

## E-story and Writing Skill among Second Language Learners

**Normaliza ABD RAHIM**

*Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, 43400 Selangor, MALAYSIA  
nliza@upm.edu.my*

**Hazlina ABDUL HALIM**

*Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, 43400 Selangor, MALAYSIA*

**Nor Shahila MANSOR**

*Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, 43400 Selangor, MALAYSIA*

### ABSTRACT

The study focused on the use of e-story and writing skill among the second language Korean learners. The objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the students' writing in the second language by using e-story. The samples of the study involved all 21 participants from two classes of Malay language at one of the universities in South Korea. The participants were taught in the Malay language as the second language for two hours a week in fourteen weeks. The participants were to rewrite the e-story learnt. The result of the study revealed that majority of the participants managed to rewrite the e-story. The participants also seemed to be interested in the e-story since it is different than the normal classroom. Also, the results showed that e-story manage to enhance study learning in the second language. It is hoped that further study will focus on other e-story from the Malay folklore to enhance second language learners in learning.

**Keywords:** e-story, second language learning, motivation, computer

### INTRODUCTION

Learning a second language in the university will be a challenging task for most of the students. However, learning a second language can be tougher when the mode of instruction is in the Malay and English. This means that the students will have to learn the English language as well as the other second language. Students in Korea will have to face this fact where they must have the knowledge of the English language in order to understand the other language. The students are sometimes having trouble to memorize words or even sentence structure for both languages. Moreover, the students have already learnt their mother tongue since schooling years and they already understood the grammatical rules of the language. However, learning two new languages will create confusion of the grammatical rules and therefore, various methods have been introduced in order to enhance the process of learning the second or third language (Normaliza Abd Rahim, 2014). The various methods involve the usage of materials using the computer, mobile phone, or any related internet and social network and others (Normaliza Abd Rahim, Affendi, & Pawi (2017). Normaliza Abd Rahim's (2014) study reveals that using the technology will enhance the process of language learning in the classroom.

A study done by Stewart and Gachago (2016) focuses on collaborative digital storytelling project titled "Being Human Today." It is a multimodal curricular initiative that was implemented simultaneously in both a South African and an American university classroom in 2015. This study facilitates dialogue and the sharing of digital stories by means of a closed Facebook group where instructors are able to investigate students' critical awareness and social consciousness regarding notions of "self" and "other" across continents. The result of the study shows that personal stories are shared in the space for critique and a raise awareness of how students are impacted by global hegemonic discourses. This study is parallel to the study by Bestgen and Granger (2014) where writing will develop phraseological competence in second language English writing. Writing in the second language will also help in the process of learning the vocabulary and sentence structure (Borich, 2012) of the target language. Borich (2012) also claims that storytelling is one of the approaches in learning a second language therefore, educators will have to ensure that the task given to learners will involve in reading and remembering the stories that the learners have read. Another study on stories using the mobile devices shows that learning a second language can be interesting and learners will look forward to the next class (Cavus & Ibrahim, 2016). Cavus and Ibrahim (2016) study is similar to the study by Dai & Ding (2010) where learning in the second language involves memorizing words and sentences. Dai and Ding (2010) study looks at the effectiveness of text memorization in English as a foreign language learning of Chinese students. The result of

Dai and Ding's (2010) study shows that the students involve memorize most of the vocabulary words in order to read or write in the target language.

On the other hand, Hoang and Boers (2016) study looks at re-telling a story in a second language. The study focuses on adult learners input text for multiword expression. The result of the study shows that adult learners are able to retell the story in the second language by giving multiword expression in delivering the story. The result of the study by Hoang and Boers (2016) is similar to the study by Eyckmans, Boers, and Lindstromberg (2016) where learning a second language needs the understanding of vocabulary in the target language. Subsequently, Eyckmans, Boers, and Lindstromberg (2016) and Peters (2016) add that the processing strategies of learning the second language were used in order for the learners to deliberate the lexical phrases. Another study by Glover, Hepplestone, Parking, Rodger, and Irwin (2016) looks at the pedagogical implication in order to enhance the learning process on teaching practice. The study focuses on educators in preparing materials for second language learners in the classroom. However, Laufer and Waldman (2011) study also looks at material prepared for classroom environment. The study looks at verb-noun collocations in second language writing. On the other hand, Qiao, Shen, and Forster (2012) study focuses on relative clause processing in Mandarin where the language is learnt as a second language. The result of the study shows that the maze task is appropriate and interesting for learning among learners of second language. Other studies on maze task in the second language include studies by Enkin (2012), Normaliza Abd Rahim (2013a), Normaliza Abd Rahim (2013b) and Ekin and Forster (2014), where the results show that learners show interest in learning.

Learning a second language can also be measured through implicit and explicit knowledge (Rebuschat, 2013). Sykes and Reinhardt (2013) agree with Rebuschat (2013) and add that second language can also be learnt by using digital games. Rebuschat's (2013) study is similar to the study done by Tokowicz and MacWhinney (2005) where there are implicit and explicit measures of sensitivity to violations in second language grammar. The result shows that second language learners will have to understand the meaning of each word and relate it to context. Studies related to using the stories and vocabulary have been studied widely throughout the world. For example, Webb and Chang (2012) study investigates vocabulary learning through assisted and unassisted repeated reading. The study has made second language learners feel motivated in learning the second language. Also, the study by Webb and Chang (2012) is similar to the study by Wright (2000) where variety in teaching and learning will create better environment. Wright (2000) study looks at stories in language teaching. The result of the study shows that learners are interested to listen to stories and the story enhances learners learning the second language.

The current study focused on the use of e-story and writing skill among the second language Korean learners. The objectives of the study were to identify and discuss the students' writing in the second language by using e-story.

## **METHODOLOGY**

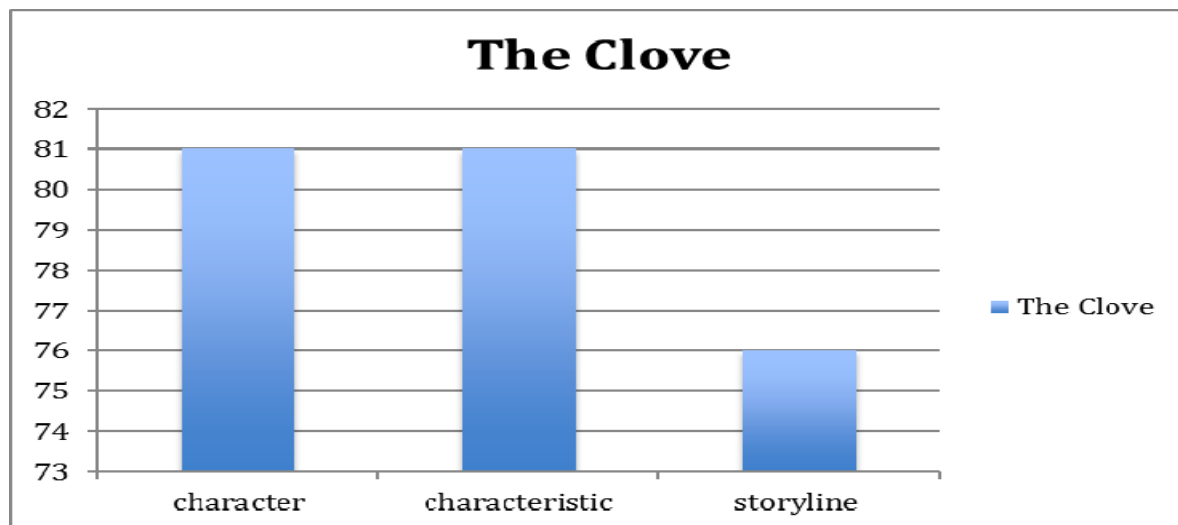
The research design of the study was a qualitative study. The samples of the study involved all 21 male and female participants age from 20 to 25 years old from two classes of Malay language at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, South Korea. The participants were taught e-story entitled 'The Clove' in Malay for two hours a week in fourteen weeks. This study limited on the use of one e-story entitled The Clove. This is due to fact that the participants have to face the confusion and difficulty of learning the second language. Therefore, this study focused on the e-story in order to have the impact towards learning the second language. The teaching involved the identification of character, characteristics, storyline which include the vocabulary, sentence structure and spelling. In week 15, the participants were asked to write the story on 'The Clove' by using the correct vocabulary, sentence structure and spelling in the Malay language. Also, the participants were explained about character, characteristics and the storyline of e-stories in Malay language. The participants' writings were marked according to the marking scheme as in the 'character, characteristics and the storyline' and also the 'vocabulary, sentence structure and spelling'. The Clove is taken from *Pekaka Bercerita Siri 1* written by Normaliza Abd Rahim (2016) and copyrighted by Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka. This data are analyzed by using Brown and Yule's (1983) discourse analysis theory. According to Brown and Yule (1983), there are four approaches in spoken and written discourse; reference, presupposition, implicature and inference. This study focused on presupposition of the discourse analysis theory since the rewrite of the story involves their perception and opinion of the story that they have learnt. Presupposition a thing tacitly assumed beforehand at the beginning of a line of argument or course of action.

### **Synopsis of the clove**

The e-story entitled The Clove is taken from the Malay folklore. It has been used among storytellers in Malaysia. Also, the story is listed in the text book by Puteh and Said (2005) entitled *366 Himpunan Cerita Rakyat*.

Long time ago, there lived a king in a big country. He is the ruler of the country. The king thought that there was a disease spreading where all of them have bad breath. The villagers did not open their mouth to talk. Even the king showed hand signals to deliver any messages. The king was worried. He asked the villagers to find medicine for the disease. However, the villagers failed. The king also failed to help the villagers in the country. One day, the princess was playing with the assistance. They were giggling and laughing but they closed their mouth with a piece of cloth. They did not want anyone to smell their bad breath. Suddenly, a small bird flew and stopped on a branch of a tree. The bird was chirping and tried to attract the princess attention. The princess saw the bird. She went to the bird. The bird was pecking on a flower. The princess did not understand but she tried to take the flower from the bird. The bird was trying to tell the princess to eat the clove. The princess put the flower in her mouth. She was so surprised. Her breath smells so nice. She thanked the bird. She ran to his father, the king. She gave the flowers to the king. The king ate the clove. He was happy with the smell. The king instructed the villagers to plant the trees. Soon, there will be no bad breath among them. The king was happy.

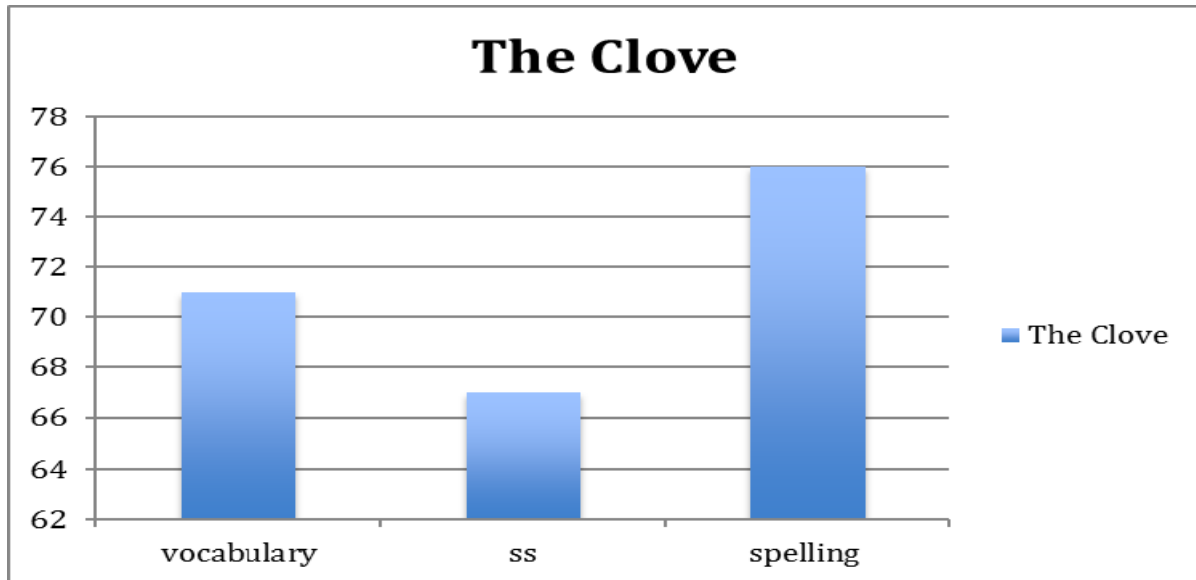
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION



**Graph 1:** Character, characteristics and storyline in the Clove

Graph 1 above shows the percentage of character, characteristics and storyline in the e-story The Clove. It can be seen that 81% of the participants (17 participants) manage to identify the characters in the e-story while the other 20% of the participants (4 participants) are confused on the name of the characters. This shows that the majority of the participants understood the characters in the e-story. The characters stated are the king, princess, bird, clove and villagers.

On the other hand, 81% of the participants (17 participants) manage to explain about the characteristics of the characters in the e-story. It can be seen that the participants manage to explain and discuss about the characterization of all the characters. The participants state; ‘The King is the ruler of the country’ (Malay: *Raja merupakan ketua dalam negara itu*), ‘The King tried his best to find solution for the problem’ (Malay: *Raja cuba untuk menyelesaikan masalah*), ‘The princess helped to find the solution by telling the king about the clove’ (Malay: *Puteri raja cuba mencari penyelesaian dengan memberitahu raja tentang cengkih*), and ‘The bird has helped the princess by giving the clove to her (Malay: *Burung itu telah menolong puteri raja dengan memberikan cengkih*)’. The examples also show that majority of the participants manage to understand the characteristics of the characters. However, 76% of the participants (16 participants) exhibit that they understand the storyline while the other 24% of the participants (5 participants) do not answer the questions correctly as they only write four to five sentences. Consequently, majority of the participants (16 participants) manage to write the whole story successfully. The participants’ writings are from the beginning of the story until the end. The story also includes the story about the villagers who do not talk or open their mouth. Also, about the princess who is playing with the assistance without opening their mouth. The story given by the participants also includes the princess closes her mouth with a piece of cloth when she laughs. The examples of the story above show the details by majority of the participants and this shows that they understand the e-story. Cavus and Ibrahim (2016) study has similar findings with this study where students will focus on the story. On the other hand, the findings of this study on the process of understanding of the story helps to enhance second language learning is parallel to the study of Bestgen and Granger (2014).



**Graph 2:** Vocabulary, sentence structure and spelling in the Clove

Graph 2 above shows the vocabulary, sentence structure and spelling use among the participants in the e-story The Clove. It can be seen that 71% of the participants (15 participants) show more than fifteen vocabulary from the e-stories. This shows that the participants understand the meaning of the vocabulary. Examples of vocabulary include, ‘worry (Malay: *risau*), think (Malay: *fikir*), work hard (Malay: *usaha*), success (Malay: *berjaya*), listen (Malay: *dengar*), patuk (Malay: *peck*), look (Malay: *lihat*), inform (Malay: *beritahu*) and others. Although the words look simple, thus learning the second language is confusing when the participants have to translate the words to Korean and then to the Malay language. On the other hand, 67% of the participants (14 participants) manage to use the correct sentence structure when writing the storyline. The participants manage to write in simple sentences in order to avoid mistakes. The sentences like, ‘The King tries to help the villagers (Malay: *Raja cuba membantu rakyat*),’ ‘The villagers do not talk to each other (Malay: *Orang kampung tidak bercakap di antara satu sama lain*),’ ‘The princess plays with the assistance (Malay: *Puteri raja bermain dengan pembantu*)’ and others. This shows that the participants manage to write the story successfully without having major mistakes in the sentence structure. The results support the findings of Tokowicz and MacWhinney (2005) where the right usage of grammar will enhance students’ writing. Consequently, it can be seen that 76% of the participants (16 participants) manage to spell most of the words in the writing correctly. It seems that the participants are confident with the sound of the words and manage to spell the words. For instance, the words, ‘walk (Malay: *jalan*), sad (Malay: *sedih*), gather (Malay: *kumpul*), singing (Melay: *menyanyi*), fly (Malay: *terbang*), branches (Malay: *ranting*), clove (Malay: *cengkih*) and others. Also, the participants manage to use the correct prefix, affix and suffix in the Malay language. The words such as ‘walking (Malay: *berjalan*), playing (Malay: *bermain*), thinking (Malay: *berfikir*), successfully (Malay: *berjaya*), using (Malay: *menggunakan*) and others. Here, it can be seen that majority of the participants (76%) even manage to spell the words with the correct prefix, affix and suffix in the Malay language. The results of this study are parallel to the studies of Noraïen Mansor & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2017) and Webb and Chang (2012) where the usage of the right vocabulary plays an important role in writing.

The results above show that majority of the participants manage to understand the e-story. This might be the fact that the participants have watched the story several times. The participants also add that they even discuss with their peers about the story and this way they manage to understand the story more. The results reveal that majority of the participants understand the character, characteristics and storylines in the e-story The Clove. In fact, the result of the study also reveals that majority of the participants have used the correct vocabulary, sentence structure and spelling in the e-story The Clove. This shows that the e-story manages to attract the participants’ attention when watching the story online. Also, this shows that e-story in the second language will enhance the participants learning in the classroom. The e-story has helps the participants to learn in different environment compared to the normal classroom. The results of the study are parallel to the study of Cavus and Ibrahim (2016), Hoang and Boers (2016), and Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014) where e-story will enhance students learning in the second language.

## CONCLUSION

This study implicates educators when preparing materials for the students in the classroom. Educators will have to ensure that using online materials which involve the computer will help to enhance students learning. Nowadays, learners prefer to use the computer in learning since learning will take place individually and sometimes in pairs. Most of the time, students will be using the computer for social network so therefore, educators will take the opportunity by considering the likes of the students and relate it with learning. This way, learners will be interested in learning the second language. On the other hand, this study also implicates learners in dealing with learning by using the computer in the classroom or even outside the classroom. Learners will feel that the difference in learning the second language will make them more motivated to learn the language. This way, learners will participate in the learning process at any time of the day. It is hoped that further study will focus on other e-story related to Malay folklore to enhance second language learners in learning.

## REFERENCES

- Bestgen, Y., & Granger, S. (2014). Quantifying the development of phraseological competence in L2 English writing: An automated approach. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 26, 28-41. doi: 10.1016/j.jslw.2014.09.004
- Brown, G., & Yule, G (1983). *Discourse analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Borich, J. (2012). Teaching foreign language through storytelling. *TLN Teachers Leaders Network*. Retrieved from [http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2012/04/02/tln\\_borich.html](http://www.edweek.org/tm/articles/2012/04/02/tln_borich.html).
- Cavus, N., & Ibrahim, D. (2016). Learning English using children's stories in mobile devices. *British Journal of Education Technology*, 47 (2), 227-237.
- Dai, Z., & Ding, Y. (2010). Effectiveness of text memorization in EFL learning of Chinese students. In D. Wood (Ed.) *Perspectives on formulaic language: Acquisition and communication* (pp. 71-87). New York: Continuum.
- Enkin, E. (2012). The maze task: Training methods for second language learning. *Arizona Working Papers in Second Language Acquisition & Teaching*, 19(5), 56-81.
- Enkin, E., & Forster, K. (2014). The maze task: Examining the training effect of using a psycholinguistic experimental technique for second language learning. *Journal of Linguistics and Language Teaching*, 5(2), 161-180.
- Eyckmans, J., Boers, F., & Lindstromberg, S. (2016). The impact of imposing processing strategies on L2 learners' deliberate study of lexical phrases. *System*, 56, 127-139. doi: 10.1016/j.system.2015.12.001
- Glover, I., Hepplestone, S., Parking, H. J., Rodger, H., & Irwin, F. (2016). Pedagogy first: Realising technology enhanced learning by focusing on teaching practice. *British journal of education technology*, 47 (5), 993-1002.
- Hoang, H. & Boers, F. (2016) Re-telling a story in a second language: How well do adult learners mine an input text for multiword expressions?. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 3/VI, 513-535.
- Laufer, B., & Waldman, T. (2011). Verb-noun collocations in second language writing: A corpus analysis of learners' English. *Language Learning*, 61, 647-672. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9922.2010.00621.x.
- Noraian Mansor & Normaliza Abd Rahim (2017) Implicature in students' perception towards language learning. *Man in India*, 97 (2), 329-336.
- Normaliza Abd Rahim (2013a). Literature computer program among primary school learners. *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 12 (2), 193-199.
- Normaliza Abd Rahim (2013b). Adjectives Identification in Television Advertisements. *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 12 (3), 15-20.
- Normaliza Abd Rahim (2014). The Nearly Forgotten Malay Folklore: Shall We Start With The Software? *TOJET: The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 13 (3), 216-221.
- Normaliza Abd Rahim (2016) *Pekaka Berceita Siri 1*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Normaliza Abd Rahim, Nik Rafidah Nik Muhammad Affendi & Awang Azman Awang Pawi (2017). Dissemination of Values and Culture through the E-Folklore. *The Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology*, 16 (1), 32-36.
- Othman Puteh & Aripin Said. (2005). *Himpunan Cerita Rakyat Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publication.
- Peters, E. (2016). The learning burden of collocations: The role of interlexical and intralexical factors. *Language Teaching Research*, 20, 113-138. doi: 10.1177/1362168814568131.
- Qiao, X., Shen, L., & Forster, K. I. (2012). Relative clause processing in Mandarin: Evidence from the maze task. *Language and Cognitive Processes*, 27(4), 611-630.
- Rebuschat, P. (2013). Measuring implicit and explicit knowledge in second language research. *Language Learning*, 63(3), 595-626.
- Sykes, J., & Reinhardt, J. (2013). *Language at play: Digital games in second and foreign language teaching and learning*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Stewart, K. & Gachago, D. (2016) Being human today: A digital storytelling pedagogy for transcontinental border crossing. *British journal of education technology*, 47 (3), 528-542.

- Tokowicz, N., & MacWhinney, B. (2005). Implicit and explicit measures of sensitivity to violations in second language grammar: An event-related potential investigation. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 27(2), 173-204.
- Webb, S. A., & Chang, A, C-S. (2012). Vocabulary learning through assisted and unassisted repeated reading. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 68, 267-290. doi: 10.1353/cml.2012.0020.
- Wright, A. (2000) "Stories and their importance in Language Teaching". *Humanising Language Teaching*, 2 (5), 1-4. Retrieved 18 dec 2016. <http://www.hlomag.co.uk/sep00/mart2.htm>