The Implementation of the Storytelling Method Using Digital Media to Increase Reading Interest

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Abstract

This study aims to enhance students' reading interest at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, through the application of storytelling techniques utilizing digital media. The research employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach involving 20 student participants. Findings revealed a marked improvement in reading interest following the implementation of digital storytelling. Prior to the intervention, 47% of students were categorized as having low or poor reading interest. After the initial storytelling session in Cycle I, this figure improved, with the average interest level rising to 62.1%. A further increase was observed during the second session of Cycle I, where students' reading interest reached the "very good" category, averaging 87.4%. Additionally, student responses indicated high satisfaction with the method, with 82.1% rating digital storytelling as "very effective" in enhancing their interest in reading. These results suggest that the integration of digital media in storytelling is a highly effective strategy for fostering reading engagement among students.

Keywords: Digital Media, Reading Interest, Elementary School, Storytelling

Introduction

Students are the successors of a nation's ideals and future (Iskandar, 2021). Therefore, to prepare a quality and prosperous generation, parents must play a role in protecting students and their rights so that they can live, grow, develop, and participate optimally in accordance with human dignity and receive protection from their parents. In the stage of early childhood education, which is a form of developmental effort aimed at children from birth to six years of age, this is carried out through the provision of educational stimulation to help the growth and development of early childhood. This requires educational efforts to optimize all aspects of both physical and psychological development (moral, social-emotional, language, cognitive, and motor skills) (Umi Kalsum Z. Z., 2024).

Along with the development of the times and advancements in technology such as gadgets/mobile phones and the internet, many children are becoming more inclined toward these rather than studying (Dahlia & Iskandar, 2024). One of the causes is the increasing sophistication of audiovisual devices, which makes the younger generation more inclined to indulge their eyes and ears rather than foster a spirit and habit of reading, coupled with the absence of a reading subject that should be taught early in basic education (Rizki Inayah Putri, 2023).

Reading is a tool to learn something and thereby broaden knowledge and extract written messages from reading materials, which can ultimately be expressed in the form of writing (Nurlaila Sapitri, 2023). Reading comprehension ability is not an inherited skill, but rather the result of a teaching and learning process carried out diligently and through training (Putri Syahri, 2024). Reading interest will emerge among children when they find

books that are interesting and contain valuable knowledge, which then trains them to be diligent and persistent readers (Hendri Yahya Sahputra, 2024).

Reading is a form of communication between the writer's thoughts and the reader. So, by reading, one can download knowledge provided by the writer. The more one reads, the more knowledge one acquires (Mulyana, 2024). The progress of a nation's civilization goes hand in hand with the advancement of its technology and knowledge. Reading is a cultural necessity for developed nations, enriching knowledge and broadening insights, which helps shape character and attitudes and results in increased knowledge (Intan Bayzura Sirait, 2025).

However, to have good reading skills, students must also have good reading interest. This way, students can read without feeling forced once that interest exists. Interest is a consistent tendency to pay attention to and remember certain activities (Andreanty, 2024). Activities that are of interest to someone are paid continuous attention to and accompanied by a sense of joy. Interest is always followed by feelings of pleasure, and from that, satisfaction is gained. Interest greatly affects learning because if the subject matter is not in line with the student's interest, the student will not learn optimally. Subject matter that interests students is easier to learn because interest adds motivation to study (Febriyanto, 2020).

Based on observations conducted at *Sanggar Belajar Pandan*, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on October 16, 2024, it was found that most students lacked enthusiasm for reading physical books. When given reading assignments, they tended to be unfocused and preferred entertaining digital activities. However, when stories were presented in a more engaging format, such as through videos or interactive digital apps, they showed higher interest. This indicates that digital media can be an effective tool for increasing reading interest, as long as it is combined with the right method, such as storytelling. Therefore, a learning method is needed that can encourage or motivate students to read, so as to improve their language skills and expand their knowledge. One method that can be used is storytelling through digital media as a means of delivering stories to students.

Storytelling is a skill that can be used to interact with students. Storytelling is a creative process for students in their developmental stage, which involves not only academic aspects but also sensitivity, depth of thought, emotions, art, fantasy, and the imaginative components of students that prioritize the functions of both the left and right brain (Umi Kalsum P. S., 2023). Through the storytelling method, students can understand and retell the contents of the story told by the teacher more easily because the teacher delivers it expressively or with engaging expressions. This makes it easier for students to retell the story, in other words, students are brave enough to speak in front of the class because they are able to capture what is told by the teacher through the storytelling method (Topan Iskandar, 2023).

In its delivery, storytelling can be done using digital media to support the improvement of students' reading interest. This is because delivering interesting storytelling to children is not easy. Especially with children who can only concentrate on listening to a story for a short period—if the storytelling is too long, it makes them quickly bored. Using digital media such as VCDs, DVDs, or films based on Sufficienty tales can actually attract students' attention toward reading (Hiramatsu, 2020).

In relevant studies, various previous research has shown the influence of applying the storytelling method in increasing reading interest. A study conducted by (Tarigan, 2021) showed that the application of Digital Storytelling media in the process of learning to write procedural texts in Cycle I had improved compared to the pre-action stage, although many students still had not reached the minimum competency criteria (KKM). Therefore, the researcher refined the actions in Cycle II by providing similar topics, improving the media, and giving intensive guidance so that students were better able to write procedural texts according to structure and improve both the learning process and outcomes.

In addition, a study by (Suwandi & Nugroho, 2020) showed that students' interest increased when Digital Storytelling media was used in short story lessons. The Digital Storytelling project also boosted students' activeness and creativity in writing short stories and improved their digital literacy regarding the operation of the applications used in completing the project. Based on the above explanations, the researcher is interested in conducting a study titled "The Implementation of the Storytelling Method Using Digital Media to Increase Reading Interest of Elementary School

Students at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia."

Method

This research employs the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method. Classroom Action Research is a type of observation that applies specific actions in the classroom in a reflective manner, through implementing certain steps or following rules in accordance with research methodology over several periods or cycles in order to improve or enhance learning practices conducted collaboratively and professionally in the classroom, thereby achieving improved understanding, quality, or predetermined targets (Sugiyono, 2022).

The research was conducted at Sanggar Belajar Pandan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, located at 3/76d, Desa Pandan, 55100 Kuala Lumpur, Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The study was carried out from September 27, 2024 to November 30, 2024. The subjects of this CAR were the students of Sanggar Belajar Pandan Kuala Lumpur Malaysia, totaling 20 students consisting of 13 male and 7 female learners. Meanwhile, the object of this research is the reading interest of the students in class, focusing on how students' reading interest emerges during the learning process. The instruments used in this study include documentation sheets and questionnaires. These instruments serve the purpose of collecting data.

The data analysis technique applied in this study uses both quantitative and qualitative descriptive analysis, starting from calculating data, organizing and arranging the data, presenting it, and analyzing the numerical data. The formula used to calculate the average is as follows (Moleong, 2000):

$$Me \frac{\sum Xi}{N}$$

Keterangan:
Me   = Average (Mean)
∑Xi   = Sum of all data values
N   = Number of data points

After determining the mean score, the next step is to calculate the percentage of students who have reached or exceeded the predetermined average score. The percentage can be obtained using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{\sum}{N} x \ 100\%$$

Keterangan:
P   = Percentage
∑   = Students who reach the average score
N   = Total number of students

Next, the mean score and the percentage of mastery obtained are compared between the pre-action activities and the post-action activities to determine whether there is an improvement after the intervention. Once the data has been collected, it will be categorized according to the assessment criteria for reading ability. The determination of the criteria is grouped into four score ranges, as follows:

Tabel 1. Reading Interest Criteria

Percentage Interval of Mastery Level	Converted Score on a Four-Point Scale		Description
	1-5	**A-E**	
86-100%	5	A	Very Good
76-85%	4	B	Good
56-74%	3	C	Sufficient

36-55%	2	D	Poor
0-35%	1	E	Very Poor

Then, the results of the effectiveness analysis of applying the storytelling method using digital media to increase children's reading interest are determined through the students' questionnaire sheet. The questionnaire data is obtained by calculating the students' scores based on their responses to each item on the questionnaire. The criteria for the effectiveness of the storytelling method using digital media are as follows:

Tabel 2. Criteria for the Effectiveness of the Storytelling Method Using Digital Media

No	Percentage	Criteria
1	81-100%	Very Effective
2	61-80%	Effective
3	41-60%	Quite Effective
4	21-40%	Less Effective
5	0-20	Not Effective

Result and Discussion

The initial observation results indicate that the reading interest of students at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is still low. Students often face difficulties in understanding reading materials and show a lack of interest in reading activities. Out of the 20 students observed, only 2 students fall into the "sufficient" reading interest category, while the other 18 students are in the "low" category.

This issue is caused by the lack of varied and engaging learning media, which reduces students' motivation to read. In addition, the monotonous teaching methods have also diminished student involvement in reading activities. Therefore, a more interactive and engaging approach to learning is needed to increase students' interest in reading.

This study aims to enhance students' reading interest by implementing the storytelling method using digital media. It is expected that the use of digital media in storytelling can capture students' attention, make it easier for them to understand the story's content, and foster a love for reading activities. Digital media is considered effective in visualizing stories in a more interactive manner, allowing students to become more engaged in the reading learning process and overall improve their reading interest.

Pre-action

On the pre-action stage, an initial observation was conducted to identify the reading interest levels of students at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Based on the observations, most students demonstrated low reading interest and faced difficulties in understanding texts properly. The recap of test results regarding students' reading interest before using the storytelling method with digital media, using 4 assessment criteria BS (Excellent), B (Good), C (Sufficient), K (Poor), is presented in Table 3 below:

Tabel 3. Recap of Reading Interest Test Results for Students at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur in Pre-action

No	Description	Data Acquisition
1	Highest Score	60
2	Lowest Score	36
3	Number of Students in Very Good	-
4	Number of Students in Good	-
5	Number of Students in Sufficient	7
6	Number of Students in Poor	13
7	Number of Students in Very	-

	Poor	
8	Total Number of Student Scores	932
9	Average Score	46,6
10	Completion Percentage	47 %
11	Level of Reading Skill Mastery	Poor (36-55%)

The results of the pre-action reflection show that the students' reading interest falls into the low category. Out of 20 students observed, the highest score achieved was 60, while the lowest score was 36. Thirteen students demonstrated a low reading interest (36-55%), while only seven students fell into the sufficient category (56-75%). No students reached the Good (76-85%) or Excellent (86-100%) categories. The total score accumulated by all students was 932, with an average score of 46.6. The average percentage of the students' reading interest was 47%, which falls into the low category. These results indicate that most students are less interested in reading activities, and the previous teaching methods have not had a significant impact on improving the students' reading interest.

Cycle I First Meeting

In Cycle I, the first meeting of the classroom action research (CAR) concerning the implementation of the storytelling method using digital media to increase reading interest at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, improvements were made based on the pre-action results, which showed that students' reading interest was still low. The average reading interest percentage in the pre-action phase was only 47%, with the majority of students falling into the low category. Therefore, in this cycle, digital media began to be integrated into the storytelling process to enhance students' reading interest.

Tabel 4. Recap of Reading Interest Test Results for Students at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, in Cycle I First Meeting

No	Description	Data Acquisition
1	Highest Score	77
2	Lowest Score	54
3	Number of Students in Very Good	-
4	Number of Students in Good	1
5	Number of Students in Sufficient	13
6	Number of Students in Poor	6
7	Number of Students in Very Poor	-
8	Total Number of Student Scores	1241
9	Average Score	62,05
10	Completion Percentage	62,1 %
11	Level of Reading Skill Mastery	Sufficient (56-75%)

In the first meeting of Cycle I, the implementation of the storytelling method using digital media was integrated into the learning process to increase students' reading interest. The reflection results from the first meeting of Cycle I showed a significant improvement compared to the pre-action phase. The average student score increased to 62.05,

with a percentage of 62.1%, placing it in the sufficient category. One student reached the "Good" category, while 13 students were in the sufficient category and 6 students remained in the low category. Although the overall results did not reach the "Good" category, this improvement indicates that the use of digital media in storytelling has begun to have a

positive impact on students' reading interest. Further refinement in the use of this media is necessary to ensure all students can achieve a higher level of reading interest.

Cycle I Second Meeting

The results of the pre-action phase indicated that most students had low reading interest, and the progress in the first meeting of Cycle I showed an improvement in reading interest to the sufficient category. Therefore,

additional steps need to be taken to raise students' reading interest to a higher level. In the second meeting of Cycle I, the use of digital media in the storytelling method was strengthened. A more interactive approach, involving students more actively, was applied, with the expectation that it would encourage an increase in students' reading interest to a better category and improve the previous results that were in the sufficient category. The data obtained can be seen in Table 5 below:

Tabel 5. Recap of Reading Interest Test Results for Students at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, in Cycle I Second Meeting

No	Description	Data Acquisition
1	Highest Score	92
2	Lowest Score	80
3	Number of Students in Very Good	16
4	Number of Students in Good	4
5	Number of Students in Sufficient	0
6	Number of Students in Poor	
7	Number of Students in Very Poor	
8	Total Number of Student Scores	1748
9	Average Score	87,4
10	Completion Percentage	87,4 %
11	Level of Reading Skill Mastery	Very Good (86-100%)

The results from the observations in the second meeting of Cycle I show a significant improvement in students' reading interest after using the storytelling method with digital media. This is evident from the average score reaching 87.4, with an average percentage of 87.4%, which falls into the "Excellent" category according to the reading interest assessment criteria. All students were in the "Excellent" category, with no students in the "Low" or "Sufficient" categories. The highest score achieved was 92, while the lowest score was 80.

This improvement reflects the success of using digital media storytelling in actively engaging students in the learning process, leading to a significant increase in their reading interest. The results obtained in the second meeting of Cycle I were better compared to the first meeting of Cycle I, so it can be concluded that the implementation of the storytelling method using digital media was effective in achieving the desired learning objectives at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Malaysia.

Based on the findings, it is evident that the use of digital media through the storytelling method significantly increased students' reading interest. During the pre-action phase, the students' reading interest was categorized as low, with an average score of 46.6 and a percentage of 47%. Eighteen students were categorized as "Low," while only two students were in the "Sufficient" category. This shows that before the implementation of the digital storytelling method, students' reading interest was still low.

After implementing the digital storytelling method in the first meeting of Cycle I, there was an improvement, with the average score reaching 62.05 and a percentage of 61%, which falls into the "Sufficient" category. One student reached the "Good" category, while 13 students remained in the "Sufficient" category, and 6 students were still in the "Low" category. However, this indicates that the use of digital storytelling was beginning to have a positive

effect, though further refinement was still necessary.

In the second meeting of Cycle I, a significant improvement was observed, with the average score reaching 87.4 and a percentage of 87.4%, placing it in the "Excellent" category. All students were in the "Excellent" category, with the highest score being 92 and the lowest being 80, with no students in the "Low" or "Sufficient" categories. This demonstrates that the use of digital media storytelling can effectively enhance students' reading interest.

This was proven by the comparison of the effectiveness of the storytelling method using digital media both before and after its implementation, particularly in improving students' reading interest. This can be seen in Table 6 below:

Tabel 6. Comparison of the Effectiveness Percentage of Digital Storytelling Implementation in Improving Students' Reading Interest

Description	Before Implementing Digital Storytelling	After Implementing Digital Storytelling
Total Score	820	1.642
Average Score	52,05	82,1
Average Percentage	52,1%	82,1%
Reading Interest Category	Less Effective (<55%)	Very Effective (86-100%)

The results of the comparison analysis before and after using digital storytelling media show that the effectiveness in improving students' reading interest before using digital media was in the less effective percentage, which is 52.1%. This indicates that conventional learning without digital storytelling media did not have a significant impact on improving students' reading interest. After the implementation of the storytelling method using digital media in the learning process, both in the first and second meetings of Cycle I, there was a significant improvement. The effectiveness of using this media in improving students' reading interest had a positive impact, as seen from the students' reading interest assessment results, which reached 82.1% after the implementation. This percentage falls into the "very effective" category, based on the reading interest assessment criteria table. Thus, it can be concluded that the use of the storytelling method with digital media is highly effective in improving the learning process, especially in enhancing students' reading interest at Sanggar Belajar Pandan Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Storytelling is a teaching method that uses narrative or stories to convey information or lessons. In the educational context, storytelling aims to build an emotional connection with students, introduce educational values, and increase engagement and understanding of the subject matter (Jamilah & Zulfikar, 2021). Traditionally, this method is done verbally, but with technological advancements, storytelling can be integrated with digital media, making it more engaging and effective, especially in capturing the interest of students who may not be attracted to conventional texts. Digital storytelling allows teachers to use images, sounds, animations, and videos to make the stories more vivid and easily understood by students.

The application of digital storytelling in elementary schools can increase students' reading interest in an enjoyable way. According to research by (Setiawan & Arifah, 2024), the use of digital media in storytelling introduces a new way for children to engage with stories, combining text with multimedia elements. This makes the stories more appealing and can influence children to read more often. Digital-based storytelling also helps students build better literacy skills, including reading comprehension and speaking skills (Ayu & Santosa, 2020).

In Sanggar Belajar Pandan Kuala Lumpur, the application of this method can be utilized to improve literacy skills among students from diverse backgrounds. By using digital devices such as computers or tablets, teachers can present stories that are not only in text form but also with images, videos, and sound effects. This can capture students' attention, enhance their imagination, and foster an interest in reading further.

SaOne of the main challenges in literacy education in elementary schools is how to address the low reading interest of students. Many students are less interested in

conventional textbooks that only contain text without pictures or illustrations. However, by using digital media in storytelling, students' reading interest can increase because the stories presented become more lively and interactive. (Andreanty, 2024) in their research states that the application of digital storytelling in elementary schools can increase students' reading interest because digital media allows stories to be presented in various forms, such as animations or interactive formats, which are easier to understand and attract children's attention. In Sanggar Belajar Pandan Kuala Lumpur, which frequently uses creative methods in teaching, the use of digital media can have a positive impact on increasing students' reading interest.

Conclusion

Based on the above descriptions regarding the "Application of the Storytelling Method Using Digital Media to Improve Reading Interest in Elementary Schools at Sanggar Belajar Pandan Kuala Lumpur Malaysia", it can be concluded that the use of digital storytelling media has proven to be very effective in improving students' reading interest at Sanggar Belajar Pandan, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. At the pre-action stage, students' reading interest was still in the low category, with an average score of 46.6 and an average percentage of 47%, indicating that previous learning methods did not significantly improve students' reading interest. However, after the implementation of digital storytelling media, there was a significant improvement in Cycle I, first meeting, with an average score of 62.05 and a percentage of 62.1%, which falls in the "fair" category, along with a decrease in the number of students in the "low" category. This shows an increase in students' motivation to read after the implementation of digital storytelling. In Cycle I, second meeting, the application of digital storytelling media resulted in an outstanding improvement, with an average score of 87.4 and an average percentage of 87.4%, where all students were in the "very good" category. This shows a significant positive impact of using digital media in building students' reading interest. Furthermore, the analysis of reading interest shows that digital storytelling media is highly effective in learning, with an assessment score of 82.1%, which falls in the "very effective" category. This shows that digital storytelling media not only increases students' reading interest but also enhances the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process. Overall, the findings confirm that the application of storytelling using digital media has great potential to support the improvement of students' reading interest and make learning more engaging and enjoyable for students.

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