



DIGITAL STORYTELLING EXPERIENCES OF ENGLISH TEACHERS IN TEACHING 21ST CENTURY LITERATURE: BASES FOR ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative phenomenological study found that the experiences of Senior High School English teachers in using digital storytelling included: helped learners understand themes, characters, and narratives more deeply; developed their critical thinking skills, digital literacy skills, creativity, and collaboration; supported diverse learning styles; provided an effective and meaningful teaching-learning process; captured learners' attention and interests; and required more preparation time. The challenges included limited access to devices and software; unstable internet connectivity; increased time requirements for planning, preparation, and project completion; and technical skills deficiencies among learners. They managed the challenges by providing clear instructions and simple digital tools; providing brief skills demonstrations; planning and organizing lessons and all materials in advance; providing alternative offline materials and activities; breaking projects into smaller and guided steps; initiating peer collaboration; providing training and professional development; and collaborating with colleagues.

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Keywords: *English Teachers, Digital Storytelling, Teaching 21st Century Literature, Enhancement Program*

INTRODUCTION

Education is geared towards more digital approaches. In teaching 21st Century Literature, it requires innovative approaches to engage students and develop their essential skills in learning. One approach is the integration of technology into education that has been increasingly emphasized as a way to enhance teaching and learning experiences. The use of digital storytelling in teaching 21st Century Literature enables students to engage with the content through multimodal way, and makes literature subject more interactive and visually appealing. Thus, it can really capture students' interest to appreciate the lessons.

According to Robin (2021), digital storytelling refers to the practice of using digital media tools to create and share narratives that incorporate traditional storytelling techniques alongside multimedia elements such as text, audio, video, images, and music. This approach transforms conventional storytelling into a more interactive and immersive experience, allowing creators to blend narratives with technology. In education, digital storytelling has become a powerful tool for enhancing student engagement, fostering creativity, and promoting critical thinking. Similarly, it encourages students to actively engage with content by creating their own stories, which facilitates a deeper understanding of the material and develops essential digital literacy skills (Ohler, 2020).

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The use of digital storytelling provides an opportunity for teachers to present complex literary themes and concepts in a more engaging and accessible manner in the field of literature education. Teachers can incorporate visual and auditory elements that help students understand the context, setting, and characters of literary works, which may otherwise seem abstract or distant. Additionally, this multimodal approach also allows for increased creativity in both teaching and student expression, as learners can create their own digital stories in response to literature.

Despite the municipality's growing popularity of digital storytelling, many Senior High School English teachers in the said municipality faced challenges when integrating this method in their teaching of the 21st Century Literature subject. These challenges may include technological barriers, lack of adequate training, time constraints, and difficulty in aligning digital stories with curriculum objectives. Moreover, teachers' experiences with digital storytelling may vary depending on factors such as their familiarity with technology, students' learning needs, and the resources available to them. Other English teachers find this exciting for students who are actively participating in their literature classes.

This study sought to explore the experiences of English teachers who used digital storytelling in teaching 21st Century Literature. By examining the benefits, challenges, and impact of this method, the research aimed to contribute to a better understanding of how digital storytelling could be effectively implemented in literature classrooms.

It also aimed to identify strategies for overcoming the obstacles teachers faced, offering insights that may intend to help others in the field incorporate digital storytelling into

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their teaching practices. Furthermore, the study may provide valuable guidance for educators seeking to adopt digital storytelling as a teaching tool, enhancing both the delivery of literature content and the students' overall learning experience.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research methodology, including the design, participant selection, sampling techniques, and the development and validation of the research instrument. It also details the procedures for data collection and analysis. The study explored the digital storytelling experiences of English teachers in 21st-century literature instruction, with the findings serving as the foundation for a proposed enhancement program.

Research Method

The research method that is used in this study is Qualitative method using the Phenomenological approach to find out the digital storytelling experiences of English teachers in teaching 21st Century Literature.

Qualitative method is a research approach that focus on collecting and analyzing non-numerical data—such as words, images, and observations—to gain a deep understanding of human experiences and social contexts. They emphasize the importance of context, meaning, and the subjective interpretations of participants. Such methods typically involve tools like in-depth interviews, focus groups, participant observation, and content or thematic analysis, all of which allow researchers to explore complex phenomena in a flexible and interactive manner

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(Brown & Nguyen, 2022).

Research Design

The aim of this phenomenological study was to explore the digital storytelling experiences of English teachers in teaching 21st Century Literature. Embree (2020) suggests that phenomenology can be used to explore how individuals understand everyday activities and phenomena in their daily lives. He also discusses how this philosophical tradition can bridge the gap between theoretical and empirical studies in contemporary social science research.

The interviewer allowed the participants to sit together and answer questions about the experiences of English teachers in using digital storytelling in teaching 21st Century Literature. The goal was to get their views and experiences through their responses to the questions.

Participants of the Study

The participants were twelve (12) Senior High School English teachers teaching the 21st Century Literature subject from the five (5) secondary schools. Four (4) English teachers came from the mother school then (8) English teachers from other barangay secondary schools. They were purposely selected based on the objective of the study. Consent from these participants was secured and their responses were taken with utmost confidentiality.

They were informed by the researcher that they are co-researchers in this study and they understood their role in explaining the phenomena. A purposive sampling was used in choosing the participants of the study.

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Sampling Design

Purposive sampling was used to select participants who have meaningful experiences in using digital storytelling in teaching 21st Century Literature. As Creswell (2020) notes, purposive sampling is appropriate in qualitative research, because it allows the selection of cases that can provide rich and detailed information. Participant selection was guided by site visits to ensure that the chosen individuals align with the purpose of the study.

Research Instrument

To gather information such as experiences of English teachers in using digital storytelling, the researcher utilized the semi-structure interview in gathering the data. Semi-structured interviews are particularly useful in studies where the researcher seeks to understand complex human behavior and the subjective meanings that participants attach to their experiences (Patton, 2020).

The interview consisted of questions that focused on teaching experiences of English teachers in using digital storytelling. The questionnaire was validated by three experts. Audio recorder was also used to capture all the proceedings during the interview.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Before establishing the validity of the researcher-made interview schedule, the researcher sought the expertise of the adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, and a panel of jurors. These individuals, selected for their proficiency in research, assessment, and the English language, evaluated each question to facilitate necessary reviews and modifications.

Validity refers to the degree to which a study's findings, interpretations, and

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conclusions accurately and meaningfully represent the investigated concept. It ensures the instrument measures its intended variables and produces credible reflections of reality. To establish content validity, the instrument's content and format must align with the study's defined variables and objectives, ensuring every item accurately reflects the construct under investigation.

According to Creswell and Creswell (2023), this process typically involves expert reviews to verify the relevance, clarity, and representativeness of the items, thereby enhancing the utility of the collected data.

The researcher carefully integrated all comments, corrections, and suggestions from the validation panel. This process was documented using the standardized criteria of Good and Scates (1972), as cited by Soqueña (2021).

Data Gathering Procedures

To authorize the study, the researcher secured formal permits from the thesis adviser, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, and the Office of the District Supervisors. Permission was also obtained from respective school heads and the individual participants. For the participants' convenience, the researcher personally conducted the interviews at their schools or preferred community locations.

Before starting, the researcher ensured all participants signed informed consent forms or waivers regarding their involvement. During these in-depth sessions, voice and video recorders were employed to capture a verbatim account of the dialogue. Following the

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completion of the interview series, the researcher systematically compiled and organized all collected data.

Data Analyses

The data collected through the interview schedule were analyzed using thematic analysis, a qualitative method designed to identify, interpret, and report recurring patterns or themes within narrative data. This approach enabled the researcher to uncover meaningful insights into the participants' experiences with digital storytelling in teaching 21st-century literature.

According to Braun and Clarke (2023), thematic analysis provides a flexible yet rigorous framework for analyzing qualitative data, allowing researchers to identify both explicit and implicit meanings across participants' narratives. This method is particularly suitable for educational research that seeks to understand complex social and organizational dynamics. Furthermore, Nowell et al. (2021) emphasize that thematic analysis enhances transparency and credibility in qualitative studies by ensuring systematic coding and interpretation of data.

The analysis followed a standard six-phase process to ensure a thorough interpretation of the transcripts. First, the researcher engaged in familiarization with the data by repeatedly reading the transcripts in both the local language and English translation. Second, initial codes were generated by assigning short phrases or labels to meaningful segments of data, such as "technical barriers" or "pedagogical shifts." Third, the researcher began searching for themes by grouping these initial codes into potential overarching categories and sub-themes that captured significant patterns across the interviews. Fourth, the researcher participated in

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reviewing themes, which involved refining and checking the candidate themes against the entire dataset to ensure they accurately reflected the participants' meanings and the study's specific focus. Fifth, the process of defining and naming themes was conducted to develop clear, concise, and academically sound titles for the final emergent themes to be presented in Chapter 4. Finally, the researcher focused on producing the report, weaving the finalized themes together with supporting direct quotes to create a cohesive narrative that linked the findings back to the theoretical framework.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This qualitative phenomenological study explored the experiences of Senior High School English teachers in using digital storytelling to teach 21st Century Literature during the school year 2025–2026. Conducted in one municipality in the 3rd Congressional District of Iloilo, the study involved twelve (12) purposely selected teachers from five (5) secondary schools, including four (4) from the mother school and eight (8) from other barangay secondary schools. Data were collected through in-depth interviews using a validated semi-structured questionnaire, with follow-up questions to elicit deeper insights.

Participants' consent was secured, and confidentiality was strictly maintained. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes that served as the basis for a proposed enhancement program.

The following are the findings of the study:

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Based on the results of the in-depth interviews, the study found that using digital storytelling in teaching 21st-century literature yielded several significant outcomes. Specifically, it helped learners understand themes, characters, and narratives more deeply; developed critical thinking, digital literacy, creativity, and collaboration; and supported diverse learning styles. Furthermore, the method provided an effective and meaningful teaching-learning process that captured learners' attention and interests, although it also required more preparation time.

It was found out that the challenges encountered by the English teachers in using digital storytelling in teaching 21st century literature included limited access to devices and software; unstable internet connectivity; increased time requirements for planning, preparation, and project completion; and technical skills deficiencies among learners.

The results of the in-depth interviews revealed that teachers managed the challenges encountered in using digital storytelling for 21st-century literature through several proactive strategies. These included providing clear instructions and simple digital tools; providing brief skills demonstration; planning and organizing lessons in advance and all materials before class; providing alternative offline materials and activities; breaking projects into smaller and guided steps; initiating peer collaboration; providing training and professional development; and collaborating with colleagues.

CONCLUSION

In light of the findings and insights arrived at in this study, the following recommendations are highlighted:

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Teachers should continue to integrate and refine multimedia-based narrative activities in literature instruction, ensuring that lessons are meticulously planned and materials are prepared in advance.

By adopting scaffolded, structured activities and providing clear guidance, educators can balance 21st-century instructional goals with varying student readiness levels. To mitigate technical barriers, teachers should incorporate alternative or low-tech options and utilize user-friendly digital tools.

Furthermore, fostering peer collaboration among students and sharing best practices with colleagues will not only enhance learners' creativity and engagement but also reduce individual workloads and improve instructional efficiency.

To ensure the sustainability of technology-enhanced instruction, school leaders should provide targeted support by addressing infrastructure limitations, such as access to devices, software, and reliable internet.

They should institutionalize ongoing professional development programs that focus on both technical proficiency and pedagogical strategies for digital storytelling.

By encouraging a collaborative planning environment and providing adequate digital resources, administrators can streamline the implementation process and create a more supportive atmosphere for innovative teaching.

Future researchers are encouraged to expand upon this study by exploring the effectiveness of technology-enhanced instructional approaches across diverse educational contexts and subject areas.

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Longitudinal studies could be conducted to investigate the long-term impact of digital storytelling on students' critical thinking, creativity, and digital literacy.

Additionally, further research into how various scaffolding strategies influence specific learning outcomes would provide valuable data for refining digital pedagogy.



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