Promoting Students' Self-Directed Learning Based- Flipped Classroom Strategy to Facilitate Students' Reading Comprehension in Narrative Text

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Abstract

The study aims to explain the use of digital storytelling based-flipped classroom strategy, and secondly to describe students' engagement of incorporating this learning model in promoting self-directed learning on reading comprehension. Qualitative method and descriptive and narrative inquiry research design were employed. The research participants were thirty students of the eighth grader of Islamic secondary school at Brebes Regency, Central Java in the academic year 2022-2023. Data collection techniques used classroom observation and interview. Data analysis techniques applied data selection, data reduction, and data verification. The findings show that implementing digital storytelling based-flipped classroom can encourage and motivate students' self-directed learning on reading comprehension in narrative text. Students responded well, actively, energetically, positively, and enthusiastically. The learning method could create a fun learning process and enhance students' participation, achievement, emotional engagement, interactive communication, learning satisfaction, and learning outcomes. It also supports learners' self- directed learning. Based on these results, this learning model is thus recommended to be implemented in English classroom context.

Keywords: *Digital Storytelling; Flipped Classroom Strategy; Narrative Text; Reading Comprehension; Self-Directed Learning*

Introduction

Narrative text reading skill is the key to process and reproduce knowledge and understanding of information and experience. Quoting Alfyna, F. (2021); Simatupang, A.S., & Siregar. (2022); Mogea, (2023): Reading is one of language skills that develops, explores, and explains a written text by using imagination and creativity. This activity transfers new knowledge and creates new experience. A student has to be able to acquire basic skills, from narrative reading skill to practicing reading competence and public speaking communication (Handayani, S., Youlia, L., Febriani, R.B., Syafryadin, 2020; Halimah, Meilany, M.P, Reza, R. H, Siti, 2022; (Susiawati, M.S., Yanto, 2022). Apart of enhancing competence,

narrative reading skill can also motivate and develop confidence as well as facilitate academic comprehension of the students (Susiawati, M.S., Yanto, 2022).

Therefore, if students understand how to deliver information in the means of written narrations, they will understand how to load information using verbal narrations. Indeed, for storytelling, a student has to acquire a variety of languages, be skilled in reading, and be able to profoundly comprehend a text (Yansyah., Hadisyah, 2018). This also influences their mind set and motivate a more critical, evaluative, and analytical intelligence by improving their narrative reading skill (Siregar, M., Husein, R., Dewi, N.R., Simatupang, A.S., Hendrawan, 2022). As written by Alfyna., (2021), the ability to explore words can help students producing ideas, facts, and elements critically, and build their creativity in social environment.

According to Handayani, S., Youlia, L., Febriani, R.B., Syafryadin, (2020), there is a series of steps to improve this skill, namely introducing text through continuous reading, understanding idea, and utilizing the knowledge conveyed by the text. Teacher facilitates the integration of meaning and knowledge interpretation to help students interpreting and reflecting the narrative. Furthermore, narrative reading is also influenced by the presence of several supporting dimensions, such as 1) interpretation; 2) background knowledge; 3) linguistic skills; 4) reading fluency; 5) vocabularies; 6) meaning; 7) memory; and 8) motivation (Susiawati, M.S., Yanto, 2022) & Mogea, 2023). These dimensions are further confirmed by Radaideh, E., Al-Jamal, D., Sa'di, (2020) who suggested that narrative reading competence should be directed as a process to extract and construct meaning through interaction and engagement with written language. Aside from building interpretation and meaning, this process should also be aimed at developing the capacity of visualization and imagination of an individual. Readers can use skimming method to grasp meaning and exercise creativity during the reading (Alfyna, F ., 2021).

To improve students' competence of reading narrative text, teachers can use digital storytelling learning media. The use of this learning multimedia is to kindle the narrative. Digital storytelling can be used to explain concepts, reflect on personal experiences, retell historical events, and build arguments. It is usually in the form of a video that combines images, audio, and video clips to present a story. According to Zhang, (2021) & Nejati, R., Ilchi, (2023), students of the eighth grader at secondary school who participated in this study can be classified as generation Z. This generation is usually referred to as the internet generation.

Generation Z commonly build social interaction through cyberspace. Since young age, they have been widely introduced to technology, are very familiar with smartphones, and are categorized as a creative generation. Educators need to consider this aspect when facilitating learning so that the materials developed are more easily grasped by this population. Educators must design innovative learning methods so that students can fully enjoy the atmosphere, which eventually leads to improved learning outcomes. Therefore, this study used digital storytelling to help teaching reading in narrative texts with a flipped classroom strategy on the basis of self-directed learning.

Experts view flipped classroom from various perspectives. Yulian, (2021) defined it as a popular learning method in which materials are transferred to students through online resources to create a more active classroom. Reflianto, Setyosari, P., Kuswandi, D., (2021) also correlated flipped classrooms with technology used as an approach to support independent learning to achieve target outcomes. In term of pedagogical framework, Abbasian, M.R., Azeez, (2021) mentioned that classroom collaboration is an effort to encourage active learning by using alternative approaches. Flipped classroom can improve cognitive ability and emotional involvement (Reflianto, Setyosari, P., Kuswandi, D., 2021). It can also change teaching and learning situation and update activities organization before, during, and after learning (Yulian, 2021). In addition, efforts are made to ensure an increase in learning for each student, in the ability to formulate and ask questions, and in the ability to articulate one's understanding (Abbasian, M.R., Azeez, 2021).Thus, it can be concluded that flipped classroom emphasizes student independence and collaboration to motivate innovation of teaching and learning process.

The success indicators of flipped classroom are varied. Reflianto, Setyosari, P., Kuswandi, D., (2021) emphasize more on the increase of students' class engagement and activity as a success indicator. On the contrary, Phung, C.K., Yen, (2020) determine the success or failure of flipped classroom through students' project reports and presentation scores. Yulian, (2021) stated that its success cannot be separated from material preview, teacher facilities, and the participation in the learning process itself. Meanwhile, Abbasian, M.R., Azeez, (2021) measured the impacts of this strategy by taking into account students' final exam performance and their rate of satisfaction.

According to Phung, C.K., Yen, (2020) & Yulian, (2021), those succeed can be achieved if students have passed the following three steps of flipped classroom: a) identification of topic that is considered difficult during learning assessment; b) topics are shared to the students so that each of them has the opportunity to deliver a presentation and leads a discussion; and c) observers are responsible for their scope and maintain the flow of discussion. In short, the success of flipped classroom is heavily influenced by individual participation in it. The learning outcomes, in the end, will indicate the success.

Meanwhile, one of the functions flipped classroom strategy is to reach students to be self-directed learner. There are various perspectives for defining self-directed learning. The first perspective is to see this concept as a concept of autonomous learning that emphasizes independent study (Mentz, E & Bailey, 2020 & Safa, B.S.S, Wicaksono, 2022). This is in line with Subekti, (2021), who suggested that learning is a process that does not require any interaction between students and teachers. Meanwhile, Wiwikananda, S.K.S., Susanti, (2022) as the second point of view, viewed self-directed learning through a number of indicators that build a learning process, namely curriculum, additional multimedia utilized for the process, and active participation of teacher instruction during learning. The third point of view sees self-directed learning from its outputs. A self-directed learning can improve students' self-management, produce dynamic information, and present a flexible interaction and communication (Nejati, R., Ilchi, 2023). It is in accordance with Wahyudi, G.S., Artini, L.P., Padmadewi, (2021) who suggested that this type of learning can enhance individual initiative in determining students' learning needs and achieving their objectives independently, carrying out their plans, and evaluating their learning (Zhang, 2021). These three perspectives define self-directed learning in a similar way to independence in online learning.

The success of self-directed learning implementation highly depends on students' readiness and motivation to accept this method. There are four influencing factors for student motivation: first, internal factor related to learning features; second, external factor related to learning environment that can impact students' motivation; and third, personal factor or knowledge gained through learning activities (Yansyah., Hadisyah, 2018 & Mentz, E & Bailey, 2020). Furthermore, students will be more motivated for self-directed learning if (1) the content presented is relevant to their lives; (2) they have technological competence; (3) they are motivated from the beginning; and (4) they gain satisfying experience through this strategy (Yansyah., Hadisyah, 2018 & Safa, B.S.S, Wicaksono, 2022). Therefore, the steps of implementation need to be adhered, starting from the first one, preparing learning materials and observing learning process; second, during the process, observing how students learn individually anywhere, anytime, and immediately achieve the learning outcomes; and third, conducting an evaluation to monitor the learning process until the follow-up of the accomplished learning activities (Dwilestari, S., Zamzam, A., Susanti, N.W.M., Syahrial, 2021; Wahyudi, G.S., Artini, L.P., Padmadewi, 2021).

However, before implementing the steps above, the most crucial aspect that should be focused on is building students' enthusiasm for learning. Building their awareness is an alternative way to optimize learning process because awareness is the foremost stimulus to encourage learning. Awareness is referred to as an ability to build self-consciousness and create meaning for individual experience. Awareness is also seen as a sense of identity, especially in terms of complexity of attitude, belief, and sensitivity, possessed by each student. With awareness for studying, they can learn independently at home. On the other hand, during a learning process, teacher should be able to provide an innovation and present a

variety of learning model and media. This is closely related to teacher's efforts to maintain learning quality and students' interest in it. One of learning models that can be applied to accomplish learning objectives is flipped classroom.

Studies on flipped classroom learning have been focusing mostly on three aspects. First, flipped classroom is seen as a learning model (Yulian, 2021; Phung, C.K., Yen, 2020 ; Reflianto, Setyosari, P., Kuswandi, D., 2021 & Abbasian, M.R., Azeez, 2021) Second, it is used to improve students' activity, creativity, and learning outcomes (Handayani, S., Youlia, L., Febriani, R.B., Syafryadin, 2020; Susiawati, M.S., Yanto, 2022 & Mogea, 2023). Third, it is implemented using digital media (Radaideh, E., Al-Jamal, D., Sa'di, 2020; Wiwikananda, S.K.S., Susanti, 2022) & Syam, 2022). Among the three above, there has not been any particular interest given in analysing self-directed learning-based flipped classroom in teaching narrative text using digital storytelling. This research aims at solving   the shortcomings of previous studies by explaining 1) the use of digital storytelling-based flipped classroom strategy in reading narrative text to promote self-directed learning; 2) students' responses towards this method; 3) the implication of integrating this method.

Method

a. Type of Research

This study employed qualitative method and descriptive narrative inquiry research design. It investigated phenomenon, and the findings describe the problems as highlighted by Creswell, 2014 & Tracy, (2013). The data of this research were collected through observation, and interview. Observation was used to understand the implementation of incorporating digital storytelling based flipped classroom strategy in teaching reading of narrative text. To sharpen the observation outcome, and interview all of the students. The data were analysed using interactive model that consists of four stages, namely data selection, data reduction, data presentation, and data verification (Miles, M.B., Huberman,A.M & Saldana, 2014).

b. Research Participants

The participants were thirty students of the eighth grader of Islamic secondary school at Brebes Regency, Central Java in the academic year 2022-2023. They consist of sixteen female students and fourteen male students.

c. Research Procedure

With regards to a research procedure theorized by Creswell, J.W. & Timothy, 2019 & Tracy, (2013), who believe that the following procedure must be made to reach the research valid:

1. Classroom Observation

Classroom observations were carried out to obtain the data of incorporating digital video storytelling as learning media that used to facilitate students' understanding on narrative text. Students' learning activities in real classroom were observed as well. The observation guidelines were used.

2. Interviewing

Beside classroom observations, interview also was conducted to obtain the data of students' engagement in following the learning model. Thirty students provided their voices regarding their point of view related to digital video storytelling, flipped classroom strategy and self-directed learning on reading comprehension in narrative text.

Results

The results of this study show that the integrative implementation of digital storytelling in reading narrative text significantly helps the students to grasp learning material. Before reading class, the English teacher gave learning material and also video digital learning media. They were sent using WhatsApp group. The learning material were about reading exercise and enrichment of narrative text. Students can answer the exercise after they watch the video. The digital video storytelling presents an Indonesian folklore with abundance of moral values entitled The Crying Stone from West Kalimantan. This material was sent to the students three days before the class. The digital storytelling was taken from a YouTube video. This consideration is because based on the researchers' observation while teaching this class, the students displayed low enthusiasm, interest, and motivation compared to other subjects. The researchers also aim to enhance students' eagerness in learning English especially reading comprehension skill. Digital storytelling was used here namely an Indonesian folklore entitled *Batu Menangis* (The Crying Stone) from West Kalimantan. The story tells about an old widow who lived in the inland of West Kalimantan with her daughter, Jelita. She was very beautiful, but she has a terrible attitude, especially to her mother. As a result, she got cursed by her mother and turned into a stone. It is said that people can see the disobedient girl's tears of regret even though she has turned into a stone. The purpose of using folklore was to enhance students' appreciation on local wisdom and culture.

The teacher arranged a digital storytelling-based reading practice. The enrichment materials consist of 40 questions about the main idea of each paragraph, multiple choices, matching definition, and cloze test. All of the practices helped the students comprehend the narrative text. This allows some time for the students to grasp the story content, because otherwise, they will not be able to answer those questions. Some examples of the questions are" 1) Where did the old widow and her daughter go? 2) What did they want to buy? 3) How far was the market from their house? 4) How was her daughter's appearance? 5) What is the generic structure of a narrative text? Additionally, there are also several comprehension questions in the forms of multiple choice, matching, and short answer.

As a learning media, digital storytelling offers a number of benefits for teacher and students. This is an interesting media for students' diverse learning styles. However, its application requires students' activity in attending the virtual class. There are a number of activity indicators. Based on the observation carried out, there were 33 students who paid attention to the lecturer's explanation. There were 32 who answered the practice questions, and 5 who raised questions to the lecturer. As many as 10 students presented their opinion about the text.

Secondly, the implementation of digital storytelling can help the students understand the materials, as observed during the interview:

R1: "I like learning to read using digital storytelling because I could understand the   content and access it anywhere and anytime".

R2: "I think digital storytelling from YouTube is easily accessible. It is an interesting and interactive media, so I enjoyed my study".

R3: "Using digital storytelling is a flexible visual audio media, so I can play it anytime until I understand it".

A self-directed learning is defined as a process in which an individual has the initiative, with or without other people's assistance. Students are able to analyse their learning needs, determine their learning objectives, identify their learning resources, choose and carry out learning strategies suitable for them, and evaluate their own learning outcomes. The teacher can facilitate self-directed learning by applying it during learning activities. In this study, she sent learning materials and digital storytelling as learning media.

The students used those media to improve their self-directed learning. Their primary abilities are to plan, to conduct, and to evaluate the learning process. Basically, their attitudes influence their self-directions. The attitude they display during this independent process is crucial since it belongs to components of learning process. Positive and negative attitudes will yield outcomes that determine the continuation of educational process. Students' success can be seen not only from the perspectives they believe, feel, and know, but also from what they have done. In other words, learning success is also determined by the competences of the participants, both the pupils and the facilitator.

Self-directed learning builds students' independence and autonomous in learning process. Based on the observation and interview results, the implementation of self-directed learning could better the students' understanding in reading narrative text. Some opinions from the students are as follows:

R 4: "I believe that self-directed learning is one of many skills that have to be acquired by students.

R 5: "In my perspective, self-directed learning is a learning method for adults, and whether I like it or not, I have to enjoy".

R 6: "Actually, the students' ability to understand learning materials differ from one to another, so with this self-directed learning, they can use various learning sources".   The competence of reading narrative text will be quickly acquired if it is taught through media. The type of media used in this study is digital storytelling. This digital media can be replayed multiple times at home in self-directed learning-based flipped classroom. Students commented on this method.

R 7: "This method fits me personally because I need several times of reading to understand the content. So, self-directed learning using this media can help me to understand the passage".

R 8: "In my opinion, this method allows me an opportunity to profoundly understand the material. If there are parts that seem difficult, I could find other resources as supporting media.

Digital storytelling is an innovative learning material presentation by using a video, one of which is to explain the theoretical concept of education. Digital storytelling as a multimedia is presented by combining images, text, animation, and voice of the educator. It functions to motivate and strengthen the message transferred. To be more specific, when a digital storytelling is employed as a system for practice and training, it can strengthen the learning process. When used as a media to transfer information, a learning process with this media will produce a more interesting and motivating message.

Moreover, it also helps in retaining longer memory than learning the message by listening and watching it directly. This statement is based on student's opinion,

R 9: "For me, using digital storytelling makes the learning more fun for us. It creates relaxed atmosphere free from any pressure. It is also safe, attractive, motivating, and interactive. this method can draw students' full attention, create interesting learning environment, and build perseverance, happiness, and ability to concentrate".

Students were more enthusiastic in grasping narrative passage. This learning practice has a better quality, and as a result, students became more active and gain more knowledge.

Basically, flipped classroom can boost students' interest in self-directed reading of narrative text. This is in line with the observation results during the learning process, the results of interview with several students, and the results of observation on the first Google Meet discussion forum. First of all, based on the observation on the learning process, the students seemed to be enthusiastic in participating and active in class discussion. This is because they have prepared the materials beforehand.

In regard to the quality, some students expressed:

R 10: "Through digital storytelling, the direction of the material is clear, and then I know what is going to be the next material without waiting for the lecturer's explanation in the class. I think this is better".

R 11: "At first, I was confused of what kind of learning that was. But after watching the digital storytelling and reading my teacher's explanation, I understood it. Wow, that was incredible. R 12: I became curious of what will be next and enthusiastic to engage in an online discussion".

R 13: "I love the story presented in this digital storytelling because it conveys moral values, so we can respect our parents more". Finally, I could enjoy this reading class, which actually made me anxious at first"

R 14: "With this flipped classroom, my reading competence develops. I am so happy. I hope I get excellent results for the final exam"

R 15: "Digital storytelling eliminates the worry I felt every time I joined the lecture. Previously, I often felt anxious because there was no proper preparation. With this flipped classroom, my confidence boosted, and I became enthusiastic in joining the class and discussion."

R 16: "Flipped classroom combines synchronous and asynchronous learning, making the process of study more relaxing and comfortable",

R 17: "With self-directed learning-based flipped classroom, the learning activities became more effective".

R 18"Flipped classroom totally boosts my learning motivation" .

R 19: "Digital-storytelling-based flipped classroom is the combination of interesting learning strategies and media, so it is suitable for 21st century education that emphasizes self-directed learning".

R 20: "I believe that using digital storytelling can improve student's active engagement in the learning process because the materials have been prepared before entering discussion forum".

R 21: "I didn't feel bored during the class because I think the media is attractive and the learning strategies can help building students' sense of responsibilities, which is through self-directed learning".

R 22: "This learning model improved my confidence when having a discussion with my friends and lecturer".

R 23: "I could learn optimally and independently through this strategy, especially because it uses digital storytelling".

R 24: "I totally enjoyed the learning process although everything was done virtually".

R 25: "Sometimes, I had signal problem. But, with this flipped classroom, I could catch up with the materials and teacher's instruction"

R 26: "I hope all subjects use flipped classroom, so that we can prepare well before the class".

R 27: "Flipped classroom motivates passive students to be more active because they have learnt the materials that are going to be discussed. It is indeed an innovative and fun learning".

R 28: "I was also not afraid to ask my teacher outside the class schedule".

R 29: "Digital storytelling is an attractive media. It is not boring and is helpful to improve my reading comprehension, as well as to expand my new vocabularies".

R 30: "hopefully all of my teachers used interesting learning media for all subjects. They help me understand the learning material.

Discussion

Based on the data above, general, flipped classroom learning activities consists of two space and time, namely main activity in real classroom and independent activity outside the class or at home. The elaboration of each space, time, and activity is as follows: in the first meeting, the teacher explained the lesson plan that uses digital storytelling. She described the learning material using digital storytelling. The focus of this study is the teacher's activities, students' activities, flipped classroom strategy, self-directed learning, and reading narrative text. The learning activities involve students' attention, task assignment, encouraging participation, listening actively, raising questions, utilizing learning resources, and learning interaction. Therefore, this type of learning is a student-centred learning approach that highlights how the students can study efficiently and continuously.

Actually, utilizing learning media in teaching learning process is not a new thing. Most teachers realize about it. Media give students something new, media make students understand the learning material. In this era, with the technology development, teachers should use a multimodal learning media, namely digital storytelling. Utilizing digital storytelling, students directed watch animation and story that make they encourage to understand narrative text and its generic structure. This is also supported by Radaideh, E., Al-Jamal, D., Sa'di, 2020; Wiwikananda, S.K.S., Susanti, 2022 & Shasqia, 2020.

The learning outcomes related to cognitive aspect is material comprehension. Meanwhile, affective outcome is fun learning with less stress, bigger enthusiasm to join activities, and discipline in submitting assignments. Psychomotor outcome is classroom attendance and participation in discussion. The purpose of this digital storytelling-based flipped classroom is to create a different learning experience for the student, which previously applies teacher-centred learning. The teacher also informed which topic and subtopic will be discussed in the classroom. The learning activities were carried out outside the class or at home. The learning space and time outside the class can be at home or anywhere. Apart from the activities, the students are also obliged to download the materials referenced by teacher and study it to substitute direct explanation in conventional learning.

After downloading and studying the materials, the students prepared the materials to be discussed later in next meeting. There are several huge benefits of flipped classroom, one of which is that discussion forum can be held not only on WhatsApp group outside the class schedule, but also on Google Meet platform. In the WhatsApp group, there is a discussion menu accessible by the students, where they can write their questions and opinions, and the teacher as well as other students can immediately join the discussion after receiving notifications in their accounts. Although flipped classroom is a new learning strategy, it is not completely new idea. Formerly, most teachers give the reading text as a kind of home assignment to their students to have a kind of background in class discussion and for students' enrichment as well.

Using digital storytelling-based flipped classroom could also help the students to be more active and emphasize self-directed learning. The teacher evaluated and reflected the learning process. Quiz and formative assessments were carried out on target competence, and shortcomings were analysed. Based on the observation results during the learning process, flipped classroom could be implemented well in accordance to the planning. However, there are several things to be noted during the process, such as the

students' lack of understanding about flipped classroom, and students' inability to catch up with the tasks and instruction. A few key characteristics distinguish the flipped classroom from an inverted classroom. In the flipped classroom, students watch video digital storytelling outside classroom, thus increasing time for active learning and practice to occur in the class. This is in line with (Phung, C.K., Yen, 2020; Yulian, 2021; Reflianto, Setyosari, P., Kuswandi, D., 2021 & Abbasian, M.R., Azeez, 2021).

Those issues should be resolved so that in the future, learning activities can run better and the objectives can be achieved optimally. There are still several students who have not understood the mechanism of flipped classroom. Thus, there were 5 students who had not downloaded the materials in the first meeting. The teacher then explained in more details about the implementation of digital storytelling-based flipped classroom. There were also 3 students who had not downloaded the materials because there was connection problem in their areas, as they lived in remote rural regions. This unstable internet connection can also interrupt the learning activities. Students sometimes have to go to city areas to get a better connection.

The use of digital story telling based flipped classroom strategy in teaching reading on narrative text is included blended learning. The flipped or inverted classroom in which the responsibility and mastering the subjects are on the students. In this learning model, the role of a traditional class and teacher is changed to an active student-centred learning approach and the teacher plays the role of a facilitator for them. It is believed, this way can create students' self-directed learning. The students become more autonomous since they have their own role and responsibility (Subekti, 2021; Zhang, 2021; Safa, B.S.S, Wicaksono, 2022 & Nejati, R., Ilchi, 2023).

Conclusion

The implementation of digital storytelling-based flipped classroom strategy could motivate students' self-directed learning in reading narrative text. Furthermore, the readiness of learning facilities and infrastructure such as laptops, cell phones, and internet networks must be smooth and in a good condition. The role of teachers in facilitating language learning, both in synchronous and asynchronous, real classes and at home, must be maximized. English teachers are required to monitor and immediately respond to online discussions via WhatsApp group so that students' learning problems can be resolved immediately.

They should also analyse the success and weakness of this program by updating it whenever a drawback is detected. In terms of enthusiasm and quality of learning to read narrative texts, digital storytelling based flipped classroom strategy encourages students' self-directed learning. This learning model can improve students' achievement and awareness in self-directed learning on reading narrative texts. Incorporating the use of digital storytelling based on flipped classrooms strategy can further enhance the quality of students' self-directed learning and reading comprehension skill of narrative text. Moreover, learning materials are clearer and more accessible to students. Therefore, further research on learning impediments and student responses to this learning model is needed to improve the implementation and practice of flipped classroom learning strategy to promote students' self-directed learning. It is recommended this learning model to be implemented in EFL classroom context especially reading comprehension skill.

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