


Chapter 8

Integration of Digital Picture Books Into Young Learners' Language Classrooms: A Novel Way to Develop Vocabulary Knowledge

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ABSTRACT

The world we live in now is more technological than in the past and continues to change and develop day by day. Our children, who are accepted as 'digital natives,' start to live a life intertwined with technology from the first years of their lives. To prepare them for the age they are in and the lives that await them in the future, digital picture books should be used effectively, especially in early childhood. This chapter discusses the use and importance of picture books in early childhood foreign language learning, the features and usage areas of digital picture books, the role and importance of digital picture books in vocabulary teaching, examples of well-designed digital picture books, websites and applications that offer these examples, and the effects of digital picture books on young learners' foreign language learning.

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INTRODUCTION

The instruction of vocabulary is a very significant component of teaching a foreign language. Without an adequate grasp of vocabulary, it is nearly impossible to communicate successfully in this language, which is one of the primary roles of language. If a student of a foreign language is lacking in vocabulary knowledge, then he or she will not be able to use the language successfully even if they have a very excellent understanding of the rules of the language (Alqahtani, 2015). This is true even if the student has a very high understanding of the rules of the language. Within the parameters of this discussion, vocabulary is one of the fundamental parts that make up the primary branches of the language (Cameron, 2001). When it comes to teaching children a foreign language, teaching vocabulary is another very crucial aspect. Because it is possible for children who are exposed to foreign languages at a young age to grow up to be individuals who are bilingual or multilingual. If children start studying a foreign language from a young age, it will be feasible for them to be prepared to learn a foreign language in the years to come and for them to develop the skills necessary to become individuals who are proficient in a foreign language (Akhtar & Menjivar, 2012).

The use of technological instructional tools has been increasingly common in recent years, and as technology continues to advance, these tools are also becoming easier to access and more efficient (Çetin Köroğlu, 2021). One of these resources is a digital format for children's picture books. Picture books have been digitized, and the resulting products, digital picture books, are now available as audio in various virtual environments. The teaching of foreign languages at a variety of different levels can benefit from the usage of digital books, which are rich in both visuals and content. Both the pupils and the teachers in early childhood foreign language programs will benefit from the usage of digital picture books, which will be an innovative and successful teaching tool (Bus & Anstadt, 2021). Examining the related literature indicated that digital picture books are not used sufficiently in the initial stages of foreign language instruction, and their effects on the language proficiency development of young learners haven't been investigated deeply.

This chapter of the book discusses the characteristics of digital picture books, their role and significance in the instruction of foreign languages, as well as some practical applications for the use of digital picture books in preschool settings.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Stories are important elements in all cultures from the past to the present, both in written and verbal forms. These elements, which reflect the experiences, imagination,

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