LearningApps and digital storytelling in EFL class

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ABSTRACT

Education is essential to keep up with the times. In today's technology age, education also requires digital technology to support school activities, particularly learning and teaching. Technology can be used in innovative ways to make learning activities more engaging and to boost students' interest in listening in EFL classes. Digital technology may play numerous functions in education. It can be instructor-directed, in which the teacher must deliver the instruction, or student-directed, in which the teacher is not compelled to give the instruction. There are many different types of digital media, including LearningApps. It is a Web 2.0 application that uses a small interactive module to help learning and teaching activities. LearningApps can be used as a digital storytelling tool to make narrative listening more engaging by providing a variety of templates for quizzes or mini games based on the materials. The purpose of this study is to find out about the role and the contributions of LearningApps as a digital story telling tool for listening in EFL class. Qualitative method is the most appropriate method for investigating the role and the contributions of LearningApps as a digital storytelling tool for listening in EFL class. This study involved an English teacher and 10th grade students. The data obtained through observation and open-ended interview. The significance of these findings in the context of teaching listening skill is included in this study, with a focus on the role and the contributions of LearningApps as a digital teaching tool. This study emphasizing the importance of digital media in narrative listening to engaged students' attention by providing listening contents in interesting ways. It was demonstrated by students' reactions to LearningApps used in narrative listening during class.

1. Introduction

Global English Proficiency Index 2023 shows that Indonesia is 79th out 113 countries and 13th out of 23 countries in Asia which categorized as low level of English proficiency. One of crucial aspects in English proficiency is listening. Listening is a common challenging skill for language learners among the four language skills (Yang et al., 2021). The development of listening is crucial in language learning acquisition (Kajiura et al., 2021). Listening efforts rely on subjective factors, therefore high-quality listening provides the insight needed to explore and integrate potentially threatening information relevant to the self (Itzchakov et al., 2020).

Nowadays, technologies are used in practically every part of life includes pedagogical issues. Technological improvements have increased pedagogical agents' ability to communicate with students (Keller et al., 2014). The learning activities should be innovative, interesting, and attractive

to students (Sriklaub & Wongwanich, 2014). Students learn most effectively when they receive real-time feedback while solving problems (Jia & Hew, 2021). Digital media offers a chance to present information in a various way such as visually and auditivelly or by combining virtual and real environment (Degner et al., 2022).

Digital media provides real-time feedback and also can engages students in problem solving so that digital media has some probabilities to help students learn effectively. However, technology is not always help teachers in teaching or help students in learning, sometimes it can be inhibits the learning process when it gets some failures to operate or connection problems during the learning process. Students' interest is one of several factors that affected learning process. The level of students' interest are influence the process of receiving the materials (Keller et al., 2014). As interest is a crucial component of instrincic motivation, such environments could be seen as a first step in increasing motivation to learn more, which in turn should increase learning performance and scientific literacy (Ruf et al., 2022)

The importance of high-quality learning experiences is well-supported by research and indicates the need to provide students with opportunities that support and motivate their academic, cognitive, social-emotional, and physical development (Blinkoff et al., 2023). When web 2.0 technology is utilized to promote collaborative learning, the interaction pattern becomes more complex since students interact with both each other and the technology. Furthermore, notwithstanding the benefits of web 2.0 technology, technology alone does not guarantee educational achievement (Kam & Katerattanakul, 2014).

In previous studies they identified interest as a unique motivation variable that is influenced by the learner's environment, the consequences for the design of interest-generating and learning-supporting science apps for teenagers, as well as the importance of taking aesthetic experience into account in future study. They also identified that a web 2.0 collaborative unveils many communication channels in support of synchronicity and group awareness. The research about how do students respond learning activities by using digital media and how does LearnigApps support learning activities especially to support digital storytelling in listening.

The differences of this research with the previous study are this research conducted in one of Vocational High School in Brebes and use LearningApps as a digital media that became the object of this research. Although the school have not using LearningApps in teaching and learning processes, they used other digital media such as YouTube, TikTok, MP3, learning video and E-book. LearningApps is a web 2.0 application which used to support learning and teaching processes with a small interactive module which can be used directly in learning materials.

Web 2.0 application is website that makes user-generated content for end user. Web 2.0 sites that facilitate real-time collaborative contributions are those where users build the site with content added and edited by more than one contributor. In collecting the data for this study, the writer limited this study only focuses on describing the role of LearningApps as a digital media to support digital storytelling in listening and students' responses of its implementation. This research focused on the case at one of Vocational High School which became the setting place of this research. This study is aim to investigate the role of LearningApps as a digital media to support digital storytelling in listening.

2. Method

This research is qualitative research which used case study as a design of this research. The research will conduct at one of vocational high school in Brebes which has implemented digital learning media as a part of teaching tools so that LearningApps can be used to delivered materials of four English skills, especially listening skill which is the focus of this research.

2.1. Participants

This research involved 10th grade RPL and TBSM which had been implementing Merdeka curriculum which encourage students and teachers to explore more about digital technology and how to apply it in the classroom activities. Each major has three classes, the writer chooses one class of each major as a representative. The writer observed those classes and selected one student with lower

interest, one student who interested the most, and one who is in the middle of each class to be interviewed.

2.2. Instruments

2.2.1. Observations

Students' interest of LearningApps measured with observation checklist. Observations were used to find out additional knowledge that supports the results of interviews about students' responses of the use of LearningApps in learning activities. The writers observed students' reactions during the class by using observation checklist to know how LearningApps works in learning processes. The goal of this observation is to examine the role and the contibutions of LearningApps as a digital learning media to support digital storytelling in listening section. In this research, the writers determined as participant observers who directly involoved in the learning processes. The writers conducted three times classroom observations.

2.2.2. Interview

The interviews have involoved 3 students of 2 classes, 10 RPL and 10 TBSM. These three students are a representative of their class which consist of student with lower interest, student with higher interest, and student who in the middle. The interviews have 16 questions about digital media which devided into 6 chategories, novelty (3 items), intensity (3 items), ambiguity (3 items), human activities (3 items), intensity factors (2 items), and life theme. We selected seveal questions related to students' interest to be revealed in this study. The purpose of the interview is to get the right information from the teachers and students about their experiences using LearningApps as a digital learning media in teaching and learning process. The writer will be conducted semi-structured interview which will be conducted by asking several open-ended questions about how was the LearningApps works.

2.3. Data Collecting Procedure and Technique

2.3.1. Procedures

Data analysis is the process of searching and systematicnally compiling data obtained from questionnaires and interviews. There were four steps of analyzing the data obtained from the instruments. The first step is trascribed interview recordings from spoken form into written form based on the information needed in this research. After that, the it reduced by summarizing the data, select the main things and focusing on the important things. In this research, data reduction was data that should be obtained regarding students' interest of digital storytelling in listening through LearningApps. Observations and interviews were selected and put an emphasis on issues concerning the role of LearningApps to encourage students' interest of listening. Data served into form of brief descriptions and tables. The last step was wrote the conclusion of this research by highlighted the main points of this research.

2.3.2. Techniques

The following are several procedures to collect the data that will be used in this research.

a. The writers determined an English teacher and 10th grade students of one of vocational high school in Brebes as subjects of this research.

b. The writers collected the data by using observation checklist, interview and field note.

c. The writers conducted classroom observations 6 times and take a field notes from each observation.

d. The writers interviewed six students that became representatives of their class about LearningApps and take field notes from each interview section.

e. After that, the writer transcribed several interview data into written form.

f. The writers analyzed the obtained data.

g. The writers concluded the results of finding.

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. Findings

The present study used two different theories about inerest: (a) Safari (2003) for the observation checklist and (b) Hidi (1990) for the interview.

3.1.1. Student's Responses

There are some questions that indicate students' interest, intensity of the use of digital media in learning proesses, and challenges or difficulties in operating LearningApps as the using media to support digital storytelling. This study revealed students' response to some questions that indicate students' interest.

> *"Many students enable to use it (digital media) because of signal"*

Accessibility is a factor that influences students' interest in implementation of digital media by using LearningApps. Based on students' perspective, some students were interested in LearningApps because it easy to access and some students were less interested in it because they found some difficulties to operate it. It supported by some statements below.

> *"It was fun, but sometimes my device doesn't support the apps."*
> *"It was fun and entertaining, but it's not that easy."*

Some students found it difficult to access LearningApps because they found some problems with their devices such as internet connections and sistem failure like phone bugs and lags. However, it can be solved by divided students into some groups so that they can use one phone per group and they can learn cooperatively to finished the tasks in LearningApps.

> *"When we used LearningApps, it's not boring. We more motivated to learn. It's more fun to see colorful stuff, it boosted my mood. It provided some unique colorful picture and other creations."*

The contents in LearningApps are also take a part in students' interest engagement. Digital media that usually used by the teacher before was personal learning videos and learning videos from Youtube. However, in this case we also used several videos from Youtube, the differece is we put the videos into LearningApps so that it could more interactive.

> *"The uniqueness of LearningApps is it can connected to other players in one line"*

The feature is considered as a factor that can engage students' interest. There are many features in LearningApps, one of the features is multiplayer feature. This statement shows that the student was interested in multilayer feature in it. Student can connected to other students from different group and do the same activites in LearningApps at the same time.

> *"Using LearningApps is more clear. The contents are more understandable"*

Content selection is one of crucial factors that can engaged students' interest. Interesting contents can motivates and increased their curiosity. It encouraged the students figured out how to solve some problems related to the materials. It triggered the students to figure out what's happening in the story that they heard from the contens in LearningApps and tried to follow all the instructions in LearningApps to solve the problems togethet with their groups.

According to the result, it shows that students stated that they had a good feelings when learning using digital media and all of them enjoyed the learning process by using digital media. They found that learning by using digial media more interesting and fun than the usual learning. They mentioned some aspects that make it more interesting such as its feature, it can connected some players/group into the same learning game. The other aspects are the contents that provided on LearningApps, in this study we used storytelling video and several audio also several pictures related to the story in the game learning. There are several factors that influenced students' interest in using digital media. The most common complaints are problems on internet connection and device which does not works when their accessing the contents on digial media.

3.1.2. Classroom Circumstances

Classroom observations have conducted to investigate how students respond to digital storytelling combined with LearningApps during the learning process. It described from their expressions, gestures and feedbacks during the learning process. Each item on the observation checklist has four points to measure students' interest. The first observation was observing traditional teaching where the teacher did not use digital media in teaching, the second observation was introducing the students to LearningApps as a digital media whch combined with youtube to served more interesting digital storytelling. The last observation was observing how students rspond the storytelling that supported by LearningApps when they already used to operating LearningApps.

a. RPL Students

This study involved 30 X RPL (*Rekayasa Perangkat Lunak*) students. Gender is also influenced their interest. Almost all of X RPL students are females and the rest, four students are males. Female students tend to interested in cute stuff. In this case, female students tend to interested in design and contents of LearningApps.
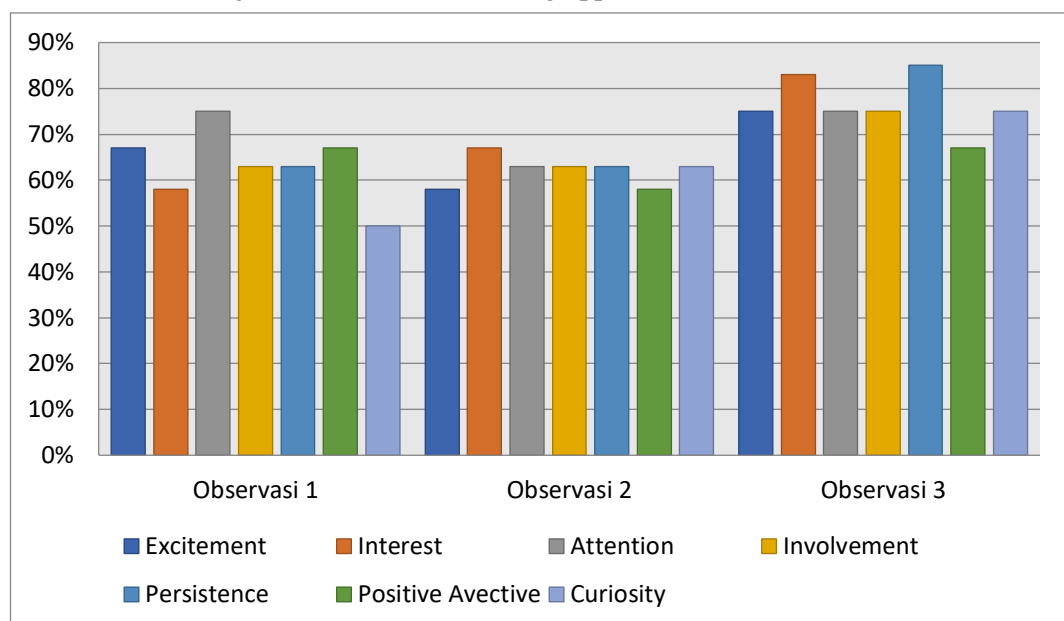

Fig. 1. RPL Students' Interest

The result shows that students' excitement, interest, attention and positive avective involvement have decreased in the second observation. Those were decreased when students were introduced to LearningApps. Those have increased again in the last observation. Student involvement and persistence were not increased nor decreased in the second observation and those were increased in the last obsrvation. Curiosity was the olny one aspect that increased in each observasion, this aspect has increased from one to other observation.

Several aspects decreased in the secoond obsersvation when the students tried to figure out the way to operate LearningApps, some students considered it as a complicated stuff. However, those aspects increased in the next observation when the students have been understood the way it works. Students' persistence has significantly increased in the last observation after consistently reached 63% in the fist and the last observations, it increased by 22% from 63% to 75% in the last observations and became the highest level.

b. TBSM Students

This study has involved 23 TBSM (*Teknik dan Bisnis Sepeda Motor*) students. If female students tend to interested in cute stuff, male students tend to interested in challenging stuff. Those differences became a factor that differentiates students' level of interest between RPL and TBSM students.
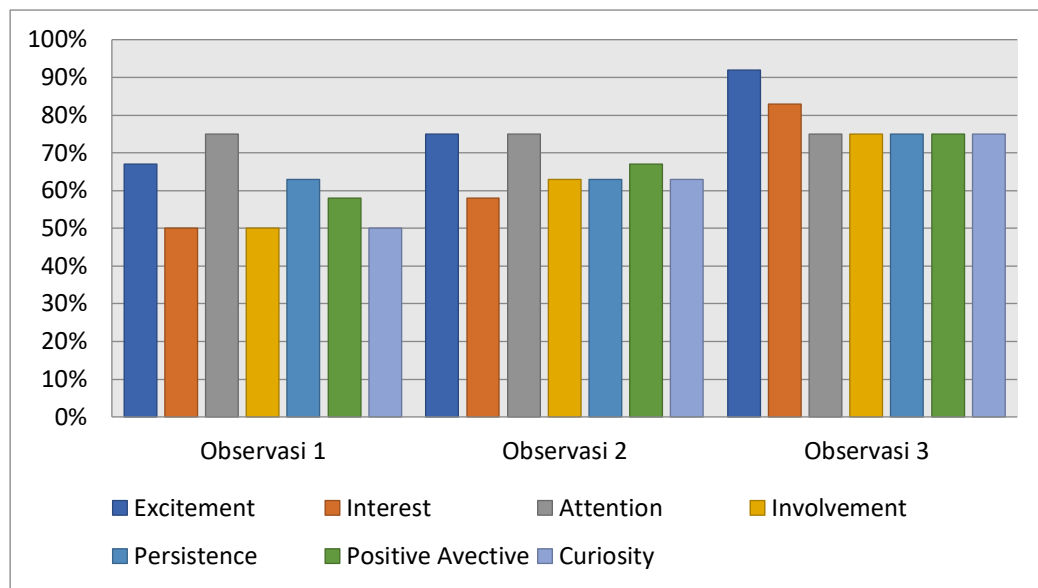
Fig. 1. TBSM Students' Interest

The result shows that almost all of interest aspects have increased in each observation. Students' excitement, interest, attention, involvement, positive avective involvement and cusiosity have increased in the second and the last observation. The average increase of those aspects is 8.5% in the second observation and 12.3 % in the last observation. Meanwhile Students' attention was the olny one aspect that did not decrease nor increase during the periode of classroom observations, it consistently reached 75%. The other one which only increased in the last observation was students' persistence. It increased by 12% from 63% to 75% in the last obsetrvation.

Male students tend to interested in challenging stuff, they tend to consider something new as a challenge. It proofed by the increase of almost all of interest aspects in each section of classroom observation. Almost all of interest aspects increased even in the second observation when LarningApps introduced to the stusdents. The students show their interest in the first time they operated LearningApps as a digital media that used to provide narrative listening contents.

The results show that the role of LearningApps in learning narrative through listening is as a digital media that provides several features to support learning processes. LearningApps has contributed to engaged students' interest, to provide a new experience to students with different features in it. It also contributed to make the learning processes more fun, interactive and interesting so that students more enjoyed the learning processes and motivated in learning listening.

3.2. Discussion

This study revealed that students' interest has increased from the first to the last observation. It shows that LearningApps has influenced students' interest by providing several unique and interesting features. LearningApps used as a warming up, brainstorming and listening exercises. Gender is also influenced their interest, female students tend to not like a complicated thing that needs more efforts to be used. However, males students tend to determined a compllicated things as a challenge. So that is why X TBSM more interested in LearningApps than X RPL. The other factors that influenced students' interests are device and internet connections problems. LearningApps takes a part in support learning processes, engaged students' interest so that students more active and give more feedbacks during the learning process. LearningApps makes learning process more attractive with play with friends feature so that all students could participate in learning activities through LearningApps and its other unique features. It can gives real-time feedbacks so it does not hinder communications during learning by using LearningApps. All those students' interest aspects can be considerations to find out the role and the contributions of LearningApps to engage students motivation in learning listening through narrative text.

4. Conclusion

The presset study revealed that the role of LearningApps in digital storytelling is to make students more interested in listen to the storytelling by using LearningApps. Digital storytelling engaged students focus to the storylines. LearningApps provided several features to make an interactive learning so that students able to enjoy and interact to each other. From the results of this study we can conclude that the role of LearningApps to support digital storytelling is to engaged students' interest of the storytelling and keep their attention on the contents by providing several interesting features such as play with friends feature and unique templates. The results are also show that X TBSM indicated more interested in LearningApps that used to support digital storytelling than X RPL. There are several factors that influenced their interest in using digital meida such as internet connections trouble and unsupported devices when accessing the contents on LearningApps. Students' interest was measured to find out the role of LearningApps and the way it contributed to engage students motivation in learning listening through narrative text.

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