

Digital Storytelling in Exploring Ideational Meanings of Narrative Genre (SFL Genre-Based Approach)

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ABSTRACT. Digital Storytelling is not newly discussed by scholars in EFL teaching contexts. However, studies focusing on how Digital Story is employed to develop literacy in ‘meaning-making’ the text among students are still very few. Thus, this study is an endeavor to investigate how Digital Storytelling is carried out to help students mean the representation of the texts. The data were obtained from the implementation of Digital Storytelling in teaching students’ narrative texts in the first grade of a Senior High School in Indonesia as the focus participants. Peculiarly, this qualitative study used the theory of SFL-GBA as the reference adopted in the teaching and learning process. The result revealed that students were guided to mean the texts in all stages of the Genre-Based Approach, especially in Modelling of the Text. In this phase, the teacher attempted to assist students to explore ‘experiences’ represented in the Digital images. To conclude, Digital Storytelling helped the students to understand how digital images could accommodate appropriate types of processes, participants, as well as circumstances to fulfill the social function of the narrative texts.

Keywords: *Digital Storytelling, Ideational Meaning, Narrative Text, SFL-GBA.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital Storytelling (DST) is not a new thing in the educational context, including EFL teaching. It is seen from any development of it in the classroom setting. As an example, nowadays, DST becomes a pedagogical approach used by teachers since it could facilitate teachers to have more innovative teaching methods with digital media [21]. Not only that, but DST is also claimed powerful to stimulate students’ critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving skill, as well as creativity during the teaching-learning process [21].

Nevertheless, many barriers are faced by EFL teachers in employing DST. One of them is the technical concerns such as lack of supporting media, minimum access to the internet, limited sources/references. Moreover, another essential point to consider is the teachers’ confusion in maximizing the teaching materials in DST during the teaching program [6]. As an example, the effective choice of materials as well as procedure in using DST which supports the content of learning itself is needed to investigate [19]. Specifically, in the EFL teaching context, it is reported that many English teachers still do not understand in choosing as well as providing the images in DST which could help students learn

the genre (text type) as the main topic in the school syllabus. This problem is also related to the statement that one big task of teachers in using DST is developing students’ literacy as well as a language [15].

In line with this, any studies focusing on DST have been much researched. Some of them focused on the effectiveness of DST [21,18], choices, or alternative media for teaching [2, 3, 22], the implementation of DST as a pedagogical approach [15, 4, 12, 14,16, 17]. It means that most studies focus on how DST practically is employed to teach generally. Moreover, a study conducted by [1] has tried to discuss how DST could focus on developing students’ literacy and language through Genre Based Approach framework. In this study, students were guided to relate the stories with the context where they live, identify the characteristics of narrative story, collaborate with peers in creating digital storytelling, and share their stories one to others.

From the previous studies above, it is clear to say that the research focusing on how the practical use of DST could help students understand the ‘representation’ of the text itself through images in the DST is still few. Therefore, this present study aims to investigate how Digital Storytelling is

employed to develop students' literacy on meaning the texts experientially through visual images.

2. METHOD

As has been mentioned, this study was an attempt to investigate how DST is used to teach students' narrative texts, focusing on understanding the concept of representation of the texts. Therefore, this study was conducted by conducting a teaching-learning process under the SFL-GBA framework. This study was conducted in a Senior High School with a grade often as the focus participants. Specifically, this intervention consists of four cycles; Building Knowledge of the Field, Modelling of the Text, Joint Construction of the Texts, as well as Independent Construction of the Texts. However, since the focus is on how to teach the representation of the texts is on stage 2 (Modelling of the text), so this study will only be focusing on this phase. Furthermore, the theory used to teach students the notion of representation is from Experiential

meanings (transitivity system) from [2,9,7,10] that it refers to what's happening within the text. It includes the participants, process, and circumstances. Participants are involved in the text, divided into some categories such as actor, senser, sayer, carrier, behavior, and token [9,7,10]. Process refers to activity occurring within the texts. It further is divided into doing, sensing, saying, existing, behaving, and others [15]. Meanwhile, circumstances are divided into location, time, manner, and many more.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This part elaborates on the data and the discussion of how to teach students representation of the narrative texts in the DST approach, especially in Modelling of the Texts. First, In the orientation stage of the story, the teacher asked students to discuss the story from the shown images in the DST as shown in Figure 1.



FIGURE 1. Some Images in the Story

From those sample pictures, the teacher guided students with questions by asking the process, participants, as well as the circumstances. As an example, the teacher said, who were they? What were they doing in the first image? Where did they play? What were they doing in the school bus? Were they in a happy or bad relationship?

Those questions led students to analyze the characters, the activities as well as the setting of the story. This means that the images in the DST were used to create meanings, rather than solely to make students a fun and enjoyed the learning. After discussing some points as questioned before, students were tried to write the important points of the orientation in the story by identifying participants, processes, and circumstances from the picture. Therefore, the teacher said; 'Ok now, please describe the possible places where Vee and Chloe were by mentioning the characteristics of the environments! In addition to that, please mention also the characteristics of Vee and Chloe in the pictures!'

Thus, in introducing the beginning part of the story, the teacher explored relational processes more

than other types of processes. This activity was done to achieve the concept that the clear background of the main characters must be obvious; such as, who the characters were, where the story took place, and when this story happened.

The sequence of the activities was undertaken to fulfill the criteria of the recount text [5,3] that orientation aims to show the sketch of the story, including introducing the characters of the story as well as the setting. Precisely, the teacher's attempt in introducing the characters is also consonant with [7,5,8] that in narrative texts, the characters are more individual and must be identified clearly. It means it tends to be a personal character, not a general thing like in other types of texts such as reports, news, or explanations. Therefore, the teacher should help students explore the relational process in the images more in this stage; such as exploring adverbial clauses, noun phrases as well relative clauses [20]. In the phase of complication, the teacher started to discuss some conflicts appearing in the digital image by centering the process, participants, as well as the setting. Figure 2 shows the sample images.



FIGURE 2. Samples Images of Conflict

From the pictures above, the teacher guided students to discuss the relations among interactants; such as, by giving some questions; What made Vee and Chloe far? What did Vee feel when Chloe preferred Tom to her? Who was Tom? Was Tom a kind boy at school? What did he usually do at school? These questions were used to dig much information about how the conflict firstly occurred. Precisely, the teacher highlighted the material process, mental process, as well as the relational

process to show that the problem came. In addition to that, the teacher also discussed the sequence of events through pictures by using some temporal conjunctions; such as (then, after that, next). As an example, the teacher said, “Then, what happened to Vee after Chloe was close to Tom? Afterward, the teacher also showed another conflict which made the story more interesting to see. Figure 3 shows the sample images in the DST discussed by the teacher.



FIGURE 3. The Sample Images in DST

After the teacher paused the video, the teacher started to direct students to discuss the new case by asking some questions, ‘What did the principal do in the canteen? Who was the new student’s name? What were the characteristics of her? What did Tom and his friend do to the new student? What types of bully were in the image? What did Chloe say to the new student as the bullying part?’

processes, verbal processes, as well as mental processes. For example, the teacher mentioned some actions, mental verbs, and verbal verbs in the images (hit friends, threw bag and paper, insulted Vee and the new student, said ‘looser, and others).

This sample activity was done to help students analyze the conflicts in the story comprehensively. Therefore, the processes explored are similar to the previous one (conflict 1). The activities above were done to help students understand that the pictures must reflect the complication of the story. Peculiarly, the teacher highlighted some important points such as the types of processes; including material

The emphasis of some processes in the digital images above is parallel to [3] that complications consist of some problems occurring in the story, or also called as a struggle episode of the main characters. In addition to that, it is also mentioned that in narrative texts, the writer should use material processes followed by the process showing ‘feelings and saying’ or called as mental and verbal processes [5]. In the last stage (resolution), the teacher started to discuss images with some solving acts of the conflicts. some of the images are shown in Figure 4.



FIGURE 4. Some Images of Solving-Conflict Acts

From the three pictures above, the teacher steered students to focus on the phase where the problem started to be solved. As an instance, the

teacher said, ‘‘ what were two students doing? did they feel disappointed or happy? what made them laugh so hard? what was the Vee’s reaction/ feeling?’’

The model questions above were posed to emphasize the starting line for Vee to report the bullying action at school to the principal. This means that students were acknowledged that there must be a logical sequence from the complication to the resolution part. This is clearly shown by the flow of the story as shown by the sequential images in the DST.

Subsequently, the teacher accentuated the resolution point through some sample images in the



FIGURE 5. Some Images of Resolution

The actions above were aimed to support students in meaning the images in fulfilling the criterion of resolution phase [10]. Purposively, the emphasis is on some pictures showing the events where the end of the story came up (the response of the principal towards the report of Vee as well as the coming of the police). Likewise, the processes highlighted in this stage cover material process, mental process, verbal process, and relational process [9,7]. The example of activities in discussing the resolution stage is also in keeping with [3] that the students need to understand how to set up the reading activities that facilitate students to analyze features of the texts (processes, participants, and setting) of the text.

4. CONCLUSION

To sum up, Modelling of the texts is one of the pivotal stages to be conducted in teaching DST especially in exploring ‘representation’ of the texts through images. This is room to introduce the concept of experientiality in the images seen from the SFL perspective (process, participants, circumstances). Therefore, the students’ visual literacy is developed particularly in considering the proper images in DST which could represent meanings of the narrative texts; including the introduction stage of the story, the conflicts of the story, as well as the complication of the story. In other words, the social function of narrative text could be achieved.

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DST below. She explained the expression of the principal seeing the post on the cellphone. As a specimen, the teacher said; Please take a look at this image! What was the principal saying when seeing the proof from Vee? Was she happy or shocked? Who did the principal call? Where was possibly Tom and his friend brought to? How did Tom and his friend feel after knowing they were in danger?

solution [4].

From the activities in the Modeling stages in providing the detailed reading of the images, it could be inferred that students must explicitly understand the concept of the story from the teachers [4,8,11]. This is also supported by the result of the study conducted by [1] that Digital images are proper tools to assist students to construct meanings of the texts in the EFL context. This is also parallel to the study conducted [5] that in Modelling of the texts, the teacher should provide detailed

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