

## THE EFFECT OF DIGITAL SHORT STORY ON STUDENTS' READING SKILLS

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### ABSTRACT

*The low reading ability of students is apparently influenced by various factors, including the lack of use of learning media and learning materials. This research aims to determine whether or not there is a significant effect of using digital short stories on students' reading skills. This research was tested on class 10 students of SMAN 3 Kota Bengkulu. The research method uses quasi-experiment. Based on the research results, it was found that there was an increase in students' reading when using digital short story media. The average pre-test score was 55.94 and the post-test score was 71.72, meaning there was an improvement before and after treatment was given. So it can be concluded that there is a significant effect of digital short stories on students' reading skills, this technique can be used by other researchers to improve the same reading abilities*

**Keywords:** Reading Skills, Digital Short Story

### INTRODUCTION

Contrary to the common belief that reading is an inherent talent, (Bebena et al. 2024:424) emphasizes that reading requires understanding the context of what is read and not just reading text only. The ability to read is essential in today's environment, since most information and messages are delivered in written form and can only be accessed by reading. Consequently, reading plays a significant role in contemporary culture. On the other hand, reading is a huge hurdle for students in Indonesian EFL classrooms; they often have to deal with complicated, overused, and boring texts. It is still challenging for kids in Indonesia to comprehend what they read, which contributes to their poor reading ability (Jeni 2020:84)). There are many obstacles that they experience, one of which is that they do not know the meaning of the part of the text they read, this is because most students are more ready to read non-formal texts than formal texts that are less interesting to them, students feel that they have less progress in reading because the teaching materials are monotonous and it is difficult to get students to dive deeper into reading English.

There have been many studies emerged to address reading problems among students in English classes. (Hasbaini et al., 2021) investigated the efficacy of short stories in teaching reading comprehension, unveiling improved comprehension and heightened interest, especially in group settings. The research additionally identified benefits such as increased self-confidence, enhanced social interaction, and individual accountability, fostering active reading habits. Short stories' significant plots further facilitate readers' engagement and understanding. In short, study underscores the effectiveness of employing short stories in teaching reading comprehension, revealing enhanced comprehension and heightened interest, particularly within group contexts. The research further identifies supplementary advantages, including heightened self-confidence, improved social interaction, and individual accountability, ultimately cultivating active reading habits. The substantial plots within short stories contribute significantly to readers' engagement and comprehension.

Literature valuable in language teaching, as it offers authentic, varied linguistic material with real-life contexts, fostering positive traits in students' personalities (Teferra,

2022). Connecting personal experiences aids students in understanding literature, fostering emotional responses and contributing significantly to reading development (Gülseren and Akar 2021:127). Literary works enhance language skills and nurture creativity. It can be said that they highlight the significance of literature in language teaching, emphasizing its role in providing authentic linguistic material and shaping positive traits in students' personalities, and underscores the value of connecting personal experiences, facilitating emotional responses, and substantially contributing to reading development. Collectively, literary works play a crucial role in enhancing language skills and fostering students' creativity.

The ability to read in English is very important, reading is a process of receptive language. (Grellet, 1999:4) states that reading as an active skill, in which reading activities always involve guessing about various reading purposes. And also, According to (Palenfo, 2018:96), In order for pupils to enhance their language abilities, it is necessary for them to have good receptive skills. Reader schemata, or preconceived notions about how the text should be understood, are the end product of this interaction. The writer's encoded language surface representation is the first step in the psycholinguistic process, which culminates in the reader's interpretation. Among the four skills necessary to acquire a second language, reading necessitates the most mental and linguistic interchange, making it an absolute must for anybody learning English, whether it be as a second language or a foreign language. Beyond that, teaching reading is an essential part of teaching English.

According to (Grellet, 1999:4), skimming, scanning, extensive reading, intensive reading are a technical way of reading, to build reading literacy it is very important to read stories which is one of the important tools, (Sahibzada, 2021:15). Consequently, reading also some thing vital and indispensable. By means of reading, we are able to growth our know-how approximately technological know-how, generation, and easy way to get a lot statistics that is beneficial for us. Studying is main ability to reach a hit observe.

According to (Ghafar & Zubaedah, 2023:601), literature is used to educate students because it is an efficient method, then it involves learning cultural values contained in cultural dialogue, in line, literary works are very effective as material for consideration in making them a medium for teaching and learning in the classroom, according to (Ali Mansoor et al. 2023:3) , using literary works to increase vocabulary in a foreign language is a new technique for creating a good English language environment in the classroom. One example of a literary work is a short story. Short stories have a significant influence in improving reading comprehension skills, (Kurdi & Nizam, 2022:96), it cannot be denied that short stories have spread throughout society, both children and parents, in schools many teachers have used short stories as teaching materials to become a medium for student learning.

In general, Stories are a natural part of what humans do to communicate (Zavkievna, I. S. 2024:562) . The short story emerged as a greater or less unbiased form of textual content in the late eighteenth century, in fiction there are the most important elements, including: plot, characters, point of views, setting. Students in this era are interested in studying things related to technology, which can be seen from the fact that technology has spread in the world of education and students' way of thinking, apart from that, teachers can use this technology in a subject as a way to increase students' learning motivation in class, so students can be more enthusiastic and not bored when studying in class. Teachers are required to keep up with the times by improving the teaching methods they use so that students better understand the true use of technology in learning, therefore teachers must prepare new learning models to attract students and readers in accordance with current developments and the conditions needed by students.

Recognizing the difficulties students face, using digital short stories can be a helpful solution to make learning more enjoyable. This helps students get ready for future Improvements in education. In Indonesia, people are starting to see the value of digital short stories in improving reading skills. Using this technology has many benefits for language learners. It lets students get the latest information and encourages them to come up with new ideas through stories, as mentioned by (Gülseren and Akar 2021:118). This matches with what (Çetin Koroğlu, 2020:71), showing that digital short stories have the potential to help with language skills. Using digital short stories seems like a good way to deal with the problems students are facing and make language learning more interesting.

In several studies regarding digital short stories in reading ability, it has been proven that digital short stories are an important learning model to be implemented in schools because digital short stories as a medium for motivating students to read are a very effective way (Pratiwi, Putri, and Suhadi 2020:37). Proof of the importance of literature in language is that presenting a literary text must be practiced further and not haphazardly, , (Barzani 2020:327) , hence, digital narratives are thought to provide pupils with an answer to their reading challenges. due to their simplicity, universal standards, and the ability to help instructors cope with human concerns, digital short tales may be an easier medium to employ. Teachers of English as a foreign language might benefit from teaching reading comprehension using digital short story. Students not only have a working knowledge of the definition, but also have more chances to practice and perfect their reading comprehension abilities as they go through the educational process. These findings suggest that digital short story are a great tool for language learners. Reading and writing are two of the most important skills a language learner can acquire, and these digital stories help with both.

Adding digital material in a short story is one of the new learning strategies in teaching English, especially students' reading skills, besides being able to have high imagination about new media models in digital short story, students can also use technology to access digital short story material such as using a computer and gadgets. According to (Çetin Koroğlu, 2020:79) (Digital short stories are an alternative teaching resource, they can be digitized using technological tools to make them even more interactive and effective. The methods used to increase students' interest in learning also vary, such as adding color, scenery, interesting storylines, and so on. It is intended to improve the quality of learning capacity of students who have different learning styles. Apart from that, (Mamabetovna, 2024:86) believes that stories really need an approach and facilitate understanding so that short stories can be seen as the best way to teach English. The reiterative nature of stories can help children learn a second language quickly due to the influence of learning habits, this is what educators need as early as possible to access new material related to students' understanding of English skills that must be learned.

After reviewing all the data, the current research is to investigate the effect of digital short story on students' reading skills. therefore the research questions are:

1. Is there a significant effect while implementing the digital short story on students' reading skills?

## **METHOD**

### **Design**

This design used in this study is a Quasi- experimental design. (Creswell, 2012:21) argued that a Quasi-experimental design is an experimental design that is carried out without randomization, but involves assigning participants to groups. (Rogers and Révész

2019:2), beliefs that pretest and posttest designs involve participant control and experimental. The purpose of the pretest is to ensure that the two groups have a relationship before the experiment begins, while the posttest allows the researcher to determine the silent resistance to the experimental variable.

### **Participant**

The population in this study were 10th grade students at SMA N 3 Kota Bengkulu. The sampling was determined using a purposive sampling technique based on certain considerations and criteria. The total population in this research was 406 students and some were used as samples. In this study there were 64 students consisting of 32 experimental class students and 32 control class students. This research was carried out at SMA N 3 Kota Bengkulu in March 2024 in the even semester.

### **Data collection technique**

Researcher used quantitative data for this study. data gathering The method employed was a test, using a reading test as the instrument. Researcher that collected data employed a number of techniques, including reading test, pre-test, treatment, and post-test.

Researchers followed several procedures in collecting data using the following steps:

#### **1. Pre- teaching activity**

- a) The teacher introduces material based on the syllabus
- b) The teacher gives several initial questions to measure the extent of students' reading abilities

#### **2. Whilst teaching activity**

- a) The teacher provides material Narrative text in the form of short stories which are accessed via the internet
- b) The teacher sends a digital short story link to students
- c) The teacher provides digital short story texts and students read them
- d) the teacher explains the generic structure, characteristics, element of the short story
- e) After reading, the teacher encourages students to analyze the story based on the generic struture and element that have been studied
- f) The students discuss and determine the analysis of the short story based on what they understand
- g) Students write an analysis of the short story in the book and present it.

#### **3. Post- teaching activity**

- a. The teacher monitors student activities
- b. The teacher collects student assignments
- c. The teacher gives students the opportunity to ask questions

### **Data analysis technique**

Analyzing quantitative data is used in this study. In order to respond to the study questions, the data from the instrument (pre- test and post-test) will be collected and analyzed. The last stage of the experimental process is data analysis. This was done to see if teaching utilizing digital short story media made a substantial change in the students' reading abilities. The pre-test and post-test findings were computed by the researchers using the ttest formula and SPSS (social science statistical software) version 26 by using hypothesis test..

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The current research is to investigate students' reading skills after being given treatment using digital short story, so the results are presented in the following table:

Table 1. Pre-test and Post-test results

| No | Student's name | Experiment Group |           | No | Student's name | Experiment Group |           |
|----|----------------|------------------|-----------|----|----------------|------------------|-----------|
|    |                | Pre-Test         | Post-Test |    |                | Pre-Test         | Post-Test |
| 1  | AN             | 60               | 60        | 17 | FRL            | 50               | 80        |
| 2  | APK            | 55               | 75        | 18 | JA             | 55               | 80        |
| 3  | AKA            | 55               | 75        | 19 | KCD            | 65               | 60        |
| 4  | AM             | 45               | 70        | 20 | KM             | 60               | 65        |
| 5  | AF             | 55               | 80        | 21 | NK             | 60               | 70        |
| 6  | ABL            | 50               | 75        | 22 | NCC            | 40               | 60        |
| 7  | AAP            | 55               | 75        | 23 | NAJ            | 60               | 85        |
| 8  | AA             | 35               | 80        | 24 | OSB            | 55               | 75        |
| 9  | AS             | 75               | 60        | 25 | RBM            | 55               | 70        |
| 10 | AR             | 60               | 70        | 26 | RA             | 50               | 80        |
| 11 | AN             | 75               | 75        | 27 | RP             | 50               | 60        |
| 12 | CSD            | 65               | 95        | 28 | RA             | 45               | 65        |
| 13 | CAN            | 60               | 65        | 29 | SN             | 45               | 65        |
| 14 | D              | 60               | 95        | 30 | VAS            | 60               | 70        |
| 15 | FDS            | 60               | 80        | 31 | ZA             | 55               | 60        |
| 16 | FR             | 55               | 65        | 32 | ZNP            | 65               | 60        |

The results in table 1 above show the results of the pre-test and post-test reading, the total number of experimental classes is 32 students, the results of the pre-test and post-test scores show that reading ability has increased, for more detailed information, here are the frequency data results below:

Table 2. Frequency Distribution

| o     | Interval | Category  | Pretest |       | Posttest |       |
|-------|----------|-----------|---------|-------|----------|-------|
|       |          |           | F       | %     | F        | %     |
|       | 80-100   | Excellent | 0       | 0%    | 9        | 28.1% |
|       | 70-79    | Very Good | 2       | 6.3%  | 11       | 34.4% |
|       | 60-69    | Good      | 12      | 37.5% | 2        | 6.3%  |
|       | 50-59    | Low       | 13      | 40.6% | 0        | 0%    |
|       | 0-49     | Very Low  | 5       | 15.6% | 0        | 0%    |
| Total |          |           | 32      | 100%  | 32       | 100%  |

Based on table 2 above, the results of the pre-test and post-test in the experimental group were obtained. In the pre-test, students were more dominant in the (low) category with a frequency of 40.6% and a total of 13 students with a class interval of 50-59, then for the category (good) got a frequency of 37.5% and a total of 12 students, 2 frequencies for the category (very good) with a class interval range of 70-79, and for the category (very low) a frequency of 15.6% with a number of 5 students in a class interval range of 0-49. Meanwhile for the post-test results of the experimental group, students were more superior in the scores obtained, students were more dominant in getting the (good) category with a frequency of 37.5% and the number of 12 students in the 60-69 interval range, then for the (very good) category with a frequency 34.4% and a total of 11 students

with a class interval of 70-79, and for the category (Excellent) with a frequency of 28.1% and a total of 9 students with a class interval of 80-100. Also the results of pre-test and post-test Experimental group scores are presented in the chart below:

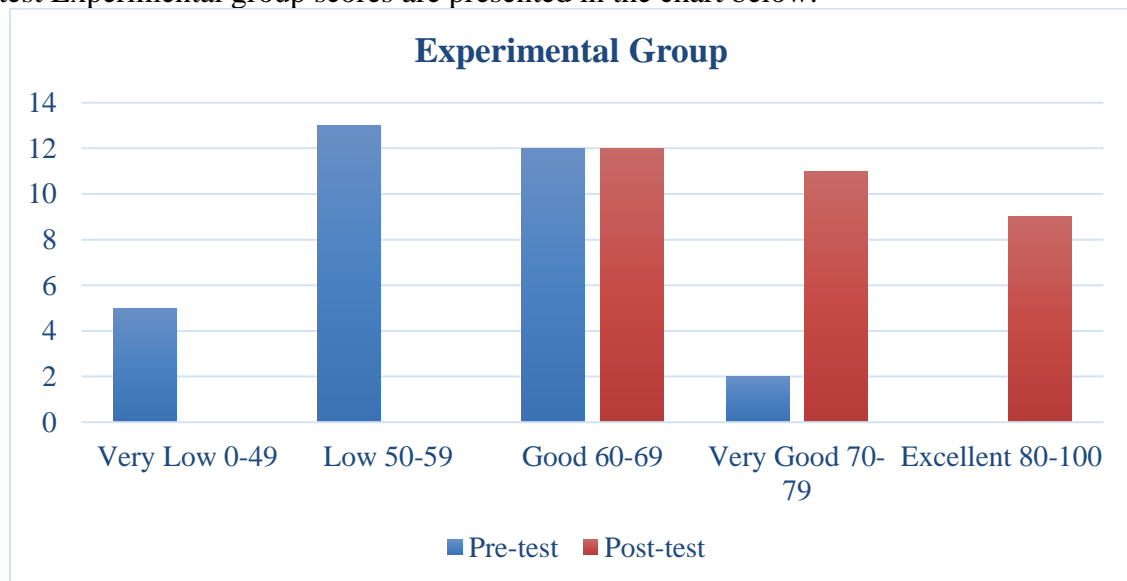


Figure 1. Histogram of Experimental group score

To determine the effect of digital short story on students reading skills, the researcher used a paired sample T Test, to see whether there was a significant effect on students' reading skills, before and after being given treatment, for more details, see the table below:

Table 3. Paired Samples Statistics

| Paired Samples Statistics |                     |         |    |                |                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------|----|----------------|-----------------|
|                           |                     | Mean    | N  | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
| Pair 1                    | Pre-Test Experiment | 55.9375 | 32 | 8.65443        | 1.52990         |
|                           | Post- Experiment    | 71.7188 | 32 | 9.38508        | 1.65906         |

In the table above it can be seen that the average score in the pre-test for the experimental group was 55.93 with a standard deviation of 8.65443, while the average score for the post-test for the experimental group was 71.71 with a standard deviation of 9.38508, this shows that there is a significant difference in the average score. Students before being given treatment and after being given treatment, it can be seen from the experimental post-test score after being given treatment which is greater than the pre-test score before being given treatment. For more details, see the table below:

Table 4. Paired Samples Test

| Paired Samples Test |                                       |                    |                    |                    |   |            |         |    |                 |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|------------|---------|----|-----------------|
|                     |                                       | Paired Differences |                    |                    |   |            | t       | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|                     |                                       | Mean               | Std. Deviat<br>ion | Std. Error<br>Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |            |         |    |                 |
|                     |                                       |                    |                    |                    | Lower                                     | Upper      |         |    |                 |
| Pair 1              | Pre-Test Experiment - Post-Experiment | - 15.78125         | 12.77026           | 2.25749            | - 20.38542                                | - 11.17708 | - 6.991 | 31 | .000            |

The experimental group had a mean score of 15.78125 on both the pretest and posttest, with a standard deviation of 12.77026, as shown in the table above. If the sig(2-tailed) value is less than  $\alpha = 0.05$  when making decisions, it can be concluded that the data value differs from the average value before and after treatment. Conversely, if the sig(2-tailed) value is greater than 0.05, it can be concluded that the data value does not differ between the two. The above table has a sig(2-tailed) value of  $0.00 < 0.05$ , indicating that the experimental class's values differed before and after treatment.

Table 5. Independent Samples Test

| Independent Samples Test |                             |   |     |                              |                 |                 |                       |   |       |   |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|---|-----|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|-------|---|
|                          |                             | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances |     | t-test for Equality of Means |                 |                 |                       |   |       |   |
|                          |                             | Sig.                                    | df  | t                            | Sig. (2-tailed) | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference |       |   |
|                          |                             |   |     |                              |                 |                 |                       | Lower                                     | Upper |   |
| Post-Test                | Equal variances assumed     | .37                                     | .55 | 4.09                         | 2               | .00             | 9.062                 | 18  | 2.2   | - |
|                          | Equal variances not assumed |   |     | 4.09                         | 1.13            | .00             | 9.062                 | 18  | 2.2   | - |

## Discussions

In this research, it was found that students who were taught using digital short stories had an increase in the average score in reading ability, while students who were not taught more dominantly got less significant scores. Of the large number of students it was found that there were several from the experimental class who got scores above the average. On average, it is stated that the comparison of using media and not using learning media is very influential in this research. This implies that this research has a significant effect in improving students' reading skills.

This finding is in line with recent research from (Ahmed et al. 2024), which found that the quality of creative reading can be improved through reading short stories efficiently and more effectively among Saudi Arabian students, the traditional way taught in the classroom must be developed. Another study by (Mamabetovna, X. B. 2024) highlights the study of the short stories in teaching, discovering the use of stories as a real source in increasing reading, so much more so that teachers can combine all four language skills directly with the short story, thus creating a successful tactic in teaching media to meet the needs of teachers and students.

This finding is different from (Kanina, & Hind. 2024). Who found that the use of short stories had a tremendous impact as teaching material in improving students' four

English language skills, in fact in this study it was students' knowledge and understanding of short stories that could influence students' reading abilities, this may be the reason according to (Teferra, 2022) which states that students should maximize their reading habits and teachers should use as many literary texts as possible in order to achieve a mature lesson. Likewise, (Sahibdzada, 2021), stated that students have difficulty reading because the curriculum is inadequate as a result causing students to become minimal and lose motivation.

The third finding of this research found that almost the majority of students were interested in learning using digital short stories, while there were one or two students who did not like it, which was clearly visible in the low average scores, possibly because the students felt lazy because they were used to using the old method, as (Bebena et al. 2024:424) belief that laziness and lack of motivation can make students experience difficulties in reading, the majority of researchers confirm this by claiming that the problems experienced by students are almost the same and must be solved immediately.

The final finding in this research is that the learning process using digital short stories turns out to be more enjoyable, students are more enthusiastic in the learning process. This means that this research proves that the use of digital short stories is indeed efficient, as stated by (Abdurazzoqova & Bozorboyeva. 2024:660), that teaching foreign languages using short stories can improve students' interpretations, encourage them to think critically, this compares with the findings that in every class, students can solve problems on questions by reading and telling stories using fun, creative ways of understanding.

This research revealed that students who were taught using digital short stories significantly improved their reading skills, while students who were taught using conventional methods were more likely to have difficulty gaining understanding quickly, resulting in their grades lagging behind. These findings underline the influence of digital short stories on students' reading abilities, considering that many students' problems in reading foreign languages are very worrying and complicated between learning their mother tongue and foreign languages. Comparing with existing literature, this research is in line with (Zavkievna, I. S. 2024: 563) spontaneously discussing insights into how communication styles when telling stories, and how they impact on those who hear, relate to students who are difficult and nervous when asked to tell stories in front of the class, that is why (Mohammed, M. A. A. 2024:5) emphasizes that teaching literature is the main focus in the areas of grammar, syntax and morphology, which is proven in this research. Students learn word structure and read gradually to achieve certain aspects of understanding.

Finally, the results of the study that have been obtained have big implications, that by using digital short story learning media in English subjects, students get a positive response as evidenced by the increase in subject grades, this is due to using literature media as a teaching material can significantly influence the quality and improvement of students' learning, influence students' reading comprehension levels and influence students' subject grades, especially English. The core objective of this research reveals that the reading scores of students who are taught using digital short stories increase significantly, compared to classes that are not taught, this is influenced by learning factors that can motivate students. This proves that using literature in learning can have a positive impact on the students being taught.



## CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this research show that there is a significant effect on students' reading skills using digital short story media. The researcher concludes that digital short stories are a good media to use in the English language learning process, especially reading, because in teaching they are very interesting to read. The test results obtained found that the level of students' reading ability was measured from the pre-test and post-test and the results showed an increase before and after being given treatment

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