



Exploring Students' Perceptions Towards The Storytelling In English Language Learning

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Abstract

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One of the best methods for enhancing a student's language development while learning English is through storytelling. In order to find out how students felt about utilizing stories to learn English, the researchers in this study asked them. The study was based on the following research question: "What is the student's perception towards storytelling in English Language Learning?" The method used in this research is qualitative. A semi-structured interview is used as a data collection tool. Twelve 8th-grade students from the SMP Negeri 1 Majalaya Karawang participated in this study. The two main findings suggest that the benefits of storytelling, and the effectiveness of storytelling. The study is designed to explore student academic performance.

Keywords: Storytelling, Students' Perception, English Language Learning

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INTRODUCTION

Storytelling is a great way for students to learn about all kinds of real-world situations. The pictures on the walls are used in the early stories as a medium. The stories were then passed on orally from one generation to the next. Stories provide students with an engaging method of experiencing challenges while teaching them how to deal with real-life problems. Another important art is the story. It is brought to life in performances, such as music and dance. The narrator's background, the settings and details chosen, and the relationship he forges with the audience will influence the story. Words, sounds, and linguistic patterns serve as the building blocks of stories. Voice, face and hands are tools.

Stories have been a useful tool for learning and mastering foreign languages for a long time. Short stories are a literary medium that educates readers about the human condition for example, provide students with examples of the appropriate use of vocabulary and grammatical structures in context, as well as cultural knowledge about the target language (Pardede, 2021b).

When students and teachers interact with tales, they not only develop their language abilities but also boost their emotional engagement with the target language, and hence students' interest in learning (Sivasubramaniam, 2006).

The most significant benefits of storytelling can be summed up as follows: Stories are enjoyable and motivating, and they can foster good attitudes about learning a foreign language. They may inspire a desire to study more. Storytelling practices develop imagination. Students may develop an emotional attachment to a story because they can identify with the characters and try to make sense of the narrative and illustrations. This imaginative interaction enhances their capacity for creativity.

Students benefit from stories for a variety of reasons, according to Soleimani and Akbari (2013), since they incorporate all four skills listening, speaking, reading, and writing in a valuable context. Students learn new ideas and become aware of the sentence structure and symbolic significance of the language when listening to, reading, or telling a story.

According to the Horn Opinion (Ahyani 2010), stories have the power to establish the ideal learning environment for young children. According to Hamilton and Weiss (2005), storytelling is the process of creating a story in one's mind and is the most basic approach to constructing meaning covering components of learning.

There are previous studies that can support this research. One of the soft materials available in the field of English language education is Storytelling, (Keshta, 2013) says that storytelling is a promising strategy for teaching English as a foreign language in the Palestinian environment. Students' ability to derive meanings, recognize characters, and summarize what they hear through storytelling is critical. Using narrative techniques, the classroom environment changes from dry and uninteresting to one alive with student attention, engagement, and productivity.

One of the story learning activities is listening skill. Listening skills are language activities in understanding the language produced by other people through spoken media. Listening skills are also basic skills that must be mastered by someone because most of these language activities are carried out in everyday life. Therefore, learning listening skills should be given adequate attention.

One of the learning methods, especially in listening to fairy tales which is used as an alternative in overcoming the weaknesses of the conventional method, is learning by using the story method. The storytelling method is expected to give an interesting impression on students and make it easier for students to listen to fairy tales, so that students no longer experience difficulties, and students' imaginations will grow and develop into creativity.

This study aims to explore students' perceptions of stories in learning English. The researchers hope that the research findings will provide theoretical and practical support for educators in using the storytelling method in the classroom.

METHOD

Researchers used qualitative methods in this study. The consideration of researchers using this qualitative research as expressed by Lexy Moleong (2010: 138) is that the adaptation of qualitative methods is easier when dealing with multiple realities, this method presents directly the nature of the relationship between researchers and respondents, this method is more sensitive and more able to adjust to many sharpening joint influences on the value patterns encountered.

Researchers use interview research methods because the data collected is not in the form of numerical data, but data derived from interview transcripts, personal documents, notes or memorandum of researchers and other supporting official documents.

The researcher independently verified the audio recordings of the interviews to transcribe the interviews. The researcher used thematic analysis steps to examine the data after all the data was collected, this analysis method consists of six steps:

1. Familiarize yourself with the data, 2. Make initial codes, 3. Search for themes, 4. Review themes, 5. Define and name themes

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Findings:

This study attempts to investigate students' perceptions toward storytelling in English language learning. To answer this Research Question, the researcher has collected data through interviews with twelve students of SMP Negeri 1 Majalaya Karawang. Based on the interview results which have been analyzed using thematic analysis it is found that there are two themes that will be discussed : (1) The Benefit of Storytelling in Helping Students Learn English (2) The Effectiveness of Storytelling in English Language Learning

The Benefit of Storytelling in Helping Students Learn English

The Use of Storytelling Helps Students Add new vocabulary

Students' perception of storytelling is very positive when they do the learning, they get many advantages in using this method, one of them is the way they understand the meaning of the text through new words.

Most students have difficulty in finding the meaning of each word and take a long time to find it. They did not have and did not know what the words meant, the first time they saw the new words in school or English lessons, they had never learned specifically about vocabulary before.

This is the right time for them to learn new vocabulary related to their field and use it for various purposes because this method is very useful and beneficial to be applied by the students in learning English, especially in learning storytelling. All students agreed and expressed the same argument that this method is good and helpful in learning English. The explanation of these students will be shown in Respondents 1 and 2.

Respondent 1

Yes, I like it, because learning to tell stories makes me learn a lot of new vocabulary

Respondent 2

Very helpful. Usually from the start of listening, we have to listen to English stories so we can add new vocabulary. Besides that, the English teacher also likes to mix things up when explaining, so I understand a little bit about the contents of the story and also practice writing as well

According to the students' statements, increasing vocabulary in learning is a useful method that students can use in learning English because students can find new words that they believe are important to know. The more activities that are done by finding or selecting as many new words as possible, the more important words are obtained to be used in various fields.

The Use of Storytelling Helps Students Practice English language skills

The use of storytelling provides another advantage in learning English using this method. This method not only helps students to understand new vocabulary but also practice their English skills. Practicing English skills makes students independent and active in learning English in the classroom. They will get used to listening to words, practicing writing, reading correctly, and practicing pronunciation.

For young learners in junior high school, storytelling is something that can make them dream, train their memory, have hope, belief, make plans, criticize, learn about something, learn to love, and many others. This can be known based on the opinion of respondents 3,4 after conducting the interviews :

Respondent 3

Yes, i like it because I can better understand the storyline, it can be increase knowledge and improve other skills in English for example speaking, writing, listening, reading

Respondent 4

Very helpful, starting from listening skills; I can practice how the word can be pronounced correctly, write; I can find new vocabulary, and practice grammar speak; I can practice self-confidence, read; I can practice correct reading, and use clear voice in learning.

From this evidence, it shows that the use of Storytelling provides a good opportunity for student learning outcomes, namely increasing vocabulary and practicing students' English skills. The more storytelling is done in learning, the more important words they will get and the more English skills they will use. It can also be used to provide opportunities for students to hone their knowledge.

The Effectiveness of Storytelling in English Language Learning

Storytelling is an effective tool in students' English language learning. The effectiveness of storytelling has been widely explored in various contexts, which contributes to building a strong foundation for storytelling activities in junior high schools. One of the hallmarks of storytelling is the promotion of morality. It is believed that the effectiveness of using storytelling in the learning process depends largely on the learning activities.

It is said that there are 2 different responses, 4 out of 12 participants stated that storytelling is effective in their classroom. The students mentioned this limitation as described below:

Respondent 1

I think it's effective, Because I understand the contents of the story, add new vocabulary, and also improve other skills such as reading and speaking

Respondent 2

Yes, it is very effective, because it can practice my listening and writing skills through stories, I can imagine the content of the story and how the story flows.

In this study, some respondents stated that storytelling is beneficial for learning in the classroom because it can hone their english language abilities, for example, writing and listening. in terms of listening, students are trained to get used to hearing words that they have not encountered before, and in terms of writing, students are trained to get used to writing with english words.

It turns out that the interview data found the opposite of what has been mentioned before. Most of the 8 participants said the opposite, they think that storytelling is not effective in learning English in their class.

During the use of storytelling method in English learning in the classroom, students have difficulty in understanding the content of the story due to the limited vocabulary they have, words that they hear for the first time become difficult because students do not know many words. Therefore, the storytelling method is

not very effective for English learning. The students mentioned this limitation as described below:

Respondent 3

No, storytelling is not very effective because I don't really understand English stories and my vocabulary is limited. Then, there is something more than storytelling, for example, a debate drama that can play all English skills.

Respondent 4

Not really, because if it's different semesters it's going to change like that. So I don't think so. Not the most effective, so there are others. Yes, there are others like drama like that.

Respondent 5

No, because I struggle when listening to stories in English, and also storytelling does not use all the skills in its learning. Then, there are things that are more important than storytelling, like drama. Drama is the most effective in class because it covers everything, like practicing speaking, writing, and reading.

From the explanation above, it can be said that most students say that storytelling is not effective in learning English. The disadvantage of storytelling is that when students listen to the audio, there are so many words they do not know, they do not understand the words in the audio and they struggle a lot in learning English. This happens because they do not have the vocabulary which leads to poor vocabulary acquisition. Because there are many unknown words, students will find it difficult in terms of listening and understanding a sentence.

DISCUSSION

The Benefit of Storytelling in Helping Students Learn English

Based on the findings, students stated that the use of storytelling can help them in adding new vocabulary and practicing their English skills. The participants really like learning English skills by using storytelling because it is very easy and not monotonous.

In this study, students stated that storytelling is beneficial to English language learning. All students agreed with the statement that storytelling is an effective method. The reason they agree is that learning by storytelling can help students understand the content of the story, add new vocabulary, and improve their English skills. The majority of students find it helpful to learn English by storytelling, they can expand their vocabulary and practice their English skills.

We know that children who are good at telling stories are able to express emotions and report abuse (Fong et al., 2020). As a common sense tool, storytelling can help children understand the world and heal from trauma (McCabe, 2017).

In addition, the findings show that students have a positive perception of storytelling which can help students learn English skills. Students also stated that they enjoyed learning to tell stories because many teachers taught in Indonesian and English. This is consistent with the findings of Estriani Hana Sulistiawati (2013) who argued that using two languages, namely Indonesian and English, can help students understand a story.

The Effectiveness of Storytelling in English Language Learning

However, this study found that 8 out of 12 students stated that storytelling is not effective for learning English. The reason they stated that storytelling is not

effective for learning is because many of them do not understand English, lack vocabulary, learning materials each semester are always changing, and also storytelling does not train all English skills. Students stated that there are more effective for learning including Drama, Debate, and Speech because according to them these methods can help and practice all skills in English.

This result is not in line with previous studies. Previous studies found that storytelling was effective. According to Ab Rashid (2012) he said that storytelling is effective in increasing the vocabulary learning of young adults who are less proficient. Mohamad Rafik (2005) is another researcher in the field of storytelling who investigates the effects of storytelling on elementary school students. He found that storytelling was effective for elementary school students. Joyce (2011) investigated the impact of song picture books on vocabulary mastery among children in kindergarten. He found that song picture books had a positive effect on increasing students' vocabulary mastery in kindergarten.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine students' perceptions of storytelling in English Language Learning. Based on the data obtained, it can be concluded that in terms of storytelling, storytelling helps students add new vocabulary and practice English language skills, as well as student obstacles in learning using the storytelling method. Students say positive things about the use of storytelling which can help and practice their English but in terms of effectiveness it turns out that students feel the use of storytelling is not effective in learning because of the limited vocabulary they have and then the difficulties they experience in English language skills including listening skills in learning.

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