DİJİTAL HİKÂYE HAZIRLAMA PROGRAMININ İNGİLİZCE OKUMA ANLAMA BAŞARISI ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

THE EFFECT OF DIGITAL STORY PREPARATION PROGRAM ON READING COMPREHENSION IN ENGLISH

Abdullah ADIGÜZEL[1]

Zeynep KUMKALE[2]

Öz

Öğrenci merkezli öğrenme stratejilerini bir noktada buluşturma özelliğine sahip dijital hikayeler, öğretme performansını izleme ve değerlendirme imkanı sağlamaktadır. Bu araştırmanın amacı dijital hikâyelerin öğrencilerin yabancı dilde okuma anlama düzeylerine etkisini belirlemektir. Araştırmanın çalışma grubu; 2016-2017 öğretim yılında Düzce ilinde bulunan bir ortaokuldaki 5-A sınıfında öğrenim görmekte olan 8 kız ve 9 erkek olmak üzere toplam 17 öğrenci kontrol grubu, 5-B sınıfında öğrenim görmekte olan 9 kız ve 8 erkek olmak üzere toplam 17 öğrenci deney grubu olarak belirlenmiştir. Veri toplama aracı olarak öğrencilere yapılan ön test ve son test puanları kullanılmıştır. Deney ve kontrol grubu öğrencilerinin ön test ve son test puanları ilk olarak Bağımlı Örneklem t-Testi yapılarak aralarında anlamlı bir fark olup olmadığı görülmeye çalışılmıştır. Ardından her iki grubun ön test puanları ortak değişken alınarak son test puanlarına ANCOVA uygulanmış ve farkın deney grubu lehine anlamlı olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır (p=0,000). Bu yöntemin öğrencilerin dil öğrenmede dört temel beceriyi geliştirdiği ve proje tabanlı öğrenmeyle harmanladığı ve etkili öğrenmeyi sağladığı söylenebilir. Dijital hikayelerin dil öğretimindeki etkisini ölçen yeterli çalışmanın alanyazında olmadığı bilinmekle birlikte var olanlar da çalışmamızın sonuçlarını destekler niteliktedir. Bulgular doğrultusunda beşinci sınıf İngilizce dersinde öğrencilerin okuma anlama becerilerini geliştirmek amacıyla ders konuları dijital hikayeler yardımıyla işlenmeli ve öğrencilerin de dijital hikayeleri kullanmaları yoluna gidilmelidir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: dijital hikayeler, yabancı dil öğretimi, yabancı dil öğrenme

Abstract

The development of technology and its use for education have revealed the term "digital story". With the attribution of easily integrate student-centered learning strategies into one point, digital stories provide the ability to monitor and evaluate the teaching performance. The aim of this research is to determine the level of influence the digital stories have on the level of reading comprehension of the students. Participants of the study are 34 fifth grade students who are studying at a private secondary school in Düzce, Turkey. Pre-test and post-test scores have been used as data collection tools. All pre-test and post-test scores of both groups first have been analyzed by Paired Samples t-Test and it has been tried to show whether there is a significant difference between the groups. Besides, ANCOVA analysis have been applied to post test scores by taking the pre test scores as covariant variables, and it has been found that there is a significant difference in favor of the experimental group (p=0,000). In consideration of these findings, it has been concluded that the use of digital stories in English lessons have had a positive effect on the level of reading comprehension. In accordance with the findings, several research proposals about the methods that should be used in foreign language lessons have been made.

Keywords: Digital stories, foreign language teaching, foreign language learning

[1]Associate Prof, Düzce University, Faculty of Education, Düzce, Turkey, abdullahadiguzel@duzce.edu.tr
ORCID: 0000-0001-7184-3644
[2] Master's Student, Düzce University, Faculty of Education, Turkey, zeynep56904@ogr.duzce.edu.tr
ORCID: 0000-0003-4580-7441

1. INTRODUCTION

Bagceci (2004) states that as a consequence of the globalization, the need to act with the world and act in accordance with the trends in the world has emerged. With global changes in science and technological developments around the world, the globalization process has changed the needs in society, and in order to meet these needs, there has been a need for a society that has constantly renewed itself and become a lifestyle to acquire new information (Turan, 2005; Saglam et al., 2011). One way of achieving universality is through cultural and scientific accumulation, and the other way is through foreign languages (Aktas and Isiguzel, 2014). According to Koksal (2000), language identifies the identity and personality of a person and enables the individual to socialize. In this context, foreign language education emerges as a subject that needs to be emphasized. Today, the number of students learning German and French has diminished and English has become a "world language" in the process of "language and globalization" (Dörnyei and Csizer, 2002; Graham, 2004; Lambert, 2001).

Foreign language teaching is a process that needs to be kept open for everyday and continuous changes (Guler, 2005). For nearly two centuries, Turkey has been engaged in teaching foreign languages (Celebi, 2006). According to Demirel (1999), in accordance with westernization there has been given a great deal of work on foreign language teaching in Turkey, serious time has been spent on this issue both at the public and the individual level. However, success has not usually been achieved at the targeted level in foreign language teaching and debates about the efficiency of foreign language teaching in primary education are still ongoing (Cetintas, 2010).

When we examine it historically, since last two centuries in Turkey where there has been spent a great deal of effort, different education systems applied over time, although there has been tried to make innovations it is a fact accepted by everyone that students who take foreign language instruction starting from primary school and during the period of higher education have great problems (Demirel, 2003). The changes in this area have also influenced English language teaching as it is in every other area. Because language teaching requires greater involvement of technology in other social areas (Kartal, 2005). Further all language learning opportunities whether provided through technology or in a traditional classroom setting, should be standards-based and help develop students' proficiency in the target language via interactive, meaningful, and cognitively ongoing learning experiences facilitated by a qualified language teacher (ACTFL, 2012).

One of the most important goals of education today is to ensure that students can act independently during learning activities or, in other words, to assume responsibility for their own learning activities and their results (Genc, 2015). Foreign languages are often learned as a means to learn something else; and using a foreign language can be a means of learning the language itself (Kenny, 1993). Until now, research on the use of information and communication technologies in language learning has revealed much different potential of technological tools from cognitive area to language-based applications (Kizil and Savran, 2016). Many experts working on foreign language education accept that computer-assisted language learning improves foreign language skills (Lück, 2008). It is no longer a question whether to take advantage of these electronic technologies in foreign language instruction, but how to harness them and guide our students in their use (Paulsen, 2001).

The methods used in foreign language education have been changing and increasing day by day. Research on learning strategies describe language learning strategies as "student-selected special paths that make learning easier, faster, more fun, independent, active and easier

to transfer to new situations" (Bayezit and Cubukcu, 2015). Teacher is not the source of information in learning environments where the student-centered approach is dominant. According to Scharle and Szabo (2000), by providing information resources and support, the teacher tires to make it easier in the belief those students are responsible for their own learning. Today, from the cognitive and constructivist point of view that forms the basis of the approaches used for foreign language teaching, students have many tasks (Ayirir et al., 2012).

Language development has become important to the education for all age levels (Tsau et al., 2006). Alvermann et al. (1998) states that the literacy training in the school is mostly done with traditional, written-based contexts. The role of short stories, in developing reading comprehension skill, has been acknowledged for centuries by many ELT professionals and pedagogues (Pathan, 2012). Pesola (1991) suggested that storytelling is "one of the most powerful tools for surrounding the young learner with language". Isbell (2002) stated that many stories that work on children include repetitive patterns, topic-specific words and interesting illustrations. Therefore, scholars like Brumfit and Carter (1986) advocate the use of short-stories as one of the best methods in ELT, which a teacher can use, because of various educational aspects. Short stories strengthten students' foreign language skills. According to Lazar (1993), the use of short stories in ELT classroom offers the teaching and learning material which is motivating, authentic and has great educational value. For this reason scholars like Garvie (1990) proposes that foreign language learning be led by story.

With the expansion of technology and its role in educational setting, a new form of storytelling has appeared (Bozdogan, 2012). Although storytelling is not new, the idea of digital storytelling is new (Meadows, 2003). The Digital Storytelling Association (2002) describes digital storytelling as "modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling. Throughout history, storytelling has been used to share knowledge, wisdom, and values. Stories have taken many different forms. Stories have been adapted to each successive medium that has emerged, from the circle of the campfire to the silver screen, and now the computer screen."

Barrett (2006) found that digital storytelling facilitates convergence of four student centered learning strategies: student engagement, reflection for deep learning, project based learning and effective integration of technology into instruction. Digital storytelling provides possibility of seeing and hearing the teaching performance, rather than simply reading about it (Tendero, 2006).

Although foreign language education in our country has been carried out for many years, the desired results in foreign language skills cannot be reached. One of the reasons for this is that technology-based activities are not used in foreign language courses. This study was conducted to measure reading comprehension skills of fifth grade students through digital stories. This work is important in the sense that it constitutes an example of the works done in this direction in our country, where the use of technology is increasingly supported.

1.1. Aim of the Study

The general aim of this research is to determine the effect of digital stories on the reading and comprehension skills of the students in English lessons taught at secondary schools. The research questions sought answers in this study are as follows:

1. What is the effect level of digital stories on reading and comprehension skills of students in English?
2. What is the effect level of printed stories on students' reading and comprehension skills

in English?

3. Is there a significant difference between printed and digital stories on students' ability to read and understand English?

2. METHOD

This research was conducted according to the controlled pre-test and post-test model of quantitative research methods. In the controlled pre-test and post-test model, the research is conducted on groups that were previously formed for specific purposes (Belet and Yasar, 2007). In this study, two groups were formed as experimental and control group. Measurements were made in groups before and after the experiment. An environment, in which the students in research process have the same conditions without any effect except for the experiment process, has been provided. In order to measure the achievement levels of students in the experimental and control groups, a pretest on The Simple Present Tense was applied. Later on, it was tried to measure the achievement levels of students by applying the post-test about the story the students read about The Simple Present Tense. The scores obtained from the pre-test and post-test of the students in the experimental and control group show the success levels of them. The outside factors which may have and influence on the level of learning and the learning situations of the students in the experimental and control groups are equal. The population of the research was formed by a total of 34 students, 17 males and 17 females, who are studying in 5-A and 5-B classes a private secondary school in 2016-2017 academic year in Düzce, Turkey. A total of 17 students, 8 females and 9 males, in 5-A class were selected as control group. 17 students, 9 females and 8 males, in 5-B class were selected as the experimental group.

In studies conducted with experimental design, the topic-related levels of subjects should be as close as possible to each other (Kaptan, 1998). In this direction, it should be investigated whether they are equivalent by looking at the pre-test scores of the groups. Indeed, it is possible to say that the difference between the post-test scores of experimental process, but only when there is no significant difference between the pre-test scores of the groups (Erden, 2004).

The independent variable of the research will be the different teaching method, and the dependent variable will be the academic achievement of the students.

Table 1. Appearance of the Experimental Design to Be Applied In the Study

	Group	Pre- test	Experimental Process	Post- test
R	E	P1	X	P3
R	C	P2	No process	P4

As seen in Table 1, there are two different groups as the experimental and control groups. Experimental group is the one that will take the courses with digital stories. The lesson will be conducted with printed stories in the control group. An Achievement Test as pre-test will be applied to determine the preliminary information levels of the students in the groups. At the end of the application process the same test will be applied again to the same groups.

At the beginning of the research process, The Simple Past Tense test has been practiced as pre-test to identify students' prior knowledge of The Simple Past Tense, determine whether

there is a significant difference between the experimental and control groups, and for equalizing the other learning conditions for both groups. A four week "The Simple Past Tense" program was prepared for both groups to determine the effectiveness of digital stories. The printed story for the control group and the digital story for the experimental group were presented and then "The Simple Past Tense" test was applied as post-test. In the experimental group, the story of the Gingerbread Man prepared on Storyjumper, a digital story making program, was presented. For the control group, The Gingerbread Man story was presented in paper printed format.

The Dependent Sample t-Test and Covariance Analysis (ANCOVA) were used in the analysis of data collected before and after four-week "The Simple Past Tense" program. The data were analyzed on a computer by using the SPSS 20 for Windows package program.

3. FINDINGS

Before the analysis of the collected data, the normality test was performed to determine whether the distribution of the findings obtained from the pre-test and post-test results of the experimental and control groups were normal. The results of obtained from the normality test are shown in Table 2, and Table 3.

Table 2. Experimental and Control Groups Pretest Normality Test Results

Groups	Experimental	Control
N	17	17
Median	60	55
Mean	56.18	54.12
Mode	65	60
Standard Deviation	9.92	9.05
Variance	98.52	81.98
Max	70	70
Min	35	35
Range	35	35
Skewness	.695	.920
Kurtosis	.308	1.024

As a result of the analysis of the points taken from the pre-test of the experimental and control group students, the mean values were found as 56,18 and 54,12, median 60 and 55, mod 65 and 60, and the standard deviations were 9,92 and 9,05, respectively. The variance points were 98.52 and 81.98. The highest score was 70 for both groups and the lowest score was 35. Pallant (2001) stated that for the normal distribution of skewness and kurtosis values, it should take a value between +2 and -2. On the table above, the skewness of the pretest was .695 in the experimental group and .920 in the control group. The kurtosis was found to be .308 and 1.024, respectively. Based on these findings, the pre-test shows normal distribution in both groups.

Table 3. Experimental and Control Groups Posttest Normality Test Results

Groups	Experimental	Control
N	17	17
Median	80	55
Mean	77.06	57.06
Mode	75	55
Standard Deviation	11.86	8.84
Variance	140.80	78.30
Max	95	70

Min	55	40
Range	40	30
Skewness	.400	.717
Kurtosis	.783	.112

As a result of the analysis of the points taken from the post-test of the experimental and control group students, the mean values were found as 77.06 and 57.06, medians 80 and 55, modes 75 and 55, and the standard deviations were 11.86 and 8.84, respectively. The variance values were 140.80 and 78.30. The highest score was 95 for the experimental and 70 for the control groups, and the lowest scores were 55 and 40, respectively. On the table above, the skewness of the posttest was .400 in the experimental group and .717 in the control group. The kurtosis was found to be .783 and .112, respectively. Based on these findings, the post-test shows normal distribution in both groups.

The results of pre-test and post-test, applied to the training program prepared within the scope of this study, were evaluated by using Dependent Samples t-Test and Covariance Analysis. The results obtained from the analysis are shown in Table 4, Table 5, and Table 6.

Table 4. Dependent Samples t-Test Results on Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Experimental Group Students

Experimental Group	N	$\overline{X}$	Sd	df	t	p
Pre-test	17	56.17	9.92			
				16	-12.47	0.00
Post-test	17	77.05	11.86			

$p<0.05$

As seen in Table 4, the mean of pre-test scores of 17 students in the experimental group is 56,17. The mean of post-test scores of experimental group was found as 77,05. As a result of Dependent Samples t-Test using pre-test and post-test scores, there was a significant difference between pre-test and post-test means of the students in the experimental group in favor of the post-test ($t_{(0.00)}$= -12.47; p <0.05). This can be expressed as the fact that digital stories have a positive influence on students' reading comprehension success in English.

Pre-test and post-test scores of the control group students were analyzed by Dependent Samples t-Test to determine whether the increase in the post-test scores were significant. The results of the analysis on the scores are given in Table 5.

Table 5. Dependent Samples t-Test Results on Pre-test and Post-test Scores of Control Group Students

Control Group	N	$\overline{X}$	Sd	df	T	p
Pre-test	17	54.11	9.05			
				16	-3.05	0.01
Post-test	17	57.75	8.84			

$p<0.05$

The arithmetic mean of pre-test scores of 17 students in the control group was 54.11, and the arithmetic average of the scores they got from the post-test was 57.05. According to the results of the Dependent Samples t-Test on pre-test and post-test scores, there was a significant difference between the average scores of the control group students in favor of the post-test ($t_{(0.01)}$= -3.05, $p < 0.05$). This can be interpreted as a positive effect of the printed story on the

students' reading comprehension success in English.

The results of the Dependent Samples t-Test revealed that the methods used in both groups had an effect on students' reading comprehension success. ANCOVA analysis was done on the post-test scores of the students in both experimental and control groups by taking the pre-test scores as "covariant variable" to explain if there is any difference between the post-test scores of the groups and when there is a difference, to explain whether this difference is due to experimental conditions. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Results of ANCOVA on The Post-test Scores of The Students In Experimental and Control Groups

Source of Variance	Sd	df	MS	F	p	η^2
Pre-test	0.31	6	0.52	0.86	0.54	0.21
Treatment	5.14	7	0.73	12.08	0.00	0.81
Error	1.15	19	0.06			
Sum	85.00	34				

According to the analysis results, when the pre-test scores of the students in experiment group in which English lessons were given with digital story, and control group in which English was taught with printed story, were controlled, the difference between the post-test scores was significant (F= 12.08, $p < 0.05$ (0.00). In other words, the use of digital stories in English lessons has a positive influence on students' reading comprehension success. It has been determined that the lessons carried out with digital stories prepared for the students in the experimental group have more positive effect on the reading comprehension skills of the students than the printed stories.

4. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In this study, it was searched whether the effect of digital and printed stories on reading comprehension success of fifth grade students in English was significantly differentiated. As a result of pre-test and post-test analyzes within the scope of the research, it has been determined that both digital and printed stories have a significant effect on students' reading and comprehension success in English. However, in terms of impact level, it has been found that digital stories have more influence on students' reading and comprehension success than printed stories. The impact of the printed stories on the success of the control group students' reading and comprehension in English is considered as the natural outcome of the educational process, the influence of digital stories on the success of experimental group students' reading and comprehension in English to be more effective, can be interpreted as the effect of digital stories. It is also evident that the difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the experimental group is greater than the difference between that of control group. In addition, according to the research investigated by Aitkuzhinova-Arslan and her friends (2016) showed that in foreign language vocabulary teaching, the effect of digital stories is much more than the traditional teaching methods. When we look at the characteristics of digital stories, it can be said that visualization, mobility, student-centered activity and high student participation have significantly influenced the students' reading and comprehension skills in English. Also, digital stories are seen as a way of learning by the students because of the fact that they present a visual

world, which is dynamic, lively and attractive to the students. Similarly, Tatlı and Aksoy (2017) investigated the effect of digital stories on foreign language speaking and they found that digital storytelling method positively affected retention of learning and that provided an opportunity for self-expression of students, who do not like to make presentations in the classroom, more easily and comfortably.

It can be said that this method develops four basic skills in language learning, blends them with project-based learning, and enables effective learning. While it is known that there is not enough work to measure the effects of digital stories in language learning, existing ones also support the results of our study. Several studies have shown that digital storytelling goes beyond the capabilities of traditional storytelling by generating student interest, concentration and motivation, facilitating student collaboration and organization of ideas, helping students to comprehend complex learning content and, presenting knowledge in an adaptive and meaningful manner (Robin, 2005; Sadik, 2008; Van Gils, 2005). In a study conducted by Hickman et al. (2004), it has been concluded that digital stories improve research, writing and speaking skills of foreign language learners. In another experimental study, Abidin, et al. (2011) researched the effects of digital stories on the listening comprehension skills of pre-school students in foreign language teaching. The experimental group who watched digital stories were more successful (Cigerci and Gultekin, 2017).

Yang and Wu (2012) investigated the effects of digital stories on language education in a research they conducted on English education. One of the results of this research is that digital stories are more successful than traditional presentation on motivation, academic achievement and critical thinking skills. As a result of a study by Torres et al. (2012), it was stated that digital stories encourage cooperative learning in which students work independently by following the directions. In their study, Gyabak and Godina (2011) pointed out that students developed a sense of voice, and the digital storytelling activity engaged an effective medium for both carrying their stories and also integrating a practical form of early computer instruction for a population who had no previous exposure to technology.

In the direction of the findings of this research, English lessons should be processed with the help of digital stories and students should be encouraged to use them in order to develop reading comprehension skills particularly in the fifth grade and generally in all levels and classes. In further studies, teachers could be provided extensive trainings on digital story preparing and they should be encouraged to use their own digital stories for foreign language teaching. Also, they could encourage the students to prepare their own digital stories and present them in English. In this study, the researchers aimed to investigate the effects of digital stories on reading and comprehension skills. In future studies, the researchers can investigate the use of digital stories on writing, listening and speaking skills, and vocabulary learning.

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