

The Integration of Digital Storytelling in Arabic Language Learning: A Pedagogical Approach to Speaking Skill Development

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the effectiveness of Canva-based digital storytelling as a pedagogical tool for enhancing Arabic speaking skills among students of the Arabic Language Education program. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research involved 25 students who participated in a five-session instructional intervention. Data were collected through pre- and post-tests (quantitative) as well as classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and written reflections (qualitative). Results revealed a statistically significant improvement in speaking proficiency particularly in fluency, pronunciation, vocabulary use, and sentence structure as confirmed by paired-sample t-test analysis ($p < 0.05$). Qualitatively, students reported increased intrinsic motivation, reduced speaking anxiety, and greater self-confidence, attributed to the integration of oral narration with self-designed visual elements. The approach aligns coherently with key second language acquisition theories, including Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Krashen's Input and Affective Filter Hypotheses, and Swain's Output Hypothesis. Furthermore, the use of Canva exemplifies effective integration of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK), merging technological, pedagogical, and Arabic linguistic content knowledge. These findings affirm that digital storytelling is an innovative, contextual, and effective alternative instructional strategy for developing Arabic speaking skills in higher education, effectively addressing the limitations of conventional teaching methods, which are often monotonous and fail to foster active student engagement.

Keywords: Digital Storytelling; Arabic Speaking Skills; Pedagogical Tool.

Abstrak : Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji efektivitas digital storytelling berbasis Canva sebagai alat pedagogis dalam meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara Bahasa Arab mahasiswa Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab. Mengadopsi pendekatan campuran (mixed methods), penelitian melibatkan 25 mahasiswa yang mengikuti intervensi pembelajaran selama lima sesi, dengan pengumpulan data melalui pre-test dan post-test (kuantitatif) serta observasi kelas, wawancara semi-terstruktur, dan refleksi tertulis (kualitatif). Hasil menunjukkan peningkatan signifikan dalam kemampuan berbicara, terutama pada aspek kelancaran, pelafalan, penggunaan kosakata, dan struktur kalimat, sebagaimana dibuktikan oleh analisis statistik (uji-t berpasangan, $p < 0,05$). Secara kualitatif, mahasiswa melaporkan peningkatan motivasi intrinsik, penurunan kecemasan berbicara, serta rasa percaya diri yang lebih tinggi berkat integrasi narasi lisan dengan elemen visual yang mereka rancang sendiri. Pendekatan ini juga selaras dengan prinsip Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), Input dan Affective Filter Hypothesis Krashen, serta Output Hypothesis Swain. Selain itu, pemanfaatan Canva mencerminkan integrasi TPACK yang efektif—menggabungkan pengetahuan teknologis, pedagogis, dan konten linguistik Bahasa Arab. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa digital storytelling merupakan strategi pembelajaran alternatif yang inovatif, kontekstual, dan efektif untuk mengembangkan keterampilan berbicara Bahasa



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Arab di perguruan tinggi, sekaligus menjawab tantangan pembelajaran konvensional yang cenderung monoton dan kurang memicu partisipasi aktif.

Kata Kunci : Digital storytelling; keterampilan berbicara Bahasa Arab; alat pedagogis;

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology in the last two decades has changed the paradigm of learning foreign languages, including learning Arabic in universities.^[1] Technology integration is driving the emergence of a more interactive, multimodal, and student-centered approach to learning. One of the innovative approaches that is widely developed globally is digital storytelling, which is the delivery of narratives using digital media that combines text, audio, visual, and other creative elements.^[2] This approach not only enriches the learning experience, but also provides an interactive space for learners to express themselves linguistically and culturally in the context of the Arabic language.

In the context of speaking skills (maharah al-kalām), many students of the Arabic Language and Arabic Language and Literature Education Study Program still have difficulty in expressing ideas fluently, accurately, and confidently.^[3] Obstacles that are often encountered include limited vocabulary, unfluent sentence structure, inappropriate intonation, and lack of opportunities to practice speaking in meaningful communicative situations. This condition is exacerbated by conventional teaching approaches that tend to be textual, repetitive, and lecturer-centered, so that they lack opportunities for creative and authentic oral practice. As a result, learners experience difficulties in developing communicative competencies that are the demands of today's academics and professionals.^[4]

Digital storytelling offers a significant pedagogical opportunity to bridge the issue. Through the process of designing, composing, and delivering digital stories, students are encouraged to practice pronunciation, intonation, diction, sentence patterns, and fluency in speaking in a meaningful narrative context.^[5] This activity also increases cognitive and affective engagement because students act as content creators, not just recipients of information. One relevant platform to support this process is Canva, which provides interactive visual features and creative templates that allow students to develop digital narratives in a systematic and engaging way. Using Canva helps learners plan their storylines, choose the right vocabulary, and integrate visual elements that reinforce the spoken message.^[6]

Although digital storytelling has been widely applied in the learning of various foreign languages, research on its effectiveness in improving Arabic speaking skills in Indonesian universities is still limited.^[7] Most previous studies have focused on the use of traditional methods or presentation media that are informative, rather than narrative and creative. In addition, there has not been much research that integrates digital storytelling with creative platforms such as Canva to develop Arabic speaking skills in a multimodal manner. This gap shows the need for empirical studies that examine how this approach can improve the aspects of fluency, accuracy, and confidence of learners.^[8]

Departing from these needs, this study aims to test the effectiveness of Canva-based digital storytelling in improving students' Arabic speaking skills. This study uses a mixed-method approach to obtain a comprehensive picture, including quantitative analysis through pre-test and post-test as well as qualitative analysis through observation, reflection, and interviews. The results of the research are expected to make a theoretical contribution to the development of technology-based Arabic pedagogy as well as practical implications for lecturers and educational institutions in designing learning strategies that are more

communicative, creative, and in accordance with the characteristics of digital generation learners.

METHODS

This study uses a mixed methods approach with a convergent parallel design, which is the collection of quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously to gain a comprehensive understanding of the effectiveness of Canva-based digital storytelling in improving students' Arabic writing skills.[\[9\]](#), [\[10\]](#) The subjects of the study were students of the Arabic Literature Study Program of the University of Muhammadiyah Gorontalo in odd semesters who were divided into two groups: the experimental class that received the Canva-based digital storytelling treatment and the control class that learned using conventional methods. Quantitative data was obtained through pre-test and post-test Arabic narrative writing with assessments that included aspects of sentence structure, cohesion and coherence of paragraphs, vocabulary, and narrative creativity. The data were analyzed with a statistical test paired sample t-test to measure improvement in each group and an independent sample t-test to compare the learning effectiveness between the experimental class and the control class.[\[11\]](#)

Meanwhile, qualitative data was collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Observations were made over the course of five learning intervention sessions to see how the digital narrative writing process unfolded, including student engagement levels, ability to process ideas, and creativity in utilizing Canva's visual elements. Interviews were conducted with twelve students who were purposively selected to explore their learning experiences, perceptions of Canva use, and emotional factors that affect their writing skills. Documentation in the form of digital narrative products, activity recordings, and other learning artifacts was used to reinforce observational and interview findings. Qualitative data analysis follows Miles and Huberman's interactive model, starting from data reduction, data presentation, to drawing conclusions, with validity strengthened through triangulation of sources and methods.[\[12\]](#)

Integration between quantitative and qualitative data is carried out at the interpretation stage to ensure the consistency of findings. The results of statistical analysis regarding the increase in students' writing scores were compared with qualitative findings which showed that the creative process of digital storytelling helped students develop flows, enrich vocabulary, and increase confidence in writing. Through the combination of these two types of data, this study provides a comprehensive picture that Canva-based digital storytelling is not only effective in improving the quality of writing linguistically, but also has an impact on the affective, motivational, and cognitive aspects of students in producing Arabic narrative texts.[\[13\]](#)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to evaluate the influence of the use of Digital Storytelling media displayed through Canva in Arabic learning to improve speaking skills (maharah kalam) in students of the Arabic literature study program in odd semesters 1 and 3. Digital Storytelling was chosen because it is able to present a learning experience that is more contextual, interactive, and in accordance with the character of the digital generation. Canva media is used to display visual images of stories that support the narrative, so that students can more easily understand the content of the story and are encouraged to express themselves in Arabic. The data collection technique in this study uses three main methods, namely: First, Interview: to explore students' opinions about the learning experience with Digital Storytelling media through Canva. Second, Observation: to observe the involvement, activeness, and courage of students in speaking Arabic during the learning process. Third, Documentation: to collect visual evidence and notes of learning activities using Canva media.

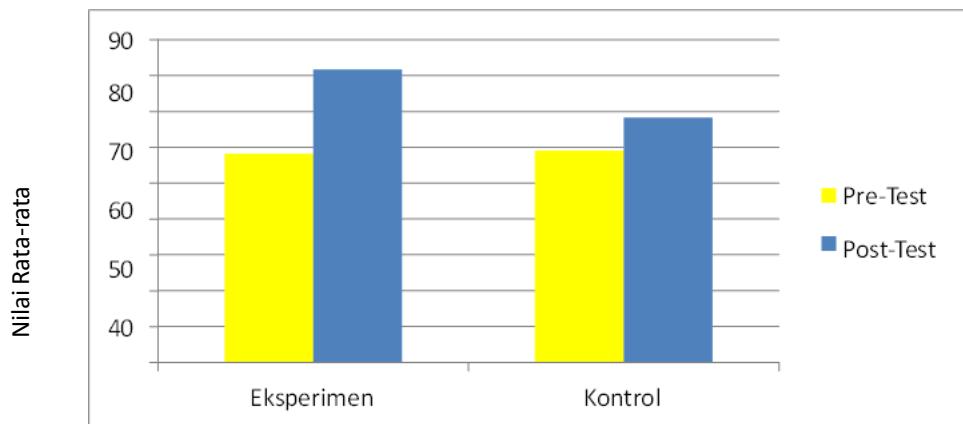
The following is a comparison table between Pre-Test and Post-Test scores from the control class and the experimental class conducted by the researcher on students of the Arabic Literature study program in odd semesters 1 and 3 at the University of Muhammadiyah Gorontalo. The Pre-Test score in the experiment and control class shows the results of the score before the use of Digital Storytelling media through Canva in Arabic language learning, while the Post-Test score in the control class is the score of students who are in the control class who did not experiment with the use of Digital Storytelling media through Canva in Arabic learning, while the Post-Test score in the experimental class is the result of the score of students who have carried out learning Arabic using Digital Storytelling media through Canva.

Kelompok	Mean Pre-test	Mean Post-test	Δ Mean
Eksperimen	58.25	81.75	+23.50
Kontrol	59.00	68.25	+9.25

The results of the independent sample t-test showed a significant difference between the post-test results of the two groups ($t(N_1+N_2-2) = \text{value}$, $p = .002 < .05$). This proves that the use of Digital Storytelling media through Canva has made a significant contribution to improving Arabic speaking skills in Generation Z children.

Learning observations showed that students in the experimental group were more active, creative, and daring to speak Arabic. Canva's media used to display storytelling images is able to present a more lively learning atmosphere, so that students feel more comfortable speaking and imagining in Arabic.

The results of interviews with students showed that most felt more motivated and confident when learning to speak using Canva-based Digital Storytelling. The documentation of the activity also shows that students are enthusiastic about following the storyline and show an increase in activeness in interacting.



Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

From the diagram image above, it can be seen that the comparison between the average score of the Pre-Test and Post-Test from the control class and the experimental class that has been carried out by the researcher on students of the odd semester 1 and 3 study program at the University of Muhammadiyah Gorontalo. The average Pre-Test score in the experimental class showed 58.25 and the average Post-Test score in the experimental class showed 81.75, in this

comparison it can be seen that the increase in the average score in the experimental class was +23.50, while the average Pre-Test score in the control class showed 59.00 and the average score of the Post-Test in the control class showed the number 68.25 which in comparison can be seen that the average score increase in the The control class is +9.25. The results of the comparison of the average increase in Pre-Test and Post-Test scores in the experimental and control classes showed that the results of the average increase in scores in the experimental class were much higher compared to the average scores of the control classes, where the comparison of the increase in scores was 14.25.

The results of this study are presented in two main parts that reflect the mixed-method approach, namely quantitative findings through the comparison of pre-test and post-test scores of Arabic writing skills, as well as qualitative findings obtained from observations, interviews, and digital storytelling products of students.

1. Quantitative Results: Comparison of Pre-test and Post-test

The pre-test given before the implementation of digital storytelling showed that most students were still in the category of basic to intermediate writing skills. Based on the rubric assessment, the main weaknesses are seen in sentence structure, the limitations of thematic vocabulary, and the low cohesion and coherence of paragraphs. The average score of the pre-test is in the range of values which indicates that students are not able to develop narratives well in Arabic.

After the intervention through digital storytelling-based learning using Canva, there was a significant increase in post-test scores. Most students showed improvements in vocabulary and diction variations, which can be seen from their ability to use Arabic words that are more contextual and relevant to the narrative theme. In addition, the sentence structure becomes more complex and the grammar of the writing is better than the initial results.

Overall, the average post-test score increased compared to the average pre-test score. Based on an inferential test using a paired sample t-test, results were obtained that showed that the difference between pre-test and post-test scores was statistically significant. Thus, an alternative hypothesis (H_1) that states that there is a significant influence of Canva-based digital storytelling on improving Arabic writing skills is acceptable, while the zero hypothesis (H_0) is rejected.

The improvement is seen not only quantitatively, but also in the quality of the formulation of ideas, diction choices, and narrative structure. Some students who initially found it difficult to compose paragraphs in a row showed the ability to build a more logical and communicative storyline after participating in the intervention.

2. Qualitative Results: Observations, Reflections, and Interviews

Qualitative data confirm the quantitative findings and provide an explanation of the factors that affect the improvement of writing skills. From the results of class observations, it can be seen that students show higher involvement compared to conventional learning sessions. They seem to be more active in discussing, experimenting with text, and collaborating in crafting digital stories.

Some students revealed that using Canva makes the process of coming up with ideas easier because they can visualize the story first before it is expressed in Arabic text. The selection of attractive images and layouts helps them relate the narrative to the visual context, thus increasing creativity and confidence when speaking.

Observations of 25 students during five learning sessions showed that the application of digital storytelling is in line with the core principles of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT), especially in providing meaning-focused tasks that encourage authentic language use. Instead of practicing grammatical structure in isolation, students engage in complex tasks: designing, recording, and presenting digital

stories in Arabic. This task meets the criteria of Ellis (2003) as a goal-oriented activity that produces a real product, namely a multimodal narrative video and demands real communication to achieve this goal. In the process, students discuss in groups, negotiate meanings, choose lexicons, and organize storylines, so that language is used as a means of communication, not just a learning object. Observations noted an increase in spontaneous and functional verbal interactions; For example, students ask each other, "هل هذا الفعل ماضٍ أم مضارع؟" or "كيف نقول 'الشجاعة' باللغة العربية؟" in a relevant context. In addition, speech anxiety levels decrease as the focus shifts from formal accuracy to successful completion of tasks. Even shy students begin to actively participate while recording narratives, driven by clear and meaningful task objectives. Thus, digital storytelling functions as a pedagogical task that facilitates language use before language instruction, creating a natural space for the development of fluency and confidence in speaking Arabic.[\[12\]](#), [\[14\]](#)

Through interviews, students stated that the process of compiling digital storytelling made them feel freer in expressing themselves. They also mentioned that the combination of text and visuals helps reduce boredom in the process of learning to write, which was previously considered difficult and monotonous. In addition, feedback from lecturers during the process of preparing a digital narrative is considered to help improve understanding of Arabic rules in a more applicable way.[\[2\]](#)

Semi-structured interviews with 12 students revealed their perceptions of digital storytelling tasks as "meaningful" and "creatively challenging" activities, two hallmarks of tasks in TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching).[\[15\]](#) Students do not feel that they are "learning to speak", but rather "completing a storytelling project", which is in line with Skehan's view that effective tasks should have clear non-linguistic outcomes.[\[7\]](#) One respondent stated, "We don't focus on grammar, but on how to make our stories touch the heart and that keeps us trying to speak better." The sound recording process allows them to perform task repetition, one of the key strategies in TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) to improve complexity, accuracy, and fluency.[\[5\]](#) They re-record the narrative until they feel the message is conveyed clearly, which indirectly trains pronunciation, intonation, and coherence of oral discourse. In addition, collaboration in groups reflects the principle of collaborative dialogue (Swain), where the negotiation of meaning during task planning encourages linguistic awareness.[\[10\]](#) Lecturer feedback is provided after the assignment is completed (post-task phase), according to the Willis model, so that it does not disrupt the flow of communication during the assignment, but still helps to improve the form of language reflectively.[\[11\]](#) Thus, interviews confirm that the task structure in digital storytelling naturally replicates the TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching) cycle: pre-task, task, and post-task that effectively supports the holistic development of Arabic speaking skills.

Students' reflections show that many of them feel motivated to use more of the new vocabulary they discover during the story-making process. Some claim to become more aware of sentence structure and spelling because their writing is associated with an attractive visual appearance and will be shared with classmates.

The written reflections of 25 students provide metacognitive evidence that the task of digital storytelling not only improves speaking skills, but also builds awareness of the language learning process is one of the main goals of TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching). Many students state that they begin to view mistakes not as failures, but as a natural part of the process of completing tasks, in line with Long's (1996) view of focus on form that arises spontaneously in communicative contexts. One student wrote: "I mispronounced 'قلب' several times, but I kept trying to get it right, because I wanted my story to be understood." This reflection shows a shift from accuracy-first to

communication-first, which is characteristic of a task-based approach. In addition, college students report an increase in intrinsic motivation because assignments have a real purpose: to convey a message through stories that others will watch. This is in line with the principle of TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching), that tasks must be relevant to real life and trigger cognitive and affective engagement. Social factors, such as presentation of work in class, also serve as public outcomes, which reinforce a sense of linguistic responsibility and encourage improvement efforts. Overall, the students' reflections confirm that digital storytelling, when designed as an authentic task within the framework of TBLT (Task-Based Language Teaching), is able to create a learning environment that supports the development of Arabic speaking skills in a natural, meaningful, and sustainable manner.

The digital storytelling products produced by students reflect a variety of delivery styles, themes, and creativity. Most of the narratives show a more coherent development of storylines, more precise use of phrases, and the ability to compose cohesive paragraphs. Some students even show the ability to incorporate simple idiomatic expressions in their stories.

educate children with fun and interesting presentations. Pellowski defines storytelling as the art of telling stories in the form of poetry or prose in front of a crowd. Stories are usually told by means of telling or using singing, using music or it can be without music, pictures, or other accompaniment, which can be learned orally through printed sources or mechanical recordings. (Alvendri & Effendi, 2024)

In the use of digital storytelling, various kinds of applications can be integrated, both applications sourced from smartphones or PCs/laptops. Among these applications are Canva, Ms. Powerpoint, digital camera, or it can also be directly from various social media which as is known has been enriched by various video editing features such as reels in the Instagram application, Youtube, Short videos and Tiktok. This kind of procedure allows learners to actively participate in various processes of teaching and learning activities, such as writing a script or story, preparing a story outline, creating videos, putting stories and videos together, and adding sound. There are several steps that can be taken in applying this strategy, including choosing a theme, conducting searches or observations, writing screenplays, and making the script into a story. All of this is done so that the results of their performance can be displayed in the classroom.

In this study, the author only focuses on researching the use of Canva as a storytelling medium to improve the maharah kalam. Maharah kalam or speaking skills is one of the language competencies that are active-productive. Speaking is the activity of giving, receiving language, and conveying messages or ideas to the interlocutor or vice versa, so that the message conveyed will be received and responded to directly by the interlocutor. Speaking proficiency as a productive ability functions as a conveyor and disseminator of information orally

As a form of language use, speaking is an important language activity in daily life. As speaking is an active and productive activity, the ability to speak requires mastery of several aspects and rules of language use.

The following are the stages in the application of the storytelling method as a method of learning maharah kalam at the Canva-based Institute of Al-Qur'an Science Sheikh Ibrahim Pasir Pangaraian: First, the Story Preparation Stage. Educators choose and prepare stories that are in accordance with the student's ability level and relevant to the learning theme. At this stage, the selection of visual materials through Canva is very important so that the story can be easier to understand and attract the attention of students. Second, the stage of giving examples. Educators present stories through pre-designed images in Canva. In his presentation, educators provide examples of how to express

words and sentences according to the illustrations shown, while emphasizing important keywords and dialogues in the story.[\[16\]](#)

Third, the stage of student participation. Students are asked to retell the content of the story in their own language. At this stage, they also explain the new vocabulary they have acquired and express independent sentences based on existing images. Fourth, the level of language guidance. Educators guide students in the correct use of sentence structure. In addition, educators provide feedback related to the use of vocabulary, sentence structure, and pronunciation to improve oral communication.

Fifth, the evaluation stage. The evaluation was carried out by asking students to write down new vocabulary that they had acquired during the storytelling activity. This evaluation aims to strengthen memory and ensure vocabulary mastery as a provision in the next speaking practice.[\[17\]](#), [\[18\]](#)

In general, qualitative data shows that Canva-based digital storytelling not only improves linguistic skills, but also affects affective factors such as self-confidence. Storytelling is the art of storytelling that is used as a means. The following will be an in-depth interpretation of the research results, linking them to relevant theories, and presenting the pedagogical implications of the application of Canva-based digital storytelling in learning Arabic writing skills.

1. The Effectiveness of Digital Storytelling in Increasing Maharah Kalam

Quantitative results showed a significant increase in post-test scores compared to pre-tests. This reflects that Canva-based digital storytelling integration is able to provide an effective learning stimulus, especially in improving vocabulary mastery, sentence structure, and narrative creativity in Arabic.

The statistically significant increase in value also confirms the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_1), namely that digital storytelling has a significant influence on writing ability. Thus, this visual-narrative-based learning deserves to be considered as a systematic approach to the development of Arabic writing skills at the higher education level.[\[19\]](#)

2. Relevance to Second Language Acquisition Theory (Second Language Acquisition)

The findings of this study show strong relevance to the theoretical framework of second language learning, in particular Stephen Krashen's theory and Merrill Swain's output hypothesis. First, the application of digital storytelling creates ideal conditions for the comprehensible acceptance of input, one of the main pillars in the Input Hypothesis.[\[20\]](#) Through examples of visual stories, pictorial dialogues, and audio narrations presented during the task planning phase, students are exposed to linguistic inputs that are not only appropriate to their level of competence ($i+1$), but are also enriched by visual context that aids in the understanding of meaning without relying on translation. Second, students are not only passive recipients of input, but also actively produce meaningful outputs: they construct narratives in Arabic based on personal experiences, imaginations, and visual stimuli of their own choosing. This process allows them to use language functionally and meaningfully, rather than simply imitating structures. Third, a collaborative, creative, and fun learning atmosphere through digital storytelling plays an important role in suppressing affective filters of psychological factors such as anxiety, lack of confidence, or motivational barriers that can hinder language acquisition. In this low-pressure environment, students are more open to experimenting with language without fear of being judged. Furthermore, this approach is also in line with Swain's Output Hypothesis (1985), which emphasizes that the production of active language (pushed output) encourages learners to process language more deeply. In this study, students are not only reading or understanding Arabic texts, but are encouraged to express ideas in writing and orally in a coherent, cohesive, and

communicative form so that there is awareness of the gap between what they want to convey and their linguistic abilities (noticing the gap). Thus, digital storytelling serves a dual function: as a source of understandable input and as a trigger for meaningful output, thus creating a holistic learning ecosystem in the context of the acquisition of Arabic as a foreign language.[\[21\]](#), [\[22\]](#)

3. Digital Storytelling in TPACK's Perspective

The application of digital storytelling through the Canva platform in this study reflects the functional integration of the TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) framework, as stated by Mishra and Koehler (2006). This integration is realized through the synergy of three core components: Technological Knowledge (TK), Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), and Content Knowledge (CK). First, from the kindergarten side, students actively use digital tools to design, compose, and present narratives in attractive visual form.[\[12\]](#), [\[23\]](#) They not only operate Canva's features—such as layout settings, illustration selection, Arabic text insertion, and voice recording—but also utilize them as a medium of linguistic and creative expression. Second, PK is seen in a student-centered, project-based, and collaborative learning design. Lecturers no longer play the role of the only source of knowledge, but rather as facilitators who guide the process of exploration, discussion, and reflection during the creation of digital stories. This approach encourages active engagement, negotiation of meaning, and social learning—key characteristics of contemporary pedagogy. Third, although technology and teaching methods are updated, CK remains the main foundation: the focus of learning remains on mastery of Arabic grammatical structures, the expansion of thematic vocabulary, and the principles of rhetoric and coherence in narrative writing.[\[24\]](#) Thus, these three dimensions do not stand alone, but rather converge in learning practices that are contextual, meaningful, and responsive to the characteristics of the digital generation—which are familiar with visuals, online collaboration, and project-based learning. The integration of TPACK not only increases the effectiveness of Arabic learning, but also prepares students to become autonomous learners and multilingual content creators in the digital era.[\[25\]](#)

4. Qualitative Findings: Creativity, Motivation, and Engagement

Data from class observations, students' written reflections, and in-depth interviews consistently show an increase in intrinsic motivation in the Arabic writing learning process through a digital storytelling approach. Students state that they feel more confident and motivated not because of external pressures, but because of a meaningful and enjoyable learning experience. This confidence arises mainly due to three main factors. First, the text they write is not stand-alone, but is combined with visuals such as images, icons, colors, and layouts that are personally chosen through the Canva platform. This combination gives a double meaning to their writing: not just as a linguistic exercise, but as a whole creative expression. Second, the storytelling process provides ample space for personal expression, either through the choice of themes (e.g., family, dreams, or moral values), or through unique perspectives and narrative styles.[\[26\]](#) This makes writing activities feel relevant to their identities and life experiences. Third, using Canva transforms the perception of writing from a monotonous activity into an interactive and dynamic design process. Students no longer feel that they are "copying" or "filling in the dots", but rather "building" a work. These findings reinforce the view in psycholinguistics that affective aspects such as motivation, confidence, and emotional attitudes toward language—play a central role in the successful learning of productive skills, particularly writing. When psychological barriers are reduced and a sense of belonging to the work increases, students are more encouraged to experiment, revise, and continue to develop their linguistic competence naturally and sustainably.

5. Pedagogical Implications

Based on the findings of the research, a number of important pedagogical implications can be formulated for the development of Arabic language learning in higher education. First, learning to write Arabic needs to undergo a paradigmatic shift from a conventional approach that tends to be textual, mechanical, and teacher-centered to a multimodal approach that integrates text, images, sounds, and layouts as sources of meaning.[\[27\]](#), [\[28\]](#) This approach is not only in tune with the characteristics of communication in the digital age, but also supports more holistic and contextual linguistic processing. Second, digital storytelling should not be seen solely as an additional project or extracurricular activity, but as an evaluative and formative strategy that is integral to the curriculum. Digital products produced by students can be an authentic assessment instrument that reflects linguistic skills, creativity, and cultural understanding, as well as a means of reflection and continuous improvement through feedback from lecturers and peers.[\[29\]](#) Third, the use of platforms such as Canva offers a concrete model of learning innovation that combines the principles of TPACK (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) and project-based learning (PBL). Through the integration of technology, collaborative pedagogy, and Arabic linguistic content, Canva enables students to learn while creating, so that knowledge is not only transferred, but actively constructed. Fourth, this study confirms that students tend to be more productive both in quantity and quality of writing when given space to express themselves visually and narratively. The freedom to choose a theme, design, and delivery style not only increases intrinsic motivation, but also strengthens an emotional attachment to the learning process.[\[30\]](#), [\[31\]](#) Thus, a creativity-based and multimodality-based approach is not just an aesthetic choice, but rather a pedagogical necessity in developing relevant, meaningful, and sustainable Arabic writing competencies.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Canva-based digital storytelling has proven to be effective in improving Arabic writing skills in students of the Arabic Language Education Study Program/Arabic Language and Literature. The results showed that the application of Canva-based digital storytelling not only improved general linguistic competence, but also created ideal conditions for the development of speaking skills: students were actively involved in the planning of oral narratives, recording voices, and expressive conveyance, all of which are core components of oral production. Increased motivation, decreased speaking anxiety, and safe space to experiment with pronunciation and intonation—revealed in observation, interview, and reflection data—confirm that this approach effectively supports the principle of Second Language Acquisition (SLA), particularly in encouraging meaningful output and suppressing affective filters. Thus, digital storytelling has proven to be a relevant, innovative, and effective pedagogical tool to improve Arabic speaking skills, while addressing the challenges of conventional learning that tend to be monotonous and centered on formal accuracy. Therefore, this approach deserves to be widely adopted in Arabic learning in college as a task-based, multimodal, and communication-oriented strategy.

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