

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, storytelling has gained increasing attention as a powerful teaching tool for educators at all levels. Stories themselves can help to make meaning out of a particular practice. While storytelling has long been used in elementary and junior school settings, its potential benefits for high school students are now being explored. According to Linse and Nunan (2005), storytelling will have a lot of impacts on learning English at various ages. It means that, not only for young children, storytelling can also provide impact if it is used in high schools. However, many Senior High School (SHS) teachers rarely use storytelling to teach their students.

It is already accepted that the use of storytelling for young learners can be beneficial for them. However, it is also possible that storytelling is also advantageous for students in SHS. Rong and Noor (2019) stated that in Portugal, it was demonstrated that employing digital storytelling among secondary school students promoted multimodal literacy in education. As the use of storytelling in educational contexts is not a new concept, its use in SHS has been limited. However, with the increasing need for innovative teaching methods to engage students, the potential benefits of storytelling are being recognized.

Storytelling is not only about listening to stories, but it can also be about retelling the stories. Rachmawaty and Hermagustiana's (2010) research found that retelling stories is an effective technique that can be applied to improve university students' speaking fluency because they can use various strategies in the retelling process. It showed the positive effect that storytelling can have on the development of the oral proficiency of students. Besides, it also gives a chance for students to speak in front of the class. So, not only the teacher who will do the storytelling, but the students can also do it. So, storytelling could improve the students' fluency, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary, and content in their speaking.

This study focused on the teacher's perception of the use of storytelling to teach students in SHS context. Through this research, the researcher wants to know more about teachers' perceptions of the use of storytelling in SHS and what the teachers' reasons are for using storytelling to teach SHS students. Additionally, this study aims to discover the teachers' perceptions about the use of storytelling to teach students in SHS. The research question of this study is: what are the teachers' perceptions toward the use of storytelling to teach English to Senior High School students?

LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been numerous studies exploring the use of storytelling in the classroom for young children, and it seems that it is beneficial to teach storytelling for young children. This review examines that storytelling can also be used at SHS.

Definitions of Perceptions

There are several definitions of perception. Efron (1669) stated that perception is the primary cognitive contact that man has with the world around him. "We can define perception as the direct, immediate awareness of discriminated I existents which results from energy absorption patterns" (Efron, 1669:147). According to Lindsay and Norman (1977) as cited in Pickens (2005), perception is the process by which organisms interpret and organize sensations to produce a meaningful experience of the world. From the two definitions here, it can be summarized that perception is the cognitive process through which organisms interpret and organize sensory

information to gain a meaningful understanding of the world around them, which involves direct awareness of differentiated existences resulting from energy absorption patterns.

Definition of Storytelling

Stories have been an essential part of each syllabus in order to develop reading skills and improve readers' imagination capability (Safdarian & Ghyasi, 2013). Storytelling is an ancient art form that has been used for generations to pass down cultural, social, and educational knowledge. Some scholars (e.g., Roney (1996) as cited in Yahya et al. (2018)) defines storytelling as a process in which an individual (known as the teller) utilizes vocalization, a narrative framework, and imaginative visualization to engage with an audience. This engagement encourages the audience to reciprocate by employing mental imagery and nonverbal cues such as body language and facial expressions, resulting in an ongoing cycle of communication between the teller and the audience. Therefore, according to Condy et al. (2012), storytelling has been used throughout history for teaching and learning. To conclude, storytelling is a kind of activity that can be used to communicate with others through the use of vocalization, gestures, or facial expressions.

Teachers' Perceptions towards the Use of Storytelling in Senior High School

The use of storytelling to teach English has different perceptions for each person. There are several perceptions about the use of storytelling in a classroom, especially in SHS context. First, the study of Yan and Zhao (2019) assumed that in order to aid students in learning languages, particularly in regard to oral ability, storytelling has been studied and used in a wide range of educational contexts, from early childhood to higher education. It can be summarized that storytelling is still efficient for students in all levels of education, especially for students in language learning class.

According to Yahya et al. (2018:325), the teachers' perceptions toward the use of storytelling is: "They perceive storytelling not just as an activity where the teacher reads a story from a book, but also refers to an event where the teacher or students share their experiences, thoughts, ideas, or real life events verbally during the lessons". Besides, in the context of EFL education in Indonesia, English should serve as a means to enhance the literacy skills of students. Therefore, it is crucial for EFL instructors to reconsider their English teaching methods to facilitate the advancement of literacy among Indonesian students. An effective strategy to boost literacy in the country is to incorporate storytelling into the classroom.

Benefits and Challenges of Storytelling

The study of Yan and Zhao (2019) stated that storytelling is an ability that can be acquired by almost everyone, and that stories should be used in foreign language teaching for the benefit of motivating students to learn the language in a realistic context. As a learning tool, storytelling can be used as a teaching method to help students to discover their individual expressiveness and to improve their ability to express their thoughts and feelings in a clear, eloquent way (Tanni & Raba, 2015 ; 711). In essence, utilizing storytelling as a tool for teaching literacy, specifically reading and writing, can provide numerous advantages for both secondary students and educators. The subsequent section outlines the benefits and obstacles associated with this approach (Satriani, 2019).

Even though there are several benefits from the use of storytelling in high schools, there are also challenges. The example of the challenge is that there are so many students in SHS who feel reading stories is boring, so that is why storytelling is rarely used in SHS. However, the study of Rachmawaty and Hermagustiana (2010) already found that storytelling is not about listening to

stories, but it can also retell stories. So, it is not the teachers who tell the stories, but the students can also tell the stories too.

Development of Storytelling

Not only humans that can grow up, storytelling also grows over time. Storytelling is one of the earliest forms of folk art. According to the study of Tanni and Raba (2015), there are the development of storytelling. At the beginning, storytelling consisted of simple songs to praise, convey the happiness of existence, and used to ease the boredom of difficult tasks. Later, storytelling became the community entertainer by combining their stories with poetry, music, and dance. In the middle ages, storytelling evolved into the form of the traveling singer who traveled throughout the country to gather the news. “Nowadays, in formal storytelling, the teller prepares a story to present to his listeners. Some are from his own imagination; others are gathered, and sometimes are adapted from books and other storytellers. Folklore stories such as myths, epics, legends, and fables are still widely preferred” (Tanni and Raba, 2015;711). In the past, we knew it as folk art (shared by word of mouth), but right now with the growth of technology we can have digital storytelling as well to engage in both old and new literacies and through the process of creating a movie they construct, examine, and manifest other literacies.

Condy et al. (2012:279) already stated that “A digital story is a multimedia text incorporating still images complemented by a narrated soundtrack to tell a story or present a documentary. Using this multimedia approach in a classroom encourages students to engage with each other”. Similarly, the study of Razmi et al. (2014) stated that Digital Storytelling is the modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling. Digital stories derive their power by weaving images, music, narrative and voice together, thereby giving deep dimension and vivid colour to characters, situations, experiences, and insights. “Digital storytelling techniques can effectively

assist the learning process in EFL classrooms. It can assist EFL learners to develop multimodal communicative competence by promoting a learner-centred environment” (Razmi et al. 2014:1542).

THE STUDY

Context of the Study

The study was conducted in two different Senior High Schools. The researcher focused on the location of two Senior High Schools in Salatiga, Central Java. This research takes place in two different high schools (public school and private school) because the researcher wants to compare and gets more information about the teachers’ perceptions toward the use of storytelling in secondary level.

Participants of the Study

The participants for this study were the English teachers who teach in Senior High Schools in Salatiga. The total of the participants were four English teachers from different schools. Here, the researcher chose two English teachers from Satya Wacana Christian Senior High School Salatiga and two English teachers from SMAN 1 Salatiga. The criteria for the teachers here are junior teachers and senior teachers. The reason for selecting these teachers to be the participants is because they may know more and they can share more information related to storytelling for higher students, especially if they have experiences in using storytelling in their teaching activities. Then, the reason for choosing those criteria is because those different teachers, which are junior and

senior teachers, have different experiences in teaching. It means that they can have different ideas too.

Data Collection Instrument

This research study was a qualitative study using interviews. The reason why the researcher is using the qualitative is because the researcher wants to get rich and deeper information from the participants to answer the research question of this study. Therefore, the researcher used semi-structured interviews to get more information related to the teachers' perception about storytelling in higher education.

To answer the research question which was about teachers' perceptions toward the use of storytelling to teach English to secondary level students, I used interviews to collect the data. The type of interview was a semi-structured interview. The aim of the semi-structured interviews was to gain deeper information to answer the research question for this study. The interviews were conducted using Indonesian language and recorded by using an audio recorder.

Data Collection Procedures

To collect the data, first the researcher designed the questions related to the topic "Teachers' Perceptions Toward The Use of Storytelling To Teach Students in Senior High School". After being finished designing the questions, the researcher did the piloting with the English teacher in SMAN 1 Ambarawa to find out whether the interview questions were understandable or not. After that, the researcher started to do the semi-structured interviews one by one with the English teachers in Satya Wacana Christian Senior High School Salatiga and SMAN 1 Salatiga. Then, after being finished doing the interview, the researcher transcribed the interview that had been recorded in a written form. To help the researcher analyzed the data, the

researcher categorized participants' result into some points. Lastly, the researcher analyzed the data that had been collected from the interviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

The responses of the teachers given through the interview were transcribed and analyzed qualitatively. The transcripts of the interview serve for clearer description of the participants' perceptions related to storytelling. After categorizing the results, the data were interpreted to reflect the beliefs of the interviewees' perception towards the use of storytelling in SHS context.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section discusses the perspectives of participants regarding the utilization of storytelling as an English teaching tool for Senior High School students. It will be subdivided into three themes: teachers' reasons for using storytelling, the challenges encountered when using storytelling in SHS, and ways to ensure that storytelling is engaging for SHS students.

Teachers' Reasons for Using Storytelling

This theme discusses the teachers' reasons for using storytelling in the classroom. Through the data that I collected, all of the participants have already used storytelling to teach English to their SHS students and they have a good view about storytelling. All of them believed that storytelling can be beneficial for all their students. From the interview section, the participants mentioned several benefits of the use of storytelling. There are three main benefits, such as; improving students' creativity, learning four skills, and storytelling can be relatable with narrative.

Three out of four participants agree that storytelling can increase students' creativity. Teacher 2 focused on the students' creativity that would improve while the students did the

storytelling performances. From Teacher 2's experience, she used storytelling by asking her students to perform their storytelling in front of the class. So, not only the teacher who did the storytelling, but the students also did it. During the preparation time before performing their storytelling, of course the students needed to think how to present it well. Therefore, the teacher believes that through this way, students will improve their creativity.

Actually it is very interesting, it makes students learn to speak in English. The other students will learn to listen to what their friends said in front of the class. Besides, it also teaches them about creativity and improves their speaking skills. It is because before they perform they can try a lot of time first, maybe they can try on the mirror, or others. (Teacher 2, Interview, 27/02/24)

Teacher 3's statement focused more on whether students' creativity would improve while students explored or thought. From Teacher 3's experience before she asked her students to retell the story, she would give her students a task. The task was that the students needed to find a story then asked the students to see which part of the story that they did not like. After that, Teacher 3 asked her students to try to change those plots according to students' wishes. Hence, through changing or re-creating the plot of the story the teacher believed that students' creativity would appear. Yilmaz & Goktas (2016) study that has a similar statement that. " Creativity in stories is closely related to individual imagination. The more imagination and description used in a story, the more creativity occurs".

Therefore, yeah of course I have to use it, because it allows students to explore their creativity. ... Here, their creativity will appear too and they can explore many things about narrative. (Teacher 3, Interview, 15/03/24)

Another reason for teachers to use storytelling in teaching English. Besides improving students' creativity, is that storytelling is also effective to make the students learn the four skills,

such as reading, writing, listening, and of course speaking. Talking about this point, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 have the same point of view.

Besides, storytelling itself is effective to learn all skills, such as; reading, speaking, writing, and listening. Even for listening, maybe they only learn how to pronounce it correctly. So the main skills are speaking and also how to improve their confidence. (Teacher 1, Interview, 23/02/24)

So they can pick the available story then they can do the storytelling using that story to practice their speaking, fluency, pronunciation, etc. ... Actually it is very interesting, it makes students learn to speak in English. The other students will learn to listen to what their friends said in front of the class. Besides, it also teaches them about creativity and improves their speaking skills. It is because before they perform they can try a lot of time first, maybe they can try on the mirror, or others. (Teacher 2, Interview, 27/02/24)

As Teacher 1 said that through the use of storytelling, the students could learn about those four skills, especially speaking. Here, the teacher mentioned that students could improve their speaking skills while the students told or did the storytelling performance. According to Anggryadi, M. A. (2014), storytelling can enhance students' speaking abilities by improving both their verbal and non-verbal expression of ideas. It helps with voice projection, word articulation, language fluency, and persuasive speaking. Tifani, Regina, & Wardah, (2020) added that *“storytelling is one of teaching techniques that can be applied to improve students speaking skill. It is believed to be one of the entertaining techniques that can be used with students in order to develop their English language skill.”*

Therefore, Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 also added that students not only learn about speaking skills while performing, but students would also learn to be confident too. Samantaray (2014) as cited in Tifani, Regina, & Wardah, (2020) stated that *“ Storytelling technique provides students an opportunity to practice their speaking skill in front of the listeners. By doing the practice continuously, they will have more experience and it can make students become more accustomed*

in front of the people. When the students do the storytelling successfully, their self confidence toward speaking English will improve gradually.”

However, Teacher 4 has different thoughts about her reasons for using storytelling in the classroom. Teacher 4 stated two main reasons, such as storytelling is relatable with narrative and storytelling could increase students' imagination. Based on the Indonesian curriculum, one of the topics taught in English subjects for high school students is narrative text. As both storytelling and narrative involve the fundamental act of telling a story. So, Teacher 4 used storytelling while she taught narrative to their students.

The reason is because storytelling still becomes an activity that is very relatable if we teach about narrative. Then, if the narrative itself is of course imaginative from the imaginative story, right? So it will be easy to explain about narrative if we could give examples through storytelling. ... The other effect, if storytelling itself for me, can make the students be more imaginative. So they can visualize what they hear / what they see to their own imagination. (Teacher 4, Interview, 15/03/24)

The Challenges Encountered when Using Storytelling in SHS

This theme discusses the challenges that the teachers faced when using storytelling in the classroom. Based on the participants' answers there are three challenges: time limitation, story choices, and students' boredom. These challenges can also be divided into two points, which are from the students side and teachers side. From the students' side, the participants stated that the challenge is related to the time preparation before the performances. As from the three out of the four participants, they used storytelling by asking their students to perform their storytelling in front of the class. However, through the challenges above, it is possible if the students and teachers face the same challenges.

The first challenge is wasting time. It is because when the students want to give the best that they can, they will give it all out. That's why sometimes it took a lot of time for students to prepare it all. (Teacher 1, Interview, 23/02/24)

Then the challenge for teachers is more about time. Even the teacher had already set the time but sometimes students need more added time. Then, if we already make a lottery, they will also need more time, some of them will say like “You first...” / “I still not ready, mam...”, etc. So yeah the challenge is more on the waiting time until all students are ready, especially for the shy students that we need to give extra motivation. (Teacher 2, Interview, 27/02/24)

Based on the statements from Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, it can be summarized that the limited time could be challenging both for the students and the teachers while using storytelling in the classroom. Then, the second challenge that could happen for both the students and the teachers is about the story choices. Here, Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 have similar thoughts.

First, maybe they forget the texts / story. Second, for students who haven't mastered English yet (slow learners), surely they will do the short storytelling. Besides, they may bring texts because they not can remember the story. (Teacher 2, Interview, 27/02/24)

The challenge is when we give that storytelling but the story comes from a certain region which is not relatable with them. It will be quite difficult to bring them all into the context. Besides, because they never know about that story too. Maybe if we tell a story about folklore / fables from their region they will understand it. Even if they do not listen / see those stories, they will quickly understand it. However, it will be a challenge from students from another region and here the teacher needs to introduce these storytelling to them first. (Teacher 4, Interview, 15/03/24)

Through these two statements above, I could understand that story choices that both teachers or students would use were very influential. For Teacher 2's statement, the challenges that students may feel is when they needed to search for their own story to retell or perform. For several students, especially students who felt that they had not mastered English yet / slow learners, they would directly choose the short story. So that they did not need to study more to understand the long story. Therefore, Teacher 4's statement added that the same challenge could be faced by the teacher. For the teachers' challenge here is more about how to choose the appropriate stories

by understanding the students' background. It is to make sure that all students could understand the story easily.

Discussing this statement, Teacher 3 has a similar thought. Even in this case, Teacher 3's challenge is not only about designing an interesting teaching and learning process for students, but she also talks about the importance of understanding students' background.

Here, the challenge is not how to make the students understand about story, structure texts, etc but it is how to relate the material with the use of technology. It must be relevant to their current interests and whether it is related to the skills they need in the future. (Teacher 3, Interview, 15/03/24)

On the other hand, it could be simplified that the two challenges of choosing appropriate stories and designing interesting storytelling activities for students have the same problem solving that is by trying to understand the students' background.

Ways to Ensure that Storytelling is Engaging for SHS Students

Regarding the challenges that the participants have already mentioned during the interview session, it can also be found the ways how to deal with the challenges. It is to make SHS students engage with storytelling by using two ways. The first way is to connect storytelling with technology.

The tips are because right now we have advanced technology, so we can let the students use it. They can combine storytelling with the technology that they have mastered. (Teacher 2, Interview, 27/02/24)

Then, how their ways to present it using technology which is close to students. So it is the things that make the students will not get bored. (Teacher 3, Interview, 15/03/24)

In this current era, students are growing up with technology. The first way to engage the students with storytelling is by connecting them through technology. Besides, in the current era

we already have digital storytelling. Condy et al. (2012:279) stated that *“A digital story is a multimedia text incorporating still images complemented by a narrated soundtrack to tell a story or present a documentary. Using this multimedia approach in a classroom encourages students to engage with each other”*. With this technology, the teacher believed that senior high school students could be interested in storytelling.

On the other hand, not all students can listen to their teacher's or their friends' stories. So, there is a good way to make all students want to listen to it. For example, by assessing or giving scores to their other friends who retell or perform the story.

For me, I will use “sama-sama”. So, if their other friends perform the storytelling, they also need to know if they come in front of class and perform it, they want to be listened to by others, right? So, when friends perform, they have to listen too. Furthermore, it's even more extreme when I want to ensure that they are really paying attention to their peers. I will give worksheets to the students who are not performing yet. I will give one sheet to one student and they have to participate in evaluation and provide comments. So, whether they like it or not, they have to listen. It can also enhance their listening skills for those who are listening. (Teacher 1, Interview, 23/02/24)

Then, for the other students (students who will listen to their friends' storytelling), they need to give grades / scores to their other friends. For example, they will be given an activity sheet that they need to fill in. (Teacher 2, Interview, 27/02/24)

From both participants' answers, it can be found interesting ways to make all students, especially SHS students want to listen someone's storytelling performances. If usually almost all students will easily get bored while they need to listen to their friends performances, here the teacher can handle it. It is by asking the students to participate to give scores for their other friends who will do the storytelling performances. Here, the teacher also give a chance for students to give their other friends' score. So, at the end the scoring will be subjective because not only teacher who will give scores, but the other students in class can also give scores to each other friend.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to investigate the teachers' perceptions about the use of storytelling to teach students in secondary education. The instrument for the data collection was a semi-structured interview. The participants of the study were four English teachers from two different Senior High Schools in Salatiga. After collecting and analyzing all the data, the researcher can find several points of views related to the teachers' perception toward the use of storytelling to teach SHS students.

The findings were classified into three themes, such as teachers' reasons for using storytelling, the challenges encountered when using storytelling in SHS, and ways to ensure that storytelling is engaging for SHS students. For the first theme, the participants believed that storytelling can be beneficial for their students. It is because storytelling increases students' creativity. The students' creativity can appear through the students storytelling performances and while the students explore how to deliver the storytelling. Not only students' creativity that will appear, but the students can also learn about the four skills. Even though the main skills that the students get through implementing storytelling is more on speaking and listening. Additionally, through the storytelling performances that the students can do in front of the class can also give a good impact which is to improve students' self-confidence.

The second finding of this study is about the challenges encountered when using storytelling in SHS. From the data collected, it is indeed possible that there are challenges that the teachers and students encounter during implementing storytelling in the classroom. Therefore the challenges are the limited time and the choices of story. The first challenge caused when the teachers ask the students to perform or retell the story. The students' challenge is when almost all of their students need extra time on the preparation. However, from the teachers' side the challenge

is happens because the teachers need to wait for the students to feel ready to perform. The second challenge is about the choices of the story. Here, both teachers and students should be aware of the choices of story that they will use which will have each effect. From the teachers' side, the effect is about how to make the students can understand the story that teacher had choose. For example if the teacher give such as a folklore from certain areas, the teacher need to make sure if their students that come from another areas will also understand it easilly or not. Then, for the students if students can choose their own story, mostly all of the them will only choose the short story.

However, the last finding of the study reveal some ways to deal with the challenges of using storytelling. First, the teacher can start by connecting storytelling with the use of technology. As students in this era (Gen Z) are close with technology, so to make them engage with storytelling is by connecting it with technology. Besides, to make the students engage in the storytelling in class the teacher can do the follow up activity. The follow up activity here is to assess together. It means when one student performs their storytelling, the other students will also assess their friends' performance. So, here not only teachers will give the points but students can also give points to their friends. Therefore, this follow up activity is an awesome way to make students engage. It is because it makes students surely listen to their friends' performances.

From this present study it can be seen that storytelling is still an English learning tool that teachers could use to teach SHS students. From the data collected, all of the participants believed that storytelling is beneficial for students. Even so, there will be some challenges that will be encountered by both teachers and students. Not only that, if storytelling is usually familiar to the teacher who tells the story, but now the students can also tell the story too. Hence, in teaching storytelling for SHS students, the teacher can ask the students to retell the story. So, here the

students can have the same chances as the teachers on telling the story or performing the storytelling.

However, this research has some limitations. First, this study is a contextual study where the data can only be used for this context. So, this study not can be generalized. The second limitation is the limited number of participants, which are only four participants from two different high schools in Salatiga. For future research, I wish the researcher could get more information from more participants from other different high schools. Thus, the study can add more perceptions. Another suggestion for future study will be to include not only the perceptions from the teachers but also from the students' perceptions.

