

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background, the research questions, the research purposes, the research significance, the research scope, the conceptual framework, and the previous studies.

A. Research Background

English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners often have difficulty developing their listening skills, as this requires understanding spoken English when listening to the English words. To overcome these challenges, educators have begun to explore innovative approaches to improve EFL learners' listening skills. EFL learners can improve their listening abilities interestingly and interactively by utilizing digital storytelling combined with the ViCA (Visualization, Collaboration, and Action) strategies.

According to Solak (2016), listening is a process that involves active involvement and interaction, where listeners seek to interpret spoken words by taking in spoken sounds. Renukadevi (2014) asserts that listening is a fundamental receptive skill that involves several cognitive processes, including understanding, predicting, inferring, assessing, and interpreting the speakers' intended meaning. Smeda et al. (2014) stated that good listeners are more likely to be successful communicators than poor listeners. However, many EFL learners struggle with listening comprehension due to a lack of focus or inadequate teaching methods. Learners' performance will not be outstanding if they do not focus entirely during listening practice (Kutlu & Aslanoğlu, 2009). Hence, there is a requirement for a creative and efficient method to improve the listening skills of EFL learners.

According to Brown (2006), there are three indicators of listening: listening for the main idea, listening for details, listening, and making inferences. First, when listening actively, the listener must identify the main ideas conveyed in the conversation. Second, listeners must focus on extracting specific and complex details from the dialogue to gain a comprehensive understanding. Lastly, making

inferences requires the listener to interpret the meaning implied in the conversation.

The use of digital storytelling is an interesting method and has the potential to improve EFL learners' listening skills. Digital storytelling is short technology-based stories accompanied by text, pictures, audio, and video displayed for several minutes (Robin, 2016). In education and language learning studies, using digital stories in educational settings is beneficial for classroom teaching (Khasanah et al., 2023). According to Wang & Zhan (2010), digital storytelling helps learners to develop their imagination, creativity, critical thinking, and communication skills. It also provides opportunities for learners to practice listening in authentic contexts.

ViCA (Visualization, Collaboration, and Action) is a learning strategy that can be utilized to improve the listening skills of EFL learners using digital storytelling. According to Zulfa & Putri (2023), there are several benefits associated with the ViCA strategy, including improved listening focus among learners, the ability to make the most of their listening activities, more engaging and exciting classes, more active and critical thinking among learners, and the ability to assess learners' levels of achievement of learning objectives. According to Taylor et al. (2018), incorporating visualizations into digital storytelling improves learners' comprehension of spoken English, leading to more efficient material acquisition. Visualization can help motivate learners and foster an engaging learning environment in the classroom (Fatemipour & Hashemi, 2016). Moreover, collaborative learning is a component of the ViCA strategies, where learners work together to solve challenges through discussion. In collaborative learning, learners work in small groups to tackle obstacles and consider solutions (Kolodner & Nagel, 1999). According to Wiersma (2000), collaborative learning is an approach that emphasizes teamwork, building, learning, and improvement. The final stage, "action" refers to the actions that learners take, such as completing worksheets provided by the teacher (Zulfa & Putri, 2023).

Digital storytelling without ViCA primarily involves creating narratives using multimedia elements such as text, images, music, and video (Jakes & Brennan, 2005). The emphasis is on crafting an engaging story that utilizes these

visuals to evoke emotion and engage the audience. This approach focuses on the creative process of storytelling through digital media, aiming to captivate viewers through the effective use of images, sound, and narration. However, it may lack structured opportunities for interactive learning and collaborative engagement between learners.

In contrast, digital storytelling with ViCA integrates three main components: visualization, collaboration, and action (Zulfa & Putri, 2023). Visualization involves presenting information graphically to improve understanding, while collaboration encourages students to work together, fosters teamwork, and mutual respect. Actions encourage students to apply what they have learned through activities such as presentations or projects. This holistic approach enhances the visual storytelling experience and encourages active participation, critical thinking, and skill development among learners. ViCA enriches the educational process by combining storytelling with interactive elements that stimulate deeper engagement and learning outcomes.

In this regard, this research aims to investigate further how digital storytelling with ViCA strategies might help EFL learners become more proficient listeners. This research is significant because listening comprehension is a fundamental component of language learning, and many EFL learners struggle with spoken language (Slimani & Moubtassim, 2023). Activities, including digital storytelling, are designed to meet predetermined learning objectives, improve listening comprehension, and provoke thought (Datko, 2014).

This research argues that using digital storytelling as an alternative can help learners become better listeners in dealing with this situation. ViCA strategies are used to assist learning. The researcher is interested in conducting research titled "Improving EFL Learners' Listening Skills through Digital Storytelling with ViCA strategies." The findings of this research can be beneficial to EFL learners and English language teachers in improving instruction and listening activities in EFL settings. Aside from that, this research can further our comprehension of how technology is used for language acquisition.

B. Research Questions

There are two following questions to be investigated in this research:

1. What are the experiences of EFL learners regarding the use of digital storytelling with ViCA strategies as a means to improve their listening skills?
2. What are the challenges of EFL learners regarding the use of digital storytelling with ViCA strategies as a means to improve their listening skills?

C. Research Purposes

Regarding the research problem above, this research aims:

1. To find out the experiences of EFL learners regarding the use of digital storytelling with ViCA strategies as a means to improve their listening skills.
2. To find out the challenges of EFL learners regarding the use of digital storytelling with ViCA strategies as a means to improve their listening skills.

D. Research Significances

The following theoretical and practical significances of the research:

a. Theoretical Significances

Theoretically, this research can shed light on the effectiveness of innovative pedagogical approaches in language learning, offering valuable insights into the intersection between technology, storytelling, and language acquisition by exploring the lived experiences of learners. Furthermore, uncovering the challenges learners face in this context can provide educators and researchers with information about potential barriers to effective implementation, thereby guiding the development of tailored learning strategies to overcome these barriers and optimize learning outcomes in the EFL context.

b. Practical Significances

Practically, the results of this research are expected to provide valuable contributions to teachers, learners, and researchers. The following are the significances of this research:

1. The Teachers

The results can be used by English teachers to understand EFL learners' experiences with digital storytelling and ViCA strategies, which can help teachers identify the most effective aspects for improving listening skills, resulting in more targeted and efficient teaching methods. Teachers can adjust their methods based on learners' experiences and challenges, offering support and integrating supplementary material. It is a foundation for continuous professional development, keeping teachers updated on modern teaching techniques. The research empowers teachers to choose digital resources that meet learners' needs, enhancing learning.

2. Learners

Digital storytelling can transform EFL learning by making it more engaging and enjoyable, motivating learners to participate more actively, and improving their listening skills. The immersive experience that combines visual, collaboration, and action elements aids in better retention and comprehension. Additionally, understanding and addressing learners' specific challenges allows for more targeted support, helping them overcome obstacles more effectively. Furthermore, the insights gained from this research can facilitate personalized learning experiences, catering to diverse learning styles and needs, ultimately leading to a more effective and inclusive educational environment.

3. Researchers

The research results can be used by researchers. The significance of this research lies in its ability to contribute new insights to existing knowledge about EFL learning, particularly through the lens of digital

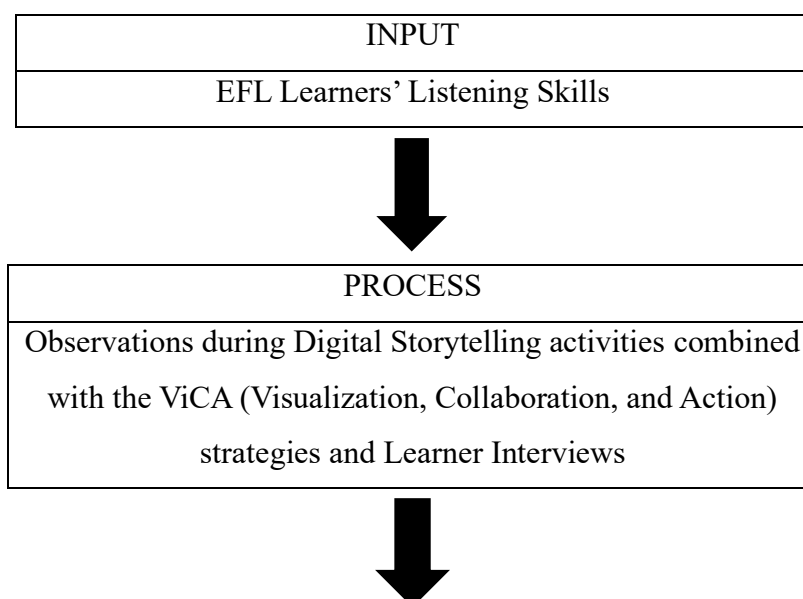
storytelling and VICA strategies. It identifies gaps in current teaching methods, highlights areas requiring further exploration, and guides future research efforts. The practical application of this research is also interesting, as it supports evidence-based practice in EFL education, which can potentially influence curriculum design and teaching strategies on a broader scale. Additionally, it paves the way for interdisciplinary studies that integrate education, technology, linguistics, and psychology, thereby encouraging a more holistic approach to language learning.

E. Research Scope

This research focuses on improving listening skills. EFL learners in senior high school will participate in this research. The application used is digital storytelling with an animated video of a myth taken from YouTube entitled “The Legend of the Crying Stone” and a digital storytelling project using photo story 3 from Widodo (2016), which can improve EFL learners' listening skills. ViCA strategies from Zulfa & Putri (2023) are also used to assist listening learning in EFL learners’ classroom.

F. Conceptual Framework

This research analyzes improving EFL learners' listening skills through digital storytelling with the ViCA strategies. The conceptual framework is outlined below:



OUTPUT
Good Results in Improving EFL Learners' Listening Skills

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework combines the elements of EFL learners' listening skills, digital storytelling with ViCA strategies. The acquisition of listening skills plays a crucial role in effective communication as it enables individuals to receive information and comprehend languages (Sardorbekovna, 2024). The process of listening comprehension involves a sequential progression of three steps: receiving, attending, and understanding (Kline, 1996). Responding and remembering can come after understanding since listeners can choose to reply right away or save the message to reply later (Wolvin & Coakley, 1985).

Digital storytelling refers to using multimedia tools to create and share stories, incorporating audiovisual content that can increase interest in learning and improve listening comprehension. In research by Budianto et al. (2021), learners believed that digital storytelling may help them become more motivated to learn, understand the story's substance more fully, and develop their listening abilities. According to Gestanti (2017), digital storytelling is a perfect tool for teaching listening skills since it encourages in-depth, reflective learning, draws in, and inspires learners.

ViCA (Visualization, Collaboration, and Action) strategies are used to offer a comprehensive approach to improving EFL learners' listening skills using digital storytelling. According to Zulfa & Putri (2023), ViCA strategies are a learning approach that consists of three stages: (1) visualization, where learners use their senses to listen to the audio-visual content displayed; (2) collaboration, where learners work together with other learners to solve problems; and (3) action, where learners fill in their worksheets. It will provide a rich and deep learning experience, allowing learners to connect spoken language and visual representations to listening skills, engage in meaningful discussions, and apply their knowledge in real-world contexts.

The integration of digital storytelling methods with ViCA strategies in EFL classrooms has the potential to improve learners' listening skills significantly. According to Tanriku (2020), digital storytelling helps learners examine and critique ideas by listening and watching better than conventional storytelling. By incorporating digital storytelling with ViCA strategies, learners can actively participate, visualize concepts, collaborate with peers, and engage in meaningful actions, leading to more enjoyable and effective learning experiences (Zulfa & Putri, 2023). This integration not only focuses on listening skill development but also considers the experiences of EFL learners. Based on learning activities, experience aids learners in validating, modifying, and interpreting their predictions and judgments (Gilakjani & Ahmadi, 2011). Understanding this experience is expected to provide enlightenment, and learners can feel the benefits of using digital storytelling methods with the ViCA strategies to improve their listening skills.

The principal tools employed in this investigation are observations and interviews. Interviews were used to gain comprehensive insight from EFL learners regarding their experiences and the impact of digital storytelling with ViCA strategies on their listening skills. Understanding the significance of interviewees' statements is the primary goal of the process (Moser & Korstjens, 2018). Observations of learners' involvement, responses, and interactions with the multimedia content will be made during digital storytelling activities with ViCA strategies to gather important information for analysis. According to Gorman & Clayton (2005), observation studies are those in which observable behaviors or occurrences are systematically recorded in a natural environment. The results will add to the body of evidence regarding the efficacy of digital storytelling with ViCA strategies as a teaching strategy for improving listening skills in EFL contexts. The expected outcomes would suggest that EFL learners' listening skills are improved by digital storytelling with ViCA strategies.

G. Previous Studies

Firstly, in research published in 2021, Budianto et al. investigated how middle school learners' EFL listening classes may incorporate digital storytelling

with exploration learning. The researchers emphasized the significance of integrating technology in the classroom to capture the attention of digital native learners. They discovered that digital storytelling proved an innovative and effective approach to teaching listening skills. To collect data, the researchers in Bali, Indonesia, spoke with thirty kids and a middle school English teacher through questionnaires, observations, and interviews. The findings showed that learners were very motivated and engaged while employing digital storytelling to develop their listening skills. However, a challenge arose during the communication stage due to the limited vocabulary in Bahasa Indonesia. According to the research, to overcome this problem, EFL teachers should give learners vocabulary pertinent to the topic at hand to help them communicate effectively during digital storytelling sessions. Overcoming this vocabulary limitation is crucial for effective listening instruction.

Secondly, the research conducted by Juvrianto et al. (2018) aimed to see how Digital Storytelling (DST) affected the listening comprehension skills of eighth-grade learners. They collected data using open-ended questions and listening comprehension tests using a neat QUAN-Qual model. The experimental group, which was exposed to DST, outperformed the control group on the post-test, as seen by the results. The statistical analysis confirmed the alternative hypothesis (H1) and the null hypothesis (H0) were rejected. Furthermore, the learners were ecstatic to employ digital storytelling as a language learning aid. They gave insightful input following four weeks of use in the teaching and learning process.

Thirdly, Tabieh et al. (2020) investigated how digital storytelling could improve third-grade Arabic language learners' creative thinking and active listening skills. Their sample comprised 200 remarkable learners who were split equally into two groups: the control group and the experimental group. Both groups took two post-tests: one evaluated their ability to listen actively, and the other evaluated their capacity for creative thought, including fluency, adaptability, and originality. The results of the active listening skills posttest showed some significant differences ($p < 0.05$) in the mean scores between the experimental and

control groups. Excellent learning outcomes were achieved by the learners who received story instruction. The research also found that fluency, one of the three components of creative thinking, was improved among the learners in the experimental group through storytelling. ju

Fourthly, The ViCA (Visualization, Collaboration, and Action) approach in learning to listen to news texts for class VIII was studied by Zulfa & Putri (2023). Descriptive qualitative methodology was used in this research. The main data source for this research is news texts studied through listening with the ViCA learning approach. Learner worksheets related to news content components are used as research tools. Data collection techniques involve observation. This research uses a descriptive data analysis approach to explain the ViCA learning approach. A total of 15 learners in class VIII were used as research subjects. Research findings show an improvement after learners implemented the ViCA method. The collaboration stage carried out by learners through discussion provides a better understanding than before regarding the material and news broadcasts they have listened to. Learners understand the material and news broadcasts better in collaboration and discussion stages. More complete learner answers demonstrate this change.

In contrast to earlier studies, this research aims to determine how digital storytelling with ViCA strategies impacts EFL learners' listening skills. Through qualitative case study techniques, this research seeks to close this research gap by examining the role of digital storytelling with ViCA strategies in helping EFL learners improve their active listening and comprehension skills. This research will also discuss ViCA in more depth because only one source researches it. The findings of this research will contribute to our understanding of language learning and provide educators with practical advice on how to employ digital storytelling with ViCA strategies to help EFL learners' listening comprehension.