INCORPORATING LOCAL CULTURE INTO DST FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Digital Storytelling (DST) is a globally accepted approach in teaching English. However, in the Indonesian EFL context, little attention has been paid to DST as a pedagogical approach, particularly its potential to create a bridge between the students' primary culture and that of English cultures. We report on how DST helped Indonesian junior-school students make meaning in English through a local culture-based DST narrative project. As part of a case study approach, we used various qualitative data collection methods, including focus group interviews, students' reflective journals, classroom observations, and the DST product itself. Finally, multimodal transcription and thematic content analysis were used to interpret the data. The study shows that the digital story is an effective tool to express the students' identity and make meaning through their local culture stories. Participating in these activities also increased student motivation. Working collaboratively in a group helped them to make meaning and focus on topics that resonated with them personally, reduced stress, and allowed them to focus on communication. Drawing on their local culture also assisted to build a bridge between the familiar lexical content and terminology and the less familiar English cultural content and vocabulary, resulting in enhanced engagement and achievement in English. Practically, the DST project-based learning assisted EFL teachers to integrate authentic and communicative learning experiences into a packed curriculum.

PREFACE

The authors say the praise and gratitude to God Almighty, for all the graces and blessings that provide health and wisdom to the author that this study can be completed properly in accordance with the planned time. The research report entitled "Incorporating Local Culture into DST for Secondary School Students".

The author has endeavored to as much as possible in completing this thesis, but the author is aware there are many drawbacks in terms of both content and grammar, then the authors welcome any suggestions and constructive criticism from readers for this thesis perfectly. The authors hope the contents of this paper would be useful in enriching the repertoire of knowledge.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Research Background

According to the literature, teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in countries like Indonesia frequently use textbook materials to improve their students' language proficiency. They often concentrate on language exercises with an emphasis on grammar practice. limiting the use of English for conversation means that students often struggle with motivation and engagement when learning the language because they see it as a pointless endeavor disconnected from their daily lives (Widodo, Budi, & Wijayanti, 2016). Young learners are habituated to multimodal interaction through images, audio, and video since they are engaged in a world of social media and technology (Hafner, 2015), and they also engage in digital meaning-making (Lestariyana & Widodo, 2018). Young students are also used to telling tales about their everyday experiences in their social and cultural surroundings. Digital tools like a digital video editor or photo editor can be used to tell a story in a familiar setting to increase engagement in an EFL learning environment (Lee, 2013). Young learners can express their own cultural and social voices and identities through the use of these digital platforms, which is very helpful (Hafner, 2015; Liontas & Mannion, 2021).

In this paper, we present research on a project that used digital storytelling and local cultural integration as a component of a project-based learning methodology. Negotiation was used to produce the materials, and the student participants drew from their own cultural experiences. Although digital storytelling has been used in several studies to teach English, less focus has been placed in Indonesia on junior high school level materials that are based on local culture. The purpose of this project is to investigate the effects of digital

storytelling and locally relevant content on student engagement and learning in English language classrooms.

1.2. Problem Statements

This study attempts to answer the following questions:

1) How do students integrate and express identity in their local culture experience into their digital storytelling?

2) How do images and multimodal resources engage students in active participation for making meaning?

3) How does the digital local story project-based learning pedagogy affect students' vocabulary acquisition?

1.3. Research Objective

This study aims to explore the impact of digital storytelling and local culture-based materials and their potential to enhance student engagement and learning in English classes.

CHAPTER II
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Rationale of Integrating Local Culture in Material Design

The importance of locally contextualized digital storytelling can be attributed to important neuroscientific research that contends that learning is a process of "making connections" and that students' ability to link their current learning to a prior idea or experience with a new concrete application will maximize their learning (Cross, 1999). Learning is influenced by cultural and social norms as well as the capacity to link knowledge and abilities. Language learning may be hampered by a lack of connection and resistance to the cultural norms of the target language (Peng & Patterson, 2021). Since digital storytelling enables young learners to represent "themselves and their cultures in positive ways" (Liontas & Mannion, 2021, p. 81), incorporating local culture into language teaching and materials could, on the other hand, inspire students and create a bridge between their cultural identities and that of the foreign language speakers (Chen & Le, 2019). As a result, it is advised that educators produce instructional materials that are compatible with the background knowledge and cultural experiences of their students. Recent research by Kim and Li (2021) and Liontas and Mannion (2021) and others has shown that digital storytelling materials that are connected to students' local cultures increase students' ability to connect with one another, develop their individual identities, and be more creative, all of which increase students' motivation to learn.

Research reveals that cultural conceptualization is the basis for engaging with a foreign language and culture in more detail (Sharifian, 2011). According to Sharifian (2011), cultural conceptualization is a cognitive process of schematization and classification that takes place when members of a certain culture group have a common point of view or conceptual framework.

Language then acts as a tool for negotiating cultural conceptualization. Funerals, marriages, and the production of cultural artifacts are a few instances of cultural conceptualization in a cultural group. To acquire a foreign language like English, a cultural conceptualization can act as a "bridge" (Chen & Le, 2019). Because of this, including elements of the learners' native culture into their study of a foreign language fosters a sense of self-worth, localizes EFL pedagogy, and serves as the foundation for cross-cultural dialogue (Kumaravadivelu, 2001). However, it is the responsibility of EFL teachers to decide what and how local culture can be incorporated into EFL education. Teachers of EFL students should experiment with using local culture to convey their identity and provide context.

2.2. Digital Storytelling in Language Learning

DST has a variety of definitions depending on the circumstances and goals it serves. For instance, Lambert (2013) outlines a digital storytelling activity in which students share personal images of their experiences, are coached through the writing and storyboarding processes, and then produce a brief, narrated personal film of two to three minutes in length. However, a variety of strategies have been used. Despite the fact that DST is not a novel educational strategy, it has many important advantages for both teaching and learning. With the help of narrative and metaphor, DST is a potent method of instruction that teachers can use to clarify difficult ideas and content (Oskoz & Elola, 2016; Sadik, 2008; Taylor, Marrone, Tayar, & Mueller, 2018), while students can express their identities and use the target language in an authentic way when they produce language using multimodal narrative (Vinogradova, Linville, & Bickel, 2011).

DST initiatives promote collaborative learning and the growth of practical communication abilities (Czarnecki, 2009). As they develop and deliver their stories, students improve their speaking abilities. Engaging with

multimodal texts, such as movies, songs, and other students' presentations, gives students additional listening skills. As their story projects take shape, the students also get writing experience (Brushwood Rose & Granger, 2013).

According to Liu, Tai, and Liu (2018), incorporating DST activities like describing photos can help students create oral narration and improve their speaking abilities. Students' enthusiasm to study a foreign language can be increased and anxiety reduced by involving them in digital learning activities. This is especially helpful in EFL environments where students are occasionally reluctant to participate actively and have a restricted vocabulary, such in Indonesia.

However, the advantages mentioned above are not always brought about by DST. The use of digital media, as Robin (2008) points out, does not mitigate against poor storytelling or a lack of effective pedagogy to guide the storytelling. Robin subsequently proposed the explicit use of a theoretical model that focused on the intersection of technology, content, and pedagogy with the aim of enhancing "the ability to think about and use technology in critical, creative, and responsible ways" (Robin, 2008, p. 50).

2.3. Previous Studies on Digital Storytelling in An EFL Context

The majority of earlier studies showed that DST was beneficial for learning languages like English. However, Yang, Chen, and Hung (2020) point out that due to the crammed school curriculum and the emphasis on textbook grammar exercises mentioned above in the context of Indonesia, it can be very challenging to integrate DST into EFL classrooms. According to Yang, Chen, and Hung (2020), some teachers lack the confidence to handle technology, and DST can quickly result in the improper use of copyright.

To avoid these problems, teachers should make every effort to incorporate DST into the curriculum. They should also give students enough time to collaborate with them on authentic meaningful activities that will

improve their English language proficiency and creative thinking (Robin, 2008; Yang, Chen, & Hung, 2020). To minimize copyright difficulties, it is also advised to concentrate on students producing their own photographs or using the internet while citing the sources.

As stated by Liontas and Mannion (2021), encouraging students to draw from their own cultural experiences and use DST as a medium to express voice and identities is one method to create a successful learning community. There haven't been many research looking into this DST aspect of teaching EFL. Vinogradova et al. (2011) investigated the use of DST in a multicultural classroom setting for intercultural dialogue and learning a new topic. In order to accomplish the new cultural notion and engage in authentic language practice, their study discovered that the intercultural dialogue dynamic provides an inclusive pedagogy. According to Vinogradova et al. (2011), students were better able to transfer skills, engage in the material, and take part in authentic English activities when they were encouraged to express their "voice" in their native language or culture and contrast it with the new culture. In a multilingual setting, Anderson and Macleroy (2017) investigated DST and found that it actively engaged the young people in language learning and inspired them to create an intercultural narrative story based on their voices, histories, and memories. Intercultural DST was also successful, according to Oakley, Pegrum, Xiong, Lim, and Yan (2018). They discussed exchanges between middle school students in China and Australia who shared digital stories about their daily lives, regional cultures, and folklore, which increased motivation and engagement for learning the target language and improved vocabulary development. Through the use of DST's multimodal tools, Kim and Li (2021) also looked at how students articulated their voices and identities.

Kim and Li (2021) discovered that DST enabled students to reflect on their learning experiences and explain their identity as community members. They used many data sources, including interview and observation, similar to

the current study. DST was employed to promote language learning in all of the aforementioned investigations, but they were all carried out in either multicultural or intercultural contexts. When learning EFL in a monocultural setting, we were curious to see if local culture may serve as a bridge, especially in terms of improving learner motivation and vocabulary growth.

<h1 style="text-align: center;">CHAPTER III</h1>
<h1 style="text-align: center;">RESEARCH METHOD</h1>

3.1. Participants and Context

The case study approach was used in the current study, which, according to Yin (2014), is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the 'case') in depth and within its real-world context" (p. 16). In East Java, Indonesia, a single junior high school served as the study's site. For this study, 30 students willingly agreed to participate. They ranged in age from 12 to 14. 18 female students and 12 male students were enrolled. They had 90-minute classes twice a week to study English. Prior to the study, we observed the class and conducted an informal interview with the teacher. Based on these observations, we discovered that the majority of the students relied solely on the textbook to learn English and applied the literal translation approach. The instructor said that she used grammatical drills to get the students ready for standardized exams and tests. She also urged them to bring their Bahasa Indonesian-English dictionaries to class so they could look up vocabulary. We saw that the students seldom ever used English outside of teacher-initiated drills and repetition exercises, giving the impression that they lacked confidence and skill in the language.

3.2. Ethics and Initial Context

The actions necessary to enter the research location are as follows: First, we made contact with the school's principal to ask for approval to carry out the study. After that, we confirmed the learning timetable with the Deputy Head of School Curriculum. After that, we conducted an informal observation of a class and conducted an interview with the English teacher to determine whether or not local culture materials and digital storytelling had previously been taught in the language classroom. Finally, we met with the students to inform them about

the study and its objectives. Additionally, written consent from parents was gotten. Students were assured of confidentiality, any photographs of faces taken were blurred, and they could withdraw from the study at any stage if they felt uncomfortable. In other words, their security and comfort were guaranteed (see Phelan & Kinsella, 2013).

3.3. Instructional Procedures

The research spanned ten weeks with one meeting per week with each class lasting 90 minutes. In this study, most of the student participants had a basic working knowledge of how to use devices such as a laptop, or smartphone. However, there were only 6 students who owned a laptop or smartphone. Another challenge was that none of the students knew how to use a digital stories creator application. Therefore, the students were assigned to work in groups and then they were taught how to use technology to create digital stories. The students also practiced using the digital tools in 6 meetings. They were divided into six groups of five students in which each group had access to at least one technological tool. They were divided into groups with various roles, which is thought to be an efficient technique to organize DST groupwork (see Ferdiansyah, 2018; Tobin, 2012). The researchers used a project-based strategy to scaffold the work in order to guarantee that the students were able to construct a digital story based on their background in local culture. Over the course of ten weeks, the culture-based digital storytelling job was scaffolded.

The pupils were initially taught to descriptive writing that included elements of local culture in the first and second meetings. The students' understanding of the genre, lexico-grammatical proficiency, and ability to create 100 words of descriptive writing were the objectives of these meetings. The multimodal descriptive writing genre was then introduced to the class during the third week. The objective was to introduce the pupils to visual descriptive text and to copyright concerns while using photos downloaded from

the Internet. The kids were exposed to a storyboarding activity and software program to construct a digital story in the fourth and fifth meetings. The students then worked on developing fresh digital stories on chosen subjects during the sixth and seventh meetings. The students rewrote their digital stories after receiving feedback on self-editing techniques for grammatical accuracy and word choice in the eighth and ninth meetings. In order to boost motivation and confidence, the students were urged to present their digital stories to the other group members at the tenth meeting. Students also published the finished version of their digital tale during this conference.

3.4. Data Collection

In this study, four different data gathering techniques were used: group interviews, reflective diaries, classroom observations, and a digital story telling product. While providing technical assistance and moving around the classroom, the researchers conducted informal group interviews with each group of students during class activities in weeks four through ten to learn about their experiences and language growth as they learned English with DST in 15 minutes. The questions in the group interviews centred around the following issues: (1) determining knowledge of vocabulary with questions like "What is the meaning of that word?"; (2) identifying the impact of multimodal text on task completion with questions like: "How did using this picture (or video or audio) impact on creating the story?; (3) determining students' experiences using digital tools and devices with questions such as "What did you think about using this technology?"; and (4) asking about the effect of drawing on local culture in their storytelling with questions such as "Did talking about X (local cultural topic) affect your work on this task? "Why?"

At the conclusion of each of the ten classes, the students were also required to write a reflection entry in their journals. Three to five phrases regarding their experiences in the class made up the journal's structure. The

journal's instructional goal was to let students reflect on their own learning progress and highlight the challenges they had when learning a foreign language. As a research instrument, it also provided a lively window into the DST experiences of the students.

After the researchers had built a connection with the students by the second encounter, group interactions were also observed and recorded. In 90 minutes, the entire meeting was captured on video. The students were made aware that the video would only be used to record the interactions for our research and would not be utilized to evaluate the students. After watching the recorded video and transcribing the dialogue, we created a story in answer to the study questions. Last but not least, the digital storytelling products created by the students served as research artifacts. The participants used the "Inshot app" to create the final digital story by choosing photographs representative of the local culture, fusing them with music, and adding their own oral histories.

3.5. Data Analysis Method

Through multimodal transcription, we first analyzed the end products of digital stories, group interview exchanges, and video classroom observations. Following Bezemer and Mavers (2011), the transcription process included framing, selecting, highlighting, and finally writing the transcription. We concentrated on the "framing" approach to respond to the three study objectives in order to look at how students articulated their identities in storytelling about their local culture, how it affected their involvement, and how language learning in relation to vocabulary development was affected. The 'selecting' process came next. We chose data from this phase, such as textual answers, speech, gesture, and image, and we highlighted the interaction between these various types of text. We also converted oral and visual material into written descriptions. The students' journal entries were already in the form of written text; therefore, no further transcription was required.

We used thematic analysis, which we adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006), to analyze the transcribed data in accordance with the stages below. The familiarization with the data is the initial stage. In this phase, we reread the data set to better comprehend the replies given by the participants in light of their context and prior DST process implementation experience. Our subsequent code step was built on the foundation of this exercise. In this step, we emphasized and focused on creating broad codes that produced a pattern. Finding themes among the general codes was the third phase. To interpret patterns in the data, we looked at the highlighted data in this stage. The next step was to review the themes. To determine whether the themes were significantly reflected or represented in the data set and compatible with the study questions, we critically examined the coded themes across the entire data set. The three researchers independently categorized the data and compared the outcomes in order to address the issue of potential coder bias. The third researcher functioned as an impartial reviewer of the coding and collaborated with the other two researchers to reach a consensus. She had not participated in the data collection phase. We followed these recommendations from Nowell, Norris, White, and Moules (2017) to make sure that our thematic analysis in this qualitative study met the standards of validity and reliability in quantitative research and to ensure an auditable decision trail. As seen in the research findings and discussion section below, we finally unpacked the themes by defining and naming the coded themes.

CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In line with the research questions, we divide the research findings and discussion into three sections: The students' expression of their identity through DST, student engagement, and the effect of DST pedagogy on student's vocabulary acquisition.

4.1. The Students' Expression of Their Identity through Digital Story Making

The students used DST to communicate their feelings and sense of self by using visuals and sounds to represent their own culture. The student described her dramatic experience in extract one. She was terrified of the tiger-like man, but she couldn't help but look forward to the Barong dance performance. She expressed in the voice narration that she saw her local cultural belief positively by using the word "interestingly." She further underlined that the act had deeper cultural significance because people in her tribe thought the man was possessed by an ancestor spirit. The significance of community in regard to cultural activities is emphasized in extract two. Although the students appreciated listening to the comedian, they emphasized that the Barong dance provided a place for individuals to socialize and enjoy one another in addition to being a performance. In fact, the effect on the crowd as a whole was so powerful that the student had to urge them to watch the play rather than just concentrate on mingling.

The significance of regional culture is increased in extract three. The pupil felt a great connection to the "Gandrung" dancer because of their similar ages and cultural upbringings. Despite not being able to dance, she belonged to the community and was able to respect and preserve traditional traditions, especially the Gandrung dance. As a result, the story concluded with a call to protect the culture.

Through engaging in groups, the students also learned about and strengthened their cultural identity. For example, a student wrote in their reflective journal entry:

> *I also learned the story of Barong dance, and I never consider the story and the characters in the drama of Barong dance. Through the discussion with friends in making the digital story, it improves my understanding of the story of the Barong dance. (Student C, journal entry 1)*

Another student stated that:

> *There are so many cultures, traditional ritual or ceremony that I need to explore through digital storytelling. They are, the story "Ider Bumi" (practice to clean the bad atmosphere of the village, the story of the origin of the village, the philosophy of a traditional house of Osingnese people (all the students were part of the Osingnese cultural group) and other ceremonies. Ider Bumi, Gandrung, the origin of the village of Kemiren, customs, and philosophy of Omah Osing and other traditional ceremonies. (Student B, journal entry 1)*

4.2. Student Engagement in Meaning Making through DST

The students worked on eight tasks to complete the project. The first task involved identifying related lexical content used in the selected cultural theme. They completed the vocabulary maps with words they knew. The students commented that this activity helped them understand the words in context as illustrated in the following group interview extract #1.

T : How do you know this word? (Pointing at the word in the worksheet)

S1 : We don't know this word at first, but S2 (a friend) remembered that it was a crown in English.

T : Do you know that this word is a part of the costume?

Ss : Yes, we do. It is on the top of the costume

T : That's great. What about this word? (Pointing at another word)

S2 : Ha..ha.. (Chuckled) we also don't know the word, so I took the

dictionary.

T   :   Did you tell the other members of the group about it?

S2   :   Yes, I did and I asked S3 (Another member) to write in the balloon in the worksheet.

T   :   Why did you ask him?

S2   :   Because he is the secretary

(Group interview #1, 00:02:45)

According to this interview excerpt, the participating students assisted one another in resolving the issue of foreign terminology. They employed a variety of techniques, including contextualization and the use of dictionaries as a tool, to comprehend the words' meanings. They collaborated on the same project since they had complementary roles to play. Beyond the assignment of responsibilities, the students were not given any instructions on how to participate in group work, so their cooperative strategies were particularly intriguing. Along with the information from the interviews, the students' log journals also showed how this group activity increased their engagement and helped them appreciate working with their group members. A student commented:

I like learning English through this collaborative digital storytelling project because can learn with my group members. I found learning with group project helpful. We can exchange ideas and solve the problem together (Student A Journal Entry 4).

Collaboration improves students' interest in their learning in various educational environments. Participating pupils can accept idea exchange and problem-solving issues from learning interactions among peers. The statement made by Mickan that "students need to develop the ability to adopt new practices, to adapt acquired social practices, and to contribute to the creation of practices for sustainable relationships and environments" (Mickan, 2006, p.8) is supported by this. As suggested by Ferdiansyah (2018), collaborative digital

storytelling in this study helped students in the three ways of increased task engagement, sustained peer support, and increased group accountability.

Besides fostering engagement through collaborative groupwork, in the process of creating a digital story, the students became more interested in their own culture as well as more engaged and motivated to learn English. As one student noted in their reflective journal entry:

> *Learning through digital storytelling is like the proverb: "Killing two birds with one stone". It means that we can get the two benefits in an action. First, I understand vocabulary that I did not know about my culture in English. Secondly, I can practice story about my culture by DST, then I become confident to give information to the foreigner so they can enthusiast [sic] to visit (Student C Journal Entry 10).*

This excerpt also demonstrates how centering DST on local culture can lead to instrumental motivation in addition to helping students create a bridge between their own culture and the culture(s) of the target language. In the aforementioned instance, the student emphasizes the importance of being able to discuss their culture with outsiders in order to increase their excitement for the culture. The student who writes the following shows instrumental motivation in even more direct terms because they perceive a job as a tour guide as being possible with a working grasp of English terminology associated with local culture:

> *I feel satisfied to create the digital story; I can use it to find money someday. I can be a tourist guide because so many foreign visitors come to see the culture, such as dance, traditional music or traditional ritual ceremony (Student F Journal Entry 8).*

Learning to talk about their own cultural heritage in English, also enhanced the students' interest in other cultures and potentially their motivation in learning English to better engage with other cultures. A student wrote:

> *Learning English is also a way for us to learn from each other's culture and to*

appreciate a difference culture. I can share my local culture experience and I want to hear and learn story from other cultures (Student C Journal Entry 6).

As pointed out by Liontas and Mannion (2021) and Kumaravadivelu (2001), using DST based on the students' own culture creates a bridge with other cultures and boosts motivation for learning English as a foreign language. The observation data showed that the students participated and discussed in the groups in a lively and raucous manner, but that they all appeared to be on task and enjoying themselves. The images below show students utilizing laptops, smartphones, and other digital tools and programs to work on their digital stories.

Photo 1   Photo 2

The use of these tools seems to present both challenges and opportunities for the pupils. Two young male pupils are depicted in Photo 1 intently engaged in their task. Despite the fact that they looked to be whispering, closer inspection showed that they were entirely focused on their task of trying to modify the effects they were applying to their chosen photographs while using a laptop and a phone. In photo 2, children are seen happily writing their stories digitally using a laptop's software. The other two were watching and making recommendations as one of the group members tried to import photographs into the application. The researcher acted as a mentor,

keeping an eye on the students' progress and offering assistance as necessary.

The following group interview extract #2 showed how students increasingly became motivated through their active participation in the digital storytelling project.

T : How did you experience using the technology?

Ss : It was fun but sometimes challenging.

T : How can it be fun? And what's the challenge?

S1 : Because we can choose pictures and change the appearance of the pictures in the screen.

S2 : Also, we can make the story alive because the tool (application) can mesh together sound and images. The challenge is sometimes it takes much time for us to adjust the time and the visual move.

T : That's great. So, are you looking forward to the next task?

Ss : Yes!...

(Group interview #2, 00:15:23)

The interview excerpts demonstrated that the task's multimodality—which included images, sounds, and text—helped the students become more motivated. The interview also revealed that despite the assignment being time-consuming and difficult, the students still considered it enjoyable. This study supports Widodo's (2016) assertion that audio, video, and animated digital storytelling encourages an active learning environment and boosts student motivation.

4.3. The Effect of Local Digital Story Project-based Learning Pedagogy on Vocabulary Acquistion

The development of vocabulary seems to have the biggest influence on language acquisition. The students' digital storytelling projects centered on local culture, particularly on the subjects of traditional dances, holidays, and local music to emphasize recognizable material. It was intended for pupils to be

able to extrapolate and compare vocabulary and content from their first language to that of the target language. The participating students had to brainstorm words from their native tongues, research the meaning and form of those words in the target language, and then employ the words in context. Observations of the students' increased use of target vocabulary items in discussions and in the final digital stories suggest that rapid vocabulary enhancement occurred. The students also appeared to have a deeper understanding of the vocabulary as can be seen in the following extract from a student's individual log journal.

> *The teacher gave me an opportunity to use my first language which helped me construct the story. When I finished the draft, I translated the language into English with the help of my friends and dictionary. With local culture materials, now I can understand the words related to Barong dance performance in English. I know the words like crown, wings, perform, celebrate, preserve, and many others so I can tell Barong dance in English now even in simple words (Student E Journal Entry 8).*

The extract demonstrates how students' initial writing in their first language helped them feel more at ease with the subject matter and provided a solid basis for learning their target language. According to Storch and Aldosari (2010), "the use of the L1 by the learners seems to serve important cognitive, social, and pedagogical functions" (p. 372), this supports their theory. The log book also demonstrates how students' ability to explain terms simply and clearly was aided by the vocabulary's concentration on local culture because they had access to enough lexical information. The inclusion of images in the digital storytelling exercises also aided the students' ability to jointly create coherent sentences and paragraphs by placing the vocabulary words in context. The group interview excerpt #3 below shows how students benefited greatly from the use of pictures.

T	:	How did the use of pictures affect your completion of the task?
Ss	:	<u>It was very helpful.</u>
T	:	How can it be of such help?
S1	:	We can focus on what to write.
T	:	What do you mean?
S1	:	By looking at the picture we can see the objects being described.
T	:	Can you give me an example?
S2	:	Can you give me an example?
S3	:	We can also look at the colors, detail accessories, and the materials.
T	:	So, it will help you what to start first and go on what's next. Is that right?
Ss	:	Yes, definitely

(Group interview #3, 00:52:10)

The participating students' usage of the images in the writing assignment served as a springboard for the development of their ideas. According to Larragueta and Ceballos-Viro (2018), pictures serve "as a reference context" (p. 2). The students acknowledged that using visuals to help them arrange their thoughts was a successful strategy. By examining the characteristics and particulars of a specific object, they were able to arrange the concepts. This supports the argument made by Weninger and Kiss (2013) that the interaction between text and graphics might be a useful tool for language learning.

Digital storytelling's significance in advancing meaning-making is one of its primary benefits. Compared to traditional storytelling, using graphics to depict the story helped pupils reach a deeper degree of meaning-making. The participating students were asked to choose images that connected to their story's theme for their project-based learning activities. They might utilize photos they already had or find them online. However, they were advised to include the website's source in their written composition in order to credit the creator of the images. They created whole stories based on their photographs by

writing captions with three to four phrases per image. Finally, they combined the narration and photographs using the digital tools they had chosen. While the groups using laptops loaded and used Photo Story 3, the groups using android-based mobile phones installed and used the Viva Video mobile application.

It is clear from the excerpt supplied that the students' narration well complemented the photographs they had chosen. For instance, pupils correctly characterized the picture of the crown on the Barong outfit and utilized the terminology in the context. In general, the students that worked on this project were able to effectively use text and images to express their message. In other words, the images helped the students shape their concepts into coherent narratives. According to the teacher who was involved, the kids' work was significantly better than that of their prior groups and there had been a major improvement in meaningful communication as opposed to memorization and regurgitation of information from sources. As one student noted in their log journal:

> *I think the use of picture is helpful to guide me and my friends draft the story because we can see the objects. We can write one word at first by referring to a particular object and then we continue developing it by looking at the colors, the other objects next to it, or the other things that may relate to it. (Student G Journal Entry 3)*

From the excerpt, it is clear that the pictures helped the student to draw on their background knowledge and use the lexical inputs within the context. Pictures can be a useful aid for effective vocabulary learning, as suggested by Larragueta and Ceballos-Viro (2018), because children learn better when they can link text and image. Additionally, the images enabled the pupils to organize the concepts into a narrative structure. The following focus group interview excerpt #4 also highlights the value of the visual input in meaning-making:

T	:	Do you think the pictures help you?
Ss	:	<u>Yes.</u>
T	:	Why?
S1	:	Because we <u>can see the object.</u>
T	:	What else?
S2	:	We can find the words that denote the object.
T	:	Ok, can you tell me the reasons why you chose the pictures?
S3	:	First, we look for the picture that has more objects to tell so that we have more ideas to develop.
T	:	Any other reasons?
S4	:	We avoid the pictures that we don't know the meaning in English.
T	:	One more reasons? Why do you choose your pictures?
S5	:	We vote when the members have two identical pictures

<div align="center">(Group interview #4, 01:20:11)</div>

The excerpt suggests that the pictures allowed the students to generate ideas. The interview excerpt also shows how students creatively developed strategies in choosing the pictures and for working together. They also selected language based on their language resources which is a useful coping mechanism for meaning making in a foreign language.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

According to this study, digital storytelling exercises based on local culture were successful at motivating students to learn languages. The collaborative digital storytelling project first and foremost assisted students in collaborative learning in three ways: they supported one another in problem-solving, shared equal responsibility in completing the job, and appreciated one another's ideas. It also shows that the digital storytelling initiative has increased students' enthusiasm to study languages because they enjoyed and found technology-based learning to be difficult. They found using technology to be time-consuming and difficult, despite the fact that it helped them improve their technology and digital literacy. The emphasis will probably shift more toward pedagogy than technology as they become more accustomed to the tools. The incorporation of resources based on local culture in the digital storytelling allowed students to learn similar vocabulary in the target language and to create a bridge across cultures, which was a key topic in the data. This was primarily due to the fact that a number of scaffolded tasks encouraged the development of lexical input as well as a growing interest in both their own and other people's cultures. Particularly useful in extending the story were images with more objects or details that students were already familiar with as a part of their sociocultural background. The pupils have also benefited from the usage of photos in examining the specified objects. Finally, by using pictures to convey meaning, students learned techniques that they can apply to different language learning situations.

On the basis of our experience, we wholeheartedly endorse the use of collaborative digital storytelling in English language instruction. It not only encourages student engagement in the classroom but also learning motivation. Theoretically, it is also advised that teachers incorporate resources based on local culture into language instruction because it enables students to develop their ability to

express local culture using the target language. Additionally, it is advised that students use digital graphics when learning a language because it will foster their learning creativity, which is very important in the twenty-first century.

To better engage the kids, teachers might incorporate extracurricular activities outside of the classroom with digital storytelling. For instance, teachers might urge the kids to leave the classroom so they can photograph and interview the staff or principal outdoors. They could then proceed to write a story about their school, describe it, share its culture (symbols, activities, and traditions), or recount its history. Digital storytelling could be used in a multicultural classroom setting even though it was used in a monocultural context for this study. The dynamic of the kids' stories being shared on a digital platform would offer an opportunity for intercultural learning that could improve their proficiency in a foreign language.

Although this study produced encouraging findings and insightful information about the teaching and learning of the English language, it had two significant flaws. To accurately assess the effect of this style of language teaching on language acquisition, a more thorough analysis of the growth of specialized language abilities, such as writing, is needed. It need a longterm study for this to happen. Second, due to the relatively low number of participants, the findings cannot be extrapolated to other Indonesian situations. As a result, future study may potentially involve a greater number of participants from various Indonesian locations and learning environments, as well as a more systematic tracking of student language acquisition over a longer period of time.

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