

**STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF CULTURAL DIGITAL
STORYTELLING ON THEIR SPEAKING SKILL**

THESIS

Submitted in partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for gaining the
Bachelor's Degree in English Language Education



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ABSTRACT

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Speaking remains a major challenge for elementary students in English language learning, often due to limited vocabulary, low confidence, and pronunciation difficulties. While previous studies have explored digital storytelling in EFL contexts, few have examined how it can be integrated with cultural content to enhance speaking skills among young learners. This study aims to investigate how cultural digital storytelling is implemented in teaching speaking and how students perceive its use in the classroom. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, involving 20 fifth-grade students from SDN 1 Magelung. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. During the learning process, students used digital storytelling to present traditional Indonesian games such as Congklak and Gobak Sodor using simple English. They practiced speaking through reading aloud, spelling, writing game steps, and demonstrating how to play. The findings showed that cultural digital storytelling increased students' motivation and participation in speaking activities. Familiar content made it easier for students to express themselves, although challenges such as limited grammar mastery and uneven

speaking opportunities were still present. Nevertheless, group work helped ensure inclusive participation, even for those who were less confident in speaking publicly. The study concludes that integrating cultural digital storytelling into EFL instruction provides a meaningful and enjoyable way to support speaking development and cultural content

Keywords: Digital Storytelling, Speaking Skill, Cultural Content, Students' Perception, EFL Students'

DEDICATION

In the name of Allah, Azza wa Jalla, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. I truly believe that no journey, especially this academic one, can be completed without faith, patience, and prayer.

This thesis is sincerely dedicated to:

To myself, for not giving up even when things felt intolerable. May this thesis be a reminder for me to grow and to persevere. My beloved parents, especially my mother, Ibu Retnaningsih, whose endless prayers, love, mentorship, and guidance have been the light in my life. Your energy has been my most important inspiration. To the principal and family of SDN 1 Magelung, thank you for being the place where I was allowed to learn, grow, and do my research. Your support, advice, and openness along my teaching practice and thesis process have had a lasting impact on my journey.

To all the teachers and personnel at SDN 1 Magelung, especially for allowing me to transform the school into a place of academic progress and achievement. To my Grade 5 students, especially Grade 5B, thank you for your excitement, collaboration, and smiles throughout the research process. You made every moment meaningful and joyful. To all my dear friends who stood by me during this process, offering advice, support, and help when I needed it most, your support was really important. To my extended family, thank you for your endless motivation, kind words, and faith in my ability to

complete this journey. Finally, to everyone who has been a part of this chapter in my life whether through words, actions, or silent prayers this work is as much yours as it is mine. May this work be a small act of gratitude for all your kindness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, all praise be to Allah, the Lord of the universe, for His endless mercy, guidance, and strength, which enabled me to complete this undergraduate thesis. Shalawat and salam are always sent to the Prophet Muhammad SAW, who brought enlightenment and wisdom to humankind.

I humbly realize that this thesis could not have been completed without the support, guidance, and prayers of many individuals. On this occasion, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude and sincere appreciation to:

- Prof. Dr. Fatah Syukur, M.Ag, as the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang, for his leadership and dedication.
- Dra. Nuna Mustikawati Dewi, M.Pd, as the Head of the English Language Education Department, for her direction and support.
- Lulut Widyaningrum, M.Pd, as the Secretary of the English Language Education Department, for her assistance throughout my academic journey.
- Awwalia Fitrotun Izza, M.Pd, as my supervisor, mentor, and advisor, who has provided valuable insights, consistent guidance, thoughtful feedback, and endless patience during the process of writing and completing this thesis.
- All lecturers and academic staff of the English Language Education Department at Universitas Islam Negeri Walisongo

Semarang, who have shared their knowledge, motivation, and support during my study.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter covers several aspects related to the introduction of this research, including the background of the research, research question, research objectives, and the significance of the research.

A. Background of the Research

Traditional teaching method in English language classrooms Usually doesn't work to promote active student engagement. These methods usually emphasize mechanical memorization and passive listening, which do not effectively support the development of Speaking Skills. As a result, students may become demotivated and unengaged to participate in classroom activities. To address this issue, innovative method are needed to make learning more interactive and meaningful. One promising method is digital storytelling, which combines text, visuals, audio, and narration. This method encourages student creativity and enables them to take an active role in constructing knowledge. Adara (2022) emphasized that technology, including digital storytelling, can significantly enhance the motivation of EFL Students'.

Therefore, digital storytelling is considered an effective and engaging method in modern language classrooms. Speaking is one of the most important skills in English language learning, as it enables Students' to express their thoughts and emotions directly. It requires not only linguistic knowledge but also confidence,

fluency, and interactive communication skills. However, many elementary students face difficulties in speaking English due to limited vocabulary and insufficient opportunities to practice. In traditional classrooms, speaking is often neglected or reduced to mechanical repetition, limiting students' skill to use the language meaningfully in real-life situations (Munir, 2023).

Digital storytelling gives students' with deep speaking experiences through structured storutelling and performance. By telling stories, students are able to use language in meaningful contexts, which supports fluency development and builds self-confidence. This interactive, student-centered method is especially effective in enhancing speaking skills Kallinikou & Nicolaidou, (2019). Moreover, cultural content plays a important role in language learning, as it reflects the identity, traditions, and values of a community. Language and culture are deeply interconnected, and understanding cultural context enhances students' language acquisition. When cultural elements are added to digital storytelling, students will be deeply connected to the material and more likely to actively engage.

Cultural integration also promotes tolerance and awareness by exposing students to different perspectives. Yuliani and Hartanto (2021) found that storytelling based on local culture improves both speaking skills and cultural understanding. Similarly, Yang et al. (2020) demonstrated that students learn more

effectively when they are exposed to authentic cultural content, Through culturally rich stories, Students' interact more deeply with language, making the learning process more meaningful. Thus, digital storytelling with cultural content strengthens both language proficiency and intercultural competence. Although it has potential, research on the use of culture-based digital storytelling in elementary education is limited. Most existing studies focus on general language skill improvement, rather than on how Elementary Students' perceive the integration of culture in digital storytelling.

Only a few studies have explored students' perceptions regarding the cultural aspects of digital storytelling. Yet, understanding learner perceptions is critical, as they directly influence motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes. A positive perception of learning activities can increase participation and promote better language development (Munir, 2023). In contrast, if instructional methods do not align with students' preferences or learning styles, the effectiveness of those methods may be diminished. This research gap highlights the importance of exploring how students perceive and respond to culturally embedded digital storytelling. As noted by Yang et al. (2020), understanding students' perspectives provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of teaching methods rooted in culture.

The findings of this study are expected to offer practical implications for English language instruction, particularly at the elementary level. Teachers can use cultural digital storytelling to enrich speaking activities and increase student engagement. Curriculum designers may also consider incorporating more local and culturally relevant materials into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) programs. Additionally, the results can guide teacher training programs in the effective use of digital tools in the classroom. When language learning is connected to students' real-life contexts, the process becomes more impactful. Culture-based stories serve as a bridge between language and identity, transforming English from a mere academic subject into a meaningful communication tool.

B. Research Questions

From the background of the study above, the researcher outlines the research questions of the research as follows:

1. How is the implementation of cultural digital storytelling in teaching speaking skills to elementary students?
2. How are Students' perceptions of Cultural Digital Storytelling in teaching speaking skills to Elementary Students?

C. Objective of Research

Regarding the research questions about Speaking and written corrective feedback issues, the researcher highlights several objectives as follows:

1. To describe the implementation of Cultural Digital Storytelling in teaching speaking skills to Elementary Students
2. To explore Elementary Students' perceptions of the use of Cultural Digital Storytelling in teaching speaking skills to Elementary Students

D. Reasons for choosing the topic

Several considerations led the researcher to choose this topic for the study:

1. Speaking is a fundamental language skill that plays a crucial role in communication and language development, especially for Elementary Students' in an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) context.
2. Many elementary students still face difficulties in expressing themselves orally in English, especially when it comes to using the language in meaningful and creative ways.
3. Digital storytelling offers an engaging and student-centered method that encourages creativity, cultural awareness, and confidence in speaking, which is particularly suitable for elementary Students'.
4. The researcher is interested in exploring students' perceptions of how digital storytelling, especially when integrated with cultural content, can support and motivate them to improve their English-speaking skills.

5. There is limited research on the use of digital storytelling in elementary school contexts, particularly in rural or public schools, making this study potentially valuable for both educational practice and future research.

E. Significance of Research

This research is expected to offer valuable contributions to both the theoretical and practical dimensions of English language learning. By exploring the integration of cultural digital storytelling in speaking activities, the findings may serve as a reference and inspiration for various stakeholders in the field of education. The expected benefits are outlined as follows:

1. English Students

This research provides students with a meaningful and engaging learning experience through digital storytelling that incorporates cultural content. By being involved in storytelling activities, students not only develop their speaking proficiency but also become more culturally aware and expressive. The integration of cultural values into storytelling helps students to articulate ideas, express emotions, and use appropriate sentence structures in context. As a result, they are more likely to communicate effectively and confidently in diverse social settings.

2. Teacher

This research offers practical insights for EFL teachers, particularly in Elementary School settings, on how to implement culture-based digital storytelling in their speaking lessons. It emphasizes the importance of using creative, student-centered methods that promote language production and cultural sensitivity. Teachers can benefit from this study by adapting their teaching method to incorporate digital tools and narrative techniques that motivate students and enhance their speaking skills.

3. The Next Researcher

This study serves as a reference for future researchers interested in exploring innovative language teaching methods that blend technology, storytelling, and cultural education. It opens up opportunities for further investigation into the effectiveness of digital storytelling in different educational contexts, the development of students' intercultural communication, and the long-term impact on language proficiency. Future research may build upon this case study to include comparative studies, experimental designs, or broader participant samples.

F. Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged in order to maintain a clear research focus and to define the boundaries of the study. The limitations are as follows:

1. Research participants

The subjects of this study were limited to fifth-grade students (5B) at SDN 1 Magelung. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to students of other grades or educational levels.

2. Research setting

The study was conducted only at SDN 1 Magelung, a single public elementary school in Kendal Regency. The specific school context, including facilities, teacher support, and student characteristics, may influence the outcomes and limit applicability to other settings.

3. Focus of the study

This research focused exclusively on students' perceptions and experiences in using digital storytelling as a medium for learning English-speaking skills. Other language skills, such as reading, writing, or listening, were not analyzed in depth.

4. Scope of Digital Storytelling

The digital storytelling tools used in the study (YouTube) were limited to those accessible and appropriate for elementary students. The effectiveness of other, more advanced digital tools was not explored.

5. Time Constraints

The research was conducted within a limited time frame during the academic year, which may have affected the depth of observation and reflection from students over a longer period of usage.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of relevant literature, including previous research and a theoretical review. The literature review presents some theories to support the data of this study, while previous research was used to identify the research gap and shortcomings so that the researcher can improve and complete it.

A. Previous Research

Exploring students' perceptions of cultural digital storytelling among elementary school students has been of increasing interest in recent years. Some studies have explored this topic from different perspectives, focusing on how the introduction of culture through digital storytelling affects student motivation, engagement, and language skills. To support the development of this study, the researcher reviews relevant theoretical frameworks and previous research related to cultural learning, digital storytelling, and student perceptions in the following sections:

1. Digital Storytelling on EFL Learning

Digital storytelling (DST) has evolved into an innovative learning method at the elementary school level. DST combines narrative elements with digital media such as photos, sound, animation, and text to create engaging and meaningful learning experiences. The use of DST in English language

learning, specifically in speaking skills, is considered effective in increasing students' active participation, building confidence, and providing a platform for creative expression. A study by Cahyanti., and Nuroh. (2023) showed that DST using DST significantly improved elementary students' speaking skills. Likewise, Putri Kusuma et al. (2023) demonstrated that DST integrating local cultural content not only enriched students' storytelling material but also boosted their fluency and enthusiasm when speaking English. These findings suggest that DST is not merely a technical tool, but also a meaningful medium for self-expression within cultural contexts. In general, the reviewed studies agree that digital storytelling positively impacts the development of elementary students' speaking skills.

In a systematic review, Nair and Yunus. (2021) found that DST enhances students' motivation, creativity, and communication skills across various educational levels. This aligns with the findings of other studies, though their focus and methodologies vary. For example, Cahyanti., and Nuroh. (2023) focused on technical aspects of speaking, such as pronunciation and fluency, while Putri Kusuma et al. (2023) emphasized the role of cultural content in deepening narrative engagement. Meanwhile, Nair and Yunus (2021) did not focus specifically on elementary-level students but included multiple

education levels in their review. The study by Abd Rahman, NF. (2023) applied experimental teaching method but did not extensively explore students' personal experiences. Similarly, the article on teaching English language improvement by Abd Rahman., NF. (2023) discussed DST in general terms and lacked emphasis on cultural elements or students' perspectives. These differences highlight the diverse lenses through which DST is studied and indicate that student voices, particularly in relation to cultural content, remain underrepresented.

From the analysis of these studies, it is evident that although DST has proven effective in enhancing speaking skills, most research still emphasizes learning outcomes and instructional method. Few studies place elementary students' perceptions at the center, especially concerning how they experience and interpret cultural digital storytelling. In fact, the cultural component of storytelling plays an essential role in shaping identity, promoting social awareness, and building emotional connections between students and learning material. Therefore, it is important to explore how students perceive DST that incorporates local cultural themes, particularly in the context of speaking English as a foreign language.

This current study seeks to address the gap by investigating elementary students' perceptions of cultural digital storytelling and how such perceptions influence their

development of speaking skills in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) settings. By understanding how students respond to this method, Teachers can gain deeper insights into its effectiveness and make informed decisions about integrating culturally relevant storytelling into the English curriculum.

The results are expected to provide practical implications for English language teaching, particularly at the elementary school level. Teachers can utilize cultural digital stories to enhance speaking activities and support greater student engagement. Curriculum developers may consider incorporating more local and culturally familiar materials into EFL programs. Furthermore, these findings can inform teacher training programs on the effective use of digital tools in the classroom. When language learning is connected to students' real-life cultural contexts, it becomes more meaningful and impactful. Culture-based stories serve as a bridge between language and identity, making English more than just an academic subject.

2. Speaking Skills in EFL Learning

Several studies have demonstrated that digital storytelling (DST) is an effective strategy to enhance students' speaking skills across different educational levels. DST integrates technology and narrative, allowing Students' to practice speaking in creative, meaningful, and personalized

ways. Hany, N. (2021) emphasized that the revision process and multimedia features embedded in DST help students become more confident and expressive in Speaking Skills. Similarly, Elyani et al., (2022), through an experimental study, found that DST outperformed traditional storytelling methods by making learning more engaging and aligned with students' learning preferences. Hany, N. (2021) also reported that the implementation of DST in the Ma'had Al-Jami'ah Walisongo speaking program led to improvements in vocabulary acquisition, confidence, and speaking fluency. Additionally, Wijaya. (2023), in a literature-based study, concluded that the consistent use of DST enhances students' competence as second language speakers while also contributing to a more psychologically supportive learning environment.

These findings highlight DST's effectiveness in improving multiple aspects of speaking skills. Across these studies, a common result is that DST positively impacts several core components of speaking proficiency, including fluency, vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation. Nisa, (2023), through a quasi-experimental design, showed that students exposed to DST demonstrated significantly better speaking results compared to those taught using traditional techniques. Likewise, Murad et al., (2023) found that DST was particularly effective among elementary school students, as repetitive

practice and variation in storytelling formats inspired active participation and increased Speaking production. Collectively, the research suggests that DST provides an interactive and motivating learning environment that promotes speaking skill development. Although each study employed different educational models, they consistently showed that DST enhances language learning by combining creative storytelling with digital tools, leading to consistent improvements in students' speaking performance.

Despite the overall consistency in results, the studies vary in emphasis and research orientation. For example, Hany, N., (2021) and Elyani et al., (2022) focused on DST as a technological and pedagogical innovation without incorporating unique cultural content into the storytelling process. Badawi, (2021), who conducted studies in formal Islamic institutions and elementary school contexts, emphasized technical improvements in speaking components rather than the sociocultural impact of the stories. Although Wijaya, (2023) addressed affective factors such as learner confidence and psychological readiness, the study was a general literature review and did not involve direct engagement with students' perspectives. These differences highlight that while the effectiveness of DST is well documented, its

implementation often lacks a culturally contextualized and learner-centered dimension.

3. Cultural Competence in EFL Learning

Several studies show that cultural integration in English language learning has a significant positive impact on the development of Students' language skills and cultural awareness. Hossain., (2024), confirms that the incorporation of cultural aspects in teaching methods can create an inclusive and effective learning environment, despite challenges such as stereotypes and student diversity. Shaikh., (2024), emphasizes the importance of integrating cultural dimensions in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), focusing on intercultural competence and pedagogical method to overcome curriculum constraints. Podara et al., (2021), add that digital storytelling, especially in the form of interactive documentaries, can increase audience engagement and sustain cultural heritage preservation through transmedia and multimedia approaches. Zhussupova., (2021), reveals that the use of digital storytelling in multilingual classrooms enhances students' creativity and cognitive engagement while deepening their cultural awareness. Meanwhile, Corpuz., (2021), observes that method such as multicultural literature, cross-cultural communication, instructional technology, and teacher education are effective in promoting cultural awareness at the elementary level,

strengthening global competence and empathy in elementary students’.

Overall, these five studies emphasize the importance of a holistic approach that combines technology, interactive method, and teacher training to maximize cultural integration in English language teaching. All the studies agree that the incorporation of cultural elements whether through traditional teaching methods or digital technologies like digital storytelling can promote inclusive learning environments, enhance student engagement, and promote deeper cultural understanding. Furthermore, they highlight the significance of teacher preparedness and the implementation of cross-cultural pedagogies to improve learning outcomes. This approach is particularly relevant in research focused on the use of digital storytelling as a medium to develop speaking skills while promoting cultural. Not only does it strengthen language proficiency, but it also promotes understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Although these studies share a common focus on cultural integration in English language learning, they vary in emphasis and application context. Hossain. (2024), concentrates on the general challenges and opportunities faced by Teachers’ when integrating culture in English instruction, including issues of stereotyping and learner diversity. Shaikh.

(2024), explores the cultural dimension within the EFL context, stressing the need for intercultural competence and innovative teaching method. Podara et al., (2021), approach the topic from a technological perspective, focusing on interactive digital storytelling for cultural heritage preservation, and analyzing long-term data from multimedia documentaries. Zhussupova. (2021), examines DST in multilingual classrooms, highlighting its role in enhancing student creativity and cultural insight through observational and interview-based research. Meanwhile, Corpuz. (2021), provides a more practical viewpoint, suggesting the integration of multicultural texts and educational technologies to develop empathy and cultural understanding at the elementary level.

Despite the breadth of existing research on cultural integration and digital storytelling, a notable gap remains. Few studies focus specifically on the application of digital storytelling programs for improving speaking skills in elementary students while simultaneously promoting cultural sensitivity. Most research centers on secondary or higher education, or uses DST to document cultural content without directly linking it to Speaking language development in Elementary Students'. Moreover, there is a lack of mixed-method studies that combine quantitative and qualitative

approaches to assess the impact of DST on students' speaking proficiency and cultural awareness in elementary settings.

Consequently, this current study seeks to address this gap by investigating how digital storytelling applications can be effectively used in elementary classrooms. It aims to explore not only the impact of DST on the improvement of English-speaking skills among Elementary Students', but also how the integration of local cultural content in storytelling contributes to students' understanding of cultural values and diversity. Through this approach, the study aspires to demonstrate the potential of DST as both a linguistic and cultural learning tool in EFL education at the elementary level.

4. Students Perceptions

Several studies show that students generally hold positive perceptions toward the use of digital storytelling (DST) and cultural awareness in English language learning, which contributes to enhancing their speaking skills and motivation. Swari, (2023), found that students perceive digital storytelling as an effective and enjoyable method that helps improve vocabulary, confidence, and speaking skills through well-structured, face-to-face learning stages.

Similarly, Nurunni'mah, (2024), revealed that students view digital storytelling tasks positively, noting improved enthusiasm, fluency, and vocabulary growth, despite facing

challenges in story creation and group collaboration. Munir, (2023), emphasized that students feel more motivated and confident to participate actively when DST is applied in speaking classes. Meanwhile, Agustin et al., (2022), discovered that most students recognize cultural awareness as an essential factor in English learning, acknowledging that language acquisition cannot be separated from cultural context,

Although further research is needed to clarify its precise role. Liang et al., (2024), also highlighted that students acknowledge the impact of cultural diversity on their learning process and appreciate activities that raise cultural awareness, enabling them to use English more effectively in pragmatic contexts. Collectively, these studies underline the importance of integrating DST and cultural awareness into English instruction as perceived by students, enhancing both linguistic ability and motivation within a meaningful learning environment.

These studies primarily employed a qualitative approach with consistent data collection techniques aimed at exploring students' perceptions in depth. Data were gathered through interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis, which enabled researchers to obtain a direct representation of students' experiences and viewpoints throughout the learning process.

The data analysis procedures in these studies followed systematic stages, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, ensuring that the findings reflect students' perceptions in a structured and valid manner. This methodological consistency supports richer interpretations of Students' attitudes, motivations, and challenges when engaging in digital storytelling and cultural content in English language learning. Consequently, the consistent application of qualitative techniques strengthens the validity and depth of the findings concerning student perceptions.

Although all five studies adopted a qualitative research approach, each differed in terms of thematic focus and data processing methods. Some studies concentrated on in-depth interviews to explore students' perceptions of DST as a tool for speaking development such as those by Sahril et al. and Nurunni'mah, (2024) while others, like Swari, (2023), combined observation and document analysis to assess the practical implementation of DST in classroom settings. Additionally, research addressing perceptions of cultural awareness often utilized questionnaires to collect quantitative data, which were then analyzed descriptively. These methodological differences reflect tailored method based on each study's research goals, ranging from understanding

students' subjective responses to evaluating their perceptions of cultural elements in English language education.

Although numerous studies have examined students' perceptions of DST in English learning, they generally emphasize motivation, confidence, and speaking development, often focusing on adolescent or adult learners. Moreover, many of these works do not investigate how the integration of cultural elements within DST shapes students' perceptions and learning experiences particularly in the elementary school context.

In contrast, the present research focuses specifically on elementary students' perceptions of DST that incorporates cultural values into speaking practice and learning. Through a descriptive qualitative design, this study offers a contextualized account of how students perceive, understand, and experience English speaking development through digital media infused with cultural content, thereby addressing a research gap that remains underexplored in previous literature.

B. Theoretical Review

This theoretical review explains the relevant theories related to students' perceptions of using cultural digital storytelling in the development of speaking skills in EFL classrooms. It aims to provide a clear understanding of the existing theoretical foundations and key concepts that support the integration of digital storytelling and cultural content into English language learning.

1. Digital Storytelling Theory

Digital Storytelling (DST) is an instructional approach that integrates traditional storytelling techniques with modern digital technologies such as images, audio, video, text, and animation to create engaging and interactive narratives. This method enables students to communicate their ideas and personal experiences through multimodal media, thereby enhancing both cognitive and emotional engagement in the language learning process.

According to Tymoshchuk, (2025), DST promotes an emotionally stimulating and cognitively rich learning environment, making it highly relevant to the digital habits and preferences of today's learners. By bridging modern technology with the classic art of storytelling, DST becomes particularly suitable for language classrooms, especially for Elementary Students' who are often more responsive to interactive and visually driven instruction.

One of the key characteristics of DST is its concise duration typically between 2 to 10 minutes along with a clear narrative structure that includes an introduction, conflict, resolution, and conclusion. Additionally, DST utilizes multimodality, a blend of visual, audio, and textual components, to convey meaning effectively and to keep students actively engaged with the content (Robin, 2008).

(Robin, 2008) proposed a six-stage model for implementing DST in educational settings:

- Planning – students brainstorm and outline their ideas
- Scriptwriting – drafting the written version of the story
- Storyboarding – visually mapping out scenes and narration
- Production – creating the digital story using multimedia tools
- Publishing – presenting or sharing the final product
- Reflection – evaluating the storytelling process and outcomes

These stages guide students in understanding how stories are constructed and enable them to develop their narrative and communication skills in a structured and meaningful way. For elementary students, Digital Storytelling (DST) has proven to be particularly effective due to its visual, contextual, and interactive nature. As highlighted by Meyer (2021), visually enriched learning experiences help Elementary Students' connect new content with their own real-life experiences. This connection not only enhances their motivation and confidence to speak but also deepens their cultural an essential aspect of holistic language learning.

2. Speaking

Speaking is an important skill in English language learning, especially for elementary students who are just beginning to develop communication abilities. According to Bygate (1987), speaking can be divided into two main types of skills: motor skills and interaction skills. Motor skills are related to how students physically produce sounds and say words clearly. Interaction skills are about how students think and respond correctly during a conversation. Both of these skills are connected and needed for good spoken communication.

(Harmer. 2001) also supports this by saying that speaking fluently is not only about knowing vocabulary or grammar. Students also need to be able to think and speak at the same time. He explains that speaking is a productive skill, so it should be practiced through meaningful and interactive activities that help students share their ideas confidently.

There are some key components of speaking, such as accuracy (using correct grammar and vocabulary), fluency (speaking smoothly), pronunciation (saying words clearly), and confidence (not being afraid to speak). Nation (2020) explains that speaking should be taught together with listening, reading, and writing so that students can become better communicators.

However, Elementary Students' of English often face problems when speaking. Some students feel shy, afraid of making mistakes, or do not know enough words. Harmer (2001) says that a positive and supportive learning environment is very important to help students feel more confident to speak English.

To help with these challenges, some researchers suggest using fun and interactive methods like Digital Storytelling (DST). Tymoshchuk (2025) and Sulistianingsih (2021) believe that DST, with its use of pictures, sounds, and videos, makes students more interested and motivated to speak. Based on the theories from Bygate and Harmer, speaking is not just a technical activity, but also involves thinking, social skills, and emotions. So, teaching speaking should include interactive practice, meaningful content, and emotional support especially for Elementary Students' in EFL classrooms.

3. Indicator of Speaking Skills

In evaluating speaking skills, especially among elementary Students', several theoretical frameworks outline key indicators that define Speaking proficiency. According to (Brown, 2004) and (Klimova, 2021), speaking performance is typically assessed based on the following components:

a. Fluency

Fluency is one of the main indicators of speaking skills. It shows how well a student can express their ideas smoothly, without too many pauses, repetitions, or filler words like “uh” or “um.” According to Brown (2004), a student can still be seen as fluent even if they make some grammar mistakes, as long as their speaking stays clear, easy to follow, and understandable. This means that fluency is more about how well a student keeps the conversation flowing rather than how perfect their grammar is.

(Klimova. 2021) also explains that fluency is the ability to speak naturally in real time, with thoughts that are connected and make sense. For elementary students, this skill should be developed through fun and engaging activities that let them speak freely, like storytelling or short discussions. These activities help students build the habit of sharing ideas in a natural and confident way. So, fluency is not just about how fast students speak, but how clearly and smoothly they can communicate in everyday situations.

b. Pronunciation

Pronunciation refers to the clear and correct articulation of English words, including syllable stress, intonation, and sound clarity. According to Brown. (2004), in EFL settings, pronunciation doesn't have to be native-like

as long as it is understandable to the listener; it is sufficient. This is especially true for young learners such as elementary school students.

c. Vocabulary

Vocabulary is an important part of speaking skills because it helps Students' express their ideas clearly in conversation. According to Brown (2004), vocabulary includes the words a speaker knows and can use correctly in different situations. When students have a wide vocabulary, they can talk about more topics, share their feelings, and describe experiences more effectively.

Klimova (2021) explains that learning vocabulary is a key part of learning any language because it directly affects how fluent and clear someone can speak. In speaking, knowing the right words helps students choose language that fits the topic, the people they are talking to, and the purpose of the conversation. For Elementary Students', vocabulary should be taught through meaningful activities like storytelling so students can better remember the words and use them in real situations.

d. Grammar

Grammar is an important part of speaking skills because it helps students build correct and meaningful sentences. According to Brown (2004), grammar is a system

of rules that allows people to form clear and understandable sentences in a language. In speaking, grammar helps with using the right tenses, making subject-verb agreement, and organizing ideas correctly so that the message is easy to follow.

Klimova (2021) also points out that grammar is very important for EFL Students' because it helps make their speech accurate and easy to understand. Although small grammar mistakes are common in early learning stages, being able to speak with fewer errors shows higher language ability and makes communication smoother.

For elementary school students, grammar should be taught through fun and meaningful activities like storytelling or short dialogues rather than just memorizing grammar rules. This helps students understand sentence patterns naturally and use them when speaking in real-life situations.

e. Comprehensibility

Comprehensibility means how easily the listener can understand what the speaker is trying to say. According to Brown (2004), being understood is not just about using perfect grammar or pronunciation. It also depends on how clearly the speaker expresses ideas through correct word

choice, sentence structure, clear pronunciation, and good use of pauses and intonation.

Klimova (2021) explains that comprehensibility is very important in language learning, especially when speaking a foreign language. The main goal is for the speaker to be understood, even if there are some small mistakes. For elementary students, this skill can be improved by practicing speaking in real situations, where they receive feedback from listeners. This helps them learn how to make their messages clearer.

f. Confidence

Confidence in speaking means a student feels sure of themselves when using English, especially during conversations or speaking in front of others. According to Brown (2004), confidence is a psychological factor that strongly affects how well someone speaks. Students who feel confident are more willing to try, speak more often, and worry less about making small mistakes.

Klimova (2021) explains that confidence grows from good experiences in class, practicing well, and knowing what they are going to talk about. She also says that it is important for teachers to create a friendly and safe classroom, so students don't feel afraid to speak.

When students feel confident, they focus more on sharing their ideas than on avoiding mistakes. Their confidence becomes stronger when they join in fun and meaningful speaking activities, and when their efforts are supported and appreciated.

4. Cultural Integration in Digital Storytelling

Cultural integration means including cultural values, traditions, and practices in the learning process. This helps students not only learn the language but also understand and express their own culture as well as the cultures of others. In Digital Storytelling (DST), cultural integration occurs when local or global cultural content is embedded into the stories students create. This approach supports both language development and cultural awareness (Hashim et al., 2022).

This concept aligns with the Multiliteracies Theory by The New London Group (1996), which emphasizes the importance of using multiple modes of communication such as text, images, and audio within culturally relevant contexts. The theory suggests that literacy involves more than just reading and writing; it also includes the ability to interpret and produce meaning through various forms that reflect students' social and cultural experiences. In DST, this theory supports the use of multimedia storytelling to promoting deeper cultural understanding and student engagement.

According to Hashim et al. (2022), incorporating cultural themes into DST increases student participation and helps them better understand the content by connecting language learning to real-life values and traditions. Cultural storytelling allows Student's to reflect on their identity, share their cultural background, and prepare for intercultural communication. It also helps reduce anxiety, especially when students feel emotionally connected to the cultural themes. Therefore, cultural integration in DST is not only a tool for improving language skills it also promotes empathy, tolerance, and a stronger sense of identity.

a. Cultural Engagement and Participation

According Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning (2001), students learn more effectively when information is presented through a combination of visual and auditory modes. This dual-channel approach enhances comprehension and retention by engaging both cognitive and emotional processes.

When applied in multicultural learning contexts, the integration of multimedia elements such as sound, visuals, and video helps Students' feel more connected to the content, especially when it reflects their cultural background. Yusuf&Yusri. (2021) emphasize that culturally rooted approaches promote student-centered learning, while

Hashim et al. (2022) found that embedding local cultural content in digital storytelling (DST) strengthens student participation and improves speaking skills through emotional involvement.

For example, students may be assigned to create DST projects about traditional games like gobak sodor or engklek. Instead of merely explaining the rules, they describe when, where, and with whom they used to play these games. When students retell such stories in English, they tap into strong emotional memories, which makes the speaking process feel more natural and fluent. This kind of emotional engagement has been shown to enhance students' motivation, creativity, and confidence in speaking.

b. Affective Filter Lowering

The affective filter refers to emotional barriers in language learning, such as fear of making mistakes, anxiety when speaking publicly, or discomfort in using a foreign language. Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1982) suggests that high motivation and low anxiety lead to more effective language acquisition. In the context of Digital Storytelling (DST), using culturally familiar content helps reduce the affective filter by making students feel emotionally safe and more confident when expressing their ideas in English. Hashim et al. (2022) support this by

showing that DST projects with local cultural themes create a relaxed and enjoyable learning atmosphere, encouraging students to speak more freely.

For example, a shy student may be asked to create a DST video about the traditional game bakiak. Because this game is often played with family or during school events, the student recalls positive memories and familiar situations. When retelling these experiences in English, the student focuses more on the story rather than the fear of making mistakes. This emotional connection reduces anxiety and increases both speaking performance and the willingness to communicate.

c. Cross-Cultural Awareness

Cross-cultural awareness is the ability to understand, compare, and appreciate both one's own and others' cultural practices. Kramsch (2021) emphasizes that language is inseparable from culture, and learning a new language also involves understanding the cultural context in which it is used. Digital Storytelling (DST) allows Student's to reflect on their own culture while drawing comparisons with other cultures, thereby promoting global awareness, empathy, and tolerance. Hashim et al. (2022) note that DST encourages reflection on cultural similarities and differences, enabling

Students' to approach other cultures with curiosity and openness.

For instance, students may be assigned a DST project comparing engklek, a traditional Indonesian game, with hopscotch, a similar game from English-speaking countries. In completing this task, they explore shared values such as teamwork and fairness, as well as differences in terminology or game materials. Through this reflective storytelling process, Students' not only enhance their English communication skills but also develop meaningful respect for cultural diversity.

d. Cultural Identity Expression

Cultural identity expression involves students' ability to communicate who they are through language and storytelling. Liddicoat and Scarino (2020) explain that intercultural competence includes not only understanding other cultures but also expressing one's own cultural perspectives in a meaningful way. Digital Storytelling (DST) provides a powerful platform for students to share personal stories based on their lived experiences, allowing them to take ownership of their identity and express it creatively through language use.

For example, a student might create a digital story about playing engklek with their grandmother in their

hometown, including details about family, environment, and emotional memories tied to the game. This form of storytelling allows the student to connect language learning with personal and cultural identity, reinforcing that their background is valuable and worth sharing in an international context. Such experiences also help students develop a stronger emotional connection to the English language, increasing their engagement, motivation, and fluency.

e. Cultural Value Awareness

Cultural value awareness refers to the ability to recognize and reflect on the moral and social values embedded within cultural practices, such as teamwork, fairness, and respect. Hofstede (2021) explains that culture is expressed not only through visible aspects like food and clothing but also through deeply rooted societal values. DST enables students to explore and communicate these values naturally through culturally meaningful narratives. This approach supports both language development and character education.

For example, in a DST project about egrang (bamboo stilts), students not only describe how the game is played but also reflect on the values it promotes, such as balance, perseverance, and mutual support. These values emerge organically in their stories and can be further explored

during class discussions. This integrated learning process enhances students' speaking skills while promoting moral understanding and cultural pride.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

In this chapter, the researcher outlines the methodological framework employed in the study, encompassing the research design, research setting, research participants, data collection methods, research instruments, and data analysis procedures.

A. Research Method

1. Research Design

In this study, the researcher employed a descriptive qualitative research design to investigate elementary students' perceptions of Cultural Digital Storytelling in learning speaking skills. Qualitative research is widely used to explore and understand individuals' or groups' experiences, particularly when the goal is to gain insight into subjective meanings, feelings, and interpretations, rather than to quantify variables or test hypotheses. According to Creswell., (2018), qualitative research involves collecting data in natural settings using methods such as interviews, observations, and documentation, with a focus on participants' lived experiences and perspectives. This approach is suitable for educational settings where the aim is to uncover how Students' experience a phenomenon, in this case, learning speaking skills through culturally rooted Digital Storytelling.

A descriptive qualitative design was chosen because it allows the researcher to present detailed, nuanced narratives about the

students' learning experiences in their own words. The study aimed to describe how students interacted with digital storytelling tools, how they perceived the integration of cultural content into English-speaking activities, and how these experiences influenced their engagement and motivation. This approach enables the researcher to portray the learning process holistically, focusing on both linguistic and cultural development. The descriptive qualitative design was chosen over a case study approach to allow broader flexibility in exploring diverse student responses without being restricted to a single bounded case. It accommodates variation in data, such as differences in speaking confidence, vocabulary use, or cultural knowledge across students, and allows for emergent themes to be explored without predetermined categories.

To ensure the credibility of the findings, the researcher conducted method triangulation using observation notes, student speaking outputs, and classroom documentation. Member checking and peer-debriefing were also used to verify the interpretation of student responses. This strengthens the trustworthiness of the qualitative data even in a small classroom context. Ultimately, this design was selected not to generalize the findings, but to gain deep insights into how young Students' experience English speaking through culturally relevant storytelling, and how this influences their language development and identity expression.

2. Research Setting

This research was conducted at SD Negeri 1 Magelung, located in Kecamatan Kaliwungu Selatan, Kabupaten Kendal, Central Java. The school is a public Elementary School where English is taught as a local content subject, and it actively promotes the development of students' speaking abilities through creative media.

The site was chosen based on the following considerations:

- a. The school has adequate facilities and digital tools to support media-based learning.
- b. The location is accessible to the researcher, enabling effective data collection and observation.
- c. SD Negeri 1 Magelung is accredited "A," indicating it maintains a quality learning environment suitable for qualitative educational research.

3. Research Participant

The participants of this study were fifth-grade students (5B) at SDN 1 Magelung. A total of 20 students participated in the research. The selection of participants used purposive sampling, in which participants are selected based on specific characteristics relevant to the research objectives.

1. They are currently learning English and have been introduced to basic speaking practices.

2. They are in the developmental stage where creativity and digital engagement are highly encouraged.
3. They are considered capable of expressing opinions, retelling simple stories, and participating in reflective discussions under guidance.

All students participated voluntarily and were given consent forms through their parents or guardians. The research focused on their experiences, engagement, and perceptions during and after using digital storytelling to support speaking skills.

4. Research Focus

This research focuses on students' perceptions and the implementation of cultural digital storytelling in learning English, particularly in the context of speaking and culture. The study aims to investigate how cultural digital storytelling is applied in class and how students respond to the learning experience.

5. Data Collection Techniques

Data was collected using the following methods: A data collection method is the procedure used by researchers to obtain information relevant to the research questions. It implies systematic efforts to gather experimental data that can later be analyzed to get insights about the studied phenomena. In this study, the researcher used three data collection techniques: Observation and interviews, These techniques were chosen to ensure triangulation and provide a

comprehensive understanding of students' speaking development through Cultural Digital Storytelling activities.

a. Observation

Observation in qualitative research refers to the process in which the researcher directly observes and records behaviors, interactions, and events as they naturally occur in a specific setting Mertler. (2021). In this study, the researcher acted as a participant observer, taking an active role as the classroom teacher while also observing how students engaged during the digital storytelling (DST) activities. The observations were carried out over two class meetings, each lasting approximately 35 minutes, in a 5th-grade English class at SDN 1 Magelung. The researcher used semi-structured field notes to document verbal interactions, non-verbal cues, group collaboration patterns, and students' reactions to the storytelling tasks.

The main focus of the observation included:

- 1) How students participated in speaking activities, such as sharing ideas, interacting in groups, and using English during DST.
- 2) How students integrated local cultural elements (such as traditional games) into their digital stories, and how they connected these stories to their personal experiences.

The goal of this observation was not to assess or measure students' speaking proficiency, but rather to gain insights into the

learning process, how students responded to the DST activities, and how cultural integration naturally occurred in classroom interactions. The findings from the observation were later analyzed alongside interview data to provide a comprehensive understanding of students' learning experiences through culturally-based digital storytelling.

b. Interviews

According to Creswell. (2012) interviews in qualitative research are a key data collection method used to gather in-depth and personal perspectives from participants about a specific phenomenon. This method allows researchers to explore participants' subjective experiences, thoughts, feelings, and the meanings they attach to their lived realities. Interviews provide rich qualitative data that may not be fully captured through observations or document analysis alone.

In qualitative research, interviews can take various forms, ranging from structured (with fixed questions and answer options) to unstructured (free-flowing conversations guided by general topics). A semi-structured interview Given. (2023) combines the strengths of both approaches by using a set of predetermined questions or topics while allowing flexibility for the interviewer to probe further, clarify responses, and explore unexpected themes as they emerge during the conversation. This balance helps maintain focus on the research objectives while

also accommodating participants' unique perspectives and expressions.

In this study, the researcher employed semi-structured interviews to collect data from a randomly selected sample of 5th-grade students in class 5B at SDN 1 Magelung who participated in the digital storytelling activities. The selection of participants was done randomly, rather than based on their activity, to capture a broader range of student experiences and perceptions regarding the use of digital storytelling in speaking lessons.

The interviews were conducted individually in a quiet and comfortable setting within the school environment to ensure participants felt safe and free to express their honest opinions. Each interview lasted approximately 20–30 minutes and was audio-recorded with the students' consent to ensure accurate transcription and analysis.

The interview questions were carefully designed around several key themes to explore various dimensions of the students' experiences with digital storytelling, including:

- 1) Students' Perceptions of Speaking Development through DST
- 2) Students' Perceptions of Cultural Content in DST

The data collected from these interviews provided valuable insights into the students' personal experiences and

helped triangulate findings from observations and documentation. By capturing students' voices directly, the researcher was able to better understand the affective and cognitive dimensions of learning speaking skills through digital storytelling.

6. Research Instruments

The instruments used in this research included:

a. Observation checklist

The researcher conducted the observations during the speaking activities where students created and presented their digital stories. Notes were carefully taken to capture the dynamics of classroom interaction, student enthusiasm, and communication skills development in real time. The observation also aimed to assess how well students were applying speaking skills in context, such as vocabulary use, pronunciation, and fluency, as well as their ability to express cultural values through their stories. Furthermore, the observation adhered to relevant educational standards, including those outlined in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education (Permendiknas) Number 41 of 2007, which emphasize the importance of well-structured learning processes. These standards guided the observation across three key stages of the learning process: Designed to capture student behaviors during storytelling activities, including their level of

participation, Speaking language use, collaboration, and engagement with the digital tools.

a) Designing the Learning Process

Before the lessons, the teacher prepared detailed lesson plans that outlined learning methods, activities, assessment method, and learning resources tailored for digital storytelling and speaking skill development.

b) Implementing the Learning Process

This phase involves executing the lesson plan during class time, broken down into three sub-activities:

1. **Opening Activities:** The teacher prepared students both mentally and physically for the lesson by engaging them in warm-up activities or discussions to stimulate curiosity and focus. The classroom environment was arranged to promote interaction, and all necessary technology (such as computers and projectors) was checked for functionality to prevent technical issues.
2. **Main Activities:** These were interactive and designed to promote student participation, collaboration, and creativity. Students were encouraged to practice speaking through storytelling, apply cultural insights, and engage with peers in meaningful discussions related to their digital stories.

3. Closing Activities: The teacher facilitated reflection on the lesson, summarizing key points, and planning follow-up tasks to reinforce speaking skills and cultural understanding.

b. Evaluating Learning Outcomes

The observation also considered how teachers assessed student progress during and after the activities, focusing on student achievements related to speaking fluency, cultural awareness, and creative expression. During the observation phase, the researcher particularly concentrated on the implementation stage, noting how the learning activities were conducted in practice.

1) Interview guideline

Interviews were used as a primary data collection instrument to explore students' perceptions of digital storytelling in enhancing their speaking skills. The interviews were conducted face-to-face in a comfortable setting to encourage open and honest responses from the participants (Merriam & Tisdell, 2022).

Before the interviews, the researcher developed a structured interview guideline grid to organize the questions and ensure all relevant aspects of the students' experiences were addressed systematically. This grid served as a roadmap for the interview sessions, helping the researcher

to cover key topics consistently while allowing flexibility for follow-up questions based on students' responses (Seidman, 2020)

The interview questions were semi-structured, meaning they combined predefined questions with opportunities for students to elaborate on their thoughts freely. This approach allowed the researcher to gain deep insights into how students perceived the digital storytelling activities, how they felt during the process, and how these activities influenced their speaking confidence and skills (Given, 2023)

B. Data Analysis Technique

This research used thematic analysis as the technique to analyze qualitative data collected from observations, interviews, and documentation. Thematic analysis is suitable for uncovering patterns or themes within qualitative data and is especially effective for exploring students' perceptions and experiences. The six-step framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) guided the analysis process.

1. Familiarization with Data:

The researcher began by reading and rereading all the collected data from field notes, interview transcripts, and student digital storytelling outputs. This stage helped the researcher become immersed in the content and start noticing recurring ideas, emotions, or issues expressed by the students during the learning activities.

2. Generating Initial Codes:

After becoming familiar with the data, the researcher highlighted important segments and assigned initial codes to meaningful parts of the text.

3. Searching for Themes:

Through this method, the study aimed to uncover meaningful patterns about how digital storytelling activities contribute to speaking skill development and cultural understanding in an EFL classroom setting. In the final phase, the researcher drew preliminary conclusions from the organized data. These findings Once the initial codes were compiled, the researcher began clustering them into broader categories or potential themes. For instance, codes related to enjoyment, participation, and positive attitudes were grouped under the theme.

4. Reviewing Themes:

The researcher then reviewed all potential themes against the original data to ensure they were coherent and accurately represented students' perspectives. Any overlapping, vague, or unsupported themes were refined, combined, or removed. The researcher made sure that the data within each theme showed a strong internal consistency.

5. Divining and Naming Themes:

Each finalized theme was clearly defined to reflect its core meaning.

6. Producing the Report:

In the final stage, the researcher organized the themes into a narrative form supported by direct quotes from students and classroom observations. These themes were connected to relevant literature and theories to strengthen the findings. The thematic analysis offered a detailed yet flexible method to understand how students experienced speaking activities through cultural digital storytelling.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the research findings and discussion on the implementation of cultural digital storytelling in teaching speaking skills.

A. Research Finding

This chapter presents the findings based on the research questions:

- 1) How is cultural digital storytelling implemented in teaching speaking to elementary students?
- 2) How do students perceive the use of cultural digital storytelling in learning speaking?

The data were collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with 20 fifth-grade students at SDN 1 Magelung. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the data, and the findings are categorized into two major sections according to each research question.

Table Students Activity

Meeting 1	
Item	Description
Theme	Introduction to Traditional Games
Method	Vocabulary Enriching & Sentence Construction
Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participate in a brainstorming session about traditional games. - Observe and respond to visual aids showing Indonesian traditional games. - Share prior knowledge and personal experiences.
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Watch a short digital storytelling video featuring traditional games. - Repeat and practice key vocabulary introduced in the story. - Practice building simple descriptive sentences using

	the vocabulary (e.g., name of game, who plays it, where it's from).
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recall and share new vocabulary or sentences learned. - Reflect briefly on the learning experience.
Assessment Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use spoken English to respond during sentence construction activities. - Participate actively in vocabulary practice.

Meeting 2 – Speaking Practice & Presentation

Activity Phase	Students' Activities
Opening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review vocabulary and sentences from the previous meeting. - Watch or listen to a model presentation as preparation.
Main activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work in small groups to construct descriptive sentences

	<p>based on an image of a traditional game.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present individual sentences orally in front of the class. - Have their speaking recorded for evaluation purposes.
Closing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share thoughts on the presentation activity. - Listen to peer feedback and teacher comments.
Assessment Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliver a short spoken presentation using the learned vocabulary and sentence structures. - Demonstrate pronunciation, fluency, and confidence during speaking tasks.

Implementation Details Based on Observation

Meeting 1: Vocabulary enrichment & Sentence construction

This session began with students watching a short digital storytelling video that showcased several traditional Indonesian games. The purpose was to stimulate interest and introduce relevant vocabulary in context. Students appeared engaged during

the video and actively responded when prompted to recall the names of the games.

The teacher then introduced key vocabulary items such as “*play*,” “*game*,” “*from*,” and names of specific games like Congklak or Gobak Sodor. Students practiced pronunciation through repetition and participated in simple sentence-building tasks. Most students were able to produce basic sentences like “*I play Engklek*” or “*It is from Java*” with teacher scaffolding. The use of culturally familiar content helped ease anxiety and encouraged participation.

Meeting 2: Speaking Practice and Presentations

During the second meeting, students worked in small groups to construct simple descriptive sentences about a traditional game they had been assigned. Using pictures as prompts, each group composed 3–4 sentences collaboratively.

After group preparation, students presented their sentences individually in front of the class. These presentations were recorded using an audio or video device. While some students spoke fluently and confidently, others showed hesitation, especially in pronunciation. However, the familiar cultural context enabled even shy students to attempt speaking, as they were discussing games they knew and liked. The integration of culture appeared to boost motivation and reduce fear of making mistakes.

1. The Implementation on Cultural Digital Storytelling in Speaking Skill

The implementation of cultural digital storytelling was observed during classroom activities where students created and presented digital stories about traditional Indonesian games (e.g., *Congklak*, *Gobak Sodor*, *Hide and Seek*). Three key themes emerged:

a. Learning Process and Classroom Management

The implementation of cultural digital storytelling (DST) began with the teacher introducing the concept of storytelling integrated with cultural values. Students were invited to explore aspects of Indonesian culture, including traditional games, local customs, and folklore, as the basis for their story content. The storytelling activities were carried out through guided class sessions.

The teacher provided clear guidance in each phase of the digital storytelling process. She first modeled how to create a cultural story and then showed students how to plan and present it orally. Instructions included how to use expressive language and organize ideas into short scenes. The teacher scaffolded learning by offering vocabulary and sentence examples.

Students participated actively and enthusiastically in each session of digital storytelling. They discussed ideas with

peers, developed scripts, and rehearsed their stories in small groups. Many students became more confident in expressing themselves in English. Some students still needed assistance, but overall engagement was high and consistent.

The storytelling activities were integrated into regular speaking lessons as project-based learning tasks. Students followed a sequence of planning, writing, practicing, and performing their cultural stories. These steps were aligned with learning goals in the speaking curriculum. The activities made the speaking lessons more interactive and meaningful.

Students included various cultural elements in their digital stories, such as gobak sodor, congklak, and hide and seek. They narrated their experiences and knowledge in English using simple but clear expressions. The teacher helped by introducing relevant vocabulary and sentence patterns. Stories reflected students' understanding of local traditions and heritage.

The classroom atmosphere during DST was supportive, cheerful, and collaborative. Students encouraged each other during storytelling performances and enjoyed the creative process. They were observed helping peers with pronunciation and content development. This environment contributed to a positive speaking experience and improved confidence.

b. Cultural Digital Storytelling Method Integration

The implementation of culture-based digital storytelling was consistently observed in every class session. The teacher designed activities that combined digital stories with local cultural content. Students were introduced to cultural values through digital stories presented via an application. These activities were structured and aligned with the lesson plans.

The teacher applied the digital storytelling method by guiding students through steps such as story introduction, script writing, voice recording, and video presentation. Students worked in groups to create stories following these stages. This process supported the development of speaking skills and collaboration. Each group was given time and assistance throughout the project.

The integrated cultural content included traditional games, local foods, and daily customs. The teacher selected relevant and age-appropriate cultural themes. Integration was done through dialogue, character portrayal, and setting design. Students demonstrated cultural understanding through how they structured and narrated their digital stories.

Technology-enhanced learning was evident through the use of digital devices during the creation process. Students

used school-provided tablets and computers to produce their digital stories. The teacher also utilized LCDs and speakers to present students' work. Technology helped students explore ideas and deliver stories more creatively.

Traditional games such as gobak sodor, congklak, and hide and seek were used as main themes for the digital stories. Students described the rules and shared their personal experiences with the games. These games became the basis of the story plots they developed. This topic choice encouraged high student enthusiasm due to its familiarity.

Digital media such as images, audio, and animations were used by students to deliver their stories. The teacher guided them in using voice recorders and simple video editing apps. All student groups successfully produced digital stories combining narration and visuals. These media facilitated engaging and meaningful learning experiences.

c. Speaking Skill Development Activities

Digital storytelling played a significant role in enhancing students' speaking skills. Through DST, students were encouraged to speak in English by engaging in creative storytelling activities. The process provided structured opportunities for students to use spoken language

meaningfully. It also allowed them to express ideas and emotions in a supportive environment.

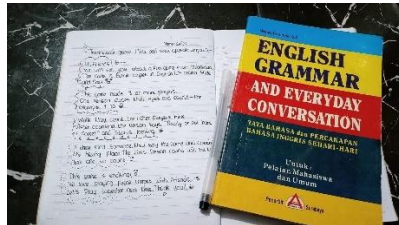


Figure 4.1. *“student script draft used for vocabulary and pronunciation practice”*

The teacher designed various vocabulary-building activities before students began their storytelling tasks. Students were introduced to key terms related to cultural topics and story themes. Pronunciation drills were conducted to help students articulate words clearly. This stage helped prepare students for fluent and confident speech during the storytelling process.

Students practiced constructing simple to compound sentences as part of their scriptwriting activities. The teacher provided examples and sentence frames to assist them in expressing ideas more clearly. Through peer correction and teacher feedback, students gradually improved their grammatical accuracy. These activities supported their spoken language structure.



Figure 4.2. “Student acting out traditional games as part of their Digital Storytelling project”

Both individual and group speaking tasks were implemented to support language production. Individually, students practiced reading their scripts aloud or retelling stories. In groups, they worked collaboratively to perform and record their digital stories. These tasks allowed students to take turns speaking and listening, fostering active communication.



Figure 4.3. “Student participate in a group speaking task during the train game”

Students presented their digital stories in front of the class or during school exhibitions. The teacher provided guidance on how to speak clearly, use gestures, and maintain eye contact. Presentation activities helped students become

more expressive and aware of their audience. These skills contributed to the overall improvement of their speaking performance.

To build confidence, the teacher used motivational techniques and gave positive reinforcement. Warm-up games, praise, and low-stress speaking opportunities helped reduce students' anxiety. The supportive classroom atmosphere encouraged students to take risks in speaking. As a result, many students showed increased confidence in expressing themselves verbally.

2. The Students' Perspective on Cultural Digital Storytelling in Speaking Skill

This section presents the students' voices and reflections regarding the use of cultural digital storytelling in improving their speaking skills. Their perspectives are grouped into several key themes that emerged from the data analysis. The first theme explores how the method sparked their motivation and enjoyment in learning.

a. Motivation and Enjoyment

The integration of cultural digital storytelling into speaking activities sparked notable enthusiasm and motivation among students. From the initial stages, learners displayed curiosity and excitement about participating in the storytelling project. The familiar context of traditional games made the learning experience feel closer to home and less intimidating. Rather than seeing English

as a difficult subject, students began associating it with enjoyment and creativity.



Figure. 4.4. “Student rereating traditional hide and seek for their digital story”

Students showed high levels of excitement and enthusiasm during the activities. R1 stated, “*When the teacher said we would make a story about hide and seek, I was really happy because I often play that with my friends.*” This sense of familiarity and playfulness motivated students to stay engaged throughout the sessions. They eagerly contributed ideas, asked questions, and volunteered to participate in discussions and role-play.

Fun learning experiences also played a major role in sustaining students' motivation. The use of digital tools to bring their stories to life made students feel like creators. R3 shared, “*I liked making the story because it’s about congklak, and I got to draw and speak about it too.*” By combining storytelling with game-based cultural themes, students were able to enjoy the process while practicing their English speaking skills in a relaxed and creative atmosphere.



Figure 4.5. “Student presenting his project enthusiastically i front of the class”

As enjoyment increased, so did their willingness to participate. Students who were previously shy or passive began showing more involvement. R6 said, *“Usually I don’t like speaking, but when we made stories, I wanted to join.”* The storytelling activity served as a bridge for students to practice speaking in a supportive and pressure-free environment. They gradually became more confident in sharing their ideas, especially when the topic was something they already knew and loved.

Students also experienced positive emotional responses during the process. Laughter, smiles, and expressions of excitement were frequently observed. R5 commented, *“I felt happy when my friends laughed at my story, it made me want to speak more.”* These emotional moments contributed to a more positive classroom atmosphere and made English learning feel enjoyable and approachable.

Finally, the activity nurtured a sense of cultural pride and connection. Students felt proud to share stories based on traditional

Indonesian games like gobak sodor, congklak, and hide and seek. R2 said, *"I'm happy I could tell a story about a game from our culture in English."* This connection between language learning and local culture strengthened students' emotional engagement and gave deeper meaning to their storytelling experience.

b. Speaking Confidence Development

The findings showed that cultural digital storytelling helped students become more confident in speaking. Their confidence developed gradually over time through consistent engagement in storytelling activities. One student shared that *"I used to be afraid to speak, but now I'm braver because I practice often."* As students were allowed to prepare, rehearse, and re-record their voices, they felt less pressure and more in control of their speaking. This process reduced hesitation and encouraged participation, resulting in more active and fearless speaking behavior.

Students felt more confident when discussing familiar topics. Themes like traditional games, daily routines, and local culture helped ease their nervousness during speaking tasks. As one student said, *"Because the topic was traditional games, I already knew it, so it was easier to speak."* Familiarity with the subject allowed them to focus on speaking rather than struggling to understand the topic or find words. This comfort helped them speak more naturally and confidently.

Digital storytelling helped reduce speaking anxiety by giving students control over their output. One student mentioned, *"I could re-record until I was happy with the result, so I wasn't afraid of making mistakes."* This flexibility made students feel safer and less judged, especially compared to live speaking tasks. Over time, their tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language showed greater ease and confidence.



Figure 4.6. *"A student confidently presenting their digital story to the class"*

Students' willingness to speak in class improved significantly. One student shared, *"Now I want to ask and answer questions in class, before I just stayed quiet."* Previously quiet students began participating more in discussions and group activities. They no longer avoided eye contact or froze when asked to speak. This change reflected a real growth in their confidence and communicative willingness.



Figure 4.7. *“two student engage in role play storytelling based on local game themes, enhancing self-expression”*



Figure 4.8. *“a male student confidently present his story in front of the class during DST performance”*

Storytelling became a medium for self-expression. Students felt free to choose their own topics and storytelling style. One student said, *"I like to tell funny stories to make my friends laugh."* They gained confidence in expressing their personalities and preferences through their work. This creative freedom allowed them to enjoy the speaking process and feel proud of their abilities.

By the end of the project, students demonstrated increased comfort during performances. Early in the process, many were nervous and stiff while speaking. But later, their voices became steadier, and they used more expressive gestures. One student reflected, *"At first I was shaking, but now I feel calmer when I*

speak." Their improved delivery reflected not only speaking practice, but also growing confidence in public performance.

c. Learning Challenges and Difficulties

Throughout the implementation of digital storytelling in speaking activities, several learning challenges were identified. These obstacles emerged from both technical and linguistic aspects, as well as students' personal struggles. While the activity offered engaging content, students' experiences revealed underlying difficulties that needed attention and support during the learning process.

Students often faced difficulty constructing proper sentences due to limited grammar and vocabulary knowledge. R2 said, *"I enjoy telling stories, but sometimes I don't know how to say the words in English."* Many participants hesitated to speak longer sentences because they lacked the right words and grammatical structure. This issue slowed down their storytelling process and made them rely heavily on simple phrases.

Using digital applications also posed challenges for some students. Although the storytelling app was user-friendly, several participants found it hard to navigate or experienced errors. R5 said, *"I wanted to record my voice again, but the button didn't work."* Others needed assistance in saving or editing their projects. These technical problems disrupted their focus and reduced the time they could spend on practicing their speaking.

Speaking in front of others or recording their own voices caused anxiety among some students. R1 said, *“I was scared when others heard my voice because I thought I sounded wrong.”* This fear led to repeated retakes or refusal to speak altogether. Performance pressure became a barrier that affected their confidence, even though the learning environment was designed to be supportive and non-judgmental.



Figure 4.9. *“student collaborating on their DST project to each other’s learning pace”*

The implementation also highlighted how students’ learning pace and style differed significantly. Some learners completed the storytelling tasks quickly, while others struggled to finish on time. R6 said, *“I need more time because I think slowly in English.”* These differences required teachers to adjust their expectations and offer more individualized support, which was sometimes difficult to manage within the time limits of classroom instruction.

Although digital storytelling was generally well-received, adapting to this new method required adjustment. A few students shared that they were more used to traditional speaking practices and

felt unsure about the new format. R4 said, “*The method is fun, but at first I didn’t understand what to do.*” This uncertainty highlighted the importance of clear instructions, scaffolding, and repeated exposure to the method to ensure all students could participate effectively.

B. Discussion

This section discusses the research findings on the implementation of culturally themed digital storytelling (DST) in teaching speaking skills to elementary school students. The discussion is divided into two key areas: (1) the implementation of DST activities within the teaching and learning process, and (2) the students’ perceptions of their experience learning to speak English through cultural digital storytelling.

Each aspect is analyzed in relation to relevant theoretical frameworks, including Digital Storytelling theory (Robin, 2008; Tymoshchuk, 2024) and theories on speaking skill development (Brown, 2004; Klimova, 2021). These perspectives help to contextualize the observed classroom practices and student responses within a broader pedagogical understanding.

1. Implementation of Cultural Digital Storytelling in Speaking Skills to Elementary Students

The implementation of cultural digital storytelling in the classroom involves a series of structured teaching activities,

ranging from the introduction of materials to the completion of student projects. Based on classroom observations, interview data, and documentation, several key themes emerged that illustrate how the method was carried out during the teaching and learning process. These themes reflect the dynamics of classroom management, student participation, digital engagement, and instructional strategies applied by the teacher.

The following discussion outlines each of these themes in detail, starting with how the general learning process and classroom routines were organized.

a. Learning Process and Classroom Management

The cultural digital storytelling (DST) lessons generally followed a clear learning process consisting of opening, main, and closing stages. These stages structured students' learning, allowed for smoother transitions between activities, and supported classroom discipline. The teachers maintained a consistent flow that helped students remain engaged and focused throughout the session.

R1 said, *"At the beginning, we always talk about something fun, like traditional stories."* This indicates that the opening phase served as a warm-up to build student interest and activate background knowledge. In line with Robin's (2008) framework, these pre-storytelling discussions helped students

connect personally with the topic, fostering motivation and a safe space to speak.

During the main activity, classroom management became crucial as students were involved in group tasks and the use of digital devices. R2 said, *"Sometimes we are too noisy when working in groups, but the teacher tells us to focus again."* This reflects the dynamic nature of DST-based lessons, where interaction is high, and the teacher's role in regulating group activity is essential. According to Brown (2004), managing communicative tasks requires balancing freedom with structure giving students room to express while ensuring the activity remains goal-oriented.

The closing stage often included reflection or peer presentations. R3 shared, *"I like the end because we watch each other's stories."* This not only served as a way to consolidate learning but also created a collaborative classroom culture. Teachers also used this stage to review learning objectives and provide feedback.

Overall, the DST learning process encouraged student participation, improved focus through structured routines, and promoted an enjoyable yet manageable classroom environment. However, as R4 noted, *"Sometimes the time is too short, and we cannot finish the story,"* suggesting that time

allocation remained a challenge, especially during the storytelling production stage.

b. Cultural Digital Storytelling Method Integration

The integration of cultural digital storytelling (DST) in the classroom was not only a matter of using technology but also a pedagogical approach to enrich students' speaking skills through meaningful, culturally relevant content. This method combined narrative, visuals, and interaction to create a dynamic learning atmosphere. The inclusion of traditional cultural elements served to make the learning more contextual and personally engaging for students.

The DST methodology was implemented through structured activities, including planning, story creation, and digital production. R1 said, *"We started by drawing our ideas and then making the story using our voices."* This process aligns with Robin's (2008) model of digital storytelling, which emphasizes pre-production, production, and post-production phases. The teacher guided students through brainstorming, script writing, voice recording, and story presentation. These steps encouraged students to develop their language skills in an integrated, learner-centered process.

Cultural content was embedded through the use of local folklore, traditional games, and daily life scenarios familiar to students. R2 said, *"I told a story about wayang because my*

grandpa always talks about it." This highlights how DST allowed students to bring their cultural background into the classroom. The integration of familiar cultural themes fostered confidence and interest, particularly in expressing ideas in English. According to Tymoshchuk (2024), such practices support identity development and intercultural awareness in young learners.

Technology-enhanced learning was evident in how the teacher incorporated mobile phones, laptops, and editing apps to facilitate storytelling. R3 commented, *"We used the phone to record our voices and add pictures."* This indicates students' engagement with digital tools to personalize their learning products. The use of multimedia platforms supported Klimova's (2021) view that digital learning environments can enhance language input and output through multimodal interaction.

In addition, traditional games were transformed into learning materials. Students created short dialogues or narratives based on games like congklak or gobak sodor. R4 said, *"I made a story about playing congklak with my cousin."* These cultural references acted as a bridge between everyday experiences and speaking practice, making the task both relatable and linguistically purposeful.

Digital media such as images, music, and voiceovers were used to enrich students' stories and support their message delivery. R5 shared, *"We added music to make it fun, and I liked hearing my own voice telling the story."* These tools not only made learning more engaging but also gave students ownership over their work. As Brown (2004) notes, language learning becomes more effective when learners are emotionally and cognitively involved in the process.

c. Speaking Skill Development Activities

Digital Storytelling (DST) played a significant role in supporting students' speaking skill development. Through the integration of visuals, narration, and cultural elements, students were encouraged to speak more actively in class. DST provided a meaningful context for speaking, allowing students to express themselves while telling stories based on familiar topics. The combination of creative digital tools and speaking opportunities contributed to students' engagement and language improvement.

During the DST process, students were exposed to new vocabulary relevant to the cultural themes in their stories. Teachers guided them in understanding word meanings and practicing pronunciation before they recorded their stories. Repetition and teacher modeling were commonly used strategies, helping students become more accurate in word

usage and pronunciation. This phase allowed learners to expand their vocabulary range and gain confidence in pronouncing English words clearly.

Students practiced sentence construction as they wrote scripts for their digital stories. Teachers supported them in forming grammatically correct sentences using simple structures. Group discussion and peer feedback were often utilized during this process to improve sentence clarity and coherence. As a result, students became more aware of how to build meaningful sentences when speaking in English, which also contributed to their writing skills.

Both individual and group speaking tasks were embedded into the DST activities. Individually, students narrated their own parts of the story, while in group tasks, they collaborated to present scenes or dialogs. This variety of speaking practices allowed students to improve fluency and coordination with peers.

Working in groups also reduced students' anxiety, making them more comfortable speaking English in front of others. One student (R4) said that when she worked with her group, she did not feel scared because they helped each other. Another student (R1) expressed, *"I like to read my part because it is my voice in the story."* These comments indicate how DST

promoted both individual responsibility and collaborative learning in speaking tasks.

Students practiced presentation skills when they performed or presented their final DST projects to the class. Teachers encouraged them to maintain eye contact, speak clearly, and use appropriate expressions. These sessions served as informal presentations where students demonstrated their storytelling abilities. Over time, students showed improved delivery, pacing, and body language while presenting in English. One student (R3) mentioned, *“Now I can speak louder and not forget the words,”* showing growing fluency and confidence. Another (R2) added that her teacher advised her to look at her friends while speaking, so she tried to do so. These practices helped students gain experience and confidence in public speaking.

DST helped foster students' speaking confidence by providing a safe and creative environment to speak English. Through repeated rehearsals, familiar content, and supportive peer interaction, students gradually overcame their fear of speaking. Some students who were previously shy began to participate more actively in speaking tasks. One student (R6) shared, *“Before I don’t speak English, now I try because it is fun,”* indicating the motivational aspect of DST. Another student (R5) said that she felt happy when her friends listened

to her during storytelling. These experiences illustrate how DST nurtured a sense of pride and confidence in using English.

2. How are Students' Perceptions of Cultural Digital Storytelling in Teaching Speaking?

This section explores students' perceptions of using cultural digital storytelling (DST) as a medium for learning speaking skills. The findings are presented based on recurring themes that emerged from interviews, observations, and student reflections. These themes illustrate how DST influenced students' motivation, enjoyment, confidence, and emotional engagement in speaking activities.

a. Motivation and Enjoyment

Students reported increased confidence in speaking English after participating in DST. By narrating their own stories and hearing themselves speak, they gradually became more comfortable using English. A student (R3) noted, "*I can speak better now because I practice many times.*" DST gave students a low-pressure way to build confidence through practice and creativity. This finding is supported by Klimova (2021), who emphasized the role of DST in developing speaking fluency and self-assurance in second-language learners.

Telling familiar stories helped students feel less anxious about speaking. Since they already knew the plot, they

could focus more on pronunciation and expression. One student (R6) said, *“I know the story, so I can speak easier.”* This reflects Brown's (2004) assertion that schema activation through known content supports learner confidence and reduces hesitation in language output.

DST helped reduce students' anxiety in speaking activities. The process of recording their voices privately before sharing helped ease their fear of making mistakes. A student (R2) shared, *“I feel shy before, but recording is better.”* This echoes the findings of Hafner and Miller (2011), who found that the asynchronous nature of DST (recording before sharing) significantly reduces performance anxiety in EFL students.

After doing DST projects, students showed greater willingness to talk in English during class discussions. Some who were previously hesitant became more expressive. One student (R1) said, *“Now I like to speak English more.”* According to Liu and Jackson (2008), task-based learning methods like DST encourage willingness to communicate by creating meaningful language use opportunities.

DST allowed students to express themselves creatively. They could choose how to tell their story and what voice to give to each character. A student (R5) commented, *“I can tell the story like I want.”* Robin (2008) and Yang & Wu (2012) both emphasized that DST supports learner autonomy and creative

language production, which are essential for developing speaking confidence.

By the end of the project, students felt more comfortable speaking in front of their classmates. Presenting their DST videos gave them a sense of achievement. One student (R4) said, *“I’m not afraid now to speak because I already try many times.”* This is in line with Klimova (2021), who found that repeated speaking practice in DST enhances student comfort with performance tasks.

b. Speaking Confidence Development

The implementation of cultural digital storytelling (DST) significantly influenced students’ speaking confidence. Many participants expressed a noticeable improvement in their comfort when speaking English during and after the activities. This aligns with Robin (2008), who emphasized that digital storytelling can create a supportive learning environment that encourages students to express themselves confidently.

Students built confidence by working with familiar cultural content. One student shared, *“Because the story is about my culture, I already know it, so I can speak more easily.”* This familiarity reduced hesitation in speaking. As noted by Nair and Yunus (2021), culturally relevant topics empower learners by giving them ownership of their narratives.

The use of DST also helped lower speaking anxiety. Several students mentioned they felt less nervous while recording or presenting their stories. One noted, *"I'm not scared like before because it's like telling a story, not a test."* This supports findings by Sadik (2008), who stated that digital storytelling provides a low-pressure platform for students to practice speaking without fear of judgment.

With less anxiety, students showed greater willingness to speak in front of others. As one student said, *"Now I want to try speaking more in class."* This marks a positive shift in their speaking behavior. According to Yang and Wu (2012), DST fosters a sense of engagement that motivates learners to participate more actively in oral communication tasks.

DST allowed students to express themselves more freely. A participant mentioned, *"I can tell my own version of the story, and that makes me feel happy."* Such self-expression built personal connection with speaking. This is in line with Hung et al. (2012), who found that storytelling enables students to develop voice and personal expression in language learning.

Over time, students became more comfortable performing in front of their classmates. One shared, *"Before I was shy, but now I feel okay speaking with the group."* This comfort reflected growth in confidence fostered by the DST process. As observed by Rahimi and Yadollahi (2017), repeated

exposure to multimodal storytelling builds learners' self-efficacy and public speaking comfort.

c. Learning Challenges and Difficulties

Students encountered several obstacles during the learning process with cultural digital storytelling. While the method offered many benefits, it also brought certain challenges that affected their participation and performance. According to Robin (2008), digital storytelling requires cognitive, linguistic, and technical engagement. These demands can become barriers if students are not adequately supported.

Some students struggled with grammar and vocabulary. One stated, *"I don't know the right word, so I just say simple things."* This limited their ability to express ideas fully and clearly. This reflects Brown's (2004) view that limited vocabulary range and grammar mastery are core issues in developing speaking skills, especially in early EFL stages.

Technical problems also occurred, especially with using unfamiliar apps. A student noted, *"Sometimes the app stops, or I don't know how to use it."* Such issues caused delays and frustration. As Tymoshchuk (2024) emphasizes, successful digital storytelling integration requires not only pedagogical

readiness but also sufficient digital literacy, which some students lacked.

Performance anxiety was another common difficulty. Several students felt nervous when speaking or recording. One admitted, *“I was scared to record because others will hear my voice.”* This aligns with Klimova (2021), who highlights affective barriers such as fear of negative evaluation and embarrassment as frequent speaking inhibitors in EFL learning.

Individual learning differences affected how quickly students adapted. While some were quick to understand, others needed more time. One teacher shared, *“Some students need more explanation before they start.”* Robin (2008) notes that the flexibility of digital storytelling allows for differentiation, yet not all students benefit equally without guided scaffolding.

Adjusting to the DST method was not easy for all. A few students found it confusing at first. One said, *“I like writing better; this is different and hard for me.”* This supports Tymoshchuk’s (2024) argument that innovation in instruction, like DST, must be accompanied by gradual orientation and familiarization to ensure inclusivity and minimize resistance.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This chapter presents the conclusions drawn from the research findings and discussion, as well as several suggestions for relevant stakeholders based on the implementation and outcomes of the study.

A. Conclusion

Based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, several conclusions can be drawn. The application of digital storytelling with local cultural topics in teaching English speaking skills to elementary students is an effective and significant strategy. Using familiar content specifically, traditional Indonesian games, students were able to construct simple English sentences such as “*I play Congklak*” and “*She’s from Java*”. The learning process was supported by visual aids, repetition, and structured sentence models, which contributed to improved vocabulary, grammar, structure, and pronunciation. Although students were still developing fluency and clarity, it is clear that basic speaking skills have improved.

Incorporating cultural content played a key role in enhancing students' engagement and emotional connection to the material. Students expressed more enthusiasm and confidence when assignments included games they knew and played in their daily lives. This cultural connection made it easier for them to create ideas and speak, even in a foreign language. Moreover, the activity enhanced

the students' sense of cultural identity and allowed them to share simple cultural information in English, which enhanced not only language learning but also cross-cultural understanding.

Students' perceptions toward learning English through cultural digital storytelling were largely positive. Most of them enjoyed the process and felt more motivated to speak English, thanks to the fun and familiar topic. Although some students remained hesitant or shy, especially when asked to speak in front of the camera, group collaboration and teacher guidance helped reduce their anxiety. Speaking English became a creative and engaging task rather than a burdensome one. Despite challenges in pronunciation, fluency, and vocabulary recall, students showed a willingness to participate. Although only around 5 to 10 students were confident enough to present during the final performance, many others still contributed in various ways, indicating that when supported by appropriate themes and scaffolding, speaking activities can be successfully implemented at the elementary level.

This study was conducted using a qualitative approach with a small sample from a specific school, and therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to all elementary students in Indonesia. However, the results offer valuable insight into how culturally embedded digital storytelling can be used to develop speaking skills and promote cultural awareness in Elementary Students'. This research serves as

an exploratory step to highlight its potential rather than to draw general conclusions.

B. Suggestion

1. For Teachers

Teachers are encouraged to utilize culturally familiar topics, such as traditional games, when teaching English speaking skills to Elementary Students'. Familiar content can significantly enhance student engagement, reduce anxiety, and increase confidence. It is essential to provide students with clear sentence models, visual support, and sufficient time to practice to develop vocabulary, pronunciation, and fluency.

In addition, speaking activities should be designed to include all students, not only those who are more advanced or outspoken. Teachers are advised to use group-based tasks and offer various opportunities for all students to participate at their comfort level. This inclusive approach creates a supportive classroom environment and promotes active participation across diverse learner profiles.

2. For Future Researchers

Future studies could expand the sample size and explore the impact of digital storytelling on other language skills such as listening, reading, or writing. Researchers might also experiment with the use of digital storytelling tools and applications more intensively, analyzing their influence on students' performance

and motivation. Additionally, comparative studies across different regions or age groups could reveal how students from varied cultural and educational backgrounds respond to this method.

3. For Schools and Curriculum Development

Schools are encouraged to integrate innovative and culturally responsive methods like digital storytelling into the English curriculum. Supporting such contextualized and enjoyable approaches from the early grades can nurture both language competence and cultural appreciation. Curriculum developers should provide room for creative expression in speaking activities and facilitate teacher training in digital tools and local culture integration. Investing in these areas will contribute to the development of confident, expressive, and culturally aware language Students’.

Table 3.1

**Interview Guideline Grid on Students' Perception of Digital
Storytelling in Speaking Skills**

Variable	Aspect	Indicator	Instrument	Number
Students' Perception of Digital Storytelling in Speaking Skills	Learning Motivation	Student's opinion on learning to speak through digital storytelling with a local cultural theme	Interview	1
	Speaking Confidence	Student's confidence after participating in cultural digital storytelling activities	Interview	2
	Learning Challenges	Students' difficulties in creating and presenting digital stories	Interview	3
	Learning Effectiveness	Student's opinion on the effectiveness of DST in improving speaking skills	Interview	4

Variable	Aspect	Indicator	Instrument	Number
	Learning Outcomes	Student's self-assessment of speaking improvement after DST	Interview	5

Source: Permendiknas No. 41 Tahun 2007, Adapted from: Asmawati & Asmara (2023)

Table 3.2**Table of Participants***Demographic Data of Research Participants*

No.	Participant Code	Gender	Age	Class	Role in Project	Notes
1	S01	F	11	5B	Narrator / Presenter	Confident, fluent delivery
2	S02	M	11	5B	Narrator / Presenter	Clear pronunciation
3	S03	F	12	5B	Narrator / Presenter	Good vocabulary, expressive
4	S04	M	12	5B	Narrator / Presenter	Shy but tried hard
5	S05	F	11	5B	Narrator / Presenter	Strong intonation, enthusiastic
6	S06	M	11	5B	Actor / Game Demonstrator	Active, helped the group organize
7	S07	F	12	5B	Actor / Game Demonstrator	Assisted peers during practice
8	S08	M	11	5B	Actor / Game Demonstrator	Participated in scene role-play

No.	Participant Code	Gender	Age	Class	Role in Project	Notes
9	S09	F	11	5B	Actor / Game Demonstrator	Good teamwork
10	S10	M	12	5B	Actor / Game Demonstrator	Helped prepare tools
11	S11	F	11	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Active in script writing
12	S12	M	11	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Helped with visuals
13	S13	F	11	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Focused on grammar accuracy
14	S14	M	12	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Practice pronunciation often
15	S15	F	12	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Good English script contributor
16	S16	M	11	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Helped others with the task flow
17	S17	F	11	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Participated in the discussion
18	S18	M	12	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Helped organize game materials

No.	Participant Code	Gender	Age	Class	Role in Project	Notes
19	S19	F	11	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Assisted in group planning
20	S20	M	11	5B	Actor / Group Task Member	Practiced sentences diligently

Table 3.3

Interview Participants

Students Interviewed on Their Perception of Cultural Digital Storytelling

No.	Participant Code	Gender	Age	Class	Interview Notes / Key Responses
1	R01	F	11	5B	<i>Felt excited to talk about Engklek; enjoyed learning through games</i>
2	R02	M	12	5B	<i>Nervous to speak, but liked making the story with friends</i>
3	R03	F	11	5B	<i>Said DST helped her pronounce words like “Congklak” better</i>
4	R04	M	11	5B	<i>Mentioned difficulty forming sentences; needed help from the teacher</i>

No.	Participant Code	Gender	Age	Class	Interview Notes / Key Responses
5	R05	F	12	5B	<i>Felt proud to share the local game; more confident after practicing</i>
6	R06	M	11	5B	<i>Liked acting more than speaking; enjoyed being recorded</i>
7	R07	F	11	5B	<i>Had trouble remembering vocabulary, but liked group work</i>
8	R08	M	12	5B	<i>Said, "It is fun. I like telling about gobak sodor"</i>
9	R09	F	11	5B	<i>Enjoyed watching videos; wanted more time to practice speaking</i>
10	R10	M	12	5B	<i>Felt afraid of the camera but learned how to say "I play Lompat Tali"</i>

Table 3.4

Speaking and Cultural Aspect

Aspect	Definition	Observation Indicators
Fluency	Smooth speech without long pauses	Full ideas; fewer “uh”, “umm”
Pronunciation	Accuracy of spoken English sounds	Correct stress; imitation of the teacher/media
Vocabulary	Use of relevant and varied words	Uses terms like “play”, “game”, “team”, etc.
Grammar	Use of correct sentence patterns	Simple S-V-O; correct word order
Comprehensibility	Ease of understanding by listeners	The message is clear despite minor errors
Confidence	Comfort and willingness to speak	Appears relaxed and enthusiastic
Cultural Awareness	Knowledge of local culture	Mentions traditional game names, origins, and stories
Cross-Cultural View	Relating local culture to	Compared with games from other cultures

Table 3.5. Observation Checklist Table

No.	Observation Focus	✓
1.	Students speak fluently without long pauses.	✓
2.	Students pronounce clearly and correctly.	✓
3.	Students use relevant vocabulary during storytelling.	✓
4.	Students form correct and simple English sentences.	✓
5.	The students' message is understandable.	✓
6.	Students show confidence when presenting.	✓
7.	Students refer to traditional games and cultural elements.	✓
8.	Students relate traditional games to other countries.	✓

Table 3.6

Category	Description
Fluency	Smooth speech with minimal pauses or fillers
Pronunciation	Accuracy and clarity of word sounds
Vocabulary	Use of appropriate and varied words
Grammar	Correct use of sentence structures

Comprehensibility	Speech is understandable to listeners.
Confidence	Willingness and comfort when speaking
Cultural Awareness	Mention of traditional games and local culture
Cross-Cultural Awareness	Comparison with other cultures or global games

Table 3.7

Comparison Before and After Digital Storytelling Implementation

Category	Before DST Implementation	After DST Implementation
Fluency	Frequent pauses and hesitation	More natural and smooth delivery
Pronunciation	Limited awareness of English sounds	Improved stress and clearer articulation
Vocabulary	Limited and repetitive words	Richer and more relevant word choices
Grammar	Many sentence structure errors	Better sentence construction with proper order
Comprehensibility	Often unclear messages	Listeners easily understand messages

Confidence	Nervous and reluctant to speak	More confident and eager to speak
Cultural Awareness	Lacked cultural references in English	Actively shared game names and cultural meanings
Cross-Cultural Awareness	Did not relate to other global contexts	Mentioned game similarities with other countries

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APPENDICES

A. Appendix 1

Interview guideline

Students' Perception of Using Cultural Digital Storytelling in Speaking Skills

1. Bagaimana pendapat Anda tentang pembelajaran berbicara bahasa Inggris menggunakan digital storytelling dengan tema budaya lokal?
2. Apakah Anda merasa lebih percaya diri saat berbicara bahasa Inggris setelah membuat cerita digital tentang budaya daerah?
3. Apa saja kendala yang Anda alami saat membuat dan menyampaikan cerita digital tentang budaya lokal?
4. Menurut Anda, seberapa efektif digital storytelling budaya lokal dalam membantu Anda belajar berbicara bahasa Inggris?
5. Bagaimana kemampuan berbicara bahasa Inggris Anda setelah mengikuti pembelajaran dengan digital storytelling budaya lokal?

B. Appendix 2

Observation Guideline

Implementation of Teaching Speaking Using Cultural Digital Storytelling

(Focus on Traditional Games – SDN 1 Magelung)

- Date: 10–20 June 2025
- Class: VB
- Material: Traditional Indonesian Games (Speaking Activity through DST)
- Teacher: Amalia Dahliana

No	Learning Step	Description	checklist
1	Opening	<p>✓ Teacher greets students and checks attendance.</p> <p>✓ Teacher leads prayer together.</p> <p>✓ Teacher introduces the topic: traditional games.</p> <p>✓ Teacher explains the goal: write and present about a traditional game in English.</p>	✓

No	Learning Step	Description	checklist
2	Main Activity	<p>✓ The teacher shows a short video about traditional games.</p> <p>✓ Teacher introduces key vocabulary and explains several traditional games.</p> <p>✓ Teacher models how to explain a game in English.</p> <p>✓ Students are divided into groups.</p> <p>✓ Each group selects one game and writes a script.</p> <p>✓ Students practice speaking in groups.</p> <p>✓ Teacher provides support and pronunciation feedback.</p> <p>✓ Students prepare for video recording.</p> <p>✓ Some students act out the game, others narrate.</p> <p>✓ Teacher or researcher helps record group performance.</p> <p>✓ Students watch peer videos and respond.</p>	✓

No	Learning Step	Description	checklist
3	Closing	✓ Teacher leads class reflection: "What traditional game did you learn today?" ✓ Students share what they learned about culture or speaking. ✓ Teacher gives praise and feedback. ✓ Teacher gives follow-up task: "Next, prepare a story about a family or regional game."	✓

C. Appendix 3

Lesson Plan

Teaching Implementation of Cultural Digital Storytelling in English Speaking Skills

- **Grade:** V
- **Topic:** Digital Storytelling & Traditional Game Speaking
- **Time Allocation:** 2 × 35 minutes (2 Meetings)
- **Method:** Group discussion, project-based learning, digital presentation
- **Media:** LCD, worksheets

Learning Objectives:

1. Recognize traditional games through DST.

2. Compose/pronounce simple English sentences related to traditional games.
3. Speak confidently using basic sentence patterns.

Learning Activities Overview

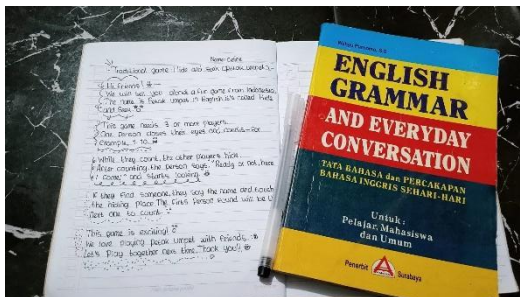
Phase	Time	Activities
Opening	10 minutes	Greeting, introduce learning objectives, brainstorm traditional games
Meeting 1	35 minutes	Watch DST video, learn vocab, build simple sentences
Meeting 2	35 minutes	Group sentence task, presentation (recorded), feedback
Closing	10 minutes	Reflect, review vocabulary/sentences, and motivation

D. Appendix 4

Documentation observation



Picture 1: The Teacher introduced traditional games and showed a sample video



Students began drafting their stories and dividing roles in groups.



Group presentations in front of the class with English narration





The teacher evaluated speaking performance and cultural understanding.



