

DIGIFLYERS: A DIGITAL STORYTELLING PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE LISTENING PERFORMANCE OF YOUNG LEARNERS¹

DIJİFLYERS: İNGİLİZCE DİNLEME BECERİSİNİ GELİŞTİRMEK İÇİN BİR DİJİTAL HİKAYE ANLATICILIĞI PROGRAMI

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to find out the impact of a digital storytelling program, DigiFlyer. This intervention program aimed to improve the listening comprehension and performance of EFL young learners (n = 31). In this experimental study, digital stories were both adapted and created to improve their performance on Cambridge YLE (Young Learners English) listening part. It was critical to establish a link between digital storytelling and achievement performance of young learners in a standardized English test. The current study handled a quasi-experimental research methodology to collect data from participants, employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The results showed that DigiFlyer had a positive effect on participants' achievement scores in listening. Furthermore, there were significant improvements in their motivation, enthusiasm, and their self-confidence towards listening in English.

Key Words: *Cambridge Flyers Test, Digital Storytelling, English as a Foreign Language, Listening Comprehension Skill*

Özet: Bu çalışmanın amacı, bir dijital hikaye anlatımı programı olan DigiFlyer'in etkisini bulmaktır. Bu müdahale programı, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenen genç öğrencilerin (n = 31) dinlediğini anlama ve performansını iyileştirmeyi amaçlamıştır. Bu deneysel çalışmada, dijital öyküler katılımcıların Cambridge YLE (Young Learners English) dinleme bölümündeki performanslarını artırmak için hem uyarlanmış hem de oluşturulmuştur. Standartlaştırılmış bir İngilizce testinde dijital hikaye anlatımı ile genç öğrencilerin başarı performansı arasında bir bağlantı kurmak çok önemlidir. Mevcut çalışma, hem nitel hem de nicel metodolojileri kullanarak katılımcılardan veri toplamak için yarı deneysel bir araştırma metodolojisini kullanmıştır. Sonuçlar, DigiFlyer'in katılımcıların dinlemedeki başarı puanları üzerinde olumlu bir etkisi olduğunu gösterdi. Ayrıca İngilizce dinlemeye yönelik motivasyonlarında, heveslerinde ve özgüvenlerinde önemli gelişmeler oldu.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Cambridge Flyers Test, Dijital Hikaye Anlatıcılığı, İngilizcenin Yabancı Dil Olarak Öğretilmesi, Dinleme Becerileri.*

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Introduction

Developing listening skills has always stood as a critical skill for not only for the mother tongue of children but also for the second/foreign language acquisition. Listening skills can be regarded as the first and the main step of communicating with people since the birth of individuals. As in the native language, abilities in listening are critical for second language acquisition as, like the native language, communication with other people in the target language is a highly significant competence. With this in mind, numerous scholars and researchers in EFL have underlined and pinned the importance of listening comprehension abilities in English language instruction (Cheung, 2010; Solak & Altay, 2014). As a well-known fact, learners need first to strengthen their listening abilities to internalize the foreign language, and to have inner language and interlanguage process. To conclude, developing listening skills is one of the primary skills to be developed and improved throughout the teaching and learning process of both the native language and the target language. However, on the other side of the coin, in Turkish EFL context, although a great amount of time, planning, energy are invested in English language teaching education in Turkey, and recent years have seen a significant increase in the use of English as the primary language of instruction in Turkey, it seems difficult to state that stakeholders have reached their goals (Paker, 2012). When investigated in detail, it can be said that listening is seen as the most undervalued ability in Turkish EFL classes (Tosuncuoğlu, 2018), although Turkey aims to catch up with the standards of other developed countries in English language teaching (Nergis, 2011). Despite all regulations in foreign language education policies, Turkey still seems behind other countries in English language education (Solak & Bayar, 2015). In order to achieve these goals mentioned above, technology can be regarded as one of the stakeholders that may have a positive effect and contribution to this end, and in modern education systems, with the development of technology integration into education, digital storytelling came to the fore with many advantages in EFL classes. The first and the most important advantage of Digital storytelling is it has important components such as collaboration, innovation, creativity, and motivation (Psomos & Kordaki, 2012). Another more specific advantage of digital storytelling is it contributes to the learning environment with important, interesting and various opportunities including increasing motivation, student centeredness, digital literacy skills, and academic achievement (Di Blas & Paolini, 2013; Robin, 2006; Yang & Wu, 2012).

Digital storytelling (DST) might be characterized as "the current embodiment of the ancient arts of storytelling, and digital stories gain their force from the interweaving of visuals, music, narrative, and voice, giving characters, situations, and insights depth and vivid color." (Chung, 2006, p.35; The Digital Storytelling Association, 2002). When the literature is reviewed, there are several studies which benefit from digital storytelling, can be used to develop listening skills and effective in teaching listening skills as it is a remarkable way of teaching in listening (Barzaq, 2009; Brewster & Ellis, 1991; Brunfaut et al., 2021; Küçüküran, 2004; Liu & Brantmeier, 2018) and also teachers can provide their lessons with a meaningful and educational tool for foreign language learners by utilizing digital storytelling.

Literature Review

What is Digital Storytelling?

Digital stories can be described as the use of computer-assisted tools such as films, photographs, or music to create stories to enlighten people in general (Chung, 2007; Jakes & Brennan, 2005; Robin, 2006). In addition, digital stories are "upgraded versions" of conventional storytelling (Gregori-Signes, 2008). Personal tales, historical events, and stories that enlighten or instruct people are all examples of digital storytelling, according to Robin (2006), and the desire to tell a personal tale is a major motivator for generating digital stories.

Using Digital Storytelling in Education

Technology has gained a great place not only in every part of life but also in the field of English language instruction. In both the native language and foreign language education, stories have always invoked children's imaginative worlds while also developing vocabulary, reading, speaking, listening, and writing abilities (Xu, Park & Baek, 2011), so the crucial issue is for teachers to choose the most suitable digital story for the interest, age, and level of learners, and when they employ a well-selected digital story, the learning process in the target language, English, will certainly improve. According to Brewster and Ellis (2002, pp.34-36), the listed factors must be taken into account while choosing digital stories:

- "Stories must be original and interesting,
- Stories should bring the real world and real language usage in classroom,
- Stories should be encouraging for students,

- Stories should arouse curiosity of the learners,
- The subject of the story should not be complicated, should not make any political guidance,
- There should not be prejudices and discrimination in the stories,
- The length of the stories and the language use should be appropriate to the level of the student.”

In an EFL classroom, when using digital storytelling is considered, there is no doubt it may contribute to the learning process in many ways (Barzaq, 2009; Brewster & Ellis, 1991; Brown,2005; Küçükturan, 2004). To begin with, as young learners like listening to stories, it guarantees that language is taught in a contextualized way and that pupils' language skills are developed. Language learners may readily engage with language and its structures or patterns in the learning environment through digital storytelling, and this interaction enhances students' listening abilities (Ciğerci & Gültekin, 2017). Furthermore, as children like listening to tales over and over, the language skills that learners need to master in language training are easily taught to students thanks to digital stories (Brand & Donato, 2001). The keywords as well as some grammatical structures in digital stories may help children to learn and recall these words and patterns through retelling. Digital stories may be used to teach new words in second language classes, and students can easily learn new terms in a story-based setting. Since DST is a voyage of discovery, it is also one of the ways to improve creativity (Gakhar & Thompson, 2007). Digital storytelling may help young learners link and combine their imagination with their own environment. Digital tales, in addition to being entertaining, establish a classroom setting in which social experiences may be shared. It promotes self-confidence in young learners and adds to their social and emotional development (Han, 2007). Teachers often use digital storytelling to assist students build good attitudes about foreign languages and foreign language study. The realistic stories that are utilized in the classroom will bring authentic language use and the real world into the classroom, while digital stories will help students to move beyond traditional techniques and a boring classroom setting in English courses (Gakhar & Thompson, 2007; Gregori-Signes,2008; Lee, 2005; Shin & Park, 2008). Teachers may employ digital storytelling in many ways and employ various techniques and procedures in teaching English through digital stories. Miller (2010) cites a few further arguments to promote digital storytelling use in the courses:

“1.Digital storytelling engages and empowers students of all levels; students become more invested in their writing and give more effort.

2. Digital storytelling projects build community in the classroom.

3. Strengthens the sense of audience.
4. Projects can be short but still effective.
5. Digital stories can be used across the curriculum.
6. Process is key. Projects teach writing and technology skills.
7. Prior knowledge can drive the story and moviemaking (p.6-9).”

When related studies in the literature are reviewed, it can be concluded that using audio media resources only, which is still a traditional way to improve listening skills in EFL classrooms, to improve listening skills is no longer appropriate because many of the benefits of technology have been incorporated into our students' daily life as well as academic life (Al-Johali, 2019). Many studies support to use video-related resources such as digital storytelling as a result of this line of thinking. Yoon (2013) conducted a study on how employing digital storytelling in English lessons after-school affected attitudes and perceptions of Korean EFL learners and found that, the digital storytelling program had a beneficial impact on young learners' attitudes about learning English. They demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the topics as well as active engagement in the classroom. Finally, digital storytelling increased motivation and interest in the target language, as well as confidence in the English learning process, allowing young learners to interact with the target language. Digital storytelling, according to Syafrizal, Chaer, and Evenddy (2015), is a vital help for e-learning web portal in Indonesian and English. Researchers constructed digital stories to improve learners' listening abilities, and the study found that these digital stories improved both bottom-up and top-down listening skills. It is shown that digital tales can be a useful tool for teaching English, however they require some adjustments. Similarly, Juvrianto, Atmowardoyo, and Weda (2018) carried out a quasi-experimental research to determine whether the use of Digital Storytelling improves listening comprehension skills of students and to determine the learning interest of them in DST. The study's findings revealed that the post-test result of experimental group was greater than the control group's post-test result. Furthermore, the findings of the open-ended interview question revealed that using DST for four weeks is an effective technique to improve the proficiency of English. It may be far more successful for English learners if it lasted for a longer period of time.

In Turkish context, Aytar (2019) conducted a study as part of his thesis to investigate learners' opinions toward the use of video materials in the process of developing listening skills and found

that authentic videos helped to improve learners' listening comprehension skills and communication skills, regardless of whether they spoke English or Turkish. The literature supports the idea that DST can be successfully integrated into English language classes as a supportive material to contribute positively to the classroom atmosphere, motivation, and interests of language learners, rather than as a replacement for traditional listening comprehension exercises.

Although the literature includes studies on using digital storytelling in EFL classes, studies aim to discover how a digital storytelling contributes to listening skills of EFL learners is much more limited. Secondly, no studies could have been found that investigates the relationship between a digital storytelling program and achievement in a standardized English proficiency test (in this study, Cambridge Flyers Test). Therefore, the present study focuses on i) developing listening skills of A2 level EFL learners, ii) unveiling their satisfaction and motivation towards digital storytelling program, and iii) find out whether this digital storytelling program has an effect on their scores in a standardized English proficiency test, which is Cambridge Flyers Test in the present study.

The following research questions are derived from the relevant literature:

“1.What are the opinions of 7th grade students about learning English through digital storytelling to improve their listening skill?

2.Does digital storytelling program (DigiFlyers) have an effect on the listening skills of 7th grade students?

2.a. Does digital storytelling program (DigiFlyers) make any significant difference in the participants Cambridge Flyers test scores?

2.b. Is there a significant difference between Cambridge Flyers test scores of the experimental and the control group?”

Materials and Methods

Research Design

The current study utilized a quasi-experimental design. Pre-test and post-test design were employed in this study. According to Creswell (2002), this design includes a control and an experimental group, and the dependent variable is evaluated before the treatment begin. The dependent variable of this study is "young learners' listening abilities." The treatment is a digital storytelling

application that was developed by the researchers and used for eight weeks on the experimental group. Generally, quasi-experimental study designs are employed to investigate the impact of the researcher's pre-determined difference or differences on dependent variables (Creswell, 2002). Additionally, if a relationship exists between the factors and the difference in pre- and posttest findings, it can be easily identified and tested. To summarize, as the quasi-experimental research design was used, the current study used a variety of approaches to examine both numerical and textual data using both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods (Nunan & Bailey, 2009). Thus, triangulation was attempted to be realized, which can be explained as using additional methods to answer the research questions with the help of more valid and confidential data for the experimental study outcomes (Heale & Forbes, 2017).

Participants

The participants of the study comprised 31 students from a secondary school.

The experimental group consists of 15 participants, while the control group consists of 16 participants. The eight-week study was applied in a state school in Turkey. When determining the control and the experimental groups, their listening test scores of the participants were compared, evaluated and it was determined that their exam results were similar. The gender distribution of the participants is as following.

Table 1. The distribution of students by gender

	Female	Male	Total
Experimental group	13	2	15
Control group	7	9	16
Total	20	11	31

Data Collection Procedure

The listening part of Cambridge A2 Flyers exam was used to gather data about the participants' listening abilities and pre- and post- achievement scores. In addition, an instrument for data collection comprised of eight weeks of a digital storytelling program developed by the researchers

(DigiFlyers) was deployed. Lastly, semi-structured interview sessions were conducted following the completion of DigiFlyers to elicit final reflections on the digital storytelling program from the participating students following the post-test.

Cambridge A2 flyers exam. This study collected data using "the listening section of the Cambridge Flyers exam" which is one of the CambridgeYLE tests, Flyers, suitable to young learners levels (A2 level). To select the most suitable test from among the numerous standardized tests, the researcher should choose the one that is most appropriate for their purposes (Bachmann, 2002; Buck, 2001). This exam was chosen after consulting with experts; these experts included one of the researcher's instructors from university and an English language teacher who had previously taught young learners, as well as taking the participants' level into account. With the opinion of the experts, the listening section of Flyers test was chosen as the data collection instrument for the present study. Cambridge tests are internationally recognized as legitimate and credible. Rather than develop a new listening accomplishment test that is internationally valid and more reliable, Flyers test is utilized for both the pre-test and post-test examinations with both groups. The exam comprises five listening sections, each with its own set of test items; there are 25 items in total, and if they successfully answer each question in each section, they earn four points, for a total of 100 points.

Semi-structured interviews. As the final stage, semi-structured interviews were conducted at the end of DigiFlyers to elicit final perspectives on the digital storytelling program from the participating students. Semi-structured interviews can be thought of as a fewer uniform data collection device than surveys, as they employ both closed-ended and open-ended questions, as well as why or how inquiries. The semi-structured interview is conducted in a conversational manner with a single participant at a time. As stated, semi-structured interviews provide an excellent opportunity to elicit participants' interpretations of their own experiences and opinions in their own words (Klandermans & Staggenborg, 2002). This enabled the study to elicit the final comments and reflections of the experimental group's participants. To elicit detailed information on the participants' perspectives and perceptions, 15 members of the experimental group were interviewed after DigiFlyers.

Implementation process

It should be noted that at the very beginning of the treatment, the school manager, participants' parents, and participants were informed related to the purposes of the research. They agreed to participate in the study voluntarily. In addition, the ethical permissions from Pamukkale University and the application permission from the Ministry of National Education were obtained. As the next step, DigiFlyers intervention program developed by the researchers were sent to consult to field experts' opinions and feedback to get confirmation. According to the feedbacks and suggestions made by experts, necessary revisions were made, and as the next step, the treatment program was piloted. After deploying the DigiFlyers Program Pilot, DigiFlyers was adjusted based on participant input, and two class hours were reserved for DigiFlyers in the pilot study. However, three class hours was found to be more appropriate and effective, as there was the need of more time in the classroom while conducting the activities. For example, several students desired to watch the story more than twice in order to complete the activities. The final version of digital storytelling program, DigiFlyers, was then prepared to use in the primary study. A sample of DigiFlyers_Digital storytelling intervention program can be found in Appendix A.

The main study was carried out for 8 weeks and 24 class hours in total. DigiFlyers is a collection of eight digital stories that were chosen among available digital storytelling resources. DigiFlyers consists of eight digital stories selected by reviewing digital storytelling resources and related activities were adopted and prepared according to learners' level (See Appendix A). The activities developed in DigiFlyers were parallel to Cambridge Flyers listening part because this exam was employed to assess learners' listening ability in pre-and posttest. Furthermore, the activities aimed to improve not only listening skills of the participants, but all skills integrated into the curriculum of the Ministry of National Education English Curriculum were aimed to improve (MoNE, 2018). Although this study aimed at improving students' listening skills, since the areas of learning to listen, speak, write, and read which make up the language as a whole, are not separated from each other, the lesson plans and activities based on digital stories have been included all learning areas.

Data Analysis Process

Qualitative analysis. The semi-structural interviews' qualitative data were evaluated using qualitative data analysis methodologies. They were analyzed through content analysis. As Yıldırım

and Şimşek (2013) stated the primary objective of this analysis is to establish themes and to collect comparable data under specific themes. The semi-structured interviews were held in Turkish and afterwards they were translated into English. Regarding the English translations of the interviews, the researcher sought expert advice from a field expert. Cohen Kappa coefficient (0.74) was used to evaluate the level of agreement amongst experts to examine interrater reliability. Transcripts from 15 experimental group participants were manually scrutinized and then analyzed. The critical points that were regularly or frequently stated were recorded. The major themes that emerged from the data were coded and classified. The researchers evaluated the comments to determine common theme components across the study, and similar statements were grouped and coded. Creswell (2015) defines coding as the process of assessing qualitative text data by breaking it down to examine what it provides before reconstructing it in a meaningful way. The trustworthiness of a research paper, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985), raises its value, and establishing reliability comprises credibility. While analyzing the data, the researchers classified the most common responses and identified key themes. This procedure was carried out independently, and the common codes were compared. The developers inspected and moved examples of each theme, subtheme, and code until they reached an agreement. According to the inter-rater reliability (Miles & Huberman, 1994), their agreement level was found to be .93.

Quantitative analysis. To address the second research question, "Does DigiFlyers have an influence on students' performance on the Cambridge Flyers listening test?" The process for quantitative data analysis was followed. The quantitative data were derived from the participants' achievement scores in pre- and post-test. The obtained data were statistically analyzed using the SPSS-22 version statistics program. To establish which test type will be used to evaluate the data, it was first determined if the data were normally distributed or not. Because the sample size in the current study ($N=31$) is less than 50, the Shapiro-Wilk value was used to analyze the results (Shapiro & Wilk, 1965) because the data were not normally distributed, the Wilcoxon test was performed to assess the statistical data.

Findings

“Results for Perceptions of the Learners in Experimental Group about DigiFlyers (Research Question 1)

One of the aims of this study was to discover the participants' thoughts on DigiFlyers, after the eight-week training, and to this aim, participants had a semi-structured interview session. To obtain valid and real responses, interviews were conducted in Turkish, and all of the respondents agreed to be interviewed. Qualitative data for the study were gathered through these interviews and participant comments. Content analysis method was used to analyse the interviews. Content analysis is a type of research approach that may be defined as one that assists in making conclusions and identifying critical points in the conversations being investigated (Holsti, 1968). Each interviewee's response to the interview questions was recorded and analyzed. All responses were carefully counted and analyzed. The interviews remained brief in order to be direct. The first question asked participants if they like listening to/watching digital storytelling. Twelve participants (P1, P2, P4, P5, P7, P8, P9, P11, P12, P13, P14, and P15) responded affirmatively (73.3 %), while two (P3, P6) claimed they did not like the stories, one stated she sometimes felt bored (P10). Then, when the reason behind it was asked, three participants (P3, P6, and P10) stated that they could not fully understand and follow and thus disliked the digital stories.

The second interview question asked during the interview was whether they got bored while engaging in the digital storytelling program. The majority of participants (N=13) said that they enjoyed the stories and were not bored. However, two participants expressed boredom due to their inability to grasp the digital stories. The third interview question inquired whether this intervention program (DigiFlyers) had an effect on their listening skills. Ten out of fifteen participants agreed that the digital storytelling program improved their listening skills. Their assumptions were confirmed by the participants' achievement test posttest scores, as there can be seen a substantial difference between the experimental and control groups' pre- and post-test scores. Two of the participants (P11, P13) were unable to state yes or no explicitly; instead, they stated, "I don't know," or "I have no clue about my improvement". "I am still not very proficient at English," participant 15 claimed, and this individual had one of the lowest pre- and post-test scores. This participant demonstrated an obvious lack of interest and motivation in the treatment period. The majority of the participants expressed positive impressions, besides, they speculated that they improved their

listening comprehension abilities in English. Following that, the researcher inquired as to whether DigiFlyers, and their associated activities have a favorable or negative effect on attitudes about the English language. Their responses were illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1

Participants' Attitudes Towards English After DigiFlyers

Question	Theme	Expressions from opinions	F	%
Do digital stories and digital storytelling program and its activities affect your attitude towards English?	Positive	Fun 1, 2, 3, 4,9,10,11,12,14,15	10	66.6
If yes, how ?	No changes	Same feelings 6,7,8,13	4	26.6
	No idea	I do not know 5	1	6.8

After analyzing the interviewees' responses, it might be concluded that the number of participants who have more positive opinions regarding English outnumbered those who have similar feelings. “They were like cartoons; I love cartoons and I liked DigiFlyers and I love English so much, our lessons are fun.” (P3)

“DigiFlyers was so fun, it was colorful, I like it.” (P9)

“I did some coloring activities at home as we did in DigiFlyers, I really enjoyed.” (P11)

“I love English, and I liked DigiFlyers, I liked listening to digital stories.” (P11)

In addition, some participants stated that the participants always loved English, hence, there was no change in their opinions. The following sentences can be examples for this theme.

“No, it did not change, I already love English.” (P6)

“I love English lessons, and still, I love it.” (P8)

Participant 5 could not state any opinion; she just stated that she did not know, her answer was classified under the emerging theme of “no idea”.

The final interview question focused on the emotions and feelings of the participants when they watched digital stories. All participants stated (100%) that in general they had a good time and learnt new vocabulary items and structures, despite the fact that they sometimes felt lost when they

couldn't grasp an unfamiliar word. Two of them expressed an interest in being one of the characters in the stories, stating that they enjoyed them and felt as if they were a part of the digital story. Additionally, they claimed that the digital storytelling program was engaging, that they had never participated in these activities, and that they thought them to be different but beneficial.

“Results for the Effect of DigiFlyers on the Improvement of EFL Learners’ Listening Skills Achievement Scores (Research Question 2)

The Cambridge Flyers exam listening section was used to test learners' comprehension of their listening skills. Table 2 demonstrated that the experimental group scored higher on pre-tests than the control group. The percentage of students categorized as good in the experimental group was one (6.6 %), pretty good was one (6.6 %), fair was two (13.3 %), low was eight (53.3 %), and extremely poor was 3 (20%). In comparison, the control group had 12 (75%) kids classified as poor, and 4 (25%) pupils classed as very poor.

Table 2

Score of Students’ Pre-tests in Experimental and Control Group

No	Category	Score	Experimental Group		Control Group	
			F	%	F	%
1	Excellent	96-100	0	0	0	0
2	Very Good	86-95	0	0	0	0
3	Good	76-85	1	6.6	0	0
4	Fairly Good	66-75	1	6.6	0	0
5	Fair	56-65	2	13.3	0	0
6	Poor	36-55	8	53.3	12	75
7	Very Poor	0-35	3	20	4	25
	Total		15	100	16	100

It can be seen that both groups' listening skills were not satisfactory. As a result, a digital storytelling program was developed, which is up-to-date and innovative technique of teaching English and an effective way to increase learners' English proficiency, particularly their listening. It was used for eight weeks to the experimental group to determine whether their listening abilities improved and whether they improved their performance on the Cambridge Flyers. Then, the

posttest was administered to both groups following the program. Table 3 shows the posttest results for the experimental and control groups.

Table 3

Participants' Post-Tests Scores

No	Category	Score	Experimental Group		Control Group	
			F	%	F	%
1	Excellent	96-100	0	0	0	0
2	Very Good	86-95	1	6.6	0	0
3	Good	76-85	1	6.6	0	0
4	Fairly Good	66-75	1	6.6	0	0
5	Fair	56-65	6	40	1	6.25
6	Poor	36-55	4	26.6	12	75
7	Very Poor	0-35	2	13.3	3	18.75
	Total		15	100	16	100

As previously stated, both groups were administered the posttest following the eight-week digital storytelling program treatment. As shown in Table 3, the experimental group had no learners in the excellent category, one (6.6 %) participant was very good, one (6.6 %) participant was good, one (6.6 %) participant was fairly good, in the fair category, there were six (40 %) participants, and the lowest percentage was poor four (26.6 percent), and two (13.3 %) learners were very poor. On the other hand, in the control group, there were one (6.25 percent) learners classified as fair, 12 (75 %) as poor, and three (18.75 %) as extremely poor.

“Does digital storytelling program (DigiFlyers) make any significant difference in the participants Cambridge Flyers test scores?”.

There were 15 participants in the experimental group, and just two of the participants were male. To maintain their anonymity, participants were assigned codes and would be referred to by their code names, e.g., participant 1. (P1). While a male Participant1 had the greatest pre- and post-test scores, the other male participant in the experimental group got one of the lowest marks, and hence the gender variable should not be included. The Wilcoxon test was used to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the pre-/post-test results of the experimental group's

participants. The Wilcoxon signed rank test revealed that post-test scores were significantly higher after the training program ($z=-2.82, p<.05$).

The average pre-test score of male students in the experimental group is 52, while the average post-test score is 60. On the one hand, girls improved their post-test results as well. Females' average pre-test score is 44, while their mean of post-test score is 57.2. In the experimental group, boys and girls was not equal in terms of number, therefore, it was not appropriate to assert that boys outperformed girls in both pre- and post-test listening performance. All participants in this example achieved higher posttest scores. The smallest increase in achievement scores was 4 points, while the largest increase was 24 points. Two participants significantly improved their scores. Regardless of their gender, all participants improved their post-test scores by an average of 4-24 points. One of the participants increased their score by 4 points, six participants increased their score by 8 points, two participants could see a 12-point improvement in their score, three participants increased their score by 16points, one participant increased their score by 20 points, and two participants increased their score by 24 points. According to these findings, there is a significant difference between the experimental group's pre- and post-tests. It may be concluded that all participants improved their listening abilities.

“Is there a significant difference between Cambridge Flyers test scores of the experimental and the control group?”.

Wilcoxon test was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the participants' pre- and post-test scores using the SPSS program. The pre- and post-test scores of the participating young learners were turned into Table 4.4 to display their averages, standard deviations, medians, and minimum and maximum scores. The results indicate a statistically significant difference ($p<.05$), and the findings are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics

	Group	Mean	Standard deviation	Median	Minimum	Maximum
Pre-test	Experimental	45.07	17.20	44	16	80
	Control	37.25	12.09	40	12	52
Post-test	Experimental	57,60	15,40	56	32	88
	Control	43,25	8,16	44	32	56

According to Table 4, the mean pre-test score for the experimental group was 45.07. Their post-test average was 57.60. As it can be observed from the table, both pre- and post-test performance increased significantly. The experimental group had a minimum pre-test score of 16 and a maximum pre-test score of 80. The control group's pre-test point ranged from 12 to 52. Both groups had lowest post-test scores of 32, and the experimental group had the highest post-test score of 88, whereas the control group had a score of 56. The experimental group had a little higher pretest score than the control group; both groups raised their post test scores, but the experimental group's post test scores climbed dramatically when their mean score was examined. The posttest results of the experimental and control groups were compared to their pretest results to determine if there was a significant difference in their listening performances. The pre- and post-test findings, as well as the differences between the experimental and control groups, were analyzed. The results indicate a statistically significant difference ($p < .05$). After treatment, the experimental group demonstrated statistically significant improvements in their listening skills.

Discussion and Conclusion

As technology gains its place and continuously extending it in every part of life, that would be illogical to isolate it from educational environments. Similarly, in English language teaching, using and integrating technology into EFL classes is a must as it is highly integrated with the real-life situations, so new approaches such as digital storytelling emerged in foreign language teaching (Lee, 2014). Numerous studies on digital storytelling have been undertaken throughout the world in many disciplines (Tahriri, Tous, & Movahedfar, 2015), and it is becoming more popular with the developments in Web 2.0 tools and blogs (Yuksel, Robin & McNeil, 2010), however, a small

number of research examined the development of listening abilities, motivation, self-satisfaction and achievement in young English learners.

It can be concluded that the digital storytelling program (DigiFlyers) could be an effective way of developing listening skills in the target language. The current study assessed qualitative data using content analysis and collected comments from the experimental group regarding DigiFlyers. Most of the participants enjoyed the digital storytelling program. This could be because digital stories were authentic, interesting and attractive to them. Another reason for this may be that stories selected were appropriate for their level and age. The second point related participants' perceptions on their ability to enhance their listening comprehension skills. The findings indicated that their English comprehension has improved as a result of the digital storytelling program. When the literature was evaluated at the conclusion of the digital storytelling program, similar findings were reported in prior studies (Al-Amri, 2020; Miller, 2010). Additionally, the majority of participants formed favorable sentiments toward English as a result of the use of digital storytelling. Additionally, they reported that they gained knowledge of new terms and structures as a result of digital stories and activities. As a similar finding to the present study, Sandaran, Chandran, and Lim's (2013) study discovered comparable findings and underlined the effectiveness of digital storytelling for improving listening comprehension as measured by comprehension exercise scores. Additionally, the participants demonstrated a high degree of curiosity, attentiveness, and motivation. Thus, it is apparent that digital storytelling is a motivating method of teaching English as a foreign language; based on the findings of the semi-structured interviews conducted for this study, it is clear that learners can improve their English proficiency while having fun and maintaining a high level of morale. This is congruent with the findings of Robin's earlier study (2008). Digital storytelling arouses learners' interest and serves as an encouraging educational tool. The present findings, taken together, corroborate earlier research (Barzaq, 2009; Brewster & Ellis, 1991; Cığerci, 2015; Küçükturan, 2004). Yoon (2013) conducted a descriptive study to determine the effects of employing digital storytelling in English classes. The results of the study suggested that a digital storytelling program improved young learners' attitudes toward English learning. They demonstrated a thorough knowledge of the lessons and active engagement in the classroom. In general, these findings corroborate the qualitative data acquired during the current study's interviews. Additionally, young learners had favorable sentiments toward digital storytelling and English learning in the present study. Furthermore, most of the participants in this study said and

showed a better level of motivation both during and after DigiFlyers. Yang and Wu (2012) examined the effects of digital storytelling on both academic success and critical thinking skills. The findings suggested that digital storytelling activities enhance learners' capacity for self-direction, critical thinking, and technology literacy. Nevertheless, the current study did not uncover the same tendencies; participants reported no progress in their critical thinking or technology literacy abilities.

Another finding of the study is that digital storytelling might affect the achievement scores of EFL learners in listening tests in a positive way. It was found that, before the implementation process, participants had low pre-test scores for listening comprehension compared to their post-test results and all experimental group individuals did notably better in the posttest.

The findings were consistent with the current study (Juvrianto, Atmowardoyo, & Weda, 2018); in these studies, students' post-test scores in the experimental group were higher than students' post-test scores in the control group, and participants expressed more favorable attitudes. Further, it can be stated that the present study yielded more tangible outcomes in terms of improving listening comprehension. It may have two reasons. First, being familiar with the authentic listening scripts could have helped and supported them to do better in the test, and secondly, the change in their perception might have produced a positive perception on their test performance.

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to determine the effects of intervention program, DigiFlyers on the listening comprehension of young learners. The current study included a total 31 seven grader participants, there were 15 students in the experimental group and there were 16 students in the control group. Improving Turkish EFL learners' listening skills was considered essential and necessary in light of evidence acquired from Turkish EFL teachers' perspectives of teaching listening in EFL classrooms. Other significant reason behind is that for decades, teaching and then assessing listening skills has been a major research area in EFL classrooms. It is fundamental to integration of new technology into English language instruction, and a DST program was designed and applied to the current study for this aim. CEFR A2 level listening descriptors were considered, and the listening section of a standardized English test was used to adapt both valid and reliable program.

The study used a quasi-experimental research design combining quantitative and qualitative data, as it was critical to establish validity by assessing the data from multiple perspectives. The pre- and post-test scores on the listening part of Cambridge Flyers were analyzed quantitatively. This was one of the Cambridge YLE exams; Flyers test was used to determine the proficiency of English language learners. The listening section of this exam was administered to both groups and their scores were recorded. Following the pre-test, the experimental group was taught a digital storytelling program for eight weeks to determine the program's influence on listening comprehension abilities and achievement on the Flyers test for young English learners.

The digital stories were chosen and adapted in accordance with the participants' competence level, age, and interests, as well as the English curriculum overseen by the Ministry of National Education. The activities for DigiFlyers were designed in parallel with the Flyers test listening sections, as the primary objective was to develop young learners' listening skills and monitor their progress on the Flyers test. Posttests were given to both groups completing DigiFlyers program. Their pre- and posttest scores were examined using the SPSS 22 program to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference in their findings between the experimental and control groups, and numerical descriptions were included in the tables. On the other hand, students' perspectives on DigiFlyers were elicited through semi-structured interviews and evaluated using the content analysis method, with verbal data classified and interpreted.

The study's findings demonstrate a strong correlation between DigiFlyers and sufficient development in learners' listening ability on the Cambridge YLE Flyers exam. Participants' abilities to comprehend what they were listening to increased. Additionally, participants stated that DigiFlyers improved their English comprehension, and students stated their enjoyment in DigiFlyers. The descriptive data from the pre/posttest scores indicated that their ability to grasp English improved, confirming the program's effects. The results indicate that DigiFlyers is an effective tool for young English learners in terms of enhancing listening comprehension abilities and achievement on the Flyers standardized test's listening sections.

Limitations and Recommendations

As stated previously, the main goal of this study was to determine the effects of DST program, DigiFlyers, on the listening comprehension abilities and achievement of young learners taking the

Flyers exam. In future research, it may be conceivable to employ a distinct DST program in which students build their own original digital stories using a variety of Web 2.0 tools. Technology literacy is gaining relevance in school as a 21st century ability, and students can develop their digital literacy abilities as well as their English language skills by creating digital stories.

The current study involved 31 seventh-grade students. Other secondary school kids could be studied in a similar manner. In future investigations, the number of participants may be increased. It is suggested that research be done to determine the influence of DST on the listening abilities of kindergarteners, high school students, and adult English learners in the Turkish EFL environment. Different proficiency tests might be used as a pre- and posttest. Additionally, the potential relationship between gender and improvements in listening comprehension could not be investigated further due to small sample size and not heterogeneous; the experimental group consisted of only two boys, the gender-related factor was omitted. Additional data collection may be necessary to ascertain the precise effect of gender on this factor. As previously said, the researcher served as the participants' teacher, and because course grades also matter to students, they may behave more pleasantly in class and provide good responses during the semi-structured interviews in order to avoid negative consequences. Hence, the researcher and the teacher can be different in order to fully understand the participants' perspectives. Finally, additional research and intervention in both public and private schools and for a longer length of time, such as an academic year, are greatly recommended.

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ETİK BEYAN: "*Dijiflyers: İngilizce Dinleme Becerisini Geliştirmek İçin Bir Dijital Hikaye Anlatıcılığı Programı*" başlıklı çalışmanın yazım sürecinde bilimsel, etik ve alıntı kurallarına uyulmuş; toplanan veriler üzerinde herhangi bir tahrifat yapılmamıştır ve veriler toplanmadan önce Pamukkale Üniversitesi Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği Kurulu'ndan 23.06.2022 tarih ve E.223209 sayılı etik izin alınmıştır. Karşılaşılacak tüm etik ihlallerde "Mehmet Akif Ersoy Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi Yayın Kurulunun" hiçbir sorumluluğunun olmadığı, tüm sorumluluğun Sorumlu Yazara ait olduğu ve bu çalışmanın herhangi başka bir akademik yayın ortamına değerlendirme için gönderilmemiş olduğunu taahhüt ederim. "

Appendices

Appendix A- A Sample Lesson Plan

Date	Process
Week 2	The Dirty Dog
Pre-listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Teacher asks some questions to students to as a pre-listening/watching activity. “Do you like animals? Have you got a pet? Have you got a dog? What is his/her name? Who takes care of your dog?”➤ Students answer the questions.➤ Teacher reads sentences to be matched with the pictures and the given names. In this activity, learners listen and draw lines (Flyers Part1). There are five sentences describing people or animals and five names given. Learners should listen carefully and draw lines with correct matching. They listen it twice and check their answers.
While-listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Teacher tells students that they are going to listen to a story about a dog named Harry and he is not a clean dog and asks students to predict what might happen in the story. How do you think Harry will get dirty?➤ Teacher plays the story and asks them to watch carefully at first. During watching, teacher stops the video and has students make predictions: “Why is Harry hiding the scrubbing brush? Do you think somebody will find Harry? Now that Harry’s all dirty, what do you think he will do? Will Harry’s family recognize him? Why is Harry digging so furiously in the yard?”➤ Students answer the questions one by one.➤ In the second time, as a while watching/listening activity, listen and match activity is designed. Five multiple choice questions with three options (Flyers Part4), they choose the correct option while listening the story. They can watch it twice, and then check it.
Post-listening	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Teacher asks some questions if they like the story, what they would do if they had a dog like Harry.➤ As a follow up activity, teacher asks them to summarize the story with their own sentences.➤ After that, they work in pairs and share their summaries.

WEEK 2 – The Dirty Dog

<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/harry-the-dirty-dog/>

Pre listening

1. T asks “have you got a dog ? what’s her/his name?”
2. Listen and draw lines. (Cambridge part1)

“Harry is a white dog with black spots who loves everything, and he is sleeping now.”

Alex is wearing a blue jumper and he is shocked.

Marry and his son are walking with their dog his son is wearing a blue coat.

Jane, who has blonde hair and black eyes, has lunch in a café with her family.

Ann is so happy she can finally hug her dog.”

Harry



Alex



Marry



Jane



Ann

While listening

1. T tells students that they are going to listen to a story about a dog named Harry and Asks students to predict what might happen in the story. How do you think Harry will get dirty?
2. During the watching , t stops the video and has students make predictions:
 - Why is Harry hiding the scrubbing brush?
 - Do you think somebody will find Harry?
 - Now that Harry's all dirty, what do you think he will do?
 - Will Harry's family recognize him?
 - Why is Harry digging so furiously in the yard?
3. Watch / listen to the story and choose the correct one.(Flyers Part4)

1-What does Harry hear?

- a) the water running in the tub
- b) the boy running in the garden
- c) his friend running in the street

2- Where does he play first?

- a)Fixing street b) fixing school c) fixing garden

3- Which game do Harry and his friend play?

- a)hide and seek b)tag c) hopscotch


4-After getting dirty, what does he become?

- a) A little dog with black spots
- b) A white dog with black spots
- c) A black dog with white spots

Post listening

1. T asks them to prepare a story map and talk about it.

Name

Story Map 

Setting	Characters	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 80px;"></div>	
Beginning	Middle	End
<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 100px;"></div>

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2. Summarize the story with your own sentences, write it down and share with your friends.

**After piloting, instead of story map, we changed the activity with “summarize the story with your own sentences”. Students weren’t able to understand how to fill these charts because they haven’t done this kind of activity in their Turkish reading classes.