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Comic Life and Cartoon Story Maker in Creating Short Story for Young Learners

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Abstract

The aims of this study is to find out TEYL students' perception and experience in using Cartoon Story Maker and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners and to identify their obstacles and problems in using those applications. This qualitative study has been conducted in a TEYL class in one English Department in West Java. The sample of the study consisted of thirty students. Questionnaires and interviews were used as data collection techniques in this study. The questionnaires were used to collect evidence from students about their experience and perception towards the use of CSM and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners. The questionnaires used in this study focus on exploring students' experience and perception toward the use CSM and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners, whereas interview was used to explored more the data about obstacles faced by the students in using CSM and Comic Life. The data collected from the respondents were gathered together to be analyzed using qualitative analysis of interactive models. The results of this study are TEYL students have positive perception toward the use of CSM and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners, CSM is easier and more suitable to use than Comic Life in creating story for young learners, and the obstacles faced by students are choosing appropriate template for young learners, writing text in text tool or bubble, and record the voice in audio bubble.

Keywords: Short Story, Children, Cartoon Story Maker, Comic Life

Introduction

Technology development has made a major contribution to all aspects of human life. It also gives opportunities for teachers to incorporate online materials and allows both teaching and learning to become more interesting and meaningful. Consequently, in whatever techniques and approaches they have chosen to use, they should see technology as tools to help them in their teaching and learning activities (Harmer, 2007).

Nowadays, it is relatively easy to find people who use technology for learning a foreign language. Both teachers and students can choose several foreign learning platforms and applications freely from internet. Ghavifekr & Rosdy, (2015, p. 188) states that almost all ranges of subjects and other major fields can be learned more effectively through technology-based tools and equipment. However, the use of

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technology in learning should be effective and efficient. It means that if technology is used effectively students will learn language better or faster and if technology is used efficiency both teacher and student will achieve learning goals with less time.

One of the technological developments in the last few years is Cartoon Story Maker and Comic Life. Those applications can be used in language teaching such as to create a picture short story, to create vocabulary quiz, or to practice speaking. Some previous studies have identified those applications' advantages in learning language. First, Hakim, et. al (2016) was conducted research about using Cartoon Story Maker and Comic Life in teaching creative writing, the results of their study are there are significant difference in creative writing achievement between those who were using CSM and those who were using Comic Life and Cartoon Story Maker (CSM) is more effective than Comic Life through Project Based Learning in teaching creative writing. Second, Anggraini (2014) who identified young learners' speaking skill improvement through Cartoon Story Maker, her study found that students' motivation and speaking skills was significantly improved after their teachers taught them by using CSM for several times.
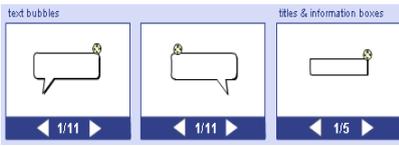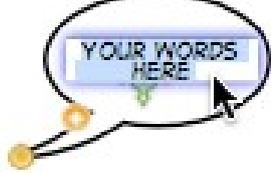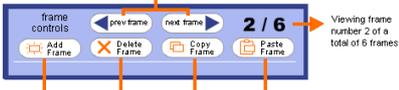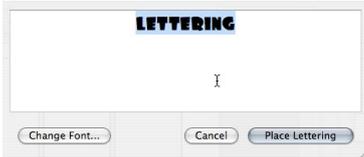
Third, Trisnadewi et al. (2020) found that CSM can improve students' writing ability and their creativity in using technology. Forth, Artigliere, (2016) proposed that implementing Comic Life significantly improves students' knowledge of and comfort with the writing process and may be visualized in their writing output. It also allowed students to develop writing skills, creatively express their knowledge of concepts, fiction and non-fiction writing via visual means. This study was different from those previous studies. This study focused on exploring students experience and perception toward the use of CSM and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners.

In creating short story for young learners, the writer needs to consider several principles of short story for young learners proposed by Weih, (2015). First, the setting and time of story should be clearly stated and addressed early in the first few pages. Second, the problem or conflict should be important to children, stands out, significant and relevant to their lives, and peak their interests. Third, the plot of the story should be the rising action building to a clear, distinguishable, and important peak or climax when all the story's suspenseful events come together, and the falling action should lead the story characters past the climax to a satisfying resolution regarding their problems or conflict. Forth, the characters should have multiple layers of personality, or a collection of qualities, revealed through how they act, talk, and think. The behavior and thinking of the characters should change and develop through the story, they should not remain the same or stagnant, and characters should go through a range of emotions: sadness, joy, courage, fear, surprise, humor-children enjoy humor and can especially appreciate it when it accompanies a character's full-range of emotions.

Cartoon Story Maker and Comic Life are interesting useful software create a short story for young learners. However, both Cartoon Story Maker and comic Life have different function and features. In Cartoon Story Maker students can create dialogues with their own text or voice recordings, add either text or voice recordings to the photos, search the web for culturally authentic images and import them into the Cartoon Story Maker as backgrounds to a story. Whereas, creating a comic through Comic Life provides a hands-on experience, involving

students in the task of composing and taking photographs, drawing illustrations, writing and creating a logical sequence of events or frames.

Table 1 Example of Features in Cartoon Story Maker and Comic Life

Cartoon Story Maker	Comic Life

Comic life allows users to create templates that aid in story creation; these templates are helpful for students to organize their ideas and writing. For example, speech bubbles and narration templates can be used to teach point of view, construct dialog or describe character traits (Artigliere, 2016). Different to Comic Life, Cartoon story maker can have unlimited number of frames which include images to drag and drop library items onto the frame, or import digital photos or images saved from the web. text bubbles to select from a range text bubbles and information boxes and drag and drop onto the frame and start typing. voice recordings to add new voice recordings using the simple built in recording panel or add recordings already saved on your computer (Aulianisa, 2019).

Method

This study was a descriptive qualitative study. This study has been conducted in a TEYL class in one English Department in West Java. The sample of the study consisted of thirty students. Questionnaires and interviews were used as data collection techniques in this study. The data collected from the respondents were gathered together to be analyzed using qualitative analysis of interactive models.

The questionnaires were used to collect evidence from students about their experience and perception towards the use of CSM and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners. The questionnaires used in this study focus on exploring

students' experience and perception toward the use CSM and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners, whereas interview was used to explored more the data about obstacles faced by the students in using CSM and Comic Life.

Results

In general the results of this study showed that the students have positive perception toward the use of CSM and Comic Life, they perceived that those applications was helpful and interesting, however, they faced several obstacles in using those applications.

Students Experience and Perception toward the Use CSM and Comic Life in Creating Short Story for Young Learners

Table 2 The Result of Questionnaire

Items	Statements (%)				
	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Neutral**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
I believe that I can make the same good short story for young learners in CSM & Comic Life as in a traditional tool.		30	23	47	
It is difficult for me to import the background images from external sources in CSM & Comic Life.			17	53	30
CSM & Comic Life helps me to illustrate the short story.	17	47		7	29
CSM & Comic Life does not offer any advantages to me.			10	73	17
CSM & Comic Life make me uncomfortable in creating a short story.			17	60	23
I prefer CSM & Comic Life to traditional tool.	77	7	16		
CSM & Comic Life save my time in creating a short story.		47	23	7	23
CSM & Comic Life provide unlimited character images.	7	40	10	47	
CSM & Comic Life is not easy to be downloaded and installed in my computer.			17	73	10
It is difficult for me to use CSM & Comic Life		10	7	80	3
The quality of picture produced by CSM & Comic Life is good.	23	73	4		
It is easy to print out the story from CSM & Comic Life	87	7		6	
The short story created in CSM & Comic Life is uninterested to be read.			10	87	3
I cannot develop my short story in CSM & Comic Life			4	73	23

Based on data from Table 1 Cartoon story Maker and Comic Life are helpful in creating a short story for Young Learners. By and large the participants agree that those applications are easy to use, to download, to install, and to develop a short

story. The data also showed that most of the participants agreed that they prefer CSM and Comic Life to traditional tool such as pencil and paper (77% strongly agree), it can be caused that they cannot draw or sketch the picture or cartoon character by using pen or pencil.

Related to the advantages of CSM and Comic Life, 73% students are agreed that they offer any advantages to them. They also felt that CSM and Comic Life made them comfortable and save their time in creating story. However, there are 23% of them felt that they need to spend more time to create the story. Although they were dissatisfied with the limited picture, they are in strongly agreement that it is easy to download and install the application in their computer and they agree that the quality of picture produced by CSM and Comic Life is good and it is easy to print out their story.

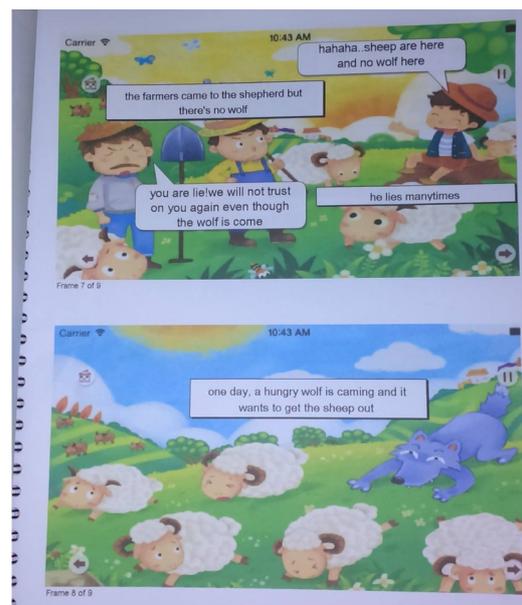*Figure 1 Story created by using Comic Life*

Figure 2 Story created by using Cartoon Story Maker

Figure 3 Story created in Comic Life   Figure 4 Story created in CSM with audio
without audio

However, although most of the participants have positive perception and experience toward the use of those applications, it does not mean that the quality of short story is good and appropriate for young learners. Based on Figure 1 to Figure 4 the participants did not consider the principles of good short story for children proposed by (Weih, 2015). First, the participants did not state the setting and time of story early in-the first few pages. They tend to use bubble and create dialog in the beginning of the story. Second, the problem or conflict of the story did not lead the story characters past the climax to a satisfying resolution regarding their problems or conflict.

Besides, Restanto, (2016) states that the short story should good for beginning readers for mastering phonics, should have unique words and rhyme for reluctant readers, and appropriate for all ages children. Furthermore, the storyline should be simple, sequential, and predictable, in the form of examples that illustrate the behavior of kindness that performed in daily life (Retnowati, et., al, 2018). By and large the participants forgot to decide the reader of the story; therefore in writing text they used small text margin and font, the storyline is not simple and predictable, and the sentence is not simple or use repetition words.

Obstacles Faced by the Students in Using CSM and Comic Life

In order to find out obstacles faced by the Students in Using CSM and Comic Life, the writer was conducted interview. The first question is about their difficulties in using both applications. Some students felt that Cartoon Story Maker is easier to use than Comic Life. In using Cartoon Story Maker they can easily insert image, add bubble and text, and use zoom out and zoom in features to set the image in the frame. Different from Cartoon Story Maker, Comic Life make students felt frustration in choosing appropriate template for young learners, drag and drop downloaded image, and write a sentence in bubble.

The second question is about difficulties in printing the story. Some students agree that it easy to print the story from those applications, however the quality of printed story is not quite good and need to edit the story for several times. They also give examples that some text in the bubble lost when they print the story, so they have to resize and make font size smaller. The third question is about the voice recording, some students said that Cartoon Story Maker have good sound quality when the students record their voice in silence room and use good microphone. The writer also found that, difference PC will be caused difference sound quality. It is because they have different quality of microphone. Some students also proposes that it is important to find great place to record, check the room and make sure that the room does not reflect the voice back into microphone and keep outside noises to a minimum.

The forth question is about picture tool and text tool. Both applications have picture tool and text tool, so they can change text color, make bold, italics or underline, and also can enlarge, rotate, flip or delete images. The interviewee said that they did not have problems in using picture tool and text tool. They can easily

change the font, the color, and the style of text; they also can crop, enlarge, insert and delete images quickly from those applications.

Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, the writer concludes that technology has become a major portion of language teaching and learning. Consequently, the teachers and students should be able to use technology for numerous activities in order to meet the ideal situation in the 21st century education. Related to the implementation of Cartoon Story Maker and Comic Life in creating short story for young learners, students have positive perception and experience in using those applications.

In addition, there are some potential factors that influence the creating short story proses success. First, because of CSM and Comic Life are also new for them, so nearly all of them really enthusiastic to explore several features in creating short story and to try several functions of features. Second, outlining and drafting story is important before they create a story in those applications. The role of teacher is to facilitate them developing their story and help them by giving feedback and suggestion about good story for children, and remind them that the plot of story should be clear, simple, and sequential. Good preparation in writing draft, planning the story, and stereotyping of character are needed before they use those applications. Third, it is important to find great place to record, check the room and make sure that the room does not reflect the voice back into microphone and keep outside noises to a minimum when using audio bubble in Cartoon Story Maker.

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