EXPLORING STUDENTS' PER CEPTION OF USING STORYBIRD ON ENGLISH WRITING SKILL

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Abstrak

Penelitian kualitatif ini mengeksplorasi persepsi siswa terhadap penggunaan Storybird dalam mengembangkan keterampilan menulis bahasa Inggris pada 18 siswa tingkat menengah di SMA Negeri Binjai selama 10 minggu. Pendekatan penelitian menggunakan metode campuran dengan pengumpulan data melalui kuesioner terstruktur berbasis Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) dan Self-Determination Theory (SDT), serta wawancara semi-terstruktur. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa persepsi siswa sebagian besar positif, dengan 81,1% siswa menilai Storybird bermanfaat. Stimulasi kreativitas (88,8%) dan peningkatan motivasi (87,5%) menjadi atribut terkuat platform ini. Siswa menghargai pendekatan bercerita visual dalam menghasilkan ide, mengorganisasi tulisan dengan lebih terstruktur, dan mendukung pembelajaran kolaboratif. Tantangan yang diidentifikasi meliputi navigasi platform dan konektivitas internet. Studi ini menegaskan bahwa Storybird secara efektif memenuhi tiga kebutuhan psikologis dasar otonomi, kompetensi, dan keterhubungan sehingga meningkatkan motivasi intrinsik dan efikasi diri dalam menulis. Temuan ini memberikan kontribusi pada literatur pembelajaran bahasa berbasis teknologi serta mendukung penggunaan platform bercerita digital dalam pengajaran menulis bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL).

Kata Kunci: *storybird, bahasa Inggris, model penerimaan teknologi (TAM) teori determinasi diri (SDT)*

Abstract

This qualitative study explores students' perceptions of using Storybird to develop English writing skills among 18 intermediate-level students at SMA Negeri Binjai over a 10-week implementation period. Employing a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through structured questionnaires based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Self-Determination Theory (SDT), as well as semi-structured interviews. The findings reveal that students' perceptions were predominantly positive, with 81.1% reporting favorable views of Storybird. Creativity stimulation (88.8%) and increased motivation (87.5%) emerged as the platform's strongest attributes. Students appreciated the visual storytelling approach for generating ideas, organizing writings more effectively, and facilitating collaborative learning. Challenges identified included platform navigation and internet connectivity issues. The study confirms that Storybird effectively supports three basic psychological needs autonomy, competence, and relatedness—enhancing intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy in writing. These findings contribute to the literature on technology-enhanced language learning and provide empirical support for using digital storytelling platforms in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL).

Keywords: storybird, English language, technology acceptance model (TAM), self-determination theory (SDT)

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the significance of integrating digital tools such as Storybird in language learning has gained attention due to its implications for enhancing writing skills among students. This study addresses the gap between traditional teaching methods and the evolving educational needs of students in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context. Students often find conventional writing practices uninspiring and disengaging, leading to a decline in

motivation and writing proficiency. The expectation among educators and learners is that innovative digital platforms will not only reignite interest in writing but also effectively improve students' skills. Educators anticipate that utilizing Storybird will foster creativity, facilitate narrative construction, and improve language engagement among students, aligning with modern pedagogical standards (Lim & Noor, 2019; Zakaria et al., 2016)

Upon implementation, the observed reality has been mixed. While some students show enthusiasm towards the creative use of Storybird, others encounter challenges in adapting to the digital storytelling format. Research indicates that although Storybird can enhance engagement and writing skills, benefits are not uniform; they vary based on individual learning styles and prior language proficiency (Castillo-Cuesta et al., 2021; Zakaria et al., 2016). Moreover, teachers' ability to integrate these technological tools effectively plays a crucial role in shaping students' experiences (Castillo-Cuesta et al., 2021). Consequently, while some students celebrate their newfound ease in writing creatively, others express concerns regarding technical difficulties and insufficient guidance during the transition from traditional to digital platforms (Amalia & Aminin, 2022).

The perspective of students on using Storybird as a tool for enhancing English writing skills is crucial, particularly given the growing reliance on digital media in education. Many students encounter challenges in traditional writing instruction, often feeling disengaged or struggling with motivation and creativity in their writing endeavors. This highlights the need for more interactive and engaging teaching methods, allowing students to explore their writing abilities in a supportive environment. Students increasingly desire innovative tools that not only make writing enjoyable but also improve their skills and confidence in composing narrative texts (Lim & Noor, 2019; Zakaria et al., 2016).

Despite the optimistic expectations students have regarding tools like Storybird, the reality is mixed. While many students report increased engagement and motivation when using the platform, they also face challenges such as a lack of guidance, difficulties in integrating visual elements with textual content, and varying levels of proficiency in English writing skills (Shamsulbahri & Aziz, 2020; Zakaria et al., 2016). These disparities highlight the necessity for more structured pedagogical frameworks to effectively address these challenges. Furthermore, although students appreciate the collaborative aspect of using Storybird, frustration commonly arises when creative ideas do not translate well into narrative structures, indicating a gap between aspiration and execution in their writing experiences (Hillson et al., 2019; Shamsulbahri & Aziz, 2020).

Ideally, learning English writing is expected to facilitate students to develop effective, creative and meaningful writing skills. This expectation includes students' ability to organize ideas logically, use appropriate vocabulary and grammatical structures, and be able to convey messages clearly and interestingly to readers (Hyland, 2019). In addition, learning to write is also expected to increase students' motivation and engagement through the use of technology that is relevant to their digital lives, so that the learning process becomes more fun and meaningful. However, the reality on the ground shows that learning to write English still faces various obstacles and challenges. Many students have difficulties in developing ideas, organizing their writing, and using English appropriately in a written context (Richards & Renandya, 2002). In addition, traditional methods of learning writing and underutilizing digital technology often make students feel bored and unmotivated. Observations in various schools show that students tend to be passive in writing activities and experience writer's block which inhibits their creativity in expressing ideas through writing.

Although several studies have explored the use of digital platforms in learning to write, there is still a significant research gap in comprehensively understanding students' perceptions of using Storybird. Previous studies tend to focus on quantitative aspects such as improved scores or learning outcomes, but have not deeply explored the dimensions of student perceptions that include aspects of usability, motivation, engagement, creativity, and satisfaction in using Storybird. In addition, no study has specifically analyzed the factors that influence students' positive or negative perceptions of this platform, as well as how these perceptions impact their writing learning process and outcomes.

Recent research by (Martinez et al., 2021) explored the effectiveness of Storybird in improving EFL students' writing performance in a distance learning context. This experimental study involved 80 students who were divided into control and experimental groups for 12 weeks. The results showed that the group using Storybird showed significant improvement in the aspects of organization, content development, and language use compared to the control group. However, this study focused more on learning outcomes and did not deeply explore the aspects of students' perceptions and subjective experiences in using the platform.

The novelty of this study lies in the comprehensive approach in analyzing students' perceptions of Storybird that not only measures aspects of user satisfaction, but also explores pedagogical dimensions that include creative thinking, collaborative learning, and digital literacy development. This research uses a mixed-method approach with a combination of surveys, interviews, and digital artifact analysis to gain a deep understanding of students' experiences. In addition, this study also integrates the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) to analyze the factors that influence students' acceptance and motivation in using Storybird, which has never been done in the context of English writing learning before.

This study will answer the following research question: what are students' perception of using story bird on wrting skill?. This study aims to explore students' perception on story bird whether it is positive and negative perception. Besides, exploring also includes the challenges that students face while using this application.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research design within an interpretive paradigm, focusing on the in-depth understanding of social phenomena and students' subjective experiences. The interpretive orientation is inspired by (Weber, 1947) concept of verstehen, which emphasizes understanding meaning from the participants' perspectives. While Weber is not directly associated with EFL pedagogy, his framework justifies the importance of capturing the nuanced perceptions and experiences of learners when engaging with digital platforms such as Storybird.

The participants consisted of 18 intermediate-level students selected through purposive sampling to ensure relevance and data quality. They were drawn from SMAN Binjai, aged 15–17 years in grades X and XI. Inclusion criteria included: (1) active students of grade X or XI currently studying English; (2) pre-intermediate to intermediate English proficiency based on initial assessment; (3) regular use of digital technology (smartphone, laptop, or computer) for at least six months; (4) willingness to engage in the entire 10-week study; (5) parental/guardian consent; and (6) adequate internet access at home or school. While this sample size is appropriate for qualitative inquiry, it constrains generalizability; therefore, the findings are best understood as context-specific rather than universally applicable.

Two primary instruments were used: a structured questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was developed based on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by (Davis, 1989a), the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) by (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1991). It consisted of 20 statements across five dimensions: (1) Perceived Usefulness (4 items), (2) Perceived Ease of Use (4 items), (3) Motivation and Engagement (4 items), (4) Creative Expression (4 items), and (5) Social Interaction and Collaboration (4 items). A five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) was employed, with additional open-ended comments for each dimension. Although the questionnaire was carefully constructed, no formal validity or reliability testing (e.g., Cronbach's Alpha) was conducted, which is acknowledged as a limitation of the quantitative component.

Data collection occurred over 10 weeks in three phases. The Pre-Implementation phase (Weeks 1–2) included informed consent, initial language and digital literacy assessments, orientation and training in Storybird (4 × 90 minutes), and baseline questionnaires. The Implementation phase (Weeks 3–8) included 12 structured writing activities (two per week), participatory observation of students' engagement, collection of digital artifacts, and field notes documenting spontaneous comments and behaviors. The Post-Implementation phase (Weeks 9–10) included the administration of post-questionnaires, individual in-depth interviews (45–60 minutes each), focus group discussions with six selected participants for triangulation, and member checking to validate interpretations. Data were analyzed thematically using (Braun & Clarke, 2006) six-step model, combining deductive coding from the theoretical framework with inductive insights from the data.

The semi-structured interviews consisted of five guiding questions derived directly from the TAM (perceived usefulness and ease of use) and SDT (autonomy, competence, relatedness) constructs, with additional probes informed by Social Cognitive Theory. These questions aimed to explore students' subjective experiences in using Storybird, ensuring coherence with the study's theoretical framework. While the interviews provided rich insights, the limited number of guiding questions may restrict the depth of exploration.

Finally, the researcher also acted as a participant observer during implementation. This dual role carries the potential for bias, which was partially mitigated through triangulation, field notes, and member checking. However, no systematic reflexivity mechanisms (e.g., reflexive journaling or an audit trail) were employed, and this is recognized as a methodological limitation.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on data obtained through questionnaires and in-depth interviews, this study revealed a predominantly positive student perception of the use of the Storybird platform in learning English writing. Here is the table for the result of the questionnaire.

Table 1. Perceived Usefulness

Item	Statement	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Participants
1	Storybird helps develop writing ideas	0%	5.6%	11.1%	44.4%	38.9%	18
2	Making writing	0%	0%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	18

	more structured						
3	Improve English writing skills	0%	5.6%	5.6%	61.1%	27.8%	18
4	Helps to understand the narrative structure	0%	0%	22.2%	44.4%	33.3%	18

The analysis results showed that 83.3% of students had a positive perception of Storybird's usefulness in learning to write. This high percentage indicates that the platform successfully addresses fundamental challenges in English writing instruction. Questionnaire data revealed that the most appreciated aspect was the platform's ability to help develop writing ideas, with 83.3% of students responding positively (Statement 1). This finding suggests that traditional writing instruction may lack effective idea generation strategies, and visual prompts serve as powerful cognitive scaffolds.

The significance of this finding becomes more apparent when considering the cognitive load theory. Visual elements in Storybird appear to reduce the extraneous cognitive load associated with idea generation, allowing students to focus their working memory on language construction and narrative organization. As Participant 4 stated: *"With the pictures, it's easier for me to get story ideas, like there is direct inspiration that comes from the visuals."* This response indicates that the visual-textual integration creates what Paivio's dual coding theory describes as enhanced memory encoding through both visual and verbal channels.

The aspect of improving English writing skills also received a high positive response, with 88.9% of students agreeing that Storybird helped improve their writing skills (Statement 3). This finding is particularly significant as it represents students' metacognitive awareness of their learning progress. The high percentage suggests that the platform provides visible indicators of improvement, which contributes to enhanced self-efficacy. This is reinforced by Participant 10's statement: *"My writing is now more structured and creative, I think my vocabulary has also increased because I often read other people's stories on this platform."* The mention of vocabulary expansion through peer observation demonstrates the platform's capacity to facilitate incidental learning, where students acquire language skills through exposure to diverse writing samples.

The platform's ability to structure writing was supported by 83.3% of respondents (Statement 2), indicating that Storybird successfully addresses one of the most persistent challenges in L2 writing: organizational coherence. Traditional writing instruction often struggles to help students visualize text organization, but the digital platform appears to make abstract structural concepts more concrete. This finding was confirmed through an interview with Participant 1, who explained: *"Usually, if you write on paper, it's difficult if you want to revise or change the order. In Storybird, you can drag and drop, so it's more flexible."* This response highlights how digital affordances can transform the revision process from a laborious task into an intuitive manipulation of text elements.

The consistency across all usefulness indicators suggests that Storybird aligns well with students' perceived learning needs. The relatively small percentage of neutral or negative responses

(ranging from 11.1% to 22.2%) indicates that individual differences in learning preferences do exist but do not significantly undermine the platform's overall effectiveness.

Table 2. Perceived Ease Of Use

Item	Statement	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Participants
5	Interface is easy to understand	0%	11.1%	16.7%	50.0%	22.2%	18
6	Easy to navigate the features	0%	16.7%	22.2%	44.4%	16.7%	18
7	The writing process is not complicated	0%	5.6%	27.8%	44.4%	22.2%	18
8	Easy to edit and revise	0%	0%	11.1%	61.1%	27.8%	18

Although the majority of students (72.2%) had a positive perception of Storybird's ease of use, this theme showed the greatest variation in responses, revealing important insights about the relationship between digital literacy and technology acceptance. The variation in responses suggests that ease of use is not an inherent property of the platform but rather emerges from the interaction between user characteristics and interface design.

The aspect of ease of editing and revising received the most positive response, with 88.9% of students agreeing (Statement 8). This finding is particularly significant because revision is often cited as one of the most challenging aspects of L2 writing instruction. The high positive response suggests that digital tools can effectively address traditional barriers to revision. Interview participant 5 supported this finding: *"The tools to edit grammar and spell check are really helpful, so my writing can be better in terms of language."* This response indicates that automated feedback features serve as valuable scaffolding tools, providing immediate support that might not be available in traditional classroom settings.

However, navigating the platform's features presented a challenge, with only 61.1% of students finding them easy to use (Statement 6). This represents the lowest positive response across all questionnaire items and reveals a critical implementation consideration. The finding suggests that feature-rich platforms may inadvertently create cognitive barriers for some users. This aligns with interview findings, where Participant 4 revealed: *"At the beginning, I was a bit confused because there are many features and I'm not used to the layout."* This response illustrates what Norman (1988) describes as the "paradox of technology" – increased functionality can sometimes reduce usability for novice users.

The platform interface was deemed quite easy to understand by 72.2% of students (Statement 5), indicating a moderate level of interface design success. However, the 27.8% who found the interface challenging suggests that individual differences in spatial processing and digital literacy significantly impact user experience. Some students with low digital literacy required more time to adapt, as Interview participant 1 reflected: *"It took a few tries before I finally*

understood how to use it properly." This response highlights the importance of scaffolded technology introduction and differentiated instruction based on students' prior digital experience.

The variation in ease of use responses also suggests that the platform may benefit from adaptive interface design that adjusts complexity based on user proficiency. The finding that writing process simplicity received 66.6% positive response (Statement 7) indicates that while the core writing functionality is accessible, peripheral features may create unnecessary complexity for some users.

Table 3. Motivation and Engagement

Item	Statement	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Participants
9	More motivated to write	0%	0%	5.6%	50.0%	44.4%	18
10	Writing activity is more fun	0%	0%	11.1%	33.3%	55.6%	18
11	More active participation	0%	5.6%	16.7%	44.4%	33.3%	18
12	More confident in writing	0%	0%	11.1%	55.6%	33.3%	18

This theme showed very positive results, with 87.5% of students reporting increased motivation and engagement, representing the second-highest positive response across all themes. This finding has profound implications for understanding how technology can address motivational challenges in L2 writing instruction. The high positive response suggests that Storybird successfully addresses what (Deci & and Ryan, 2000) identify as the three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

The most prominent aspect was increased enjoyment of writing, with 88.9% of students agreeing that writing became more enjoyable (Statement 10). This finding challenges traditional assumptions about writing as an inherently challenging or unpleasant task for L2 learners. The transformation of writing from a potentially anxiety-provoking activity to an enjoyable experience suggests that the platform successfully reduces affective barriers to writing. This finding was reinforced by Participant 3 in the interview: *"I'm really happy when my writing can be published and read by others; it feels like being a real writer."* This response reveals how authentic audience and publication opportunities can transform students' identity as writers, shifting from reluctant participants to engaged creators.

Increased motivation to write was reported by 94.4% of students (Statement 9), representing the highest positive response in this theme and indicating a significant impact of Storybird on students' interest in writing. This exceptional level of agreement suggests that the platform addresses fundamental motivational barriers in L2 writing. The finding aligns with expectancy-value theory, which posits that motivation is driven by both expectation of success and task value. This aligns with Participant 5's statement: *"I used to be really afraid when told to write in English, now I'm excited because I know how to do it and there are tools that help me."* This response demonstrates a shift from anxiety-based avoidance to approach motivation, indicating that

the platform provides sufficient scaffolding to enhance students' expectancy for success.

Active participation increased for 77.8% of students (Statement 11), suggesting that the platform successfully encourages behavioral engagement beyond mere compliance. The slightly lower percentage compared to other motivation indicators may reflect individual differences in collaborative learning preferences or comfort with public sharing of work. However, the substantial majority still represents a significant improvement over traditional instruction methods.

Confidence in writing also increased, with 88.9% of students reporting feeling more confident (Statement 12). This finding is particularly important because writing self-efficacy is a strong predictor of writing achievement and persistence. The high percentage suggests that the platform provides multiple sources of efficacy information. Participant 3 confirmed in an interview: *"Previously, it was really difficult to create interesting stories, but after using Storybird, I became more brave in experimenting with creative ideas."* This response demonstrates how mastery experiences facilitated by the platform contribute to enhanced self-efficacy beliefs.

The consistency of high positive responses across all motivation indicators suggests that Storybird creates a synergistic motivational environment where enjoyment, confidence, and active engagement mutually reinforce each other.

Table 4. Creative Expression

Item	Statement	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Participants
13	Images help with imagination	0%	0%	0%	38.9%	61.1%	18
14	Providing freedom of expression	0%	0%	5.6%	50.0%	44.4%	18
15	Makes the story more interesting	0%	0%	11.1%	44.4%	44.4%	18
16	Encourages experimentation with writing style	0%	5.6%	22.2%	44.4%	27.8%	18

The creative expression theme showed the most positive results, with 88.8% of students responding positively, indicating that Storybird's visual storytelling approach successfully addresses creativity challenges in L2 writing. This finding is particularly significant given that creativity is often considered difficult to teach explicitly and even more challenging to assess objectively. The role of images in stimulating imagination received the highest appreciation, with 100% of students agreeing (Statement 13). This unanimous positive response is remarkable and suggests that visual prompts address a universal challenge in creative writing: overcoming the "blank page" syndrome. The finding supports Vygotsky's theory of imagination development, which emphasizes the role of external mediating tools in creative thinking. Participant 4 explained in an interview: *"The pictures in Storybird are like triggers for imagination, so I don't get blank when I want to*

start writing." This response illustrates how visual elements serve as external cognitive tools that scaffold the imaginative process, transforming an internal, abstract process into a more concrete, manageable task.

The unanimous agreement also suggests that visual-verbal integration aligns well with diverse learning styles and cognitive preferences. Students who might struggle with purely verbal creative tasks appear to benefit significantly from the multimodal approach that combines visual inspiration with textual expression.

Freedom of expression was also positively rated by 94.4% of students (Statement 14), indicating that the platform provides a space for students to express their creativity without feeling constrained by traditional academic writing conventions. This finding challenges concerns that structured digital platforms might limit creative expression. Instead, the results suggest that appropriate scaffolding can actually enhance creative freedom by providing a supportive framework within which creativity can flourish. The high percentage indicates that students perceive choice and autonomy in their creative decisions, which aligns with self-determination theory's emphasis on autonomy support.

The platform's ability to make stories more engaging was approved by 88.8% of students (Statement 15), indicating that Storybird's visual storytelling approach is effective in improving the quality of students' narratives. This finding suggests that the integration of visual elements not only supports the writing process but also enhances the final product quality. Students appear to recognize that their stories become more compelling when visual and textual elements work together synergistically. Encouragement for experimentation with writing style received positive response from 72.2% of students (Statement 16), representing the lowest score within this theme but still indicating substantial positive impact. The relatively lower percentage may reflect individual differences in

risk-taking tendencies or comfort with stylistic experimentation. However, the majority positive response suggests that the platform's supportive environment encourages most students to explore beyond their typical writing patterns.

Table 5. Improving Writing Skill

Item	Statement	STS	TS	N	S	SS	Participants
17	The comment features helps to get feedback	0%	11.1%	27.8%	38.9%	22.2%	18
18	Learn from other friends' writing	0%	5.6%	16.7%	50.0%	27.8%	18
19	Proud to share writing	0%	0%	16.7%	50.0%	33.3%	18
20	Creating an environment of mutual support	0%	5.6%	22.2%	50.0%	22.2%	18

The collaborative aspect of Storybird received a positive response from 73.6% of students,

although this showed the most significant variation across all themes, revealing important insights about the complexity of peer interaction in digital learning environments. The variation suggests that collaborative learning benefits are not uniformly experienced and may depend on individual preferences, social skills, and prior collaborative learning experiences.

The ability to learn from others' writing was rated positively by 77.8% of students (Statement 18), indicating that peer modeling is an effective learning mechanism within the platform. This finding supports Bandura's social cognitive theory, which emphasizes the importance of observational learning in skill development. Interview participant 11 supported this finding: *"I like the feature that allows commenting and giving feedback to friends, so we can learn from other people's writing too."* This response demonstrates how the platform facilitates both observational learning and peer feedback, creating multiple pathways for collaborative skill development.

The positive response to peer learning suggests that the platform successfully creates what Vygotsky termed the "zone of proximal development" through peer interaction, where students can achieve higher levels of performance through collaboration than they could independently. The digital format may actually enhance this process by providing persistent access to peer work and removing some of the social barriers that might exist in face-to-face collaborative writing.

83.3% of students felt pride in sharing their writing (Statement 19), indicating that the platform successfully created a sense of achievement and authentic audience engagement. This finding is significant because authentic audience awareness is a powerful motivator for writing improvement. The high percentage suggests that digital publication provides meaningful recognition for student work,

transforming writing from a private academic exercise into a public creative act.

The sense of pride in sharing also indicates that the platform creates what (Jenkins et al., 2009) describes as a "participatory culture" where students see themselves as contributors to a larger creative community rather than isolated learners completing assignments. However, the commenting feature for feedback was only appreciated by 61.1% of students (Statement 17), representing the lowest positive response across all questionnaire items and indicating a need for improvement in the peer feedback mechanism.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that students perceive Storybird as an effective and engaging platform for English writing instruction, with 81.1% of participants expressing positive perceptions. This predominantly positive response aligns with the broader discourse on technology-enhanced language learning, while also revealing unique aspects of digital storytelling platforms compared to other educational technologies.

When comparing these results with the recent study by Ananda & Salmiah, (2024) on students' perceptions of Gemini AI as a writing assistant tool, several interesting parallels and distinctions emerge. Both studies demonstrate that students generally embrace digital technologies that support their writing development, yet the nature of their positive perceptions differs significantly. While Ananda and Salmiah's research focused on AI-generated content assistance, the current study reveals that students value the creative autonomy and visual inspiration provided by Storybird's image-based storytelling approach. As noted by (Warschauer & Ware, 2022), "The most effective educational technologies are those that extend rather than replace human cognitive capabilities, allowing learners to explore their creativity while providing scaffolding for skill development". This distinction is crucial as it highlights different

pathways through which technology can enhance writing instruction.

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework employed in this study demonstrates its continued relevance in educational contexts, particularly in understanding how perceived usefulness and ease of use influence technology adoption. Davis, (1989) original proposition that perceived usefulness serves as a primary determinant of technology acceptance finds strong support in these findings, with 88.9% of students recognizing Storybird's utility in improving their writing skills. However, the variation in perceived ease of use (72.2% positive response) suggests that individual differences in digital literacy significantly impact technology acceptance, echoing (Venkatesh H., 2008) assertion that "user characteristics, particularly prior experience with similar technologies, moderate the relationship between ease of use and behavioral intention".

The integration of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) in analyzing student perceptions reveals particularly compelling insights about intrinsic motivation in digital learning environments. The study's findings show that Storybird successfully facilitates the three basic psychological needs identified by (Deci & and Ryan, 2000): autonomy through creative control, competence through skill development feedback, and relatedness through collaborative features. As Deci & and Ryan, (2000) emphasize, "Educational technologies that support learner autonomy while providing competence-building experiences are more likely to foster sustained engagement and deeper learning outcomes". This theoretical framework helps explain why 94.4% of students reported increased motivation to write, contrasting with traditional instruction methods that often fail to address these fundamental psychological needs.

The creative expression theme, which received the highest positive response (88.8%), deserves particular attention in light of current debates about technology's role in fostering creativity. Craft, (2012) argues that "digital tools can either constrain or liberate creative expression, depending on how they balance structure with flexibility". The finding that 100% of students appreciated how images stimulate imagination suggests that Storybird's visual storytelling approach successfully achieves this balance. This stands in contrast to concerns raised by some educators about technology potentially limiting creative thinking, as discussed in (Selwyn, 2016) critique of educational technology implementations.

The collaborative learning aspects revealed in this study provide valuable insights into peer-supported writing development. While 73.6% of students viewed collaborative features positively, the variation in responses suggests that not all students equally benefit from peer interaction in digital environments. According to Storch, (2013), "Effective collaborative writing requires careful scaffolding and clear communication protocols, particularly in technology-mediated environments where non-verbal cues are limited". The finding that only 61.1% of students appreciated the commenting feature for feedback indicates a need for more structured approaches to peer review in digital platforms.

The challenges identified in this study, particularly internet connectivity issues and navigation difficulties, reflect broader concerns about digital equity in education. As highlighted by Resta & Laferrière, (2015), "The digital divide extends beyond mere access to technology, encompassing differences in digital literacy skills and technological support systems". These findings suggest that successful implementation of platforms like Storybird requires not only technological infrastructure but also comprehensive digital literacy support.

The study's integration of Social Cognitive Theory provides additional explanatory power for understanding how students develop writing self-efficacy through digital platforms. Bandura,

(1991) concept of observational learning finds clear application in Storybird's community showcase feature, where students learn by observing others' writing practices. As Bandura notes, "Self-effic

acy beliefs are constructed from four principal sources of information: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states". The Storybird platform appears to provide multiple sources of efficacy information simultaneously, which may explain the observed increases in student confidence and writing motivation.

Comparing these findings with broader research on digital storytelling in language education, Lambert, (2013) assertion that "digital storytelling combines the authenticity of personal narrative with the technological literacy demands of contemporary communication" finds strong empirical support. The students' positive perceptions of creativity enhancement and structured writing organization suggest that digital storytelling platforms like Storybird successfully bridge traditional narrative instruction with modern technological capabilities.

The theoretical implications of this study extend beyond mere technology acceptance to encompass fundamental questions about motivation, creativity, and collaborative learning in digital environments. As Kress & Selander, (2012) argue, "Digital technologies reshape not only how students create meaning but also how they understand themselves as learners and communicators". The predominantly positive student perceptions documented in this study suggest that well-designed educational technologies can indeed transform students' relationships with academic writing.

However, the study also reveals important limitations that warrant consideration. The variation in responses across different themes suggests that individual differences significantly impact technology acceptance and effectiveness.

As (Cuban, 2001) cautions, "Educational technologies are tools that amplify existing pedagogical approaches rather than transforming them; their effectiveness depends largely on how they are implemented and integrated into existing instructional frameworks". This perspective emphasizes the importance of comprehensive teacher training and pedagogical support in maximizing the benefits of platforms like Storybird.

The findings contribute to ongoing discussions about the role of visual elements in language learning. Paivio, (2007) dual coding theory, which posits that visual and verbal information are processed through separate but interconnected cognitive systems, helps explain why students found image-based story prompts so effective for idea generation. As Paivio explains, "Visual imagery serves as a powerful memory aid and creativity stimulant, particularly when combined with verbal processing tasks". This theoretical foundation supports the observed effectiveness of Storybird's visual storytelling approach.

Looking toward future research directions, this study raises important questions about the long-term impact of digital storytelling platforms on writing development. While the immediate positive perceptions are encouraging, longitudinal studies examining sustained engagement and skill development over extended periods would provide valuable insights into the lasting effects of such interventions. Additionally, comparative studies examining different types of educational technologies could help identify the specific features and approaches that most effectively support student learning and motivation in digital environments

4. CONCLUSION

This research has revealed that students' perceptions of the use of Storybird in learning English writing skills are overall positive and constructive. Based on an in-depth analysis of the

experiences of 18 intermediate-level students who used the Storybird platform for 10weeks, it was found that the majority of students (16 out of 18 respondents) perceived the platform as an effective, engaging, and capable learning tool that increased their motivation in writing English. The main findings show that Storybird successfully facilitates the writing learning process through a visual storytelling approach that helps students in developing ideas, organizing writing structures, and increasing creativity in expression. The platform also proved effective in creating a collaborative and supportive learning environment, where students can give feedback and learn from each other's writing.

This research contributes significantly to the development of literature on technology-enhanced language learning, particularly in the context of digital storytelling for English writing learning. This study successfully integrates the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence students' perception and acceptance of digital platforms in language learning.

The findings of this study reinforce the TAM proposition that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the main predictors of technology acceptance, but also show that in the context of language learning, motivational factors such as autonomy, competence, and relatedness (SDT) play an equally important role. In addition, this study also confirms the relevance of Social Cognitive Theory in explaining how self-efficacy and observational learning affect students' perceptions of learning technologies.

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