The Attitudes of Teachers Toward Pre-K Students Reading Digital Picture Books on Screen

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Introduction

- The integration of **digital picture books** into early childhood education is rapidly increasing, shaping new paradigms of literacy learning. According to **Bus et al. (2020)** and **Hirsh-Pasek et al. (2015)**, digital media influences emergent literacy through interactive and multimodal features. However, teacher perspectives significantly shape the educational effectiveness of these tools.
- In Oklahoma and across the U.S., the need to understand **teacher attitudes** toward digital content in Pre-K settings is urgent. Barriers such as **limited training**, **technological access**, and **screentime skepticism** (Plowman & McPake, 2013; Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2013) may hinder meaningful implementation despite the growing presence of digital tools in literacy instruction.

Study Goal and Objectives

Aim:

To explore how preschool teachers perceive and use digital picture books in early literacy development. **Research Questions:**

How do teachers view the educational value of digital picture books for Pre-K students? What influences their attitudes toward integrating digital picture books in classrooms? How do these attitudes affect their strategies for engaging students during digital reading sessions?

Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded in **Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory** (1978) and **Postmodernism, Constructivism & Feminism**



Methodology

Approach: Qualitative multiple-case study

(Creswell & Poth, 2018)

Participants: Pre-K teachers in Oklahoma, selected through purposive and snowball sampling. Data Collection:

- > Semi-structured interviews with one teacher (iterative cycles)
- Qualtrics surveys
- > Focus group discussions

Discussion of Results

Preliminary findings reveal that:

- ☐ Teachers who believe in the educational value of digital books adopt scaffolded reading strategies and encourage digital engagement.
- ☐ Barriers include technological inconsistency, screen-related behavior management, and insufficient professional development.
- ☐ Many educators appreciate how digital picture books support interactive, engaging storytelling aligned with early literacy goals.

"Kids are drawn to the animations, but it's the teacher's voice and interaction that anchor the learning."(Interview excerpt)

- ☐ Invest in ongoing professional development
- ☐ Develop guidelines for screen-based reading
- ☐ Support classroom integration of digital tools with practical strategies



https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ySuZM Nhx0qgVsZ0RV8eGRgfKPD34F68CMClqySE rRsQ/edit?usp=drivesdk

Individual Characteristics

- Teaching experience
- Comfort with digital tools
- Access to technology
- Age and training background
- Sociocultural context

Lived Experiences

- Classroom use of digital picture books
- Previous exposure to tech-integrated literacy practices
- Professional development participation
- Observed student reactions and engagement

Teacher Beliefs

- Digital books support literacy when used interactively
- Visual and sound features engage learners
- Concerns: overuse of screens, tech replacing interaction
- Belief in balancing guidance and freedom (scaffolding)

Instructional Strategies

- Scaffolding discussions during digital reading
- Managing attention and screen behavior
- Choosing developmentally appropriate digital content
- Incorporating ZPD-aligned practices (Vygotsky)

Reading Interaction & Engagement

- Children show interest in animations and audio
- Learning enhanced by teacher-led questioning
- Encourages vocabulary, sequencing, and comprehension
- Need for adult mediation to avoid passive consumption

Classroom Integration Practices

- Use of tablets or smartboards for group reading
- Combining individual and shared digital reading
- Adjusting reading formats to students' needs
- Blending digital content with literacy goals

Implications for Practice

- Need for targeted professional development
- Guidelines for meaningful screen-based instruction
- Investment in classroom tech infrastructure
- Policy alignment with early literacy best practices

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