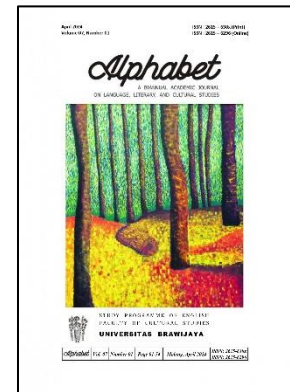


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Incorporating Entrepreneurial Digital Storytelling in Teaching Business English

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Incorporating Entrepreneurial Digital Storytelling in Teaching Business English

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Abstract

Entrepreneurship, as an academic discipline, in higher education institutions (HEIs) is crucial in supporting the government's mission to promote entrepreneurial education. As part of this trend, there have been growing interests in integrating entrepreneurship into a course's curriculum, including in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class, specifically within the Business English subject. This study proposes the incorporation of entrepreneurial digital storytelling (EDST) contents, encompassing personal narratives and real-life experiences of successful entrepreneurs within the Business English course in higher education settings. This study employs a qualitative approach through literature review to support the theoretical perspective and practical implementation of this study. The article highlights the benefits of incorporating entrepreneurial storytelling content to support EFL students in enhancing their motivation to learn English, particularly to improve the language skills. Furthermore, its implementation is useful for the development of students' entrepreneurial intentions and motivation while simultaneously enhancing their English language proficiency and academic growth.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial digital storytelling; Business English; English as a foreign language; Higher education; Entrepreneurship education.

The adoption of entrepreneurship as an academic discipline in higher education institutions (HEIs) has become crucial in supporting the government's mission to promote entrepreneurial education within a nation. This is of paramount importance as entrepreneurship significantly impacts human resource development and the economy at large. Consequently, many courses have made efforts to incorporate entrepreneurial values into the higher education curriculum (Melnikova et al., 2017), including in English as a foreign language class (Özdemir, 2015)].

Meanwhile, EFL teaching and learning has been reported to face challenges in terms of encouragement and engagement, particularly among higher education students (Alsalihi,

2020), especially non-English majors (Trinh & Pham, 2021), which has prompted researchers worldwide to continuously innovate and discover effective approaches to sustain student engagement in EFL learning. In this respect, among the impactful trends used in encouraging students' EFL learning is by using digital storytelling (Tavoosy, 2018; Zhussupova & Shadiev, 2023).

Storytelling has widely been used as a powerful educational tool that facilitates learning and captures learners' attention by connecting with their emotions and experiences. Moreover, technology has made significant contributions to language learning, making it crucial to harness the available entrepreneurial storytelling resources to enhance student engagement

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and improve their overall foreign language learning experience. In this study, entrepreneurial digital storytelling (EDST) refers to the use of digital platforms or media to engage in storytelling activities that contain entrepreneurial contents, such as the life stories of entrepreneurs and their experiences in building successful businesses. The primary discussion centers around the role of EDST in supporting EFL students' language production (speaking and writing) and language comprehension (reading and listening), with the aim of fostering their entrepreneurial values in alignment with their academic needs.

Previous studies have highlighted the potential of fostering students' entrepreneurial mindset in EFL classes (Zülküf Altan, 2019) and the advantages of leveraging entrepreneurial (digital) storytelling within organizations and industries, leading to increased creativity, innovation, and project design (Borghoff, 2018). Similarly, within the context of foreign language learning, studies have shown that the application of storytelling has a positive impact on students' motivation and their development of foreign language skills (Alemi et al., 2022). However, the use of entrepreneurial digital storytelling (EDST) in EFL learning, particularly in the context of business English classes, remains largely unexplored.

Therefore, the present paper aims to explore the potential integration of entrepreneurship education by leveraging EDST within the EFL classroom, specifically focusing on business English course for students in Entrepreneurship, Business and Management programs. Additionally, based on the perspective of EFL teaching and entrepreneurship education, this study proposes EFL and entrepreneurship integrated teaching model and examines the interrelationship between the teaching of entrepreneurship through digital storytelling (DST) and the EFL teaching methods that can mutually support each other.

To support this perspective and objective, a qualitative approach using a secondary data analysis was conducted, drawing from various literature sources that are relevant to the field.

The analysis primarily focused on recent studies and academic articles that examine the application and impact of digital storytelling, particularly within the context of EFL learning and education, as well as the integration of entrepreneurship education in the EFL classroom. By reviewing the existing literature, this study provides insights into the theoretical foundations and practical implications of incorporating EDST in business English or EFL teaching, particularly in higher education level.

This study makes valuable contributions to the field of foreign language teaching, specifically in the effectiveness of EFL and other language teaching activities. By exploring the application of digital storytelling in a foreign language learning environment, this research offers both theoretical and practical insights into its efficacy. Additionally, the study investigates the integration of entrepreneurship education within the EFL/ Business English classroom, aiming to enhance the learning experiences of entrepreneurship and business students. These contributions shed light on the potential benefits of incorporating digital storytelling and entrepreneurship education in language learning, offering valuable implications for educators and practitioners in the field.

DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurial digital storytelling and EFL/ Business English course

Digital storytelling (DST) has been applied, particularly in the field of education, since the mid-1990s to promote digital literacy and creativity (Schleser, 2012). DST typically involves the integration of various elements such as images, music, videos, and alternative methods of narration such as voice-overs, written text, or note-cards (Davis et al., 2019). The Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS), now StoryCenter, identifies seven key elements in DST, including the point of view and story perspective, the use of dramatic questions to grab the audience's attention, emotional resonance, the quality of the narrator's voice, appropriate background music, economy or

brief content, and effective pacing or rhythm of the story (Lambert, 2013).

DST has gained significant popularity among educators in the US, UK, and Australia (Signes, 2010). Generally, DST is integrated in a foreign language class, encompasses a wide range of life experiences and contexts, allowing students' engagement and improving their digital literacy (Niemi et al., 2014). In this study, entrepreneurial digital storytelling (EDST) specifically focuses on digitally accessed or delivered narratives centered around entrepreneurship. In other words, students engage in EFL learning through existing inspiring entrepreneurial stories or by their own storytelling projects based on their experiences, or by doing both. EDST is expected to be a potential tool to facilitate students' self-expression and their motivation to communicate in the target language, bridging the gap between language learning and real-world application, especially based on the students' academic field in entrepreneurship.

Based on the aforementioned advantages of EDST, it is necessary to incorporate it in EFL learning, particularly in Business English subject. Business English typically covers materials related to formal communication with business partners, supervisors, colleagues, and

clients, both in person and through various (digital) channels. While these materials are essential, it is also relevant to integrate entrepreneurial values into the curriculum. This is because language skills play a vital role in the field of entrepreneurship (Johnstone et al., 2018).

Moreover, in higher education settings, teaching English as a foreign language with a focus on Business English often revolves around daily professional communication. However, one of the major challenges faced in teaching Business English in an EFL context, especially for beginners, is how to effectively motivate and engage students while still achieving the desired learning outcomes. In this regard, entrepreneurial digital storytelling (EDST) can serve as a valuable tool or project for students, meeting their interests and needs within a Business English class. Integrating EDST as a medium for learning activities or assessments remains relevant, considering its numerous benefits. It can be included as an additional learning activity alongside the primary objective of teaching daily business communication skills. To ensure its effectiveness and students engagement, it is also crucial to ensure that the EDST contents are suitable for the students' language skills and that they have a clear understanding of the instructions and

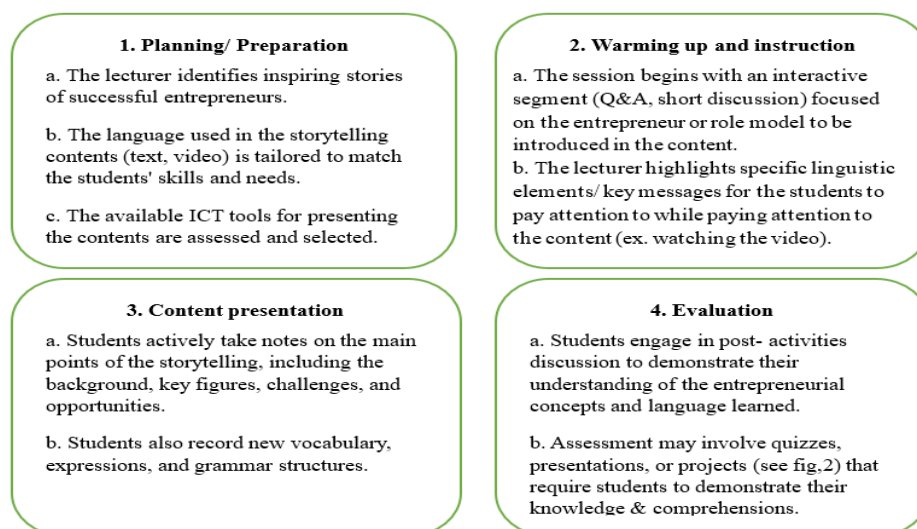


Figure 1. The Implementation of EDST to enhance students' (business) English Comprehension in EFL

its application in their English learning. Figure 1 and 2 show the model of its implementation.

Teaching EFL/ Business English through EDST to support EFL learning

Facilitating language comprehension (reading and listening)

DST presents opportunities to enhance students' language comprehension skills in both reading and listening (Hamdy, 2017). By utilizing engaging storytelling materials related to entrepreneurship, students are exposed to authentic language use, specialized vocabulary, and real-life business scenarios. This exposure enables students to develop a deeper understanding of business communication and enhance their overall language comprehension abilities. Figure 1 below shows the basic model on how EDST can be used for this purpose in four main steps

Facilitating language production (speaking and writing)

Through active involvement and creative participation in DST projects, empirical studies found that students demonstrated significant improvements in their English-speaking skills (Fu et al., 2021) and creative thinking

abilities (Yang et al., 2022). Moreover, engaging in ICT-supported learning and actively participating in the process of crafting their own narratives or retelling stories of others has been shown to enhance students' writing skills (Tsigani & Nikolakopuolu, 2018) and expand their vocabulary (Hava, 2021). These compelling findings highlight the valuable contributions of DST in fostering diverse language competencies, particularly in relation to language production skills.

Therefore, the integration of EDST in the teaching of Business English provides students with valuable opportunities to engage in discussions and reflections on entrepreneurial narratives, express their viewpoints, and practice using language structures commonly employed in business contexts. This active engagement serves to enhance students' speaking and writing proficiency, thereby fostering effective communication skills within the realms of business communication and entrepreneurship.

In implementing this approach, the steps outlined in Figure 2 can be utilized either as a follow-up activity to the tasks presented in Figure 1 or as a standalone activity aimed at fostering students' EFL production skills.

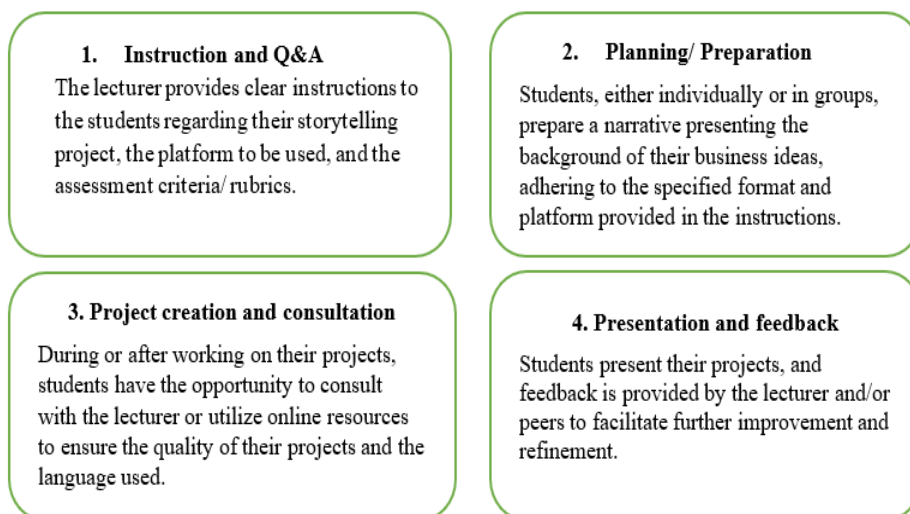


Figure 2. The implementation of EDST as students' project

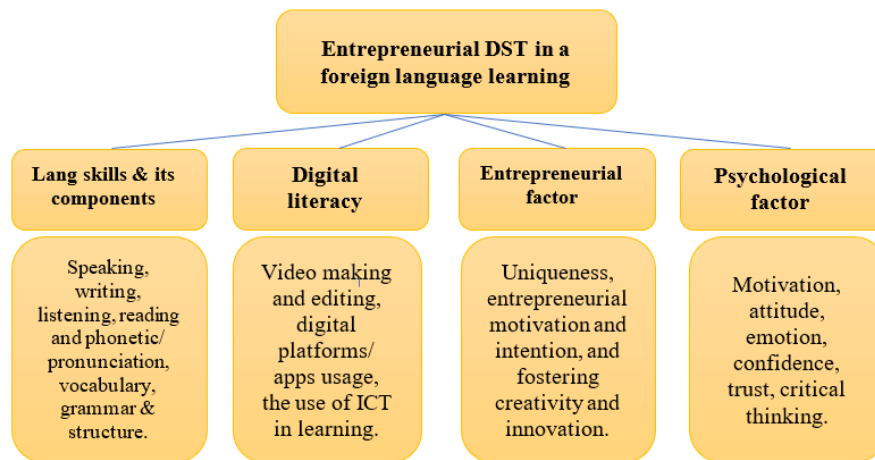


Figure 3. Outcomes of implementing entrepreneurial digital storytelling in language learning

Developing language components

Furthermore, the integration of EDST goes beyond the development of language skills and extends to students' mastery of essential language components such as phonetics, vocabulary, and grammar (Castaneda, 2013). By closely analyzing authentic storytelling materials, students are exposed to natural pronunciation patterns and intonation commonly employed in business communication. Additionally, the contextualized use of grammar structures within entrepreneurial narratives enhances students' comprehension of grammar rules and their application in practical business contexts.

Supporting entrepreneurship education

Fostering entrepreneurial mindset

EDST provides a platform for cultivating and nurturing an entrepreneurial mindset among higher education students, particularly EFL learners who aim to enhance their professional careers (Zülküf Altan, 2019). By immersing themselves in entrepreneurial stories and experiences, students have the opportunity to develop crucial entrepreneurial traits, including creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and risk-taking. These qualities con-

tribute to the cultivation of a proactive and innovative mindset that holds value in both entrepreneurship and language learning contexts.

Fostering entrepreneurial intention and motivation

The integration of entrepreneurial digital storytelling in EFL instruction has a positive impact on students' motivation to learn the language. The authentic and engaging nature of entrepreneurial narratives captures students' interest, resulting in a more enjoyable and meaningful language learning experience. This increased motivation contributes to enhanced language acquisition and a deeper comprehension of entrepreneurial concepts.

Prior studies have shown that role models, such as family members or inspiring successful entrepreneurs, positively affect the students' entrepreneurial competence, motivation (Joensuu-Salo, 2022) and intention (Liu et al., 2019; Nowiński & Haddoud, 2019). In other words, when students engage with entrepreneurial narratives depicting the struggles and successes of role model entrepreneurs, they are inspired and motivated to work hard and strive for success.

Promoting creativity and innovation

Entrepreneurial digital storytelling (EDST) promotes students' creative thinking, particularly when they are tasked with creating their own EDST projects. Through engaging with entrepreneurial narratives, students are exposed to diverse perspectives and problem-solving approaches within the context of real-life entrepreneurs. These activities foster critical thinking skills, enabling students to generate innovative ideas and apply them in practical situations.

Furthermore, during the process of producing EDST content, students are encouraged to express their business ideas creatively, drawing upon their unique experiences and backgrounds. This creative freedom empowers students to showcase their ingenuity and innovation in narrative composition or audiovisual production.

The figure 3 below illustrates how EDST plays a significant role in enhancing language skills, promoting digital literacy for educational purposes, and fostering entrepreneurial and psychological factors among (entrepreneurship) students, particularly in higher education.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has explored the powerful impact of incorporating entrepreneurial digital storytelling (EDST) in the EFL classroom within a higher education setting. The integration of EDST as a valuable tool or medium not only promotes digital literacy and entrepreneurship education but also plays a significant role in enhancing students' language skills through active engagement in composing and presenting their own story projects, as well as engaging with inspiring entrepreneurial narratives.

The incorporation of EDST in teaching Business English for entrepreneurship students holds immense potential for enriching their learning experiences, fostering language proficiency, and nurturing their entrepreneur-

ial aspirations. By embracing innovative approaches like EDST, language educators can create dynamic learning environments that empower students to succeed in the globalized world of business and entrepreneurship. Additionally, it also serves as entrepreneurial education support among students in EFL curriculum. This is in line with the university support in shaping the students' entrepreneurial mindset and skills (Wardana et al., 2020).

While the benefits of integrating EDST in the EFL classroom are substantial, it is important to acknowledge potential challenges that may arise in its implementation. These challenges include limited access to supporting IT tools, such as reliable internet connections, in certain institutions or regions. In addition, it is also possible to identify fundamental digital literacy gaps among students and teachers in certain instances (Reinders, 2011).

Future studies and practical developments should explore the use of more sophisticated technologies, such as robots and AI, in delivering EDST or applying EDST in teaching English for other fields of study. Additionally, further research should investigate the long-term impact of EDST on students' entrepreneurial outcomes and their ability to apply their (English) language skills in authentic entrepreneurial contexts.

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