

SCRUTINIZING STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES ON DIGITAL STORYTELLING AS AN EDUCATIONAL TOOL IN LEARNING ENGLISH

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Abstract

English Teachers encounter difficulties when trying to pique students' interest in learning English. Technological innovations can enhance English courses through digital storytelling, which can support English lessons because it can strengthen students' commitment to learning and foster a better learning atmosphere. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' views of the attitudes and barriers when leveraging digital storytelling in learning English. This research utilized qualitative methods with questionnaire and interview research instruments to fill the methodological gap because there was a lot of research on digital storytelling conducted using quantitative methods. There were forty eighth-grade students at a private junior high school in Malang who had filled out the questionnaire, and three of them were interviewed. The research results showed that when leveraging digital storytelling to learn English, they have a favorable perspective concerning it, such as assisting them in focusing on the lesson material, keeping them entertained, aiding them in visualizing the lesson material, deepening their understanding of the lesson material, engaging them in learning, helping them communicate in English, providing them a sense of security to take part in class, and creating a stimulating learning environment. On the other hand, some students displayed uncertainty in terms of self-confidence and self-motivation when learning English leveraging digital storytelling although some students also demonstrated an increase in these traits. In addition, by leveraging digital storytelling, they found it simpler to recall the information given and felt more at ease expressing their language proficiency in the form of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, they ran into barriers while leveraging digital storytelling in English classrooms, including technological issues and trouble understanding unfamiliar vocabulary. The study's implications have been mentioned here.

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INTRODUCTION

At the moment, learning English is challenging for students due to their limited proficiency in the language as a result of discouragement, anxiousness, a dismissive environment, and a fear of making mistakes. Junior high school students have difficulties in writing because they typically have limited subject matter knowledge, restrictions on text organization, constraints on how to use capital letters, punctuation, and spelling, and limited English vocabulary. Additionally, their grammatical skills are lacking. The psychological issues they have when writing include trouble getting started in writing, a lack of motivation, laziness, and difficulty figuring out sentence structure (Nurlatifah & Yusuf, 2022). Jaelani & Zabidi (2020) claimed that speaking and listening were the two areas where most students struggled with English. They struggle to speak because they lack confidence in their

grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation. In addition, the absence of vocabulary impairs their capacity for listening. Vocabulary learning is another challenge for students (Woodeson et al., 2023). Students need a successful vocabulary learning technique since they not only lack vocabulary mastery but also are unable to employ the appropriate vocabulary. Students feel unprepared to read English-language materials as well. In their reading, they displayed unfavorable sentiments like worry and fear (Eriksson, 2023). Additionally, their reading speed is another issue that interferes with it. Difficulty in reading comprehension that occurs in junior high school students is caused by a lack of motivation, laziness, and difficulty reading in English (Hayati & Puspitaloka, 2022). Apart from that, they also lack vocabulary which is the source of their reading difficulties.

Junior high school students still strain to learn English because they encounter obstacles when speaking, listening, reading, and writing, and these obstacles are mostly triggered by a lack of vocabulary knowledge. Since each student absorbs information differently, it is important to focus on effective teaching and learning strategies that can enhance students' English language proficiency through engaging instruction. English teachers also confront difficulty in helping students who are having trouble learning English by offering lessons that will pique their interest in the subject. English teachers who incorporate audio-visual materials into their lessons will see an increase in student engagement and concentration, as well as attention, mental stimulation, and ease of memorization, and they will establish a meaningful learning process that will enable students to demonstrate their learning skills effectively (Asnas et al., 2023). Therefore, English teachers are expected to be able to take advantage of technological advances that can support students' English learning, and one of them is using digital storytelling. The greatest method to enhance students' learning is through digital storytelling because it fosters critical thinking and vocabulary acquisition (Indriani & Suteja, 2023). In addition, students may find it simpler to recall broadcast content when using digital storytelling. Digital storytelling can fulfill learning requirements for communication and self-expression to make teaching language skills easier. Digital storytelling can help children learn more effectively, build their visual memory, boost their self-esteem, and cultivate an open mind (Munajah et al., 2022).

As a result of research that was published in previous years, there has been an upsurge in interest in researching digital storytelling in learning English. First, Sembiring & Simajuntak (2023) investigated the potential of digital storytelling in helping students' vocabulary knowledge using comparative research design. The finding revealed students in the experimental class who are leveraging digital storytelling do better than students who are not taught using this medium, which means that employing this kind of instruction can greatly aid students in expanding their vocabulary knowledge. Additionally, this medium inspires students and boosts their self-assurance when they are learning new vocabulary. Students can learn engagingly and dynamically with the help of digital storytelling.

Second, Roza & Rustam (2023) conducted research with an emphasis on employing digital storytelling to facilitate speaking abilities using mixed methods. According to the study's findings, digital storytelling can give students the chance to improve their speaking fluency. The first previous study has shown that digital storytelling aids students' vocabulary knowledge. As it happens, this study also clarifies why vocabulary is a language element frequently employed in digital storytelling. Additionally, this research indicates that grammar is frequently employed in this media in addition to vocabulary. Because vocabulary and grammar are frequently used leveraging digital narrative learning strategies, employing this media can increase their speaking skills by 15%. Their ability to communicate is increasingly being mediated by digital technology, which can promote lifelong learning.

Third, Badawi et al. (2022) studied the effect of leveraging digital storytelling in speaking using a quasi-experimental approach. The research results reveal that after receiving digital storytelling exercises, the experimental group's students fared better in speaking tasks than the control group after post-treatment. Elementary students could be encouraged to speak up in class using this strategy. Students' good impressions are strengthened by the story, sound, and graphics, which makes them joyful and engaged. By voicing their ideas, they can practice speaking. The vocabulary, comprehension, and fluency of students can all be enhanced by this media. The students' fear of being judged negatively and making mistakes in their English pronunciation at first prevented them from speaking, but after engaging in several activities including role-playing and oral discussions via digital storytelling, their fear subsided.

Fourth, Hadi et al. (2023) examined an investigation regarding improving listening skills through digital storytelling using experimental research. The study's findings indicate there is a mean difference in learning outcomes between the pretest and posttest, indicating that students' listening skills are impacted by digital storytelling. Concentration and comprehension are required for listening. Digital storytelling led to an improvement in students' listening abilities. Digital storytelling can help enhance teacher-student engagement in the classroom. The animated pictures shown by technical tools in this media can help enhance students' motivation, self-confidence, and activity levels. Students' attention and interest in class activities may be raised by using digital storytelling. The familial context, prior experiences, and other individualized characteristics have an impact on students' listening abilities, but the utilization of this media reveals a rise in student interest in studying as well.

Fifth, Sudarmaji et al. (2020) finished research on digital storytelling to enhance students' writing and visual memory abilities. Findings indicated that there were no appreciable differences between students who used digital storytelling and those who received traditional instruction because all groups of students showed the same abilities, concentration, and focus throughout the course. Since the students' talents were the same in both the experimental and control classes, no differences were identified between them. However, in the experimental class, using digital storytelling to learn resulted in extremely good student motivation for learning. Because they actively ask questions and may come up with solutions, students using this method also foster a positive learning environment in the classroom. Therefore, even though there is no statistically significant difference, digital storytelling can nevertheless have an impact on the experimental class because of how highly motivated the students are to learn and how this fosters a positive learning environment.

Sixth, Radaideh et al. (2020) carried out a study on digital storytelling that concentrated on reading comprehension using a quasi-experimental design. It found that the experimental group performed better than the control group overall on the post-test for reading comprehension. Therefore, digital storytelling can help readers become better readers. Additionally, the relationship between students and teachers is improved by using this media. Digital storytelling contributes to a fun and energetic teaching environment. Students who struggle to understand the context of the reading, comprehend the author's intended meaning, or are unmotivated to read English texts do so because they lack the appropriate reading strategies. By contrast, digital storytelling can be a learning strategy that supports students in developing their reading skills.

There should be more research done on technology-based learning media, as shown by the large number of previous studies that look at digital storytelling. The next justification for conducting this research on digital storytelling is that technology has a good impact and improves students' enjoyment of their studies. This media is also a solution to the challenges

of learning English faced by students, so additional investigation is required on digital storytelling at the junior high school level. Only the first and fifth previous studies have looked at it at the junior high school level; other studies have looked at it at the elementary and university levels, which is why the researcher chose to focus on junior high school students. Furthermore, there are significant drawbacks to earlier investigations that might turn into research gaps in the present study. First off, prior research has mainly concentrated on a single language skill or language component. Second, prior studies did not explore students' perceptions using qualitative approaches and mostly employed quantitative methods, notably in experimental research designs. As a result, this research has some novelty. The first novelty is that this research examines students' views about digital storytelling by focusing on multiple language skills rather than just one. The second novelty of this research is the use of qualitative methodology to investigate students' views on the attitudes and barriers to utilizing digital storytelling to learn English, as opposed to the quantitative approaches employed in the majority of prior studies. Therefore, by using qualitative descriptive research, the researcher investigates how junior high school students perceive the attitudes of digital storytelling on their language skills or language components to fill any study gaps that may exist. Apart from that, this research will also investigate what barriers junior high school students encounter when they leverage digital storytelling in learning English since previous studies did not discuss this issue. Therefore, the research questions in this study consist of: (1) What are the attitudes when leveraging digital storytelling in learning English based on students' views? and (2) What are the barriers when leveraging digital storytelling in learning English based on students' views?

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

To obtain a comprehensive knowledge of the phenomena of digital storytelling and to address research concerns about students' views of it, a thorough analysis of subjective data was conducted through the use of the qualitative method in this study. This method was utilized to gather more detailed information about junior high school students' attitudes when leveraging digital storytelling to learn English and their barriers when they leverage digital storytelling in learning English. Therefore, qualitative research was ideally suited to address research questions that sought to comprehend viewpoints and explore intricate occurrences. This research method's strength was its deep and rich comprehension of participant experiences. Qualitative research had limitations and the possibility of bias. First, because qualitative research was interpretive, subjectivity might arise throughout the data collection, analysis, and interpretation stages. Additionally, researcher bias or prejudice might have an impact on the findings. Second, because qualitative research often uses smaller sample sizes, it could be challenging to extrapolate results to a larger population because results from questionnaires and interviews might be more difficult to extrapolate to a larger population because of the depth and specificity of the data gathered.

When using qualitative methodologies, the researcher employed several strategies to lessen study restrictions. First, member checking could lessen bias and boost the study's credibility by reviewing or validating findings. Second, the research's credibility could be raised by using a transparent methodology that clearly outlines the steps involved in collecting and analyzing data. Third, the validity and reliability of the research could be ensured by upholding stringent standards through adherence to recognized qualitative research technique standards. Fourth, minimizing potential bias could be achieved by standardizing procedures by creating precise guidelines for administering questionnaires and

conducting interviews. Fifth, bias or ambiguity in questions could be corrected by doing pilot testing to test interviews and questionnaires before major data gathering.

Research Participants

Students at a private junior high school in Malang, East Java who were in the eighth grade and had previously used digital storytelling as a means of learning English made up the target population. The forty individuals who answered the questionnaire were chosen by random sampling. The utilization of random sampling served to mitigate bias and enhance the probability that the sample was representative of the total sample. To ensure that every member of the population had an equal chance of being chosen for the study, the researcher used simple random sampling, which was accomplished by using a random number generator.

Following the particular objectives of the research, purposive sampling was utilized to select three students who scored the highest on English tests for the follow-up interviews. Forty participants, or the sample size, completed the questionnaire, and three students were selected for interviews. Features of the demographics were twenty-three female and seventeen male students took part. The researcher decided to reflect the imbalance in the sample to better represent the original population, which was why this study's sample size was unbalanced by gender. The study represented a population where gender imbalance occurred naturally. Furthermore, participant availability affected sample composition so that when there were more participants from one gender who were willing and available than from another gender, the researcher chose to work with the available group while still maintaining the principle of random sampling.

Students in the eighth grade at the private junior high school who had previously used digital storytelling as a means of learning English met the inclusion criteria. High English scores were one of the inclusion requirements for the interviews. The selection of high achievers and a larger proportion of male students was primarily based on methodological reasons and possible considerations. Firstly, high achievers typically had a clear understanding of their English language proficiency as well as an awareness of the difficulties they encountered when learning the language through digital storytelling, so this selection could delve deeper into the experiences of these students and offer a more nuanced understanding of the nuances of using digital storytelling as an educational tool. Secondly, purposive sampling aligned with the research objectives to guarantee that participants gained a significant understanding of the research questions. Thirdly, the higher proportion of male students in the selected sample was due to the availability of high-achieving students, so achieving a perfect gender balance was still not possible. Fourthly, students who had previously used this method of learning and who were interested in or knowledgeable about digital storytelling were selected by the researcher. Fifthly, these students had an extremely positive attitude towards the use of digital storytelling. Sixthly, they were students who were open to candidly and honestly sharing their experiences. Therefore, random sampling was employed for the questionnaire to reduce bias, and purposive sampling was employed in the interviews with high-achieving students to discover more about their attitudes and the barriers they encountered when learning English through digital storytelling.

Instruments

A questionnaire and interview were the two main data collection techniques used by the researcher. A questionnaire was the first instrument used. The researcher adopted a questionnaire created by Ahmad & Yamat (2020). To ensure the adopted questionnaire was valid and pertinent to the research context, it was validated by consulting experts in the field of English language learning media. The questionnaire was distributed using Google Forms. Three response alternatives were presented on a Likert scale, namely agree (A), not sure (N),

and disagree (D). Likert scales could fill in gaps in qualitative research by emphasizing their unique contributions and many benefits within the research context. First, by offering structured response options, the Likert scale gave a data collection structure that allowed the researcher to automatically gauge and categorize the degree of agreement or disagreement, allowing questionnaire responses to yield detailed information that could be qualitatively analyzed. Second, a Likert scale expedited the process of gathering data, enabling it to get around the time constraints that impeded qualitative research. Third, Likert scales could be applied in qualitative research to gain a deeper understanding of perspectives or experiences. The researcher used the questionnaire because it was a commonly used tool to gather standardized responses from a larger group, providing structured data regarding participants' perceptions and attitudes toward digital storytelling for English language learning. Using a Likert scale allowed for quantifiable data analysis.

The second instrument was semi-structured interviews conducted in Indonesian. The duration of this interview was two hours. Seven interview questions focused on attitudes towards utilizing digital storytelling and barriers to English language learning. The researcher used interview because it provided an opportunity for an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and challenges. Semi-structured interviews allowed for a flexible conversation, encouraging participants to express their views candidly. The use of Indonesian might ensure better understanding and comfort for the participants. Participants were informed about the study's objectives and provided consent before participating. Participant confidentiality was conducted in this study to ensure the anonymity of participants, such as removing identifiable information from the collected data. Field notes from the interviews were likely kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

Data Analysis

The questionnaire was the first source of data to be analyzed. The analysis for this first instrument was descriptive statistical analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis was a way of summarizing and describing the distribution of responses from a questionnaire using percentages. Finding these percentages helped in providing an understanding of the distribution of opinions or responses to a particular questionnaire question within the population under investigation. This was a part of descriptive analysis that helped in summarizing qualitative data into a more understandable form. The analysis involved calculating percentages based on participants' responses to ten items using the formula, namely $P = F/N \times 100$ where P was the percentage, F was the frequency of a specific response, and N was the total number of responses for each item. There were three steps involved in this analysis. First, the computation of responses was conducted by using the formula $P = F/N \times 100$ to calculate the percentage for each response option in the questionnaire for the ten items. Second, calculation of average percentage was employed by computing the average percentage for each of the ten items to understand the overall distribution of responses for each item. Third, summarization and conclusion involved summarizing the findings derived from the calculated percentages for the ten items, leading to the establishment of conclusions based on the summarized data.

The second sort of data that was examined was the interview. As part of the interview data analysis procedure, there were four stages to analyze the interview data. First, transcription was employed by transcribing interview recordings into written transcripts. This transformation of spoken content into text facilitates the analysis process, enabling the researcher to review and categorize the information systematically. Second, coding was carried out by categorizing and organizing the transcribed information by identifying key themes, concepts, or patterns. Coding involves assigning labels or codes to specific segments

of the text, allowing for structured analysis and comparison. Third, thematic analysis was used by identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within qualitative data. Themes were recurring ideas or concepts found within the transcripts, forming the basis for deeper insights. Fourth, comparative analysis was conducted by comparing the findings with earlier studies to assess consistency or divergence. This comparative analysis helped in understanding how the current data aligns with existing literature or research in the field.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

Data on students' perceptions of leveraging digital storytelling in learning English are included in Table 1. This table shows the percentages reflecting the number of participants who selected each item.

When the author(s) needs to present tables or figures, please see Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1
Students' Perception of Leveraging Digital Storytelling in Learning English

Items	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)
I give my full attention during the storytelling activities	80.0	20.0	0
I enjoy storytelling activities	95.0	5.0	0
I could imagine the characters, time, places, and activities taking place	75.0	20.0	5.0
Storytelling activities help me understand the content better	60.0	40.0	0
Storytelling activities are interesting and attractive	77.5	22.5	0
Storytelling activities make me confident to take part in class	35.0	57.5	7.5
I can learn to speak English during the activities	70.0	27.5	2.5
I feel safe to participate in the storytelling activities	65.0	35.0	0
I feel learning English is fun	72.5	27.5	0
I would like to participate in future storytelling activities	42.5	50.0	7.5

Based on Table 1, 80% of students (32 students) agreed that they give full attention during digital storytelling activities. 20% of students (8 students) were undecided about the idea that they used digital storytelling as a medium to learn their English by giving their full attention during the activities. The result was concluded that the students were found to have concurred that when engaging in storytelling activities, they pay close attention. Additionally, 95% of students (38 students) confirmed that storytelling activities are enjoyable. 5% of students (2 students) were unsure if they liked storytelling activities. The result showed that the students said they liked the storytelling-related activities. Moreover, 75% of students (30 students) thought that storytelling activities help the students visualize the characters, settings, and activities that are going place. 20% of students (8 students) were neutral on the topic. 5% of students (2 students) voted against this assertion. It could be concluded the bulk of students could picture the characters and the setting easily.

Furthermore, 60% of students (24 students) believed that storytelling activities improved their comprehension of the material. 40% of students (16 students) responded negatively. The conclusion was that students concurred employing exercises that involve storytelling can help them quickly assimilate the material. After that, 77.5% of students (31 students) acknowledged that storytelling activities are appealing and entertaining. 22.5% of students (9 students) expressed a neutral opinion regarding it. In light of this, the students concurred that they are drawn to storytelling activities. Then, 35% of students (14 students) approved that participating in storytelling activities gave them more confidence to participate in class. 23 students, or 57.5% of the class, were unsure whether they felt confident enough to

participate in class. Three students, or 7.5% of the class, expressed the opinion that they lacked the confidence to participate in class. Because of this, the student's self-confidence in storytelling activities was neutral. Following that, 70% of students (28 students) can improve in speaking English during storytelling exercises. 27.5% of students (11 students) were skeptical about their ability to learn English through the storytelling activities. One student, or 2.5% of the class, disagreed. As a result, the students had the perception that storytelling activities could help them more easily to speak English.

In conclusion, the majority of junior high school students have favorable opinions on digital storytelling to learn English. They agreed that participating in digital storytelling activities could encourage them to pay close attention to the information presented. Second, the students also concurred that they enjoy storytelling-related activities a lot since the activities are entertaining. Third, students have no trouble visualizing the scenes and characters that are described in the digital storytelling. Fourth, leveraging digital storytelling deepens students' comprehension of what they are studying. Fifth, digital storytelling can amuse students because they find the media to be intriguing. Sixth, employing digital storytelling can make it more feasible for students to speak English. Seventh, students feel secure enough to participate in digital storytelling activities. Eighth, digital storytelling can promote a joyful learning atmosphere.

Meanwhile, some students gave a neutral response since they were not sure how they felt about several claims made concerning digital storytelling. First, students are hesitant about digital storytelling activities which can make them more confident to participate in class. Second, they also cannot decide whether they have the motivation to continue participating in storytelling activities in the future. Therefore, they showed their attitude of doubt in terms of self-confidence and self-motivation in using digital storytelling in learning English. Then, three participants were questioned about their attitudes toward language skills proficiency and obstacles they encountered when leveraging digital storytelling to learn English. According to Participant 1, learning to use digital storytelling can increase confidence in English skills, especially in reading, writing, and speaking skills. In addition, it can help Participant 1 remember the content that has been broadcast because there are components in digital storytelling that support language learning such as sound, images, and writing.

“Digital storytelling sound should be louder because usually at home you like to listen to digital storytelling using earphones. Apart from that, sometimes learning to use digital storytelling is also a bit difficult to understand. Even so, learning to use digital storytelling can help me remember the storyline that has been presented in digital storytelling because there are sounds, images, and writing that support it. Digital storytelling can increase my confidence in reading, writing, and communicating” (Participant 1).

However, Participant 1 had difficulties learning English using digital storytelling. The difficulty that Participant 1 faced was that the voice in digital storytelling was not heard clearly in certain parts when digital storytelling was used in classroom learning. Participant 1 usually uses earphones when Participant 1 studies at home using digital storytelling. When digital storytelling displays parts that are difficult to understand, Participant 1 is sometimes a bit discouraged, so Participant 1 thinks learning using books is easier to understand. Moreover, Participant 2 also faced challenges when using digital storytelling to learn English. The challenge that Participant 2 faced was when Participant 2 could not see the writing in digital storytelling clearly so Participant 2 felt confused because Participant 2 had lost the information in the digital storytelling writing.

“The challenge I face is that sometimes I cannot see the writing displayed in digital storytelling because many of my friends are scrambling to get closer to my teacher's laptop screen when the digital storytelling is broadcast. On the other hand, digital storytelling helps me be confident when speaking and listening.

This tool also keeps me from getting bored so I am confident when speaking and listening. I am very happy because learning to use this tool can entertain me. Digital storytelling can increase intelligence in learning English because it is displayed in an attractive and not boring way so that it is fun when used in learning” (Participant 2).

Contrarily, Participant 2 was delighted and entertained while learning English by leveraging digital storytelling since Participant 2 did not find it to be boring. Participant 2 reported feeling more assured about the capacity for both listening and speaking. Furthermore, Participant 3 also learned a lot of new vocabulary while learning English through digital storytelling, so Participant 3 was enthusiastic about learning English because Participant 3 had acquired the language acquisition. In addition, Participants feel that learning English using digital storytelling can improve listening skills because listening to digital storytelling can hone listening skills with the help of writing in it which can help when Participant 3 does not know unfamiliar vocabulary or sentences.

“Through digital storytelling, I was helped to understand new vocabulary. I am also more enthusiastic about learning to use this tool even though I have obstacles in understanding English as a whole. But if you compare it to just listening to the teacher's explanation during an English lesson, without using digital storytelling it also feels incomplete. I hope this way of learning can be applied to all subjects. This digital storytelling can also train my listening skills. I can also understand grammar easily because in digital storytelling we explained the differences in the use of Verb 1 and Verb 2, and how to dissect sentence structures such as subject, verb, and object. My motivation to learn vocabulary has also increased because my vocabulary can develop easily and quickly through this medium” (Participant 3).

In addition, Participant 3 also has motivation in English using this learning media because Participant 3 thinks that if Participant 3 only listens to the teacher's explanation when learning English is lacking. Participant 3 can also easily understand the grammar displayed in digital storytelling because the animation, explanation, sound, and writing in digital storytelling are easy to understand and interesting. In contrast, Participant 3 also experienced obstacles in digital storytelling if Participant 3 only listened to digital storytelling without listening to the teacher's explanation to strengthen Participant 3's understanding of English learning. Therefore, combining explanations from digital storytelling and teachers is very necessary for learning English using this media.

In conclusion, because they enjoy leveraging engaging learning materials, students have a good attitude when learning English through digital storytelling. Students' motivation, passion, and sense of self-worth can all rise when they use digital storytelling to learn English. Additionally, they can recall the information offered through digital storytelling. They are comfortable expressing their language competency since they have well-developed listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Additionally, they are proficient and quick learners of English grammar and vocabulary. However, they also encounter several obstacles when learning English through digital storytelling. Technical issues like shaky sound and illegible writing in digital storytelling are some of the obstacles they encounter. In addition, students feel dejected when they miss due to challenging terminology for them to understand. Consequently, teachers' explanations are required as a supplement to English language acquisition through digital storytelling to facilitate them to retain the information at that time.

Discussion

This research aims to explore students' views about attitudes and barriers when utilizing digital stories in English language learning. There are several student attitudes regarding leveraging digital storytelling for learning English which are inferred from the questionnaire's data. Based on the above analysis, the students' attitudes when leveraging digital storytelling in learning English are positive in terms of enhanced focus and active learning, interest and enjoyment, visualization of scenarios, improved understanding of

subject matter, amusement, and engagement, strengthened English-speaking abilities, safe participation, and fostering a pleasurable learning environment. However, they face uncertainty in terms of self-confidence and self-motivation.

To answer the first research question, the current findings revealed that the students acknowledged that digital storytelling exercises encourage them to focus on the material provided. It may engage the younger generation and inspire them to learn English. This result is consistent with Kristiawan et al. (2022) who explored that the multimodal nature of digital storytelling, which combines text, sound, and images, promotes an active learning environment while lowering their fear about learning English. Students' willingness to participate in engaging group discussions and their enjoyment of the activities make this learning extremely important in an EFL environment where students occasionally lack the vocabulary and desire to participate meaningfully.

Second, the students also agreed that storytelling-related activities are interesting, so they appreciate them. As it is engaging to use in English classes, this media gives students a beneficial educational opportunity and protects them from getting bored. This result is consistent with Talan (2020) noted that digital storytelling makes learning English in the classroom more enjoyable and entertaining because it can grab students' attention by appealing to different senses, igniting their excitement and sparking their curiosity about how to use their creative thinking and imagination to learn new things. Due to the media's ability to clearly and logically explain concepts by comparing them to real-world situations, this strategy has a favorable effect on students' willingness to enjoy English classes.

Third, digital storytelling's specified scenarios and characters are easily visualized by the students. The design of graphic user interfaces that are tailored to the context of use, namely as a visualization tool to empower students in learning English, is bridged by digital storytelling. This result corresponds with Addone et al. (2021) confirmed that digital storytelling is an effective instructional strategy for enhancing linguistic abilities, problem-solving abilities, and the ability to visualize data or knowledge. Digital storytelling can depict data through graphics, text, and sound, so this media is growing in popularity in the educational field. Gloder et al. (2020) also supported that because digital storytelling involves a variety of cognitive processes, including attention, working memory, scene perception, language processing, and narrative comprehension, it can demonstrate its effectiveness in sustaining student engagement, improving relationships with characters, and boosting concentration. Students will receive content that has been analyzed using data visualization in digital storytelling, which gives them access to text analysis tools and is instructive for them.

Fourth, leveraging digital storytelling helps students understand their subject matter better. Digital storytelling can improve students' comprehension of English language instruction since it makes the learning process more realistic, satisfies pedagogical requirements, and has supportive technology integration. This finding concurs with Harjono & Wiryotinoyo (2021) who reported that because abstract notions in learning topics can be portrayed to make them more vivid and understandable, emotional involvement is also increased. Therefore, determining in-depth learning of the learning content depends greatly on this emotional involvement. Digital storytelling enables students to thoughtfully consider what they have learned, thus enhancing learning outcomes and digital literacy.

Fifth, students can be amused by digital storytelling because they find it appealing. Digital storytelling uses special effects to keep students' attention while they listen to the story, making it engaging and captivating. This finding corresponds with Rahiem (2021) who stated that the use of amusement as a teaching approach is crucial for boosting student participation during lessons. Because it integrates instructional messaging with learning

experiences to provide a dynamic learning environment, this medium engages students in learning that is meaningful to them.

Sixth, students' English-speaking abilities can be strengthened by using digital storytelling. By acquiring the ability to ask questions, voice ideas, and coordinate communication to their thinking, students' communication abilities develop. This finding follows Fu et al. (2022) who stated that students' speaking abilities can be improved through the use of this media, particularly in pronunciation, vocabulary, fluency, and grammar. Because digital storytelling encourages communication rather than rote memorization of grammar and vocabulary, it can help students become more proficient speakers. In addition, this media helps students hone their communication abilities by permitting them to retell specific passages of the story after listening to it.

Seventh, students feel safe to engage in digital storytelling activities. They work harder to organize their thoughts carefully and thoroughly when learning through digital storytelling. This result is confirmed by Lazareva & Cruz-Martinez (2021) who claimed that digital storytelling assignments are less difficult for students to complete than frontal presentations in class, allowing them to convey their opinions. For students to complete their tasks in a way that allows them to express their thoughts more freely, digital storytelling has an open or more creative nature. Thus, digital storytelling assignments can encourage students' positive behavioral, emotional, and cognitive involvement.

Eighth, a pleasurable learning environment can be fostered by digital storytelling. It can assist students to cooperate effectively and make studying enjoyable rather than tedious. This result corresponds with Pandian et al. (2020) emphasized that the cognitive, technical, and ethical aspects of learning in this media can foster an environment in the young generation that is not only technology-oriented but also knowledgeable and creative. Digital storytelling can promote digital competence so that it can promote media literacy and intellectual curiosity. Students can efficiently make use of the numerous tools offered in their digital storytelling to expand their understanding and reflect on their significant experiences (Kim & Li, 2021). Consequently, through a variety of multimodal characteristics that can enhance their learning environment, digital storytelling can offer learning that is both accessible and affordable.

Ninth, students are still unsure whether digital storytelling activities can make them more confident to participate in class. Therefore, they distrust their confidence. The result of this research is contradictory to the result of research put forward by Aziz & Husnawadi (2020) who declared that because students believe they have learned from their classmates and teachers appropriately, they get more self-assurance when engaging in digital storytelling activities in English. In addition, because teachers may provide students with immediate feedback when they make a mistake while studying, students use digital storytelling as a powerful tool to transmit information in English. Digital storytelling might boost one's confidence while responding and expressing thoughts. The more proficient a student is, the more assured they are that they can employ a sufficient linguistic repertoire. Student's fluency and readiness for learning also grow when practical exercises using digital storytelling are repeated. On the other hand, this finding corresponds with Sunderland et al. (2021) revealed that while using digital storytelling, most students initially feel afraid, but they can soon build confidence. They fear utilizing technology to try something new because they have had some bad experiences, but some of them can get past their fear. Therefore, even though there are considerable issues, teaching leveraging digital storytelling can aid students in building self-confidence, so the majority of students are either in favor of or neutral about utilizing digital storytelling in their education.

Tenth, students are unable to determine if they will be motivated to take part in storytelling activities in the future. Thus, they are doubtful about their self-motivation. However, the findings of this study do not match up with studies done by Kasami (2021) who expressed that for the majority of students who struggle with their English, digital storytelling can boost their motivation to learn. Students' motivation increased as a result of feeling more at ease in English class and less anxious about speaking English. Due to the chance to describe their ideas, students can communicate with others in English. On the other side, this finding conforms with Wisnumurti et al. (2021) who asserted that in fact, students' affective involvement with digital storytelling was mixed, with both bad and good responses. Because their cognitive involvement is troublesome due to a lack of background information and misunderstanding in the classroom, digital storytelling does not inspire learners to learn English. Students' somewhat laziness in completing digital storytelling activities is an indication of their lack of motivation. However, several students have indicated support for utilizing digital storytelling to teach English because the activities involve teacher and student engagement with questions and answers, which can boost motivation to learn the material. Question and answer sessions can help students concentrate and become actively involved, which will help them become more motivated. Some students indeed lack the motivation to complete projects associated with digital storytelling, but if they are placed in a group that works collaboratively, the group members will motivate them to maintain their passion (Kaminskienė & Khetsuriani, 2019). Teachers as facilitators must carefully monitor each student's participation in the process and promote more student-centered learning to help students become more motivated.

Next, the researcher discussed students' other attitudes and their barriers to leveraging digital storytelling in English lessons through interview data. There are other four attitudes shown by students in terms of increased enthusiasm and sense of value, improved retention of knowledge, comfort in expressing language proficiency, and efficient vocabulary and grammar acquisition. First, students' enthusiasm, passion, and sense of value can all rise by leveraging digital storytelling. It has a significant impact on student excitement, which encourages students to develop as people who are very involved in and committed to working hard when studying. This study corresponds with Rohayati et al. (2021) who claimed digital storytelling is becoming more and more common in educational settings because it helps students connect passionately to their learning by allowing them to explore their concepts in novel ways. With the help of students' interests and prior knowledge, this media promotes rich learning that increases knowledge and relevance. Because digital storytelling employs a style of learning that is engaging and challenging, students become enthused throughout English courses, such as when voicing opinions and participating in group discussions. Because digital storytelling offers authentic learning connected to students' real-life experiences, students' enjoyment of the learning process when it occurs enhances their intentions.

Second, the knowledge provided by digital storytelling is retained by students. Students are better able to recall lessons when they use digital storytelling. This finding is in line with Adara & Haqiyyah (2021) who stated students who are accustomed to using digital storytelling can apply their information more quickly and effortlessly. Because they can recall their lessons using existing images or visuals, visual learners can also quickly absorb the information delivered through this medium. Students' comprehension can be increased by incorporating visuals into text. Since visual learners want visual encouragement, digital storytelling can suit their demands and improve student learning.

Third, the students feel at ease expressing their language proficiency since they have strong speaking, listening, reading, and writing abilities. The findings are consistent with those of earlier investigations. First, Roza & Rustam (2023) mentioned students that who use

digital storytelling may have the chance to speak more fluently. This media provides frequent opportunities for vocabulary and grammar repetition, which can help users' speaking abilities. Digital technology is progressively facilitating students' ability to communicate, which can promote lifelong learning. Second, Hadi et al. (2023) stated although students' listening abilities are influenced by individual factors and previous experiences, digital storytelling can improve their listening abilities. This rise can be attributed to animation, which fosters students' increased engagement in their studies. Third, Radaideh et al. (2020) declared students' reading abilities can be improved through digital storytelling. It assists students in improving their reading comprehension and motivation to read English-language materials. Fourth, Castillo-Cuesta et al. (2021) conveyed that after leveraging digital storytelling to learn English, students' vocabulary and grammar have improved, which can raise their enthusiasm for writing. Therefore, digital storytelling can enhance students' academic English proficiency in these four language areas.

Fourth, the students can pick up English vocabulary and grammar quickly and proficiently. The findings support earlier studies by Sembiring & Simajuntak (2023) expressed students' vocabulary grows thanks to digital storytelling. Student learning of new vocabulary can be stimulated by appealing media appearances. Al-Amri (2020) said that students enjoy digital storytelling because it fosters conversation in the classroom and helps them develop communication skills with noticeable grammatical and lexical gains. In terms of the use of connectors, subjects, and verb tenses, their grammar has improved. They are actively involved in the ongoing grammatical correction of the text in digital storytelling. Additionally, group projects on these platforms help to improve the grammar of the content. Moreover, students' lexical competence is also increased through digital storytelling activities. This media generates implicit vocabulary teaching, which is more effective than explicit vocabulary teaching. Activities that force students to recall terms in a contextualized setting are essential to the explicit vocabulary teaching process.

To answer the second research question, this present study declared that they face two barriers while using digital storytelling to learn English in terms of technical problems and difficulty understanding terms. First, students run into technical problems like unstable sound and unreadable writing in digital storytelling. Despite having technological challenges, students face barriers while adopting digital storytelling for learning, even if they generally have good attitudes about this medium. This finding corresponds with Tatlı et al. (2022) who revealed one of digital storytelling's drawbacks is that it has technical issues with the music, duration, etc., which result in a high level of cognitive load. However, by removing these technical challenges, this media can be used effectively in learning. Therefore, the planning procedure for digital storytelling must overcome these technical challenges.

Second, students experience disappointment when they fail because of difficult terms for them to understand. Students occasionally tend to shift their moods abruptly, making it exceedingly challenging to hold onto one's stance. They want to engage in focused activities, so teachers give courses using digital storytelling to help students learn by expanding their vocabulary. However, the majority of students struggle to master vocabulary by leveraging digital storytelling. This finding is in line with Asnas et al. (2023) declared that EFL students struggle with translating and comprehending very complex vocabulary when they use audio-visual media for English language learning, and this difficulty is exacerbated when the voice actors in the media use rapid tempo intonation, students' refusal to use a dictionary, a lack of interest in learning English, and friends or a learning environment that discourages the acquisition of vocabulary in the language. This finding also corresponds with Maya et al. (2022) claimed students' problems stem from their inability to correctly pronounce, write, and interpret English vocabulary when leveraging digital storytelling in learning English. Because

language development frequently necessitates context-based teaching, which includes the use of digital storytelling, this media must be developed as interestingly and frequently as possible to attract students' interest in the vocabulary development process. This will help digital storytelling become a superior learning tool that can attract student involvement in the vocabulary acquisition process.

CONCLUSION

The present study has undertaken an extensive investigation into junior high school students' viewpoints regarding the utilization of digital storytelling in the context of English language instruction that provides significant insights into the possible advantages and obstacles linked to the integration of digital storytelling in learning English for junior high school students. This research aims to explore students' views about attitudes and barriers when utilizing digital stories in English language learning. This research argues that junior high school students have a favorable attitude about leveraging digital storytelling to learn English. Their positive attitude can be seen through focusing their attention during learning, feeling entertained, visualizing the material easily, understanding the material deeply, getting involved in learning actively, establishing English communication, feeling safe when participating in class, generating a stimulating learning environment, retaining learning material swiftly, and expressing their English language proficiency through four language skills and two language components well.

However, some of them had doubts about their self-confidence and self-motivation when learning English using digital storytelling, and some other students showed that their self-confidence and self-motivation were growing. On the other hand, they experience barriers related to technological problems and difficulty understanding unfamiliar vocabulary when learning English using this media. Therefore, teacher explanations were required in this activity as an addition to student learning. The study's limitation is the small and unbalanced number of samples. As a result, it is advised that future research conduct comparable studies with a large and balanced number of samples, such as when completing questionnaires and interviews, so it can limit the incidence of bias because only three students out of forty students were interviewed in this study. Even while this study concentrated on a particular group of EFL students, future research will expand the generalizability of the findings by exploring other student populations and taking into account variables like age, cultural background, and language competence level.

This current research has several implications. First, this research's pedagogical implications include the possibility of using digital storytelling to improve student focus and involvement, which teachers can then use to create interactive learning environments. Multimedia strategies that incorporate text, sound, and image elements can be used to keep students interested in English language learning. Furthermore, the present study underscores the positive effects of digital storytelling on the learning environment. Teachers can use this information to craft classroom activities that not only improve language proficiency but also establish a lighthearted and encouraging environment that enhances the cognitive, technical, and ethical dimensions of learning. Second, the research findings have implications for curriculum development as well, as the positive perceptions of digital storytelling by students suggest that digital storytelling can be incorporated into the English curriculum by matching it with language learning objectives and competencies to enhance language proficiency. Third, the findings of this study have implications for teacher professional development as well.

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