

UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL SHORT STORIES IN TEACHING VOCABULARY

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Abstract:

Since educators now have easier access to digital tools such as scanners, digital cameras, PCs, and user-friendly software, the adoption of new technologies in education has grown globally in recent years. The majority of the effects of new technology in educational settings have been favorable since they have helped teachers improve their knowledge and abilities, which has raised educational standards. Researchers have discovered that integrating these technologies improves student motivation, achievement, and engagement. Education systems still have a lot of work ahead of them, one of which is figuring out how to increase student involvement to improve academic results. The utilization of creative instructional strategies to engage students has grown in significance. One of the creative and useful strategies that might get students interested in in-depth, meaningful learning is the use of digital short stories. The purpose of this research effort was to use digital short stories to increase learners' vocabulary. The study looked into the advantages of using digital short stories as well as how they affect student's learning when they are used by both teachers and students.

Keywords: educator, software, favorable, achievement, engagement, involvement, meaningful, effort.

Introduction

Digital Short Stories

These days, students can access a vast array of media to discover fresh narratives in their language studies. Among the often-used virtual sources are digital short stories. Novelists, screenwriters, playwrights, and poets use digital short stories, which possess the qualities of successful stories, to shape people's worldviews through a variety of linguistic experiences. The ability to access and evaluate electronic information, as well as the ability to use, manage, create, quote, and share sources of digital information with confidence, are just a few of the opportunities that digital information literacy affords (Jeffrey, Hegarty, Kelly, Penman, Coburn, McDonald, 2011). These resources provide students with information on culture, ethics, the economy, the law, and society. Additionally, by letting students create imaginary characters and locations, digital short tales provide them with practice in telling stories. Students who are exposed to digital storytelling improve in many areas, including oral storytelling, literary composition, media literacy, visual literacy, and cinema convention



comprehension. Narratives contain captivating and enjoyable material that can be utilized to support educational objectives (Rossiter, 2002). Students might improve their language skills by synthesizing the content from short stories. In light of this, short stories can aid in education by encouraging discussion, disseminating cultural information, and increasing awareness (Georgiou and Verdugo, 2011:137-155). Students with many forms of intelligence, including kinesthetic, auditory, and visual intelligence, find stories to be interesting as well. Through individual and group involvement with stories and activities, students can experience successful learning environments (Alex, 1988). According to Collie and Slater (1987), using short tales can help students with their independent work since it gives them creative language-use platforms. When kids are curious about what they are learning, learning becomes more engaging, appealing, and meaningful for them. This study aims to teach vocabulary in language lessons by utilizing the creative potential of digital short stories. For language learners, using digital short tales also has several benefits. Through narrative discourse, students can more confidently access new material and feel more capable of coming up with and sharing original ideas. For language learners, digital narrative tools offer a fun and educational platform. Because they do not view stories as standard classroom instruction, learning becomes more engaging for them. When multimedia texts are used in the classroom, students are encouraged to become acquainted with new vocabulary and linguistic structures (Ahmadi, 2018, 115–125). Students can use extensive syntax, vocabulary, and grammar input to analyze and create digital stories. Additionally, there are possibilities for students to interact personally through written and verbal language output. The discourse of digital short stories offers information that are globally consistent and culturally relevant. Learners can easily relate to abstract concepts like love, humanity, morals, and human interactions, among others. According to Oatley (1999), reading fiction can help people become more empathetic and comprehend other people. Plot details have an impact on kids and help them retain the words over time. Word recognition begins to transfer into long-term memory when the reader is deeply engaged with the material. Mitigating learners' age, background, and interests is a major problem of digitalized learning in order to achieve more effective learning results. Stories with engaging and enjoyable content can be used to support learning objectives, according to Rossiter (2002). Therefore, in order for language teachers to choose the best stories, it is critical that they are aware of the interests and reality of their students. Short stories are adaptable educational resources that can be used to stimulate learners' curiosity and drive regardless of their age, background, or hobbies. As long as learners' curiosity is piqued and their worry is decreased, learning opportunities become more viable. In this type of learning environment, new words stick in learners' memories longer and more vividly. The purpose of this study was to determine whether carefully selected digital short stories might be useful resources for teaching students how to develop their language and vocabulary.

Short Stories in Teaching and Learning Vocabulary

Students can learn new vocabulary and make connections between it and their native tongue by reading short stories. Building cultural bridges through short stories is crucial to the language acquisition process. Tales include a wide range of universal subjects related to



interpersonal relationships and life events. For pupils, the conclusion of a story becomes clearer and more significant when they analyze it themselves. Students can relate to the story's characters. Reading helps students develop empathy for characters and helps them recall new terminology more quickly. Learners might be profoundly impacted by a single tale event, which guarantees that they will retain the word over time. Furthermore, as Lazar (1994:115–124) highlights, short stories are valuable and time-efficient tools for grabbing students' attention. When they finish reading short stories, students are satisfied. Reading short stories and watching videos on the internet enhances the fun of language classes. Learning becomes more enduring when it is more pleasurable (Phillips, 1993). Vocabulary and Short Story Development The foundational element of teaching language is vocabulary. Learning a language can happen fast when one has a solid foundation in vocabulary. In light of this, there are two types of word knowledge: active and passive vocabulary knowledge. Students who have a passive vocabulary are able to identify words but are unable to utilize them in spoken language. Students with active vocabulary knowledge are conversant in the words and utilize them in their language practices. Hatch and Brown (1995) distinguished between productive and receptive vocabulary in a similar manner. When students possess receptive vocabulary, it indicates that they can comprehend words when they see or read them in context; on the other hand, productive vocabulary refers to the ability to employ words in speech or writing. Learners typically acquire word knowledge through receptivity. They might then consciously or accidentally impart their information in a useful way. Because students learn words as a list, teaching vocabulary is more difficult than teaching other language abilities. For learners, expanding their vocabulary might be difficult since they have to connect newly learned terms in their language system. Additionally, kids become less motivated when they memorize words. Because they attempt to memorize new words and then forget them readily, learners have a bias against learning new words. Nation (1990:326-328) asserts that when students use words frequently, they learn them through process. According to Lubliner and Smetana (2005:163-200), when students encounter words in texts multiple times, they acquire persistent vocabulary knowledge. Students should be able to utilize words in sentences and deduce the meaning of terms from the sentence. In light of this, Hişmanoğlu (2005:1–14) demonstrated how using short stories as a substitute for tiresome vocabulary study could be effective. Carter and Long (1991) highlighted the value of employing stories because they help students remember words by giving them important context-specific knowledge about other people's cultures, philosophies, and societies. Learning language in this way also makes it more permanent and pleasurable. Additionally, before beginning vocabulary instruction in short story reading, pre-reading exercises might be used. Learning vocabulary can be aided by engaging in a discussion or word-finding exercise prior to reading. In these kinds of exercises, students encounter a lot of fascinating expressions and idioms. Learners can become more adept at incorporating these terms into their everyday language by brainstorming prior to reading and playing games or interpreting characters afterward. Making coherent sentences on the spur of the moment is one of the hardest things for pupils to do. Students will be inspired to utilize language more creatively by the interactive exercises that illustrate the aforementioned ideas. Once students have amassed a sufficient number of words, they may be



asked to write as a post-story assignment. Oster (1989:85–103) attests to the fact that these exercises foster students' creative writing abilities. Through writing exercises, students can improve their writing abilities. These pupils are also capable of writing dialogue or more difficult assignments. There are many opportunities for language learning, particularly vocabulary acquisition, in short stories. Many literary forms are most suited for usage in language classrooms, particularly short stories. Students can improve in every area needed to pick up the language. The advantages of short stories can be investigated for all ability levels.

The Benefits of Using Short Stories

- Integrated language can be presented in short stories. Students are exposed to a predetermined curriculum and syllabus, which may not be very interesting to them. For English language learners, short stories can offer a fresh viewpoint and reduce the fear of reading in the language.
- You can use short stories to help bridge the gap between grammar and vocabulary instruction.
- Students can write and have discussions on short stories. Advanced students can improve their language development by using fresh arguments and closely examining stories to find intricate grammatical structures.
- The short stories, which are more enjoyable than textbook readings, may already be familiar to the students. Short stories can easily be used in a language classroom during one or two lesson hours due to their shortness. In terms of pedagogy, they offer a comprehensive educational encounter. Benefits for structural awareness also exist. Povey (1972:40–46) asserts that students can look at real-world applications of word patterns and grammatical structures. When reading a short narrative, students focus more on understanding what they read and attempt to deduce the meaning of words. As a result, in addition to the dictionary definition, students can also discover other meanings for words. Writing short stories is another way to hone your writing abilities. Writing and literature, according to Oster (1989:85–103), are related and can help pupils become more creative. In contrast to hearing, listening ability is an active and intentional process, according to Helgesen (2003:23–47). Students can practice purposeful listening by using digital short tales. Students can hear digital short stories read aloud in their native tongue. This is very helpful for helping the learner's second language pronunciation. A more focused reading exercise results from an efficient listening exercise. These stories are available for students to listen to on digital devices, guaranteeing continued learning opportunities. Because each student has a unique vocabulary and proficiency level, some students may not fully understand a text after just one reading or listening session. Thus, a second chance to practice and catch up can be provided via an activity such as this one for slow learners. In order to help students, understand and to provide them the background information they need before reading the literary work, the instructor may pose some questions prior to the students listening. It is evident that the use of digital short stories extends beyond language instruction. Additionally, it helps all language proficiency in the second language advance. Nevertheless, only vocabulary acquisition will be investigated for the purposes of this study. In light of this work, future research can explore further facets of language development via the use of digital short stories.



Conclusion

Students' autonomy, inventiveness, and awareness of what they were learning grew as a result of the digital story technique, and as a result, they actively participated in group projects and solo homework. In order to break free from the confines of traditional teaching methods, this study advocates experimenting with novel techniques and pedagogies in language learning settings. Attempting new things will lead to fresh discoveries for language teachers, but more significantly, it will help language learners learn more effectively.

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