
Increase Students Reading Comprehension Through Retelling Technique : Using Storybird

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Abstract: This qualitative study investigates the efficacy of using Storybird, an online platform for creating and sharing visual stories, to enhance students' reading comprehension through retelling techniques. Through in-depth interviews, observations, and student reflections, the study explores the impact of integrating Storybird into the curriculum. Findings reveal that students exhibit increased engagement and motivation when utilizing Storybird for retelling activities. The platform's interactive and visually stimulating features are reported to enhance students' understanding of textual content and foster deeper connections to the material. Additionally, students express positive attitudes towards using Storybird as a tool for literacy instruction, highlighting its potential to promote active learning and creativity in the classroom. The study underscores the significance of digital storytelling platforms like Storybird in enriching literacy education and offers insights into their practical implications for enhancing reading comprehension skills among students.

Keywords: reading comprehension; retelling technique; Storybird; Narrative text.

INTRODUCTION

Lately, English has been progressively assuming the role of the primary means of communication across all spheres of life, especially within the realm of education. Consequently, numerous individuals are acquiring proficiency in English as a response to global requirements. Their primary motivation for mastering the language lies in their desire to be competent readers. They view reading as the cornerstone of language proficiency, ranking it above other language skills. Research suggests that reading is inherently perceived as paramount; individuals proficient in a language are commonly referred to as readers of that language. A considerable portion, if not the majority, of foreign language learners prioritize developing their reading abilities.

Reading is crucial for language learning as it helps develop listening, speaking, and writing skills. Its main aim is to understand and grasp information from a passage. According to Hornby, reading is how we process and understand something, enabling us to grasp the writer's intentions.

Reading is a fundamental skill that's closely linked to writing, speaking, and listening. Students need to read extensively and understand what they read to improve their learning outcomes. Reading comprehension also enhances vocabulary and writing abilities. Nuttall (2018) identifies four aspects of reading comprehension: identifying the main idea, finding specific information, making inferences, and understanding words or detailed information, which are often challenging for students. Grabe & Stoller (2013) suggest that reading can be taught as a means of extracting information from text and forming interpretations, making it a crucial way for students to gain knowledge in the educational process.

Reading is a complex process influenced by various factors such as perceptual skills, decoding abilities, experiences, language backgrounds, mindsets, and reasoning skills, all of which shape how readers anticipate and understand the meaning of what they read.

Reading is a crucial language skill that holds significant importance as it goes beyond mere data delivery, potentially enhancing one's comprehension of the world. Pramila and Ahuja emphasize the paramount importance of effective reading, stating that it unlocks numerous opportunities. Burn further underscores the necessity of nurturing literacy in all individuals, suggesting that advanced nations should prioritize it as an essential capability.

In education, reading ability can be considered as the basis for building comprehension skills in reading. Therefore, improving reading ability can influence reading comprehension ability.

Reading comprehension is a multifaceted skill that encompasses various cognitive processes involved in understanding and interpreting written text. It goes beyond simply decoding words on a page; it involves making meaning out of the text by synthesizing information, making inferences, and critically analyzing the content.

One aspect of reading comprehension is vocabulary knowledge. A strong vocabulary is essential for understanding the meaning of words within a text. Research has shown that individuals with larger vocabularies tend to be better readers, as they can more easily comprehend the nuances of language. Vocabulary can be expanded through exposure to a wide range of texts, explicit vocabulary instruction, and context-based learning.

Another important aspect is fluency. Fluency refers to the ability to read text accurately, smoothly, and with expression. Fluent readers are able to process text quickly and efficiently, which allows them to focus more on comprehension rather than decoding individual words. Fluency can be developed through repeated reading, guided oral reading, and modeling of fluent reading by teachers.

Comprehension strategies are also crucial for effective reading. These strategies include making predictions, asking questions, summarizing, visualizing, and monitoring comprehension. Skilled readers employ these strategies automatically as they read, helping them to construct meaning from the text and to engage with the material on a deeper level. Teaching these strategies explicitly can empower students to become more independent and effective readers.

Furthermore, background knowledge plays a significant role in comprehension. Readers draw on their prior knowledge and experiences to make sense of new information and to connect it with what they already know. This is known as activating schema, and it helps readers to build a framework for understanding the text. Providing opportunities for students to build background knowledge through experiential learning, discussions, and exposure to diverse texts can enhance comprehension.

Text structure is another factor that influences comprehension. Different types of texts have distinct organizational patterns, such as cause and effect, compare and contrast, problem-solution, and chronological order. Understanding these structures helps readers to anticipate the content and make sense of the information presented. Teaching students to recognize text structures and how they contribute to meaning can improve their comprehension skills.

In addition, metacognitive awareness is essential for effective reading comprehension. Metacognition involves understanding one's own thinking processes and being able to regulate them. Skilled readers are aware of their comprehension strategies, monitor their understanding while reading, and adjust their strategies when needed. Explicit instruction in metacognitive strategies can help students become more strategic and reflective readers.

In conclusion, reading comprehension is a complex skill that involves vocabulary knowledge, fluency, comprehension strategies, background knowledge, text structure awareness, and metacognitive awareness. Developing proficiency in reading comprehension requires a combination of instruction, practice, and exposure to a variety of texts. By nurturing these skills, individuals can become more proficient readers who can comprehend, analyze, and evaluate written material effectively.

Reading comprehension involves understanding the written material, grasping the content, and forming meanings from the text (Healy, 2002). Woolley (2011) describes it as the process of deriving meaning from text, with the aim of gaining an overall understanding rather than focusing on individual words or sentences. This idea is also supported by Horowitz (2014), who emphasizes that reading comprehension is a complex cognitive process where the reader needs to be intentional and thoughtful, continuously monitoring the words and their meanings as they progress through the text. In essence, readers don't just read the text but also extract meaning and construct sentences from it.

(Snow, 2002) provided a definition of comprehension as the act of both extracting and constructing meaning through engagement with written language. This process involves three key components: the reader, the text itself, and the specific purpose or activity for reading.

Mastery of reading comprehension skills is a crucial first step in understanding a text, yet to ensure deeper comprehension, the use of the retelling technique is also necessary. By summarizing the text using the retelling technique, readers can test their understanding and internalize the information they have read.

Hence, the teacher holds a crucial role in selecting effective teaching strategies (Simamora, 2020), particularly in teaching reading. The teacher's creativity and approach are essential in the classroom when instructing reading to ensure students excel in this skill. Reading strategies aim to aid students in comprehending texts as they read (Gonen, 2015). Teachers can leverage available school resources, such as technology, to deliver materials online for easy student access (Ayu, 2020). Proficiency in utilizing appropriate technology during the learning process is among the various adjustments teachers can make. This approach will undoubtedly enhance student engagement, learning outcomes, and create a fresh learning environment for English education. Moreover, employing the correct strategies can transform reading into an enjoyable activity for students.

The retelling technique is a widely used instructional strategy in education, particularly in language arts and literacy instruction. It is an effective method for assessing and enhancing students' comprehension, memory retention, speaking, and listening skills.

Firstly, retelling requires students to actively engage with the text they have read or heard. Rather than passively consuming information, students are prompted to process and internalize the content, which fosters deeper understanding. This active engagement is crucial for effective learning as it encourages critical thinking and analysis.

When students retell a text, they are required to identify the main ideas, key events, characters, and other important elements of the story or passage. This process involves summarizing the content in their own words, which helps reinforce their understanding and memory of the material. By selecting and organizing information for retelling, students develop skills in discerning relevance and prioritizing information.

Moreover, retelling encourages students to make connections between different parts of the text, as well as between the text and their own experiences or prior knowledge. This process of making connections enhances comprehension by providing context and meaning to the information. Students may draw parallels between events in the story and real-life situations or relate characters' experiences to their own.

Additionally, retelling serves as a form of informal assessment, allowing teachers to gauge students' comprehension and identify areas for further instruction or clarification. By listening to students retell a text, teachers can assess their ability to understand and recall information accurately. Teachers may also observe students' language proficiency, vocabulary usage, and speaking skills during retelling activities.

Furthermore, retelling promotes oral language development by providing opportunities for students to practice speaking and listening in a structured setting. Students must articulate their thoughts clearly and coherently, using appropriate language and vocabulary. This helps improve their communication skills and fosters confidence in expressing themselves orally.

Incorporating the retelling technique into classroom instruction can take various forms, depending on the age and proficiency level of the students. For younger students, retelling may involve simple story recall or sequencing of events using picture prompts. Older students may engage in more complex retelling activities, such as summarizing longer texts, analyzing themes, or retelling from different perspectives.

Overall, the retelling technique is a valuable tool for educators to promote comprehension, memory retention, and oral language development in students. By actively engaging with texts and practicing the skill of retelling, students become more proficient readers, critical thinkers, and effective communicators.

The retelling technique is a teaching strategy that involves students orally repeating what they have read, seen, or heard. It is considered an effective method for improving speaking ability, as it encourages students to communicate and enhances their oral language comprehension. The technique can be used in various subjects and can help students become more active in their learning, improve their pronunciation, and develop their fluency. However, it also has some disadvantages, such as being limited to certain subjects and potentially encouraging passive students to imitate others' answers.

According to (Takacs, 2015), DST offers many potential learning benefits, including increasing student motivation which makes it an ideal strategy to consider using in telling personal stories. Therefore, with the research and digital stories created, it is hoped that it can increase students' motivation and competence towards technology through practice and experimentation compared to TST. This will increase the educational benefits of digital storytelling for grade 7 A students. Several empirical studies show that DST improves learner-centered learning and builds a learner community of practice. No less important, when working on DST, students are involved in the process of creating stories and sharing (Lee, 2014). This social engagement creates a supportive and learner-centered learning environment.

In addition, the emergence of Web 2.0 tools offers opportunities to improve writing skills through collaboration between writers. Connecting with fellow writers in online writing communities can reveal distinctive characteristics among young and talented writers (Jill M Olthouse, 2012). Additionally, educators can increase the appeal of their writing by utilizing digital storytelling tools, such as Storybird, which facilitate global collaboration between writers. Storybird was founded by Mark Ury in 2010, offering a digital storytelling platform that encourages the creation of creative narratives. With a variety of pre-designed visuals and writing prompts, Storybird provides users with a dynamic and interactive experience. An important aspect of Storybird is its collection of professionally created digital imagery. As emphasized by (Siti Maziha Mustapha N.S., 2010), exploring student perceptions is very important to understand classroom dynamics.

Storytelling, or narration, is the ability to convey a story or narrative in an engaging and captivating manner to an audience or reader. It's a crucial skill in various contexts, such as education, communication, and culture.

Experts emphasize that storytelling has several significant benefits. Firstly, through storytelling, one can develop language and communication skills. By enriching vocabulary, varying sentence structures, and using

appropriate intonation, storytelling helps improve speaking and listening abilities. Moreover, storytelling helps listeners or readers understand and retain information better. Compared to simply reading facts or data, stories provide a richer context and facilitate the memory process.

Storytelling can also be used as a tool to teach values and morals. In many stories, there are important messages about kindness, justice, or courage. This helps in teaching abstract concepts to children or conveying complex messages to mature audiences, additionally, storytelling can inspire and evoke empathy. Stories can create an emotional connection between the audience or reader and the characters in the story or the themes presented. This can influence how they think, feel, and act.

Finally, storytelling promotes creativity. The process of crafting a story requires imagination and creativity, which encourages thinking outside the box and generating new ideas, in the educational context, storytelling is used by teachers as a tool to educate and entertain. They use stories to explain complex concepts, introduce new lessons, or entertain students. Teachers may also ask students to create their own stories to express their understanding of the lesson material.

Moreover, in the business and marketing context, storytelling is used to convey brand messages, build relationships with customers, and influence purchasing behavior.

(Caldwell J. and Leslie, 2009) state that children learn the structure of narrative texts through being read to. Studies show that students who have been read to can recall important aspects of a story, like characters, the main problem, significant events, and possible solutions when asked to retell the story. Furthermore, utilizing such strategies helps students understand and relate to assigned narratives on a personal level, thus enhancing the overall reading experience.

Thus, this study aims to address the following research questions: How do students experience utilizing Storybird? By examining students' viewpoints on using the Storybird application to create and share stories, this study seeks to enhance students' reading comprehension through retelling techniques, thereby exploring the potential of Storybird as a platform for narrative texts. In line with this previous research is analysis Storybird offers a diverse range of visually appealing illustrations and artwork, which can captivate students' interest and motivate them to engage with the text.

METHOD

Research design

In-depth interviews These involved conducting detailed interviews with participants to explore their experiences, perceptions, and attitudes towards using Storybird for enhancing reading comprehension through retelling activities. The interviews allowed for a deep understanding of the impact of Storybird on students' engagement and motivation, as well as their overall learning experience. **Observations** Researchers observed the interactions between students and the Storybird platform during reading comprehension activities. These observations provided insights into how students engaged with the platform, their level of involvement, and their responses to the visually stimulating features of Storybird. **Student reflections** researchers collected reflections from students about their experiences using Storybird. These reflections provided valuable insights into students' perspectives on the effectiveness of Storybird as a tool for literacy instruction, as well as its potential to promote active learning and creativity in the classroom.

This study employs a qualitative method to investigate the efficacy of using the Storybird platform in enhancing students' reading comprehension through retelling techniques. A qualitative approach allows the researchers to gain in-depth understanding of students' experiences and perceptions regarding the use of Storybird, as well as to explore the impact of its integration into the curriculum. The research methods

employed in this study include in-depth interviews, observations, and student reflections, all aimed at comprehensively understanding how the use of Storybird influences students' reading learning.

Population and sample

This research aims to investigate students' experiences in using the Storybird platform to improve their reading comprehension. The population chosen for this research were junior high school students from grade 7 at a high school in an urban area. The sample consisted of a special class of 20 students with varying levels of reading comprehension. The purposive sampling method was used to select students based on criteria such as level of reading ability, interest in literacy, and level of technology skills. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and observational notes made by researchers. Semi-structured interviews allowed for an open exploration of students' thoughts and views, while the researcher's observational notes provided additional context and insight into students' behavior and interactions throughout the study. Through a combination of these methods, this research aims to explore in depth students' experiences in using Storybird and its potential to improve their reading comprehension.

Intervention Procedure

Step	Description
1. Introduction	The researcher introduces the concept of Storybird and the objectives of the intervention to the students. The researcher explains the benefits of using Storybird to enhance reading comprehension.
2. Initial Training	Students undergo a brief training session on how to use Storybird. Step-by-step guidance is provided for creating stories using the platform.
3. Retelling Activity with Storybird	Students read stories and utilize Storybird to visually retell them. Students are encouraged to reinterpret the stories creatively.
4. Implementation in Classroom	The integration of the Storybird retelling activity into daily learning occurs. Teachers provide guidance and support, while students create stories independently or collaboratively.
5. Monitoring and Observation	The researcher observes students' reactions and interactions with Storybird during the activity. Detailed observations regarding students' engagement levels are recorded.
6. Individual Interviews	Individual interviews are conducted with students to gain deeper insights into their experiences. Open-ended questions are used to explore students' perceptions of Storybird."

Direct Observation:

Aspect of Observation	Description
Date & Time	March 20, 2024 09:00 - 10:00
Location	Class 7 A
Student Interaction with Storybird	When reading stories on Storybird, students were excited. read and turned the pages of the stories with diligence.
Student Understanding of the Story	It was observed that several pupils were examining finer elements in the tale photos by zooming in on them. This demonstrates their attempts to comprehend the story's events more fully.
Student Engagement in the Retelling Process	Students used Storybird to summarize the stories they read in small groups conversations. process, they supported and critiqued one another.

Creativity in Rewriting the Story	After utilizing Storybird, several students summarized the story in a highly imaginative way in their own words. They portrayed story scenes in distinctive ways and included extra details.
Emotional Responses of Students to the Story	While utilizing Storybird to examine the humorous portions in the story, some pupils were observed grinning or chuckling. However, other kids seemed to be paying attention and acting seriously while they were recording the story's poignant passages.
Teacher Feedback to Students	Students received praise from the teacher for their efforts in using Storybird to summarize the story. Additionally, she gave recognition to the kids whose summaries included complicated phrases and a variety of language.

Assessment of Understanding Stories Using Storybird:

No.	Assessment Aspect	Score (1-5)
1	Capacity to Recap the Narration	
2	Participation in Group Debate	
3	Language and Vocabulary Usage	
4	Innovative Narrative Rewriting	
5	Knowledge of Characters and Conflict	
6	Overall Assessment	

Each assessment aspect is given a score from 1 to 5, where:

- 1: Very Poor
- 2: Poor
- 3: Fair
- 4: Good
- 5: Excellent

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Instrument

Student interviews:

1. Interviewer: What is your opinion on using Storybird's retelling technique to comprehend stories?
 Student Reaction: Storybird's illustrations make the story much easier for me to understand, so I think that's incredibly useful.
2. Interviewer: Do you find that utilizing Storybird increases your reading engagement?
 Student Reaction: Definitely, yes! The stories are easier to read and more engaging because of the graphics.
3. Interviewer: How would you rank your capacity to condense narratives after utilizing Storybird's retelling technique?
 Student Reaction: With Storybird's assistance, I can now visualize the important events in the stories, which gives me greater confidence when describing them.
4. Interviewer: Do you like using Storybird because it makes the stories easier for you to imagine?
 Student Reaction: Absolutely! Storybird allows me to completely immerse myself in the narrative and envision lively situations.
5. Interviewer: How does Storybird's reading experience differ from that of printed texts?

Student Reaction: To reading printed literature, using Storybird makes reading much more engaging and entertaining. visual components have a significant impact.

There is one of Student having Reflection on Using the Retelling Technique with Storybird:

Nurul: Looking back on my experience with Storybird, I discovered that the retelling method is a very interesting and useful way to learn stories. I was able to fully engage with the story and understand the plot because of Storybird's blend of textual text and visual features. The chance to recount the story imaginatively and creatively in my own words was one element that I really loved. It helped me develop my critical thinking abilities by allowing me to investigate many viewpoints and interpretations of the story. Working with my classmates in group conversations was also helpful since it gave me fresh perspectives and ideas on the narrative. My comprehension and appreciation of the story were enhanced by hearing other people's views and ideas. Additionally, because I had to pick words carefully in order to effectively represent the spirit of the narrative in my retelling, utilizing Storybird helped me to enhance my vocabulary and language abilities. This feature forced me to communicate myself more clearly and succinctly. All in all, it was a fun and instructive experience to use Storybird for the retelling technique. It improved my understanding of the stories and helped me develop my critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork abilities. I'm excited to apply this strategy in my upcoming reading projects.

The results of student interviews and reflections provide insightful evidence on the efficacy of using Storybird's retelling technique to enhance reading comprehension and engagement among students. Several key themes emerge from the feedback that highlight the benefits and impact of this method.

Students consistently reported that the visual elements in Storybird made stories easier to understand and more engaging. This aligns with educational theories suggesting that multimodal learning—where textual information is combined with visual stimuli—can significantly enhance comprehension and retention. The illustrations help to clarify narrative elements, making it simpler for students to follow and internalize the plot, characters, and events. This multimodal approach appears to be particularly effective in maintaining students' interest and motivation in reading.

The interviews revealed that students felt more confident in summarizing and retelling stories after using Storybird. The visual support provided by Storybird seems to aid in the organization of thoughts and the identification of key events, which are crucial skills for narrative construction. Students noted that this method allowed them to visualize the important events, thereby giving them greater confidence when describing these events in their own words. This suggests that the retelling technique with Storybird not only aids comprehension but also helps in developing students' narrative and summarization skills.

Nurul's reflection highlights that the retelling technique with Storybird fosters critical thinking and creativity. By encouraging students to retell stories in their own words, Storybird promotes deeper engagement with the material, requiring students to analyze and interpret the story's content actively. This process of reinterpretation and creative expression enhances their ability to think critically about the narrative and explore various perspectives. Moreover, the opportunity to participate in group discussions further enriches this learning experience by exposing students to diverse viewpoints and ideas.

The necessity to choose words carefully to effectively convey the essence of the story in retelling exercises helps students improve their vocabulary and language skills. The act of retelling forces students to articulate their understanding concisely and clearly, which is a valuable exercise in language proficiency. This

aspect of the technique is particularly beneficial for EFL learners, who need ample practice in using language creatively and accurately.

Working collaboratively in group discussions provides additional benefits by fostering a sense of community and shared learning among students. The exchange of ideas and interpretations not only broadens students' understanding of the narrative but also enhances their social and communication skills. Hearing different perspectives allows students to appreciate the multifaceted nature of stories and improves their ability to consider multiple viewpoints.

The findings from the interviews and student reflection underscore the effectiveness of Storybird's retelling technique in enhancing various aspects of reading and language skills. The integration of visual elements with textual content makes stories more accessible and engaging, thereby improving comprehension. The technique also promotes critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration among students, while aiding in the development of narrative skills and language proficiency. Given these benefits, educators should consider incorporating Storybird and similar multimodal tools into their teaching strategies to enrich the learning experience and outcomes for their students.

CONCLUSION

Based on result and discussion, the utilization of Storybird for retelling stories yielded notable enhancements in students' reading comprehension. Beyond merely improving comprehension, Storybird fostered heightened engagement levels among students and reignited their enthusiasm for reading. Moreover, the platform facilitated the development of students' summarization skills, encouraging them to delve deeper into the narratives and express their interpretations creatively. Additionally, Storybird served as a catalyst for honing critical thinking abilities, prompting students to analyze story elements and consider diverse viewpoints. Through collaborative endeavors facilitated by Storybird, students not only refined their comprehension but also benefited from peer interaction, further enriching their learning experiences. In essence, Storybird emerges as a multifaceted tool that not only enhances reading comprehension but also revitalizes the reading process, making it more interactive and enjoyable for students.

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