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## **A Digital Storytelling on Video to Improve English Speaking Skills of Thai EFL Undergraduate Students**

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### **Abstract**

Digital storytelling can be used as a multimedia tool, such as texts, images, and audios in English language learning to encourage students improve their speaking skills by using technology to deliver the story messages freely. The purposes of this study were to investigate the implementation of digital storytelling on video in developing English speaking skills and the satisfaction of digital storytelling. The research participants were 28 Thai EFL undergraduate students who enrolled in the Innovation and Information Technology for English Teachers course at Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Rajabhat University, trimester 1/2019. Before creating digital storytelling, students received interesting topics. After that, the students were encouraged to design storyboard their own digital storytelling by telling the story along with a video editing application. Afterwards, all of the works were presented and published through Youtube for sharing the ideas with their friends in the classroom. After the presentation, all works were evaluated by instructors and experts in accordance with evaluation criteria. In conclusion, the development of digital storytelling on video increased the EFL students' English speaking skills and their classroom activities.

*Keywords:* Digital Storytelling, English Speaking Skills, Video editing application

### **Introduction**

Speaking is one of the four macro skills which is necessary for effective communication in any language, particularly when speakers are not using their mother tongue, which allows everyone in a given culture or others who have learned a system of culture, communication or interaction. By speaking, we don't mean to just utter words through the mouth. It means conveying the message through word of mouth. (Boonkit, 2010; Bashir, Azeem, & Dogar, 2011). English speaking skills should be

developed in conjunction with other skills beginning in the classroom so that these helps increase communication success with others of the international community. According to Noom-ura (2008) & Alharbi (2015), the speaking skills must arise from practice and it will be developed by optimizing the teaching environment and methods, assigning tasks and materials, and a variety of speech assessments.

In the Thai context of learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) of undergraduate students are unable to speak English confidently. Although English has been taught in Thailand for a long time, the problems of teaching and learning the English language in Thailand are still recurring shown. One reason to consider maybe a lack of confidence in speaking English with teachers and classmates in terms of anxiety about speaking errors (Akkakoson, 2016). Moreover, Punthumasen (2007) found that most of students do not want to learn English because they find the subject matter boring and also teaching methodology in the classroom is not interesting. Thai EFL environment, these students are limited in the use of the target language such as lacking sufficient language knowledge, shortage of opportunity to speak the language and do not dare to speak in real situations. As a result, students are impaired in speaking and be vulnerable to anxiety once they are required to communicate through English in the classroom (Oxford, 2002). Promoting confidence and increasing opportunities for students to practice speaking skills are important and challenging for teachers. The study of how to promote confidence in speaking fluently and precisely is used as the basis for designing classroom activities.

Technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) is the use of technologies in service of language learning for encouraging students to learn both inside and outside classroom (Golshan & Tafazoli, 2014) since technological tools have been regarded as ways of helping students improve language skills such as speaking skill. Internet, podcasts, video conferencing, videos and speech recognition software are considered the best tools for teaching speaking skills (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014). Learning to use technology to enhance the current interest, Digital storytelling is a promising instructional strategy as well as an emerging field of study in higher education, using technology as a tool to teach the class with a variety of digital multimedia, such as images, audio, and video. All digital stories bring together some mixture of digital graphics, text, recorded audio narration, video, and music to present information on a specific topic (Robin, 2006; McLellan, 2007). Because of the problems of teaching and learning the English speaking skills of Thai EFL students, the researcher is interested in using storytelling through technology by Video to improve students' English speaking skills. In this study, the assignments given to students were completed with the help of an android application, each student was given the freedom to choose the application to be used in making videos. The subject matter

presented in this study is about any situation that students are interested in assigning roles and telling stories in English.

### **Research Questions**

This study consists of two main research questions:

1. Does learning English Digital Storytelling on video improve students' English speaking skills?
2. Does Digital Storytelling on video provide positive opinions toward teaching the English language?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Speaking Problems in the Classroom**

According to Arifin (2017), speaking in English for EFL students is not an easy task and needs much effort to produce acceptable words and utterances in English. Khamkhien (2010) believed that, speaking is considered to be the most important in a second language. It is the ability that requires the process of communicative competence, pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. However, it still is a problem of many Thai students. According Wiriyachitra (2003), English learning in Thailand is not very successful because the most students lack the opportunities to learn and practice English in English environment. Akkakoson (2016) mentioned that in English conversation classes of Thai university when posed a question or asked to do any speaking activity, most of his students became a crowd of silent onlookers while some stuttered in their replies. As the most important aspect of language skills in terms of communication, speaking is precisely often the one that students cannot gain enough competence during the English classroom (Arifin, 2017). Integrating activities in the classroom are a suitable procedure that is selected in this research.

#### **Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL)**

Technology gives students a chance to engage in self-directed actions, opportunities for self-paced interactions, privacy, and a safe environment in which errors get corrected and specific feedback is given (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014). As the use of technology in language classrooms has increased rapidly over the past years, the language teachers have recognized and acknowledged its value for teaching and learning. Language students can learn about language anywhere and anytime by using a portable electronic device (Kongsuebchart & Suppasetseree, 2016). Moreover, technologies allow students to become more independent in the classroom. Users can be fundamental structural changes to achieving significant improvements in

productivity. It is used to support teaching and learning (Kuning, 2019). In addition, it gives students the opportunity to learn on their own and feel comfortable in their daily lives. The more they are used in language teaching, it helps to improve students' speaking.

### **Digital Storytelling**

Digital storytelling a modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling. Throughout history, storytelling has been used to share knowledge, wisdom, and values. Stories have taken many different forms their power by weaving images, music, narrative and voice together to present information on a specific topic through the use of technology (Robin, 2006; Rule, 2010). Nowadays, digital storytelling has become a compelling tool for classroom teachers and students promising instructional strategy as well as an emerging field of study in higher education (Somdee & Suppasetsee, 2013; McLellan, 2007). The stories are typically just a few minutes long and have a variety of uses, including the telling of personal tales, the recounting of events, or as a means to inform or instruct on a particular topic. The digital storytelling project was an important learning experience for students. They were able to gain computer and technology skills that are crucial for any student in the Internet age (Czarnecki, 2009).

### **Video editing application**

Historically, the video has been used in the language classroom as a “static” resource but the ubiquity of smartphones has vastly increased the level of consumption of videos and provided the means to produce them (Condon, 2018). In agreement with Meyer & Forester (2015), they considered video production as the perfect vehicle for integrating skills practice, authentic communication, and process-oriented group activities at a level of student involvement that is difficult to sustain through other media. There are more mobile editing applications that make a video with a combination of videos and data of personalized things rather than a regular video that aims at promotion or advertising (Choi & Hur, 2014). Furthermore, the application of video in the classroom can also improve the quality of language teaching and learning process (Shahani & Tahriri, 2015). It serves contextual input on where a specific language expression is spoken in certain situations, demonstrating the use of language in real life as accurate.

## **Research Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The present study was a quasi-experimental research conducted in the form of one group post-test only design. The experiment with the digital storytelling on video had

lasted for four weeks and aimed to improve students' English speaking skills. In the experimental phase, students organized groups to create videos based on topics of interest with mobile applications. After that, they presented them on the website for evaluation. In addition, the participants expressed their reactions concerning improving their speaking ability by using digital storytelling on video through an interview.

### Research Participants

The participants were twenty-eight undergraduate students who enrolled in the Innovation and Information Technology for English Teachers course at Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Rajabhat University in the first trimester of the academic year 2019, selected by the purposive sampling technique. The reason for choosing this group was from observing student's behaviour as they don't dare to speak English in class. Even if they are learners while leaning in the teaching profession, they should be trained to acquire certain speaking skills and this is suitable for the present study.

### Research Instruments

The two main types of research instrument used to acquire data for the findings of the study were as follows:

#### The Elements of Digital Storytelling

Digital stories include all of the components of traditional stories with setting, plot, point of view, conflict, theme, and character. Additionally, according to Lambert (2007) and Robin (2006) successful digital stories included seven elements (see Table 1) which is often cited as a useful starting point to begin working with digital stories.

Table 1

*The Seven Elements of Digital Storytelling*

Factors	Particulars
Point of View	what is the perspective of the author?
A Dramatic Question	a question that will be answered by the end of the story
Emotional Content	serious issues that speak to us in a personal and powerful way
The Gift of your Voice	a way to personalize the story to help the audience understand the context
The Power of the Soundtrack	music or other sounds that support the storyline and the narrative clearly
Economy	simply put, using just enough content to tell the story without overloading the viewer with too much information (three to five minutes long)
Pacing	related to Economy, but specifically deals with how slowly or quickly the story progresses

### English speaking skills evaluation form

Student performance was evaluated by using digital storytelling to improve English speaking skills for English language teaching professionals to consider English speaking skills based on students' designs with rating scales. The analytic rating scale determines each part of the tasks with limited answer characteristics. Most of the scales are classified into not more than four levels. This type of rating scale is easy to assess and reliable (Weigle, 2002), consisted of 6 factors (see Table 2) with scoring system was 4 levels/scores which 4 (good), 3 (moderate), 2 (poor), and 1 (very poor) respectively, based on the design of Srikaew, Tangdhanakanond, & Kanjanawasee (2015) which had high-level reliability and a total of 24 points.

Table 2

*Criteria for considering competence level of English speaking skills*

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Particulars</b>
Vocabulary	based on the student's speech that reflects two things, the scope of the vocabulary used is diverse and the correctness that meets the definition of communication
Syntax	sentences can be accurately meet the communications needs as subject, verb, object
Cohesion	able to link each sentence to a related story correctly
Pronunciation	emphasize the voices, punctuation, pauses, and the use of high and low tones correctly and properly allowing listeners to understand what they want to communicate
Ideational Function	speaking communication can be achieved as intended. By speaking, listeners understand what they want to communicate, such as speaking directly to a specific subject, answering questions correctly, answering questions appropriately with the nature of the question, etc.
Fluency	speak English fluently and smoothly while speaking uninterrupted or interrupted interruptions while speaking

### Data Collection

Data collection for this present study was conducted by the following procedure:

1. In the 1st period, an orientation on the learning step with digital storytelling was organized for the participants and training for the participants on how to design and create their video on mobile application using Kinemaster.

2. In the 2nd period, grouping with 3-4 members in a total of 8 groups, then received interesting topics or had learners think of group issues that could lead to storytelling in English. After that, learners were encouraged to design their own

storyboard storytelling by telling the 7 elements of storytelling conditions and presenting to the instructor for suggestions.

3. In 3rd period, in order to create video using a mobile application.

4. In the 4th period, all work will be presented and published on Youtube to share ideas with friends in the classroom assessments as part one and the second score is evaluated by 3 English language experts.

Interpretation Levels of English speaking skills scores/satisfaction are shown as follows:

Table 5

*English speaking skills scores and satisfaction*

Score	Satisfaction	Range
20 – 24	4.51 – 5.00	Very Good/Highest
15 – 19	3.51 – 4.50	Good/High
11 – 14	2.51 – 3.50	Intermediate
6 – 10	1.51 – 2.50	Poor
1 – 5	0.00 – 1.50	Need to be improved

### Data Analysis

The analysis of quantitative data was carried out using the data from evaluating student work and satisfaction. The statistical methods used to analyze the results of English speaking skills of students were the arithmetic mean and standard deviation.

### Results and Discussion

In this paper, the data obtained from student work of the digital storytelling was analysed and the results of each research questions were shown here:

#### Research Question 1: Does learning English Digital Storytelling on Video improve students’ English speaking skills?

Table 4

*Overall of English Speaking Skills*

Group	Vocabulary	Syntax	Cohesion	Pronunciation	Ideational Function	Fluency	Mean	Range
1	3.3	3.3	3.3	4.0	4.0	4.0	22.00	Very Good
2	3.0	3.0	3.3	2.7	3.0	2.7	17.67	Good

Group	Vocabulary	Syntax	Cohesion	Pronunciation	Ideational Function	Fluency	Mean	Range
3	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.3	3.3	3.0	18.67	Good
4	3.3	3.0	3.0	2.7	3.0	3.0	18.00	Good
5	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.3	3.3	3.0	18.67	Good
6	3.3	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.3	21.33	Good
7	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.3	18.33	Good
8	3.0	3.0	3.0	2.3	3.0	2.3	16.67	Good
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>3.17</b>	<b>3.13</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>3.08</b>	<b>18.92</b>	<b>Good</b>

According to the Table 4, the overall picture of the English speaking skills score was evaluated from the video of all 8 groups of learners by 3 experts found that learners had the English speaking skill at a good level with an average score of 18.92 points out of 24 full points.

**Research Question 2: Does Digital Storytelling on Video provide positive opinions toward teaching English language?**

Table 5

*Overall of the satisfaction of learners*

Factors	Mean	S.D.	Range
1. preparation before learning	4.43	0.50	High
2. the process of digital storytelling	4.46	0.58	High
3. measurement and evaluation	4.36	0.68	High
4. gain knowledge of video editing on mobile	4.39	0.69	High
5. activities help students speak more English	4.57	0.50	Highest
6. activities can be improved students' English speaking skills	4.39	0.74	High
7. working together with classmates	4.43	0.63	High
8. should be teaching this course to others	4.39	0.69	High
9. can be guideline for developing other learning	4.43	0.63	High
10. students are happy with the teaching	4.54	0.51	Highest
<b>Overall</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>0.61</b>	<b>High</b>

According to the Table 5, the satisfaction of learners after learning with digital storytelling on Video found that the learners satisfied with the activities at the high level, 4.44 of mean and 0.61 of standard deviation while the most satisfied topic was "activities help students speak more English" which was 4.57 of mean and 0.50 of standard deviation. As some of the students' interview are shown:



*“I think my English speaking skills have improved because it makes me enjoy speaking activities in my video as well. I have the opportunity to record my voice and can edit it many times without being shy to speak English. It's fun to improve my English speaking skills.”*

*“I would like the activity to be organized with another subject because it helps students to have fun telling stories to their friends in the classroom and outside of the classroom.”*

### **Conclusion**

The purposes of this study were to investigate the implementation of digital storytelling on video in improving English speaking skills and the satisfaction toward learning from the digital storytelling of Thai EFL undergraduate students. In conclusion, digital storytelling on video was a suitable tool for learners in English Teaching Program at Phranakhon Si Ayutthaya Rajabhat University for increasing their knowledge of English. It is also a way to increase motivation as learners show happiness and excitement during the learning process in developing and practicing English speaking skills. Moreover, modern technologies can be used as a supplement to the classroom teaching method to have a lively atmosphere in the classroom and immerse them in a variety of scenarios (Bahadorfar & Omidvar, 2014). In video production, students are challenged to develop a deeper understanding of content and language so they can develop the ability to share meanings with their friends. Robin (2008) found that digital storytelling has captured the imagination of both students and teachers. Some studies argue that teachers who use digital storytelling more effectively encourage their students to engage in discussion, participation and make content more comprehensible (Alismail, 2015). Therefore, the digital storytelling on video was a suitable tool for Thai undergraduate students for improving their English speaking skills could be applied to promote a particular skill or integrated-skill pedagogy in EFL and other language learning contexts.

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