

## **ANIMOTO APPLICATION AND STUDENTS SPEAKING SKILL: A STUDY ON STUDENT PERCEPTION**

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**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengkaji persepsi siswa terhadap penggunaan aplikasi digital storytelling Animoto untuk meningkatkan keterampilan berbicara bahasa Inggris di kalangan siswa kelas sembilan SMP 2 SATAP Tabongo. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif dengan pengumpulan data melalui kuesioner dan observasi. Peserta terdiri dari 30 siswa yang terlibat dalam kegiatan digital storytelling yang diintegrasikan ke dalam pelajaran bahasa Inggris mereka..

**Kata Kunci:** Bercerita Digital, Keterampilan Berbicara, Persepsi Siswa, Animoto, Pembelajaran EFL.

**Abstract:** *This research investigates students' perceptions of using a digital storytelling application, Animoto, to improve English speaking skills among ninth-grade students at SMP 2 SATAP Tabongo. The study was conducted using a descriptive quantitative method with data gathered through questionnaires and observations. The participants consisted of 30 students who engaged in digital storytelling activities integrated into their English lessons.*

**Keywords:** *Digital Storytelling, Speaking Skill, Student Perception, Animoto, EFL Learning.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In foreign language learning, speaking is one of the most essential skills, as it reflects a learner's ability to use the language in a meaningful and communicative way. According to Rubini et al. (2019), speaking is a highly complex skill that requires accurate pronunciation, fluency, appropriate vocabulary use, and grammatical competence. However, in many English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, speaking remains the most difficult skill for students to develop. Syafryadin and Salniwati (2019) explain that most EFL students tend to be passive when asked to speak in English due to fear of making mistakes and low self- confidence.

Arroba and Acosta (2021) found that digital storytelling is an effective alternative strategy for developing students' speaking skills because it encourages self-expression through

voice, visuals, and digital narration. Kallinikou and Nicolaidou (2019) further emphasize that digital storytelling supports the development of critical speaking components such as pronunciation, grammar, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The process of drafting scripts, recording narration, and selecting multimedia elements engages both linguistic and cognitive skills.

Digital tools such as *Animoto* provide accessible platforms that facilitate digital storytelling in classroom settings. Through this application, students can combine voice recordings, photos, music, and text to create personal and purposeful stories. These tools help learners to speak in more authentic, relevant, and motivating contexts, making the learning experience more meaningful (Nair & Yunus, 2021). Despite its promise, the practical implementation of digital storytelling remains underutilized in many Indonesian junior high schools, particularly in remote or underserved areas.

For instance, SMP 2 SATAP Tabongo, a junior high school sharing a building with an elementary school, faces various challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited digital tools, and low student motivation. Based on preliminary observations, students at this school generally show low interest in learning English. Some are frequently absent during English classes, and those who do attend tend to be passive and hesitant to speak. Their speaking skills are very limited, particularly in terms of pronunciation, sentence construction, fluency, and overall confidence. Traditional teaching methods have proven ineffective in overcoming these barriers, further highlighting the need for more engaging, student-centered alternatives.

Given these challenges, the use of digital storytelling offers a promising solution. It provides a more dynamic, interactive, and learner-centered approach that supports creativity, increases motivation, and builds confidence. Therefore, this study aims to explore students' perceptions of using a digital storytelling application, specifically *Animoto*, to improve their English speaking skills. By examining students' responses, this study seeks to provide insights into how digital tools can be effectively integrated into EFL instruction, particularly in rural or resource-limited educational contexts

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive design. This approach aims to identify and describe systematically and factually the effectiveness of using a digital storytelling application in increasing students' speaking skills.

As explain by Sahin & Mete (2021), descriptive research aims to describe and explain a phenomenon based on data obtained from participants. In this study, the design is applied to illustrate changes in students' speaking skills after using the digital storytelling application Animoto. The scores were processed using descriptive analysis. The formula used to calculate percentage values is as follows:

$$P = \frac{F}{N} \times 100\%$$

Where:

- P = Percentage
- F = Frequency of a response
- N = Total number of respondent

In addition, the results of the questionnaire data are categorized on a likert scale to be reclassified based on student perceptions by determining the interval by the method of finding the percent interval with the following formula.

Formula :  $I = 100 \div \text{number of likert scales}$   $I = 100 \div 5$

$I = 20$

With this category of choice the likert scale has a value range of 20 displayed in Table 4.2 the following student perception categories.

Table 4.2 student perception categories

No	Score	Category
1	84% -104%	Very positive
2	63% -83%	Positive
3	42% - 62%	Neutral
4	21% - 41%	Negative
5	0% - 20%	Very negative

To determine the average score for each statement item, the method is as follows: multiply the score for each item by the corresponding value (5 for Strongly Agree, 4 for Agree,

3 for Neutral, 2 for Disagree, and 1 for Strongly Disagree), then sum the results of these multiplications. then divide the result by the number of questionnaire items multiplied by the highest category (5), then multiply by 100 to obtain the average value. The categorization of Likert scale percentages was adapted from commonly used descriptive statistical methods in educational research, as suggested by Sugiyono (2015) and Arikunto (2010).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the aspect of **student participation and engagement** with the use of the digital storytelling application (Animoto), data were collected from three questionnaire items that measured students' comfort, activeness, and interest in digital storytelling activities during class. These results clearly indicate that the majority of respondent felt comfortable using Animoto in the classroom, suggesting a high level of acceptance toward the integration of technology in their learning experience. Although most students indicated a willingness to participate, the relatively high number of neutral responses suggests that some students might still be adjusting to this method or may need more encouragement to participate actively.

These results demonstrate a generally positive perception, although a portion of students may still be hesitant or unfamiliar with storytelling using digital tools. When averaging the results from all three questions, the overall percentages are as follows:

- **Disagree (D):** 11.7%
- **Neutral (N):** 25.6%
- **Agree (A):** 43%
- **Strongly Agree (SA):** 23.3%

Overall, the **average perception score across the three items was 76.4%**, placing it in the *Positive* category. This reflects that students generally feel comfortable, engaged, and supported when digital storytelling is integrated into speaking activities. These findings underscore the potential of applications like Animoto to enhance student motivation and promote active participation in language learning.

### Understanding and Use of the application

The second component examined in this study focuses on students' **understanding and use of the digital storytelling application (Animoto)**. This aspect was assessed through three questionnaire items, and the distribution of responses reflects students' comprehension, ease

of use, and challenges in operating the application. These results suggest that although a majority of students found the application manageable, a significant number still felt uncertain and required more guidance or practice. These figures reflect that although some students understood the process, half of the class remained undecided, possibly due to lack of prior experience or limited training. These responses confirm that while Animoto is user-friendly for many, it still presents a learning curve for others.

Based on the responses across the three items, the **average percentages** for each category were as follows:

- Strongly Disagree (SD): 3%
- Disagree (D): 10%
- Neutral (N): 40%
- Agree (A): 34%
- Strongly Agree (SA): 13%

### Speaking ability

The analysis of students' perceptions regarding their **speaking ability** after using the digital storytelling application was measured through three Likert-scale-based questions. The responses illustrate how students evaluated the impact of digital storytelling, particularly through the Animoto platform, on their confidence, fluency, and ease in expressing ideas in English.

When the results from all three items are averaged, the percentage of responses by category is as follows:

- **Strongly Disagree (SD): 0%**
- **Disagree (D): 10%**
- **Neutral (N): 30%**
- **Agree (A): 29%**
- **Strongly Agree (SA): 31%**

### Challenge, Feedback and Presentation

The analysis of student responses related to the **Challenge, Feedback, and Presentation** variables is based on four questionnaire items. Each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale, and the results reflect students' perceptions of the level of difficulty, their comfort in presenting, the usefulness of feedback, and the overall challenge of the digital storytelling

presentation process.

When calculated across all four questions in this category, the **average percentage distribution** of responses is as follows:

- Strongly Disagree (SD): 7.8%
- Disagree (D): 7.5%
- Neutral (N): 32.5%
- Agree (A): 37.8%
- Strongly Agree (SA): 10%

## CONCLUSION

Students showed a high level of participation and engagement (76.4%), enjoying the interactive and visual elements that made speaking more enjoyable. This aligns with Vygotsky's theory, which supports meaningful, student-centered learning. In terms of ease of use, students had a positive but mixed response (average 71.3%). While many could operate the app well, some expressed uncertainty—highlighting the need for training and guidance, as explained by Davis's Technology Acceptance Model.

Regarding speaking ability, students felt more confident and fluent, with the highest score (83.3%) on expressing ideas through digital media. This supports Mayer's theory of multimedia learning and Bandura's self-efficacy theory. Students also reported strong motivation and enjoyment, echoing Robin's belief that digital storytelling increases learner autonomy and satisfaction.

However, some challenges were noted, especially time management and presentation anxiety. Despite these, feedback from teachers and peers was helpful in improving their speaking.

This supports Sadik's findings on the value of peer review in digital storytelling.

In conclusion, Animoto had a positive impact on students' speaking skills and learning experience. It increased motivation, confidence, and speaking fluency while making learning more creative and engaging. For successful use, adequate preparation, training, and classroom support are essential. Digital storytelling is not just a tool but an effective, modern teaching approach that integrates language, technology, and creativity into a meaningful learning process.

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