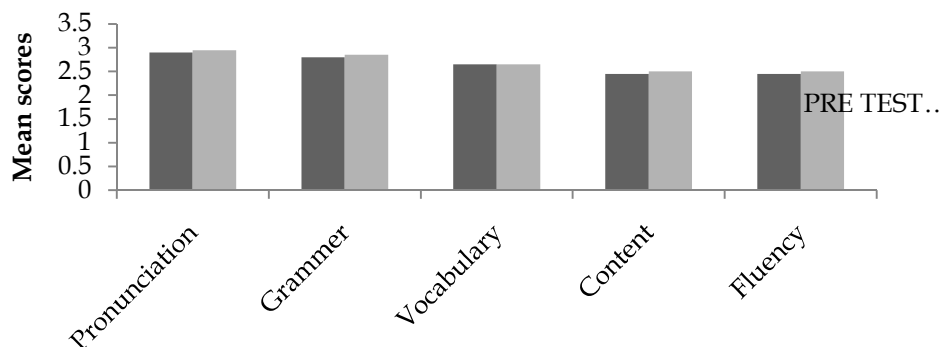


Figure 9: Mean scores of control group's question 2 describe a problem that affects the environment in the area where you live?

The figure 9 shows the mean scores of question 2 of control group. The abilities of students does not increased (either mean scores remained same or increase with a very minute difference) in control group's after test (orally story telling) on all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency. i-e M = 2.95 from M = 2.9, M = 2.85 from M = 2.8, M = 2.65 from M = 2.65 and M = 2.5 from M = 2.45 and M = 2.5 from M = 2.45 respectively.

The mean scores of question number 3 are shown in Figure 10:

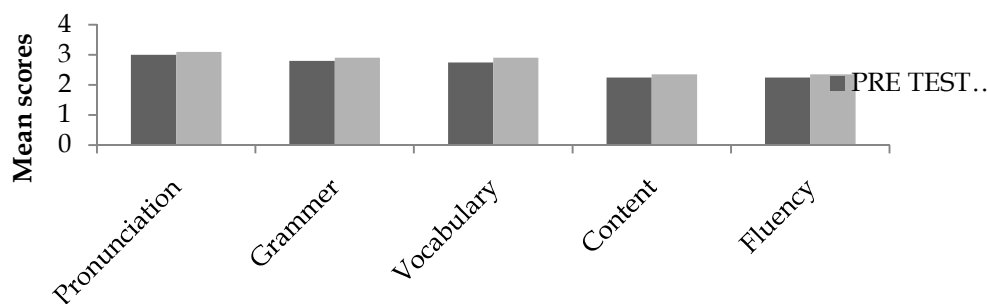


Figure 10: Mean scores of control group's question 3: In what ways are your friends important to you?

The figure 10 shows the mean scores of question 3 of control group. The abilities of students does not increased (either mean scores remained same or

increase with a very minute difference) in control group's after test (orally story telling) on all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency. i-e M = 3.1 from M = 3, M = 2.9 from M = 2.8, M = 2.9 from M = 2.75 and M = 2.35 from M = 2.25 and M = 2.35 from M = 2.25 respectively.

The mean scores of question number 4 are shown in figure 11:

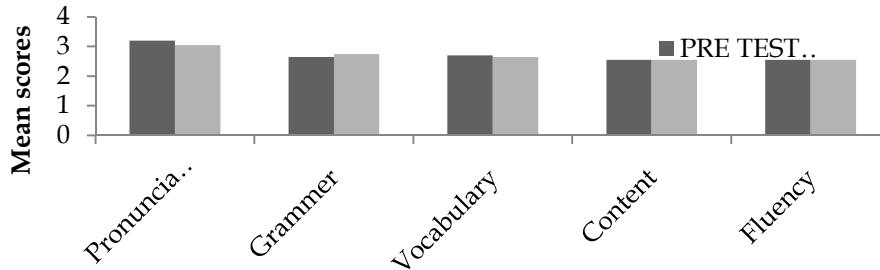


Figure 11: Mean scores of control group's question 4 describe a film or TV program which has made a strong impression on you?

The figure 11 shows the mean scores of question 4 of control group. The abilities of students does not increased (either mean scores remained same or increase with a very minute difference) in control group's after test (orally story telling) on all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency. i-e M = 3.05 from M = 3.2 (this one decreased), M = 2.75 from M = 2.65, M = 2.65 from M = 2.7 (very slightly decreased) and M = 2.55 from M = 2.55 and M = 2.55 from M = 2.55 respectively.

The mean scores of question number 5 are shown in Figure 12:

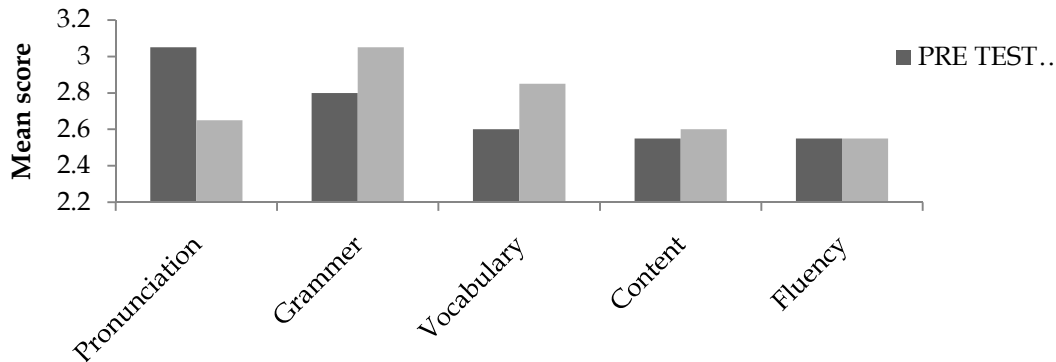


Figure 12: Mean scores of control group's question 5 do you think festivals are important for a country?

The figure 12 shows the mean scores of question 5 of control group. The abilities of students does not increased (either mean scores remained same or

increase with a very minute difference) in control group's after test (orally story telling) on all five parameters pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, content and fluency. i-e M = 2.65 from M = 3.05 (decreased considerably), M 3.05 from M = 2.8 (increased with good ratio), M = 2.85 from M = 2.65 and M = 2.6 from M = 2.55 and M = 2.55 from M = 2.55 respectively.

The following tables are the accumulated averages of both pre-test and post-test of the control group.

Table 7
Control group pre-test averages

	Average Q1	Average Q2	Average Q3	Average Q4	Average Q5	Total Pre-test average
Pronunciation	2.8	2.9	3	3.2	3.05	2.99
Grammar	2.65	2.8	2.8	2.65	2.8	2.74
Vocabulary	2.45	2.65	2.75	2.7	2.6	2.63
Content	2.7	2.45	2.25	2.55	2.55	2.5
Fluency	2.45	2.45	2.25	2.55	2.55	2.45

Table 8
Control group post-test averages

	Average Q1	Average Q2	Average Q3	Average Q4	Average Q5	Total Pre-test average
Pronunciation	2.85	2.95	3.1	3.05	2.65	2.92
Grammar	2.75	2.85	2.9	2.75	3.05	2.86
Vocabulary	2.5	2.65	2.9	2.65	2.85	2.71
Content	2.7	2.5	2.35	2.55	2.6	2.54
Fluency	2.6	2.5	2.35	2.55	2.55	2.51

Figure 13 is the graphical representation of Control Group Pre-test & Post-test Results

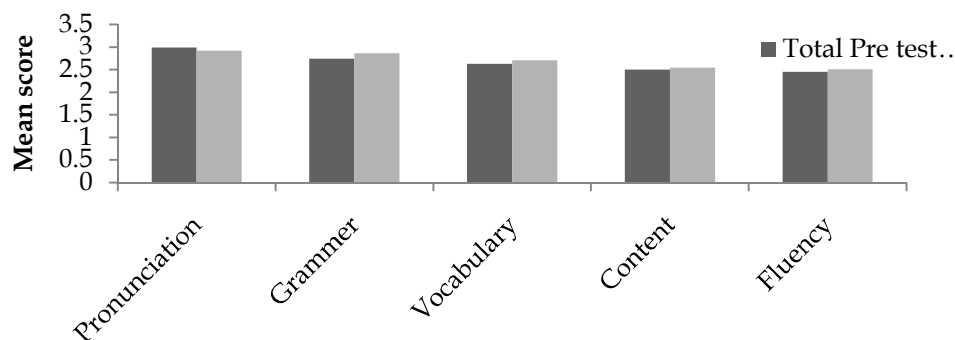


Figure 13: Graphical representation of control group pre-test & post-test results

The study has compared the pre-test and post-test results of the control group, shown in table 7 and table 8, and a graphical representation of these results is shown in figure 13. It was established that the mean value of pronunciation in the post-test was 2.92, which very slightly decreased from the value of pre-test i-e 2.99. The mean value of grammar was 2.86 from 2.74 (slightly increased). The average mean score of vocabulary was 2.63, increased with a little variation, and scored 2.71 in the post-test. Fluency and content changed with minor variations 2.51 from 2.45 and 2.54 from 2.5, respectively. It means that the traditional storytelling technique didn't benefit the students in their English speaking skills. Their results didn't show any substantial variation.

Conclusion

This research was planned to find a solution to the queries associated with DST's influence on pupils' speaking and verbal skills at the intermediate-level. The use of the mixed-method approach is among the study's pros compared to other researches carried out in the past. Outcomes of this research revealed that every experimental group student showed positive results after experiencing 12 digital storytelling sessions. They found this technique useful and stated that their reading and speaking skills enhanced significantly. DST method could productively help linguistic course work in EFL intermediate schoolrooms. Digital storytelling could also help EFL students' multidimensional communicative ability by supporting a learner-focused linguistic education atmosphere. By this manner,"students can ensure numerous prospects to get along with friends and teachers and practice verbal communication as an essential means of interaction. Learners define the screenplays of their stories and record themselves. Different kinds of software containing computer-based visuals, cybernetic text, pictures, video clips, and music were further mixed with this material, as all this goes more attractive on a computer. As a result, students started creating and telling their own stories and delivered the stories made by them in front of the audience. To practice the student-based DST technique and method, this current research aims to determine and write down the enhanced growth in intermediate students' communicative abilities to back the recent studies' results and discoveries. The investigators of this research wanted to determine DST's outcome on learners' enthusiasm, commitment, and learning by bringing together concepts, communicating thoughts, and building definitive explanations. In keeping with this study's findings, the plan of using digital storytelling improves students' communication skills. It puts a significant influence on their motivation headed for the overall learning process and mainly speaking abilities. DST and story-creation offer a chance to share views and thoughts as a class, group, or alone. Digital storytelling is like an encouragement instrument that motivates learning, good communication skills, and writing engagement.

Furthermore, DST is the best meansto assist children who want to learn and improve their learning desires. Besides this, digital storytelling can educate learners

to grasp a thorough understanding in a short period. It helps both the teachers and the students by presenting material implicitly and providing a more comprehensive experience. Abilities of speaking and listening go hand in hand, and both were the focuses of this research. The future subjects might reveal the outcome of DST on the abilities of learners. Similarly, investigations could be carried out to gauge the diverse techniques of storytelling and their effect on learners' abilities. Further research is needed to check DST's impact on the undergraduates' imaginings and creativeness independently as they restate after listening to the stories.

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