Digital storytelling as a method for teaching writing skills

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Abstract The objective of this study was to assess the writing abilities of pupils, employing an experimental research design. The participants consisted of Grade 10 students from Inopacan National High School. Two tools were utilized: the control group used a module, while the experimental group utilized digital storytelling. The analysis revealed that the students’ writing skills were good when using both the module and digital storytelling, with minimal difference between the two approaches. The findings indicate that the teacher’s intervention and initiative play a crucial role in providing pupils with the best opportunity to address their writing weaknesses. Based on the results of the study, it is recommended that further research be conducted to explore ways of enhancing students' writing abilities and implementing interventions to facilitate ongoing skill development, particularly in addressing areas of weakness among students.

Keywords: development, module, teacher’s intervention, weaknesses, writing abilities

1. Introduction

Both teachers and students can greatly benefit from using digital storytelling as a creative teaching strategy to boost students’ writing abilities. One of the issues the researchers identified in their students' writing abilities. Because their students struggle with basic writing skills such as proper word usage and mechanics, it is a concerning issue. This study was created in response to this.

The use of technology and digital media in storytelling is known as “digital storytelling.” Its goal is to create a teaching tool that may be used as an intervention to improve the writing abilities of children in Grade 10. The stories develop into multimedia experiences. Around the world, billions of mobile devices are in the hands of people around the world, and an ever-increasing percentage of those devices contain video cameras, still cameras, and microphones.

One of the most crucial skills that any student should possess is writing, but most struggle to write well (Bruma and Marbella, 2019). In a poll by The Chronicle of Higher Education, it was found that 61% of teachers claimed that their students could not write longer than five pages, which provided further evidence of this claim. Thus, they lack the necessary training to acquire writing skills. It has been established that other people experience this issue in addition to the researcher.

In reality, the findings of the study by Bruma and Marbella (2019) show that pupils in the second level of secondary school frequently make grave errors when writing official letters in Filipino. According to the study’s findings, pupils lack a basic understanding of the structure, topic, and mechanics of essay writing. Due to a lack of writing practice, students have these deficiencies.

According to Yamac and Ulusoy (2016), the importance of supporting students in the development and utilization of various writing abilities to prepare them for life in the 21st century cannot be overstated. The use of teaching aids is considered an intervention that can facilitate the completion of teaching and learning tasks for both teachers and students. The equipment used in teaching is systematically arranged to create a favorable learning environment for students (Bacalla, 2019). The necessity of setting writing objectives, organizing thoughts, adhering to grammar rules, using appropriate word choices, punctuation, and spelling is emphasized (Odewumi et al 2019). This assertion drives the researchers to consider interventions aimed at strengthening their students’ areas of weakness.

The K to 12 Filipino Curriculum Guide (2016) establishes benchmarks for each grade and places significant emphasis on writing as a macro ability. According to this guide, students who have completed grade 10 should be capable of utilizing technology to showcase their communication skills, understanding, and enthusiasm for literature. To achieve this objective, the researchers assessed the effectiveness of digital storytelling as a strategic intervention.

Rong and Noor (2019) contend that one of the contributing factors to students’ poor writing abilities is the teaching methods employed by teachers. Given the necessity of adapting schools to the 21st century, the use of technology in the classroom has become essential, regardless of teachers’ personal preferences. School administrators consistently advise...
teachers to tailor their lessons to the interests of their students. The importance of exposing the current generation to technology in order to prepare them for the future is widely acknowledged.

This rationale underpins the researchers’ encouragement to implement a technological intervention. As educators, the researchers believe it is crucial to address their students’ weaknesses, particularly in writing. They anticipate that the findings of this study will be valuable for teachers who also grapple with their students’ poor writing abilities. The study employs digital storytelling as a means to evaluate students’ writing skills.

2. Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study used Berman’s (2020) statement as a basis for analyzing students’ writing skills. Berman (2020) explains that technology makes students creative in writing (Figure 1). With technology, students learn new things they did not know before. In this statement, it is only stated that technology can help develop students’ writing skills.

Hughes (1998), who was cited in Emberda’s (2021) thesis, described how teachers used technology in their lessons, how they learned about using it in the classroom, and what knowledge and learning outcomes resulted from doing so. This idea emphasized how some schools have been slow to update their writing curriculum to incorporate new technologies, although writing has become a crucial skill for younger generations. This article suggests that using technological gadgets can help pupils improve their skills.

Lopez (2017) shared that in global competition, students will be exposed to technologies. In response to this need, the DepEd Computerization Program (DCP) has undergone further expansion. To address the issue, an Aide Memoire titled “Accelerating DepEd Computerization Program: Digital Learning Requirement” was issued. Its objective is to provide public schools with the necessary technologies to enhance the teaching-learning process, meet the challenges of the 21st century, and address the ongoing pandemic. In line with DepEd Memo No. 280, s. 2011, which aligns with Berman’s statement (2020), the implementation of the DepEd Computerization Program for Batch 7 e-classroom packages aims to employ suitable e-learning teaching tools that can enhance students’ learning outcomes to meet the demands of the K to 12 program and produce students equipped with 21st-century skills. It is widely recognized that the majority’s understanding of democracy serves as the foundation for valuing the development of every individual.

Education is very important to the development of humanity and the transformation of society. It is thought to be a pillar in developing skills so they can be completely exploited, and it will also pave the way for creating a better society. Humanity is united by education around the world. According to some, education is the only tool that can be used to mend and improve relations between countries. Therefore, it is a huge honor for a teacher to create a successful tribe. The educational curriculum is always changing as well.

Increasing teachers’ knowledge can help them stay current and avoid getting left behind when things change. To make lessons more understandable and to keep students’ attention and memory, teachers must use new teaching techniques. The educational curriculum is always changing as well. Increasing teachers’ knowledge can help them stay current and avoid getting left behind when things change.

To enhance lesson comprehension, sustain student attention, and promote better retention, teachers must incorporate innovative teaching techniques. In this particular study, digital and modular storytelling were employed by the researchers to emphasize the writing skills of Grade 10 students. The participants’ proficiency was evaluated based on five key aspects of writing: content, organization, vocabulary, usage, and mechanics. The utilization of digital storytelling as a teaching resource resulted in the creation of various products.

**Figure 1** Schematic Diagram of the Study.
3. Materials and Methods

The experimental approach was employed in the study. The experimental method is a scientific approach to research that gives the researcher complete control over the variable under study so they may monitor and assess any changes in the variable's condition that they wish to investigate. Using a quasi-experimental research design, students in grade 10 were made into the study mix with 17 girls and 15 boys. The researcher evenly divided the students based on their grade point average (GPA). In the grouping, it was determined who the participants will use the module and for digital storytelling where they will receive equally from the highest to the lowest GPA. The instrument used is stories contained in the Grade 10 module. The researchers have prepared three stories that will be the basis of this analysis. Both stories were prepared for the students who would use the module in the control group and the digital storytelling for the experimental group.

Three (3) stories from the Learners Material (LM) in Filipino 10 were developed by the researcher, who also included references to modules based on the Most Essential Learning Competency (MELC). The first two works are contained in the second mark titled “Ako Po’y Pitong Taong Gulang,” which is a short story, and “Aguinaldo ng Mago” by O. Henry, which is a short story. The third mark includes Barbara Kimenye’s short story “Ang Alaga,” which is the third work.

The works are carefully chosen for the students based on the themes they cover and the time frame in which they are distributed. Students must respond to a specific question for each task as part of the experiment. Similar questions were posed to the two groups, and their responses required them to each contribute an opinion of at least 150 words to determine the five components of writing (content, organization, vocabulary, use, and mechanics), which served as the foundation for the analysis that followed Mabalhin and Marbas’s (2019) study.

Researchers have created criteria or rubrics to evaluate students’ writing abilities. The criteria were taken from Tabec (2013). The researchers divided the students according to their grade point averages in the Filipino subject. There were students in both the experimental group and the control group. The participants in the control group learned using the conventional method, which consisted of attentively reading the module’s carefully chosen stories before responding to the questions. The same chosen stories that were applied or employed by multimedia in the digital storytelling method were used in the experimental group, and the same question was addressed.

In both groups, the researcher utilized the same device. The control group received a response first, followed by the experimental group, according to the researchers. The researchers gave the participants instructions on what to do before the story began. Their learning task includes this work. After the participants responded to the preprepared questions, the researcher engaged three teachers with master’s degrees who assessed the participant’s skills.

The researchers produced or developed a teaching tool that made use of e-learning materials after studying the study’s findings. The researchers created an LAS to ensure that the included activities were in line with the competency after creating the instructional materials. The researchers analyzed, interpreted, and forecasted the gathered data using statistical techniques. In this investigation, the weighted mean was employed. The mean is useful since it takes into account the results from all of the research study’s subjects.

4. Results

4.1. Students’ Writing Skills Using Module Tasks

Table 1 answers problem 1, showing the results of students’ writing skills using tasks from the module.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weighted Mean</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>15.95</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocabulary</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usages</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanic</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>Fairy Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>13.53</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria:

- 25-21 Outstanding
- 20-16 Very Satisfactory
- 15-11 Satisfactory
- 10-6 Fairy Satisfactory
- 5-1 Did Not Meet Expectations

4.2. Students’ Writing Skills Using Digital Storytelling Activities

The study of students’ writing abilities utilizing the digital storytelling intervention is shown in Table 2. The results show that two of the five components or elements—the content has a weighted mean of 19.6, the organization a weighted...
mean of 19.45, the vocabulary a weighted mean of 19.1, the tool a weighted mean of 17.25, and the mechanics a weighted mean of 17.15—performed well.

Table 2 Students’ Writing Skills Using Digital Storytelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>18.51</td>
<td>Very Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.3. Differences in Students’ Writing Skills Using Modules and Digital Storytelling

The result shown in Table 3 is the result of the analysis of the contrast of students' writing skills using the module and digital storytelling.

Table 3 Differences in Students’ Writing Skills Using the Module and Digital Storytelling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Module vs Digital Storytelling</td>
<td>0.096</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td>There is no significant difference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Discussion

Table 1 makes it evident that while the mechanical aspect received a bad description, the other four writing elements—content, structure, language, and usage—all received good descriptions. The outcome clearly demonstrates that grade 10 students possess the ability to offer activities that are consistent and acceptable with the assignments that the teacher has prepared. The students were able to set up the activities based on what they had created because they grasped the material completely. Students are therefore adept at employing creative language. However, this result is somewhat concerning because, although mechanics is the simplest of all the writing components, it has a low skill level, as evidenced by its low weighted mean of 9.7, the lowest of all components.

The proper use of capital and lowercase characters, as well as punctuation, is referred to as mechanics. Vocal (2019) and Flores (2018) claim that the teacher began instructing the students in mechanics while they were in the first grade. This outcome is concerning because if mechanics such as punctuation and the proper use of small and capital letters are employed wrongly, the elegance of the text, organization, vocabulary, and grammar accuracy will be irrelevant. According to Vocal (2019) and Flores (2018), many students fail to employ proper spelling, punctuation, capitalization, italics, writing numbers, and word and paragraph brevity. In reality, both of their participants performed poorly, particularly in terms of writing mechanics, which was also a problem in this study.

It is disappointing as a Grade 10 teacher because it is expected that at their level, they have been careful with proper writing. Notice that the word that should be written in capital letters such as Britty is written in small letters and that the common noun that is the dog is written in capital letters. This was one of the mistakes noticed by one of the students while checking their answers. "Before, I used to love Dogs. Now my pet Dog is brittle!".

Usage describes how a word should be used correctly or appropriately. Usage scored the second lowest of these skills, with an 11.2 weighted mean. This weakness is one of the most frequently observed weaknesses in studies. This result is a related result of Legaspi’s (2020) study, and the writing component used in both studies obtained a good description. This simply means that every teacher must emphasize and focus on punctuation, spelling and other components of writing so that students can succeed in any written task. Having enough writing skills for every student is a great success for every teacher in his teaching.

It can be observed from the results in Table 2 that in each component of writing, all the participants had good skills. It is indicated here that e-learning tools such as digital tools can help in developing the weaknesses of students. This is confirmed by the results shown in Table 2.

As a Grade 10 teacher at Inopacan National High School, we will continue to assign writing assignments. It now forms a component of the exercises the instructor planned for his students. One of the qualities that students in Grade 10 are encouraged to build is writing proficiency. To succeed in their academic activities, students must be ready for a new chapter in their education where this skill is one of the prerequisites. As a result, it is important to emphasize the teaching tools and the tactics that will be utilized to strengthen any student weaknesses, particularly in the components of usage and mechanics.
because both groups had low weighted means while using the modular and digital methods. It merely suggests that the teacher, particularly the researcher, may need to put twice as much effort into his activities, techniques, and interventions if he is to be successful in shaping the minds and skills of students.

It just demonstrates that the instructor, particularly in Grade 10, will genuinely care about his students’ welfare. Being a teacher of Grade 10, we find it concerning that their former teachers or institutions of higher learning will have an impact on the aptitude or performance of college students. The researchers then completed the assignments given to the two student groups. Five members of the experimental group participated in a casual conversation with the researcher to discuss their feelings while carrying out the planned assignment. The participant who said that “classes that employ technology like narrating a tale are interesting since it is engaging to watch and easy to take in what is told” expressed the same opinion. One participant even stated, “It is easy to get the message or content of the story in these devices”.

Kamariah et al (2018) suggested that the current instructor should be in accordance with his students’ interests in response to the participants’ statements. Everyone is aware that today’s students are surrounded by a variety of gadgets and technology that teachers view as tough competitors for pupils’ attention and academic success.

The development of today’s youth’s knowledge is aided by their obsession with various technologies, which every institution of higher learning must keep up with. The instructor needs to have instructional materials so that everyone can receive a good or quality education, as stated in Section 3 of the Education Act of 1982: “The state shall encourage the right of every individual to relevant quality education.” The focus of competitiveness in today’s schools is on 21st-century technology and modern teaching.

The advantages for both students and teachers are well understood in modern education. As evidenced by several participants’ statements, it broadens the notions since pupils can better understand what the particular issue seeks to express. Simply put, it means that each teacher must be original in how they apply the technique. Their students’ deficiencies can be improved with the aid of strategy.

Using the T test, it is clearly shown in Table 3 that there is no significant difference in the efficiency of the writing skills of the students who used the modular and experimental group or digital. According to the investigation, the population as a whole did not experience a shift or improvement in pupils’ writing abilities as a result of employing digital storytelling. The increase only applies to a limited number of Grade 10 students. According to the participants’ personal interviews, their parents and siblings assisted them in some of their activities. Some participants went on to say that they felt secure in their responses because some of their siblings and parents were educators.

This could be the reason why there was no difference in writing competency between the two groups. This result showed that the teacher is always coming up with new teaching methods and tools to help pupils improve their skills. It simply means that educators will increase their concern for their students’ wellbeing by creating interventions and innovations to strengthen their areas of weakness. There are various reasons why students’ aptitude remains low, including the subject’s lack of interest among students, a task’s boredom, or the teacher’s lack of preparedness due to the instructional materials employed. This only serves to highlight how difficult it may be for teachers to mold their pupils’ knowledge, particularly in light of the modern technologies that surround us.

Writing is a skill that is highly regarded in the twenty-first century and one that teachers are encouraged to help children improve because it is essential to the achievement of K to 12 goals and all academic work. Every teacher aspires to support their pupils’ academic growth. One strategy for achieving this goal is for teachers to employ various techniques, such as the utilization of contemporary technologies, to enhance each student’s aptitude.

In other words, the teacher must be imaginative or creative in their selection of instructional aids. To help their students develop their skills, teachers might continue to tickle their charges, according to Talafhah (2018). One of every teacher’s promises is to help students reach their potential. For the benefit of their students, teachers must therefore step up their efforts.

6. Conclusion

It is merely suggested that the opportunity to strengthen students’ areas of weakness, such as their writing abilities, depends on the teacher’s intervention and initiative. It is merely suggested that the opportunity to strengthen students’ areas of weakness, such as their writing abilities, depends on the teacher’s intervention and initiative. Consider strategies to help students learn more and keep exploring solutions to close students’ learning gaps.

Ethical considerations

Not applicable.

Conflict of Interest

The authors whose names are listed below certify that they have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest (such as honoraria; educational grants; participation in speakers’ bureaus; membership,
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