Child-Friendly Digital Storytelling to Promote Young Learners' Critical Thinking in English Learning

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Abstract : Integrating critical thinking and digital based learning is one of demands in teaching English in 21st century. Child-friendly digital storytelling (CFDS) is an innovative learning model to promote young learners' critical thinking. Therefore, this study aims to (1) investigate how child-friendly digital storytelling is implemented to promote young learners' critical thinking in speaking English; (2) find out the benefits gained by the students in their learning based on CFDS. Classroom Action Research (CAR) took place in two cycles in which each of the cycle covered four phases namely: Planning, Acting, Observing, and Evaluating. Three classes of seventh graders were selected as the subjects of this study. Data were collected through observation, interview with some selected students as respondents, and document analysis in the form individual recorded storytelling. Sentences, phrases, words found in the transcribed data were identified and categorized based on Bloom taxonomy. The findings from the first cycle showed that the students seemed to speak critically that can be seen from the way they understood the story and related the story to their real life. Meanwhile, the result investigated from the second cycle likely indicated their higher level of critical thinking since the students spoke in English critically through comparing, questioning, analyzing, and evaluating the story by giving arguments, opinions, and comments. Such higher levels of critical thinking were also found in the students' final project of individual recorded digital story. It is elaborated from the students' statements in the interview who claimed CFDS offered opportunity to the students to promote their critical thinking because they comprehended the story deeply as they experienced in their real life. This learning model created good learning atmosphere and engaged the students directly so that they looked confident to retell the story in various perspectives. In term of the benefits of child-friendly digital storytelling, the students found it beneficial for some enjoyable classroom activities through watching beautiful and colorful pictures, listening to clear and good sounds, appealing moving motion and emotionally they were involved in that story. In the interview, the students also stated that child-friendly digital storytelling eased them to understand the meaning of the story as they were motivated and enthusiastic to speak in English critically.

Keywords : critical thinking, child-friendly digital storytelling, English speaking, promoting, young learners

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