English Lecturers' Perceptions on DST in Teaching Grammar

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Abstract

Most of the literature has focused on using DST as a medium for teaching story-based text to students, such as narrative and descriptive text. Then is from it this study aims to investigate DST with a different focus: how English lecturers perceive DST in grammar teaching. This study used a case study design with the interview as the main instrument to collect the data. The methods were conducted in one high educational institution in Garut, Indonesia. The participant in this study was consisted of one lecturer using DST to teach grammar to college students. The findings showed that the lecturer has more positive views about using DST in teaching grammar. The positive views such as improving students' grammar comprehension, increasing the students' engagement, and relaxing the class environment when teaching grammar are the main sights of the lecturer. However, the negative views are focused on the technical issues when applying DST in the classroom. Thus, not all teachers can immediately understand the use of DST, so we need to provide direction on how to use DST. DST is a helpful tool for transferring material in teaching grammar.

Keywords: *DST, Lecturer Perception, Teaching Grammar, University Students, Teaching Media*

INTRODUCTION

Digital storytelling improves students' capacities in the aspects of language skills and psychology. In terms of language skills, DST improves students' ability, especially in listening and pronunciation (Bashirnezhad & Yousefi, 2017). Moreover, students who studied using DST had significantly improved writing skills than students who studied using traditional methods (Sarica & Usluel, 2015). For students taught by digital storytelling, the reading score of short stories increased, with 64% of students in the "outstanding" category and 36% of students in the "good" category in the post-test score (Anggeraini & Afifah, 2017). In addition, the approach allows students to pick out the correct vocabulary and apply the ideal structure to students speaking ability (Eissa, 2019). In terms of psychology, DST increases confidence in storytelling and is very effective for use in a learning environment to improve student's language and digital skills (Hava, 2021). Additionally, digital storytelling is an ideal way to teach listening skills to inspire deep and reflective learning, engage and motivate students, and provide natural resources (Gestanti, 2017). As such, digital storytelling fetches many benefits to English language teaching for students.

However, some problems arise from using DST methods when teaching English. First, teachers are mainly unable to apply DST in English teaching and have experience limitations in designing the proper digital storytelling for students (Kurniawan, 2018). Second, when making a DST product, teachers mostly have difficulties when dubbing the sound in the software, especially in terms of pronunciation (Özüdoğru & Çakır, 2020). Third, EFL teachers and students did not illustrate their normal practices which lead into ineffectiveness in teaching English (Budianto et al., 2021). As such,

mainly lack knowledge in arranging the instruction of DST in teaching English is the central issue of the topic.

Furthermore, there are previous studies that strengthen the use of DST. First, some studies have been explaining the perceptions of DST in teaching English (Azis & Husnawadi, 2020; Hava, 2021; Özüdoğru & Çakır, 2020; Alcalde-Peñalver & Santamaría-Urbieta, 2021; Kurniawan, 2018; Kobayashi, 2012; Yang & Wu, 2012). Second, some studies clarifying about the effectiveness of DST in teaching English (Azis & Husnawadi, 2020; Gutierrez et al., 2019; Rahimi & Yadollahi, 2017; Hava, 2021; Al Khateeb, 2019; Mohamed Salama Eissa, 2019; Mirza, 2020; Aljaraideh, 2020; Al-Amri, 2020; Liu et al., 2018; Bashirnezhad & Yousefi, 2017; Sudarmaji et al., 2020; Zarei et al., 2021; Setianingsih, 2011). Third, DST is a tool to search for the ideational meanings of narrative text (Fajriah et al., 2021). Lastly, some research is more on the instruction of DST applied in English teaching (Setiawati & Setyarini, 2020; Kim et al., 2021; Andayani, 2019; Rong & Noor, 2019; Abdel-Hack, 2014). Thus, those researches are providing the information about the topic.

DST conveys many advantages and issues in applying English teaching, especially in the EFL area. DST also clearly influences psychological and language skills such as listening, writing, reading, and speaking. Nevertheless, some the troubles, such as teachers' lack of knowledge of applying the proper DST methods in teaching English are appeared. The researches on DST are mostly based on DST's effectiveness and perceptions in teaching English especially in teaching story-based text such as narrative text. However, this study focusses on researching lecturer perception throughout the use of DST in enhancing students' grammar comprehension for English subject.

METHODS

This study used a qualitative case study design. This case study design presents a detailed and contextual picture of a particular phenomenon (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003; Widodo, 2013; Shih & Huang, 2017). This design was chosen since it aims to investigate the natural phenomenon in this case how the lecturer uses DST in teaching grammar. In addition, this study was carried out in one of the educational institutions in Garut, Indonesia. The participant is an English Lecturer who uses DST in teaching grammar. The selection of this participant is due to the good reputation of the participant in using DST, especially in teaching grammar. The data of this study were obtained from the semi-structured interview. This interview was chosen since a semi-structured interview is powerful to make the data is more comprehensible. The data were analyzed inductively through the stages of recording, transcribing, categorizing, analyzing, and interpreting.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

These stages elaborate the research findings regarding the topic of how the English lecturer perceives DST.

Findings

Based on the facts that have been mentioned in the introduction, this study aims to investigate the lecturer's perception of using DST in teaching English grammar. The findings focused on the perception and stages of DST by dividing 3 aspects: Knowledge, Experience, and Belief.

Knowledge

In the aspect of knowledge, the lecturer said, *"So, DST ini singkatan dari digital story telling"* which means that the lecturer recognized the abbreviation of DST itself, which is Digital Storytelling. That shows the understanding of the lecturer itself that DST is storytelling that is delivered into digital media. Then, she also said that *"Menurut pendapat saya, dst ini biasanya sebuah cerita yang disampaikan melalui media digital, biasanya itu di buat untuk perpose pembelajaran yang hubungannya dengan teks teks yang ada disekolah untuk in hand kemampuan bercerita atau kemampuan menulis"* which has meanings that from the participant perspective, DST is a story which is delivered through digital media and is usually made for teaching purposes especially teaching text-

based story in the classroom for enhancing storytelling ability and writing ability. Moreover, the participant stated, "*Kalo yang saya ketahui tentang dst ini kaya media yang dipake untuk mempermudah atau membantu pelajaran ini*" implies that from what the participant perceived is that DST is like a media to make teaching or learning easier. Those data stated that DST is digital storytelling with a story delivered into digital media and is usually made for making teaching more accessible, especially teaching text-based stories in the classroom to enhance storytelling ability and writing ability.

Regarding the knowledge of DST types in the aspect of knowledge, the lecturer as this statement, "*Kalo tipe-tipenya i have no idea, yang saya tau itu ini adalah jenis jenis cerita anime action yang kita pake dikelas*" shows that the lecturer did not know the classification or types of DST itself. However, the lecturer provides another term: the type of the story as the data mentioned above is anime. This leads to the interpretation that the lecturer does not know to differentiate the types of DST while using DST in teaching grammar. Meanwhile, in terms of differentiating the types of the story or the content of DST, the lecturer understood that there is a story based on anime, cartoons, fable, fiction, and many more.

Another finding in knowledge is that the lecturer knows the platform that can be used in using or making DST content. The lecturer said that "*Kalo dulu ketika kita mau pake atau kita mau bikin, kan biasanya ada aplikasi aplikasi khususnya.*" It means that when we want to use or make a content, there are usually specific applications that we can use. This is interpreted as the lecturer knowing the stages that when the lecturer wants to use DST, then the lecturer needs to prepare the content first, and to prepare the content; there are two ways: making DST content and using someone's DST content. The lecturer said specifically that "*Biasanya kalo saya pake ISpring for example atau yang paling mudah biasanya saya pake yang langsung aja dari Youtube.*"

Experience

Regarding to the experiences of making DST content, the lecturer said that "*Kalo membuat saya tidak experience untuk membuat digital story telling ini, dulu saya pernah membuat seperti komik itu kita ngedesain dulu cuma itu prosesnya lama dan saya memilih unsur yang sudah tersedia saja*" which means that the lecturer did not have the experience to make the DST content since it was difficult for the lecturer itself. However, the lecturer has experience making comics and stated that making them was tough and long. Because of that, the lecturer is more convenient to pick the available content on YouTube.

In terms of choosing materials, the lecturer said that "*Pertimbangan dari memilih media itu biasanya relevan antara tujuan pembelajaran sama saya dengan si cerita yang mau saya ambil itu berarti relevansi antara tujuan.*" which means that the first thing in choosing materials is the relevance of the contents to the learning or teaching purposes. This elaborates that the lecturer was conscious of giving the best materials to the students so that the students would easily understand the materials.

The second thing in choosing materials for DST is the clarity of the content itself. This regards to the statement from the lecturer that "*Kemudian yang kedua, clarity dari vidionya ini dari dstnya ini.*" shows that clarity is important in teaching grammar by using DST. Moreover, the lecturer also stated that "*Apakah dia tuh clear tersampaikan atau tidak karena tidak semua sesuai dengan apa yang saya inginkan. Seperti pembicara atau narasi atau narator dari si ceritanya itu kadang kurang klik dengan apa yang saya inginkan itu menjadi pertimbangan saya, berarti konten dengan tujuan kemudian clarity dari si ceritanya itu sendiri yang saya utamakan.*" which shows that the lecturer found out that not all of the contents are clear enough to understand and also not clear enough to the purpose of learning. Thus, choosing materials based on the purpose of learning and clarity of the story on the DST content itself are the most important things to be evaluate with.

In the aspect of experience, the lecturer said that "*Sebenernya yang pertama itu fasilitas dan teknis, terkadang dikelas itu ada projek mati atau technical issue trus proyektor kadang internetnya mati ketika kita lagi memutarkan si DST ketika online untuk melihat vidio bareng-bareng kadang*

susah disana nya ngelag.'' which means that actually the first thing when it comes to the disadvantages of DST is facilities and technical issues such as projector suddenly didn't working, internet buffering and many more. This also elaborates that the lecturer experienced technical issues and lack of facilities that were not available in the classroom. That leads to ineffectiveness in teaching processes. Moreover, students will also be bored cause of the technical issues that appear when learning English.

Because of the issues, the lecturer said that *"Jadinya akhirnya akses masing-masing jadi nanti kita balik lagi ke screen untuk mendiskusikan apa yang ada dalam vidio ini"* which means that the lecturer found a solution that students are given the link or the access of the video and watch individually then the lecturer will explain the topic after students watch the video through the link. This elaborates that the lecturer has an alternative way to deliver the DST content to students for teaching grammar. It also shows that the lecturer did not give up on the technical issues.

The second issue that appeared in the aspect of the experience is content picking. The lecturer said *"Tidak semua vidio memberikan subtitle, kadang anak tersebut membutuhkan proses waktu kita perlu menyesuaikan dengan anak tersebut. Kalo dari vidio cari yang paling dekat itupun masih di ejah dan paling mudah dipahami. So tidak semuanya mudah dipahami"* means that the lecturer had issues choosing the materials or the DST contents for teaching grammar. The lecturer also mentioned that most of the videos have no subtitles, which may lead to be challenging to be understood by the students. Since not all of the contents of DST are easy to understand, the lecturer found a solution to pick an easy one so that the students can understand the materials in learning grammar.

In terms of the stages of applying DST, the lecturer understood the steps on applying DST in the classroom. The lecturer stated, *"So in the beginning the lesson for example kita melihat vidio and then we show them and then we ask them"* this means that the first stage in applying DST in the classroom is playing the video and then asking the students questions based on the content. In addition to that, the lecturer also explained that *"Selain itu kita juga bisa pakai media ini ketika proses penguatan sesudah kita menjelaskan, kita mau melihat anak ini apakah mengerti atau tidak berarti kita kasih lagi vidionya sebagai bentuk exercise. Exercise disini adalah sebagai penguatan untuk materinya, yang sering kita lakukan ini yaa di awal, jadi ketika kita berada di kelas harus bawa 2 atau 3 vidio. Yang pertama untuk yang kedua dibagian penguatan atau dibagianj model. Kira-kira untuk vidionya tidak lama dan yang paling lama itu 5 menit biar tidak bosen, ada yang 2 menit ada yang 3 menit"* means that the lecturer used DST to enhance the students' understanding of the materials that the lecturer has given. After that, the lecturer gave the exercises to see the students' understanding of the video or content. Furthermore, for the video duration, the lecturer chose 2 – 3 minutes of DST content since it is not too long so that the students do not feel bored learning grammar.

Belief

In using DST to improve grammar skills for students by learning English, there are advantages that lecturers can take from this knowledge. The lecturer said that *"Kalo manfaatnya ini, kita tahu bahwa grammar ini susah kita harus konsentrasi yang benar-benar fokus ketika dalam pembelajaran, dan kita bisa pembelajaran itu jadi lebih relax untuk pembelajaran yang serius, grammar serius kemudian kita pake gambar, kita bisa mempelajari itu dengan tidak langsung. Memang secara cepat mempelajari itu penting dan kita berikan pada saat dipenguatan. Nahh klo dengan adanya vidio itu sangat membantu secara langsung mengenalkan topik tanpa saya harus berbicara. So interesting and fun dan masih banyak manfaat lainnya''* shows that this lecturer knows that learning grammar requires high concentration and focuses on understanding it. Meanwhile, through videos, lecturer was able to make the learning processes to be relax and enjoyable. In addition, learning grammar through DST is very interesting and fun to learn and teach using the DST. However, the lecturer did not mention from what aspect that DST in teaching grammar is fun and interesting.

Discussions

The discussions focused on the connectivity of the previous studies and findings in the field about lecturers' perception of DST by dividing 3 aspects: Knowledge, Experience, and Belief.

Knowledge

In the aspect of knowledge, it has shown that the lecturer seems to understand the bigger picture of DST. The lecturer can interpret DST, digital storytelling with a story delivered into digital media, and is usually made for making teaching more straightforward, especially teaching text-based stories in the classroom to enhance storytelling ability and writing ability. This is in line with the previous studies that stated that DST is a short multimedia story that combines audio, image, and music to enhance storytelling ability and writing ability (Benmayor, 2008; Robin, 2008; Normann, 2021). However, another statement is that DST must be a short film narrated in the first person for display on a television or computer monitor or projected onto a screen (Kajder et al., 2005).

Moreover, in terms of the types of DST, the lecturer was unable to provide the information and lacked an understanding of the DST types. Meanwhile, in the previous studies, there are three types of DST such as personal narratives - stories that contain accounts of significant incidents in one's life; historical documentaries – stories that examine dramatic events that help us understand the past; and stories designed to inform or instruct the viewer on a particular concept or practice (Robin, 2016). However, the lecturer stated the story types as examples of the types of DST. In understanding the platform, the lecturer understands the platforms that can be used in making DST content or applying DST in teaching English, such as using ISpring and YouTube. This has the same voice that the product of DST can be shared through YouTube, Vimeo, compact discs, podcasts, and other multimedia platforms (Dreon et al., 2011). However, the lecturer did not explain why the lecturer chose YouTube as the best platform for choosing the best DST content. Moreover, the lecturer did not mention any other reasons for choosing YouTube except for its ease of accessibility.

In terms of making DST content, the lecturer did not know and could not explain how to make DST content since the lecturer had no experience in making DST content. Contrary to the previous studies that have mentioned four stages to make DST content such as (1) the storyteller should choose a topic for the digital story and determine the purpose of making the story; (2) the storyteller chooses specific audios, images, texts, and contents for the story; (3) the storyteller creates the story by inserting the audio/visual materials, narration, music, and animation into a media producer program on the computer; and (4) the story is presented to the audience and their feedback is asked for (University of Houston, 2009).

In addition to the previous statement, the lecturer did not mention the multimodality of the DST such as audio and video or visual aspects, especially in writing skills since writing correlates with grammar comprehension. Several studies have revealed how multimodal writing differs from formal writing, as students individually may choose their text not only relying on teachers' instruction, but multimodal text mediates students to ease the process of generating ideas in the writing stage, can be a more robust aid to support the argument, and engage students in the learning (Fraiberg, 2010; Howel, Reinking & Kaminski, 2015).

Experience

As in the findings mentioned, the lecturer did not have the experience to make the DST content since it was difficult and time-consuming for the lecturer. This has the same intention as the previous studies that making DST content needs a significant amount of time that must be devoted to reviewing students' recordings in order to coach them on proper intonation and pronunciation (Bandi-Rao & Sepp, 2014; Özüdoğru & Çakır, 2020). Moreover, factors such as technology literacy and technical competence guarantee that technology is used effectively and meaningfully in the classroom are required for the lecturer to make good DST content (Sadik, 2008). The lecturer has admitted that in making DST, the lecturer has no skills in doing that. However, the lecturer has experience making comics and stated that making them was tough and long. In the end, the lecturer posts other people's DST content on YouTube and uses it to teach grammar. Even though, as the previous studies

mentioned that those practices that integrate video-making support twenty-first-century learners to be producers of content rather than just consumers, something which is also becoming a necessity for learners to master for their future careers (Greenhow et al., 2009).

Furthermore, the lecturer faced difficulties in two aspects of using DST: technical and content issues. This correlates with previous studies that stated that using digital storytelling as an effective language-learning strategy is still challenging, as this type of pedagogy involves creative and technical skills that might be lacking in older students and teachers (Malita & Martin, 2010; Al-Khateeb, 2019; Eissa, 2019; Al-Amri, 2020; Mirza, 2020). Regarding content issues, the lecturer found out that not all of the contents are clear enough to understand by the lecturer and students and not clear enough to the purpose of learning. It means that the lecturer experienced difficulties in choosing the best content for students to learn grammar. This relates to the problem that many teachers or lecturers as a provider do not understand how to choose DST content which could help students learn the materials effectively (Lestariyana & Widodo, 2018).

On the other hand, in the aspect of stages in using DST in teaching English, the lecturer only focused on explaining the stages while teaching and post-teaching in the classroom, such as preparing two or three of 2 – 3 minutes videos, playing the videos in front of the classroom, asking materials to students, ask to do the exercises, and explain some of the exercises to students. However, there are three stages of teaching English in the classroom using DST: pre-teaching or preparation, whilst teaching, and post-teaching (Putri & Ardi, 2013). In preparation, the lecturer should make the lesson plan and prepare the materials. Whilst teaching, there are three sections: Exploration, which has a purpose of increasing the students' engagement first, Elaboration, which is to keep students' focus by asking students about the content by playing and pausing the video, and Confirmation in purpose to give feedback, conclusion, and encouragement to the students' performance. In post-teaching, the lecturer checks the students' understanding by giving exercises. Thus, some of the aspects have already been done by the lecturer; nevertheless, the lecturer did not mention more details on the preparation and lesson plan.

Belief

As shown above, the lecturer positively perceives using DST in teaching grammar. The lecturer believes that DST content such as 2 – 3 minutes videos can relax the learning processes and increase the enjoyable moment on students' minds. This correlates with previous studies that stated that DST allows students to develop their creative writing skills, use vocabulary and grammar accurately, and write sentences correctly. (Duman and Gocen, 2015; Eissa, 2019). In addition to that, DST is both valuable teaching content and procedure that inspires active learning and "creates the atmosphere of excitement and fun; fosters appropriate use of technology within the curriculum; bridges school and community; weaves into all subject areas; and is effective for both visual and auditory learners" (Frazel, 2011). Moreover, many teachers or lecturers believe that digital storytelling can increase students' understanding of content and are willing to include digital storytelling in the curriculum (Sadik, 2008). Furthermore, in applying DST, the storyteller or the content of DST is required to express the current mood through movement, tone, stress, and intonation (Daqili, 2000). This elaborates that the ambient of the classroom affects learning grammar, and DST can fill the good ambient in the classroom. Thus, it is concluded that students' engagement increases in learning grammar using DST.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

To conclude this research, the lecturer mostly has favorable views on using DST in teaching grammar since it provides many advantages such as improving students' grammar comprehension, increasing their engagement, and relaxing the class environment. In addition to that, the lecturer has decent general knowledge of DST and also the platforms. However, the lecturer has negative views in teaching English grammar using DST, especially on technical and content picking issues. The

lecturer also has difficulties explaining the types of DST and its multimodality. Despite the opposing views, the lecturer believes that DST brings interesting and fun vibes to learn grammar for students.

Based on this study, the researchers have suggestions for the lecturers who will use DST as a tool in teaching grammar such as:

1. The lecturer must understand how to use DST in teaching English grammar properly such as understand the knowledge of DST, the elements that are important in DST, content picking in DST, and also technical skills in using DST. Those aspects are really important for lecturers in teaching grammar using DST.
2. The lecturer also must able to provide better teaching approach to students since not all of the students have the same interest.

Thus, this study can be used as a reference for any other researchers who want to investigate the English lecturers' perceptions on DST in teaching grammar or in general the use of DST in teaching English.

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