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Digital Storytelling Trends in Early Childhood Education in Indonesia: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT: Digital storytelling is often used in various contexts today, especially in the world of education. Many educators have followed this trend in early childhood education (ECE). This study examines the application of digital storytelling in ECE in Indonesia. Using a systematic literature review (SLR) a method, this research is a qualitative approach which is also known as a meta-synthesis. The literature reviewed was 15 articles from 56 articles that researchers found in the Google Scholar database. The results show that digital storytelling serves as an important method and medium to ensure children's learning experiences are enjoyable. In general, it is used in ECE in Indonesia through simple technology. This technology can enhance a story or fairy tale by making it more fun, interesting, communicative, and dramatic. However, the findings of this review of studies and methodological gaps have implications for ECE policy, practice, and research in Indonesia.

Keywords: digital storytelling, early childhood education, storytelling trend in Indonesia

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1 INTRODUCTION

For a long time, storytelling was used as a distraction in ECE rather than a deliberate and planned educational strategy (Phillips, 2013). Egan (1989) pioneered storytelling as an exciting and meaningful teaching method in early literacy teaching in children. He believes that teaching should take the form of stories because storytelling enhances children's imagination, which is an effective learning technique (Egan, 1989). According to Agosto (2016), storytelling can help develop cognitive engagement, critical thinking, and story sequencing. In addition, his research shows that follow-up activities such as conversation, retelling, and topic-related activities (written or spoken) can help develop children's literacy skills. ECE has relied heavily on conventional text-based reading and writing forms, including storytelling, rarely using digital technology (Boltman & Druin, 2001). The rapid progress of globalization requires educational institutions to upgrade their teaching methodologies. Digital technology can be used in the classroom to help children develop an interest and drive to learn (Ahmad, 2022).

At the most basic level, digital storytelling (DS) is the activity of telling stories through computer-based technology. Its narratives, electronic memoirs, documentaries, interactive storytelling, and even digital essays are terms used to describe the process (Shelton et al., 2017). The basis of this activity is the use of multimedia components, including graphics, video and audio, and online publishing technologies (Tahriri et al., 2015). Like conventional storytelling, it covers various issues and has a specific character. However, the term "digital storytelling" indicates that this story combines computer-generated graphics, text, recorded voice narration, and video footage (Tatli et al., 2018).

Digital storytelling is often used in various contexts today, the most significant of which is to improve students' speaking skills in the classroom (Kogila et al., 2020). It is a new way to help children have social, motivational, and language values and be passionate about learning. Telling stories with digital models can make children more motivated to be creative. In addition to storytelling, children increase their knowledge and skills by reading their stories and using the media with the things they make and skills by reading their stories and using the media with the things they make (Rosyidah & Putri, 2019). Digital storytelling allows for an impressive interaction between context and information, which is essential for improving students' speaking skills (Chambers & Yunus, 2017).

This study is unique in terms of the item being examined, specifically the findings of studies in Indonesia on the use of digital storytelling in ECE. The researcher undertook a systematic review of the associated literature, which he gathered from various sources. The difference between this study and prior research is that in this study, researchers synthesize the findings of relevant past studies to highlight the trend of using digital storytelling in ECE in Indonesia. What is the urgency of introducing this activity in ECE in Indonesia, and how is it executed is the review question posed by the researcher?

2 THEORITICAL STUDY

Digital storytelling is the latest means to express oneself through stories or fairy tales from various media sources. Porter (2004) defines it as combining the traditional art of storytelling with technological tools to describe a story or fairy tale through visuals, graphics, music, and sound, including the storyteller's voice. This definition aligns with Robin (2008) and Psomos and Kordaki (2015), which define as conventional storytelling enhanced with multimedia. On the other hand, Kearney et al.(2012) define it is a short story filmed in the video format. Numerous studies with older children have shown that digital storytelling can excite children's interest and drive them to learn while facilitating their understanding of complex subject matter (Robin, 2008; Sadik, 2008).

Like conventional storytelling, it covers various issues and has a specific character. However, the term "digital storytelling" indicates that this story combines computer-generated graphics, text, recorded voice narration, and video footage (Robin & McNeil, 2019). While stories can be extensive, instructive stories are generally three and ten minutes long. The subjects of digital storytelling often range from diverse experiences to gathering historical events and examining people's lives in their communities and everything in between (Wahyuni et al., 2018).

Many empirical studies on DS in children's education have been carried out. Demirbaş and Şahin (2020) conducted a study on this activity in Turkey using the systematic literature review method. The findings state that DS increases student motivation, creative and critical thinking skills, and problem-solving skills. The study explained DS could be used in various fields and disciplines, and digital storytelling can be applied to students at different levels. Next, Nair and Yunus (2021) conduct a systematic review of DS in improving speaking skills. His findings suggest that educators can use DS as a valuable tool in enhancing students' speaking skills at various educational levels, from primary education to higher education. Most of the research articles provide empirical evidence that reinforces the advantages of using digital stories in the classroom to help students communicate and speak more effectively.

From the study, the researcher highlighted that the implementation of DS had become mainstream in education, especially early childhood education. Using digital media to apply storytelling strategies is proven to help educators and students achieve learning goals. This study seeks to map trends in DS in early childhood education. This study aims to provide readers with a better understanding of DS trends in ECE in Indonesia, especially in the last five years.

3 METHOD

This study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) method with a qualitative approach, also known as meta-synthesis, to answer research problems. A SLR is a scientific procedure guided by a specific and strict set of rules to establish the methodology's completeness, bias-free nature, transparency, and accountability and implementation (Dixon-Woods, 2010). A qualitative approach in a systematic review is

used to synthesize (summarize) the results of descriptive studies. The method of synthesizing (summarizing) the results of these studies is called meta-synthesis. Meta-synthesis is defined as a technique of integrating data to obtain new theories or concepts or a deeper and more thorough level of understanding (Perry & Hammond, 2002). Researchers reviewed several research publications and journals related to DS trends in ECE in Indonesia. This study aims to describe and explain trends in DS in ECE in Indonesia. This study conceptually explores the critical components of how DS is implemented by reviewing selected studies related to DS.

The literature accessed for review consists of electronic journals and/or proceedings. This study is based on a systematic analysis of the literature sourced from the central database, namely Google Scholar. Literature processing is carried out based on journals dated between 2017-2021. Therefore, the researcher used seven steps in the literature review to carry the analysis in this study. It includes defining the scoping phase. The literature searches phase, the screening phase, the literature mapping phase, the quality assessment phase, the findings synthesis phase, and finally, the conclusion phase. This SLR is driven by several review questions (RQ): (1) RQ1 What is the urgency of digital storytelling in ECE in Indonesia? (2) RQ2 How is digital storytelling implemented in ECE in Indonesia?

3.1 Procedure

To ensure that the review that the researcher conducts is systematic, the researcher follows several procedures (Davies et al., 2013).

3.1.1 Establish the scope of the review:

The researcher begins by developing inclusion criteria to determine which studies will be included in the review (see table 1).

Table 1. Inclusion Criteria for Review (Meta-Synthesis)

Criteria Type	Inclusion Criteria
Theme	The literature should relate directly to the review questions above (environment, student impact, teacher role, teacher support, parental warfare).
Recency	The literature was published between 2017-2021.
Age Range	The literature should relate to ages 0-8 years.
Geographical Spread	Literature should relate mainly to studies in Indonesia
Research Base	The literature should be based on empirical research (qualitative and quantitative).
Transparency	The research methodology on which the literature is based should be explicit (e.g., sample size, instrument, analysis).
Reliability/Validity	As far as can be determined, the literature's findings should be valid and reliable, considering the type of study.

3.1.2 Searching the Literature

The researcher identified relevant studies in various literature. The database used in this systematic literature review is the Google Scholar database (see table 2).

Table 2. Types of Literature and Sources Sought

Literature Type	Source
Journal Article	Search database online via Google Scholar
Proceeding	Search database online via Google Scholar

Agreed Search Keywords:

"Digital storytelling" AND ("anak usia dini" OR "early childhood" OR "PAUD" OR "TK" OR "PIAUD").

3.1.3 Screening the Literature

Each literature was screened according to the inclusion criteria. It helps avoid hidden bias by having clear, consistent rules about which studies to answer the research question. By assessing each study against the same criteria and recording the results, the basis for the review's conclusions is made transparent.

3.1.4 Describe and Mapping

The researcher describes the methodology and findings of each included study, including variables such as population focus, study design, and critical characteristics related to the research question. It is used to construct a descriptive map which provides a systematic description of the research activity about each question.

3.1.5 Assessment of Quality and Relevance

Researchers evaluate each study in a descriptive map regarding the following: (1) The quality of the research determines the credibility of the results according to generally recognized standards for conducting a particular type of research from the research design (methodological quality) and (2) the suitability of the research design to address their specific research topic (methodological relevance). (3) Research emphasis is acceptable to answer review questions (topic relevance). (4) The overall weight of evidence (WoE) in table 3 is determined based on the weight assigned to the criteria above (Gough, 2007).

Table 3. Criteria for Judging the Weight of Evidence

Level/Criteria	Methodology Quality	Methodology Relevance	Topic Relevance
1: Excellent	Excellent research design justifies all decisions taken: e.g., sample, instrument, analysis—clear evidence of actions taken to maximize validity and reliability.	The research question is clearly stated. The methodology is highly relevant to RQ and answers it in detail.	The study is closely related to one of the leading review questions and provides robust evidence to base future policy/action.
2: Good	The research design is clearly stated with evidence of decisions taken to provide valid and reliable findings.	Review questions are explicit or can be inferred from the text. Findings address RQ.	The study aligns with one of the leading review questions and provides valuable evidence.

Level/Criteria	Methodology Quality	Methodology Relevance	Topic Relevance
3: Satisfactory	The research design may be implicit but seems reasonable and generates valuable data.	The RQ is implicit but appears to be broadly matched to the design and findings of the study.	At least some of the research findings are relevant to one of the leading review questions.
4: Inadequate	The study design is not mentioned and contains flaws.	RQ is not stated or not according to design.	The study did not answer the critical question.

3.1.6 Synthesizing Study Findings

This involves summarizing the research methodology, findings, and evidence weights from the joint mapping exercise under a thematic heading as a narrative paragraph summarizing the main message and its relative evidence base. Several studies, each with high WoE, support the findings. It is described as strong evidence. Findings with fewer studies or studies with lower WoE were described as reasonable evidence.

3.1.7 Conclusions/Recommendations

The researcher draws up a series of recommendations closely related to the synthesis findings to create a transparent basis for each recommendation. It includes identifying potential limitations in generalizing or transferring the findings. The research procedure can be observed more simply through a flow chart that describes the process of systematic review of the SLR research steps, which can be seen in Figure 1.

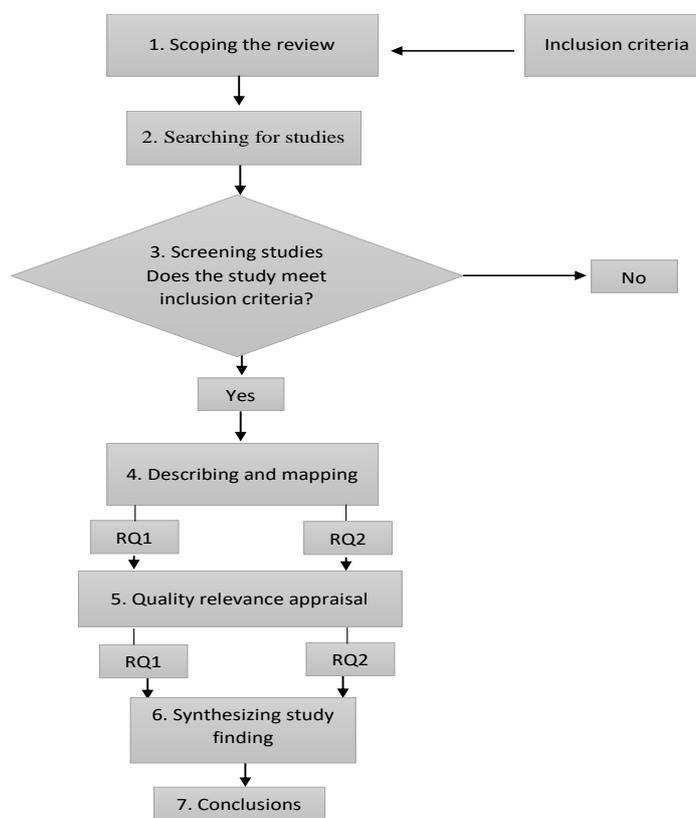


Figure 1. Research Framework adapted from (Davies et al., 2013)

4 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

From a systematic review of 56 scientific literature published in the 2017-2021 period, researchers only found 15 empirical studies that met the inclusion criteria, and their findings answered the review questions. Of these, 8 are experimental/quasi-experimental studies with research subjects aged 4-8 years. The other 3 are action research with subjects aged 5-6 years, two development studies related to media, and learning models tested on children. Then 2 are a case study, which involves collecting qualitative data such as interviews, classroom observations, and reflective journals of teachers or students.

Table 4. Literature that Meets Inclusion Criteria and Weight of Evidence

Authors	Topics	Age Group	Country	Publication Type	Methods	Sample Size	Related RQ (1-2)	Weight of Evidence (1-4)
Aisha & Kaloeti, (2021)	Social Behavior	5-7 Years	IDN	Journal	Experiment	11 Childs	1, 2	1
Karlina et al. (2018)	Speaking Ability	5-6 Years	IDN	Journal	Classroom Action Research	10 Childs	1, 2	2
Maghfiroh et al. (2020)	Media	Kindergarten and Elementary School	IDN	Journal	Development	-	1, 2	2
Manullang et al. (2021)	Cognitive	Kindergarten	IDN	Proceeding	Development	45 Childs	1, 2	2
Maureen et al. (2018)	Literacy	5-6 Years	IDN	Journal	Experiment	45 Childs	1, 2	1
Maureen et al. (2020)	Literacy	5-6 Years	IDN	Journal	Experiment	62 Childs	1, 2	1
Maureen et al. (2021)	Literacy	4-5 Years	IDN	Journal	Experiment	49 Childs	1, 2	1
Nuraina et al. (2018)	Character	Kindergarten	IDN	Proceeding	Experiment	-	1, 2	2
Pusparina et al. (2020)	Healthy	Preschool	IDN	Journal	Quasi Experiment	30 Childs	1, 2	1
Rahiem (2021)	Digital Literacy	Early Childhood Education	IDN	Journal	Case Study	4 Teachers and 72 Childs	1, 2	2
Sulistianingsih (2017)	Emotional Intelligence	3-4 Elementary School	IDN	Journal	Experiment	-	1, 2	2
Tri Aprilia & Hasibuan (2021)	Language Skill	5-6 Years	IDN	Journal	Pre-Experimental Design	20 Childs	1, 2	1
Tridinanti (2017a)	Language	5-6 t Years	IDN	Journal	Classroom Action Research	20 Childs	1, 2	2

Tridinanti (2017b)	Language Skill	5-6 Years	IDN	Journal	Classroom Action Research	20 Childs	1, 2	2
Yordan & Fahyuni (2021)	Learning	3 Elementary School	IDN	Journal	Qualitative	-	1, 2	3

Table 4 shows, overall, 15 of the empirical studies involved Pre-School or Kindergarten (TK) students and students in grades 1-3 of primary school. Then the researchers used the literature to answer the review questions (RQ) that the researchers formulated earlier. In this study, the researcher asked two review questions related to digital storytelling trends in early childhood in Indonesia, including the urgency of DS in ECE and how it is implemented in the learning process.

4.2 Discussion

4.2.1 RQ1 What is the urgency of digital storytelling in early childhood education in Indonesia?

A teacher can use a variety of practical teaching approaches when teaching children at the ECE level. Storytelling is one of the most effective methods to make children's learning environment more enjoyable by combining instructional objectives and learning activities. This technique is based on new teaching and learning ideas to build a constructive learning environment that emphasizes the information, and skills needed to present stories effectively and fairy tales through writing, telling, or reading narratives. Therefore, this strategy can improve learning outcomes by increasing student participation in the learning process. This strategy can help children improve their communication skills by enabling them to express their feelings appropriately and respect the emotions of others (Malik et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, the application of the storytelling method has become mainstream in ECE. However, digital media has become a new trend in implementing storytelling methods to replace conventional media. For many years, ECE storytelling techniques were limited to traditional text-based reading and writing types, puppets, story-related items, and computerized media used sparingly (Maureen et al., 2018, 2020). Therefore, incorporating storytelling activities into ECE can be beneficial by using fairy tale elements related to properties such as pictures and dolls and technology, which results in DS that is technique that integrates the art of storytelling with various digital media, including images and sounds (Maureen et al., 2021).

In his research, Maghfiroh (2020) argues that aspects of child development can be facilitated by learning storytelling with the help of animated videos of puppet creations. Children can obtain various benefits from storytelling, including can help children develop their imagination. Help children gain experience and improve their concentration. Help children expand vocabulary, develop their grasping power and social feelings, develop emotions, practice listening, introduce positive and negative values, and improve their knowledge.

Using audio-visual technology in storytelling (digital storytelling) helps develop children's empathy skills. In addition, presenting stories using audio-visual media can help build children's absorption, or ability to hold their attention, as well as their creativity and ability to create exciting scenarios. Using DS to teach children is to develop their empathy, perspective-taking, self-awareness, and sense of community (Aisha & Kaloeti, 2021). The use of digital media in early childhood learning through DS helps develop children's digital literacy skills, which are very important for future education (Maureen et al., 2021). Proper use of these digital tools can help children's understanding and motivation by making information more comprehensible and inspiring.

The opinion above is supported by research conducted by Rahiem (2021). The teacher stated that learning in early childhood and moral education through DS was more exciting and fun in his research. Digital Storytelling is exciting and captivating, encouraging children to participate in learning activities. Next, Aprilia (2021) added that children would expand their vocabulary by listening to digital fairy tales. According to the principle of it can help children develop their linguistic abilities. Children acquire new vocabulary skills, widespread vocabulary, or terms that children often use in everyday communication. From the discussion results above, in providing stimulation to children, one must pay attention to children's characteristics, who tend to be interested in fun activities. In this case, digital technology is an essential strategy and media in ensuring that the learning process is fun.

4.2.2 RQ2 How is digital storytelling implemented in early childhood education in Indonesia?

As a follow-up to the previous discussion, DS has a significant impact on learning goals in early childhood education. Several researchers in Indonesia have proven the effectiveness of DS in the early childhood learning process. The researchers used various models or methods of implementing DS into the lesson plans. Nuraina (2018) has conducted experiments on students at the Kindergarten level by applying the fairy tale method with the help of digital media in the form of animated videos. The title of the fairy tale given is Lutung Kasarung's fairy tale. The duration of the treatment is around 30 minutes with video discussion because one video runs for about 10 minutes to 15 minutes. There is a significant difference in children's behavior and attitudes before the digital fairy tale-based learning is carried out and after.

Maureen (2020) believes that compelling storytelling relies on five essential story elements: setting, topic, characters, plot, and conflict, in which children develop story schemes that aid further reading comprehension. At the same time, compelling DS involves personalization, a unique point of view, dramatic questions, dynamic material to personalize content, good power, soundtrack, economic presentation, and speed. There is empirical evidence that strategies that combine narrative and play-based teaching, both spoken and digital, can effectively assist children's literacy and digital literacy development (Maureen, (2021). In another study, designing experimental

conditions for the implementation of DS in early childhood, the construction of activities was based on teaching design (Smith & Ragan, 2005).

Each unit has two or three objectives to contribute to developing literacy skills. These goals become the main idea in each storyline in experimental conditions. A unit consists of a four-part structure: opening (30 minutes), storytelling (digital) (30 minutes), follow-up activities (60 minutes), and closing (30 minutes). In each unit, there is preparation for oral storytelling or digital storytelling. The main storyline is similar for both experimental conditions, but the delivery method is different. The planning details are illustrated for the “My Hobby” theme. Table 5 shows how storytelling (digital) and Gagné's et al., (1988) teaching designs are incorporated into the lesson plan. This lesson aims to recognize everyday words related to their hobbies in written form and have conversations about them.

Table 5. “My Hobby” Lesson Plan: Illustration of the Combination of Digital Storytelling and Gagné's Teaching Design

Gagné's Teaching Design	Class Session
Opening (30 minutes)	
1. Get attention	Involvement in the morning routine
2. Informing students about the goals	The teacher tells the children about the theme and purpose of the day
3. Stimulates memory of previous lessons	- Make a children's activity booklet - Compile the conversation rules poster
Storytelling (Digital) (30 minutes)	
4. Presenting content	- The teacher tells the rules for the session and some story-identification - The teacher tells stories or plays digital stories through projection devices
5. Provide study guidance	The teacher discusses how the stories begin and end, the different parts of the stories, and how they relate to the activities for the rest of the day.
Follow-up activities (60 minutes)	
6. Gain performance	Matching games: hobbies and equipment (game by rules)
7. Provide feedback	What are your hobbies? T (dramatic play)
Closing (30 minutes)	
8. Assess performance	Reviewing hobby survey results
9. Improve retention and transfer	The teacher reviews the story and summarizes the day's activities

A series of activities was developed to encourage age appropriate ECE literacy that integrates DS with Gagné's et al., (1988) instructional design. Digital Storytelling was created to provide appropriate early childhood literacy training (Maureen et al., 2021). Manullang (2021) added that using DS media and educational game applications is proper for using online learning in collaboration with parents. Teachers and parents assist children in using digital video storytelling applications and educational games, doing play, and learning activities together through Zoom Meetings and Offline Learning to develop cognitive abilities of early childhood.

In general, the implementation of DS in ECE in Indonesia uses simple digital technology. This technology can make storytelling entertaining, engaging,

communicative, and theatrical (Rahiem, 2021). Researchers listed several digital technologies used by teachers in applying DS to children, which included: pictures, PowerPoint presentations, sound systems, microphones, screens, LCD projectors, and laptops. These tools are simple digital technologies that teachers use to contextual stories.

4.3 Limitation

This study was limited to the number of studies that were systematically reviewed. This number includes a small number with a wide scope of discussion. Future researchers can continue a more comprehensive study by including many studies from other databases such as Scopus, Science Direct, Web of Science, etc.

5 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, from the discussion above, clearly educators must consider children's character naturally attracted to fun activities in providing stimulation to children. In this scenario, digital storytelling serves as an essential method and medium to ensure that the child's learning experience is enjoyable. In general, digital storytelling is used in early-childhood education in Indonesia through simple digital technology. This technology can enhance a story or fairy tale by making it more fun, engaging, communicative, and dramatic.

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