

Digital Storytelling to Enhance Eighth-Grade Students' Vocabulary Mastery of Verbs

Dian Putri Arinjayani

dianputriarinjayani@gmail.com

Ajeng Setyorini

ajengsetyorini@upgris.ac.id

Indri Kustantinah

indrikustantinah@upgris.ac.id

Universitas PGRI Semarang

ABSTRACT

Learning English verbs requires understanding their meanings and forms within meaningful contexts. This study examined changes in eighth-grade students' performance on a verb vocabulary test following digital storytelling instruction. A quantitative pre-experimental study using a one-group pretest and posttest design involved 30 students from one eighth-grade class at SMPN 1 Gubug, without a comparison group. The study comprised four meetings: a pretest, two treatment sessions, and a posttest. During the treatment, digital stories developed using Canva and displayed through a projector presented target verbs in simple past and progressive forms. Data were collected using an adapted 20-item vocabulary test and analyzed using descriptive statistics and the Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The mean score increased from 33.83 to 80.33, representing a gain of 46.50 points. Twenty-nine students obtained higher posttest scores, while one obtained a lower score. The reported Wilcoxon statistic was $Z = -4.770$, with a calculated effect size of $r = .87$. These findings indicate a substantial short-term improvement in performance on the measured verb items following the two instructional sessions. However, the absence of a comparison group prevents attributing the improvement solely to digital storytelling, and vocabulary retention was not assessed. The results provide preliminary classroom evidence warranting further investigation through controlled studies and delayed assessment.

Keywords: Digital Storytelling; Verb; EFL Learners, Junior High School

INTRODUCTION

Vocabulary knowledge is fundamental to English language learning because it enables learners to understand messages and express ideas. It involves knowledge of word forms, meanings, and uses in particular contexts rather than the memorization of isolated definitions (Lessard-Clouston, 2021). Ha (2021) identified relationships between receptive vocabulary knowledge and second language listening and reading comprehension, demonstrating the relevance of

vocabulary to language understanding. For junior high school students, vocabulary instruction therefore needs to provide opportunities to encounter words in meaningful situations and connect their forms with their intended meanings.

Verbs are particularly important because they express actions, events, and states. However, learning verbs involves both lexical knowledge and an understanding of their grammatical forms. These abilities are related but distinct. A student may understand the meaning of a verb while experiencing difficulty selecting its appropriate form in a sentence. Similarly, choosing a correct grammatical form does not necessarily demonstrate the ability to use that verb independently in communication. This distinction is relevant when vocabulary instruction includes verbs in simple past and progressive contexts, where learners must connect an action's meaning with the grammatical construction used to represent it.

Research in Indonesian EFL settings has documented difficulties with past verb forms. Tuminah et al. (2021) examined errors in students' use of the simple past tense in recount texts, while Seruni (2023) identified misformation as a frequent error in students' short stories. Although these studies primarily concern grammatical accuracy in writing, they illustrate the challenges learners face when using verbs beyond recognizing their meanings. Progressive constructions also require attention to the relationship between form and meaning. Zeng et al. (2021) investigated the interaction between lexical and grammatical aspect in processing English past tense and progressive aspect, while Noh and Song (2021) examined progressive use among Korean EFL learners. These studies provide a basis for considering grammatical context in verb instruction, although their findings should be interpreted in relation to their different populations and tasks.

Contextualized vocabulary instruction can help organize these relationships through meaningful examples. Stories place actions within connected events, providing information about who performs an action, what happens, and how situations develop. Digital storytelling offers a medium for presenting such narratives through digital resources. Depending on its implementation, it can combine written language, visual representations, and other multimedia elements. These resources may provide contextual cues that help learners interpret unfamiliar vocabulary. However, the contribution of individual features, such as visuals or repeated exposure, needs to be investigated directly rather than inferred from an overall increase in test scores.

Previous research has explored digital storytelling in several vocabulary learning contexts. Belda-Medina and Goddard (2024) investigated English vocabulary learning in inclusive and diverse education, while Tatli et al. (2022) examined vocabulary alongside speaking and cognitive load in an online EFL course. Al Ghaithi et al. (2023) also considered vocabulary improvement together with motivation and self-directed learning. These studies demonstrate the range of educational outcomes associated with digital storytelling research. Nevertheless, vocabulary performance, motivation, and independent learning are separate

outcomes, and improvement in one does not automatically establish improvement in the others.

Several studies are particularly relevant to the present research. Anggara (2023) examined junior high school students' vocabulary mastery through watching digital stories, providing a close reference in terms of educational level and instructional approach. Nami and Asadnia (2024), in contrast, investigated vocabulary learning through students' self-made digital stories. This difference matters because viewing prepared stories and creating stories involve different opportunities for language input, production, and revision. Roudhotul Jannah (2026) focused on vocabulary retention among EFL middle school learners, while Pratiwi et al. (2026) examined vocabulary instruction using a quasi-experimental design. Their stated research focus concerns vocabulary more broadly and should not be characterized as specifically addressing past-tense verbs without supporting evidence.

The present study builds on this existing research through a narrower classroom focus. It examines performance on an adapted test targeting verbs presented in simple past and progressive contexts among eighth-grade students at SMPN 1 Gubug. Its contribution lies in documenting short-term changes within this particular instructional setting rather than introducing digital storytelling as a new approach to vocabulary learning. Unlike research involving student-created stories, the instructional procedure used prepared digital stories developed in Canva and displayed through a projector. Unlike research explicitly addressing retention, the present study included a posttest following instruction without a delayed assessment.

The primary outcome was the total score on a 20-item verb vocabulary test. This outcome provides information about performance on the measured items, but it does not separately establish changes in lexical recognition, grammatical form selection, or contextual production. The study also employed a one-group pretest and posttest design involving 30 students and two instructional sessions. Without a comparison group, the observed changes cannot be attributed solely to digital storytelling because classroom practice, test familiarity, and other learning experiences may have contributed. These limitations position the research as a preliminary within-class evaluation.

Accordingly, this study aimed to describe students' performance on the target verb vocabulary test before and after digital storytelling instruction and examine whether their paired scores differed statistically. It addressed three research questions: What was students' performance on the target verb vocabulary test before instruction? What was their performance after instruction? Was there a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores? The findings are intended to provide classroom evidence of short-term performance changes and inform further research using comparison groups, more detailed measures of verb knowledge, and delayed assessments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Vocabulary Knowledge and Verb Learning

Vocabulary knowledge involves understanding the forms, meanings, and uses of words. It supports learners' ability to interpret messages and communicate ideas through spoken and written language. Lessard-Clouston (2021) emphasizes that vocabulary learning extends beyond memorizing definitions and requires opportunities to encounter and use words within meaningful contexts. Ha (2021) also identified relationships between receptive vocabulary knowledge and second language listening and reading comprehension. These perspectives suggest that vocabulary instruction should help learners connect words with their meanings and recognize how they function in language use.

Verbs are an important component of vocabulary because they express actions, events, and states. However, learning verbs involves several related abilities that should not be treated as interchangeable. Lexical recognition concerns understanding a verb's meaning, grammatical form selection concerns choosing a form appropriate to a construction, and contextual production concerns using the verb in meaningful language. A learner may recognize the meaning of a verb without being able to use its past form accurately. Similarly, successful completion of a form-selection item does not necessarily demonstrate independent use of that verb in communication. These distinctions are important when interpreting scores from a vocabulary test that includes grammatical contexts. In the present study, verb learning is examined through performance on an adapted test targeting verbs in simple past and progressive contexts. The total score provides an overall measure of performance on the tested items. However, without separate analyses of items measuring meaning, form selection, and production, the findings cannot establish which specific component of verb knowledge changed.

Verb Forms in Simple Past and Progressive Contexts

English verb forms communicate information about actions and their temporal characteristics. Simple past constructions generally describe past events, while progressive constructions present actions as ongoing at a particular reference time. Allard and Mizoguchi (2021) discuss the English tense and aspect system through a framework that connects grammatical structures with their meanings. This relationship suggests that instruction should address how verb forms represent situations rather than treating forms only as patterns to memorize. Research in Indonesian EFL settings has documented difficulties in using past forms. Tuminah et al. (2021) examined errors in students' use of the simple past tense in recount texts, while Seruni (2023) identified misinformation as a frequent error in students' short stories. These studies concern grammatical accuracy in written production, which is related to, but distinct from, vocabulary knowledge. Their relevance to verb instruction lies in showing that knowing an action word may not be sufficient for using its appropriate form in a particular context.

Progressive constructions also require learners to connect grammatical structure with meaning. Zeng et al. (2021) investigated the interaction between lexical and grammatical aspect in the processing of English past tense and progressive aspect. Noh and Song (2021) examined progressive use among Korean EFL learners. Although these studies involve populations different from the participants in the present research, they highlight the relationship between verb meaning and grammatical construction. Contextual examples may therefore provide useful opportunities to examine how the same verb appears in different situations. Whether learners improve in distinguishing these constructions, however, requires evidence from assessment items specifically designed to measure that ability.

Digital Storytelling in Vocabulary Instruction

Digital storytelling presents a narrative through digital resources that may include written text, images, narration, audio, or animation. The features used vary across instructional settings, so digital storytelling should be understood as an approach with different possible implementations. Belda-Medina and Goddard (2024) examined its application to English vocabulary learning in inclusive and diverse education, while Tatli et al. (2022) investigated speaking, vocabulary, and cognitive load in an online EFL course. These studies illustrate the range of outcomes and settings in which digital storytelling has been explored. Narratives can place vocabulary within connected events, giving learners contextual information about the actions described. Visual representations may provide additional cues for interpreting unfamiliar words, while accompanying activities can direct attention to their forms and meanings. These features offer plausible explanations for why digital stories may support vocabulary learning. Nevertheless, their individual contributions cannot be established when a study evaluates the instructional activity as a whole without measuring the effects of narrative, visuals, repetition, or practice separately.

A further distinction concerns whether learners view prepared stories or create their own. Viewing stories primarily provides opportunities to receive and interpret language input. Creating stories can also involve selecting vocabulary, composing sentences, revising language, and presenting a narrative. Nami and Asadnia (2024) investigated students' self-made digital stories, whereas Anggara (2023) examined vocabulary learning through watching digital storytelling. Findings from these approaches should be interpreted in relation to their different instructional demands. The present study used prepared stories developed in Canva and displayed through a projector. Its documented implementation included visual and narrative elements and activities directing students' attention to target verbs. Consequently, explanations of its outcomes should remain connected to these reported features. Benefits associated with learner-created stories or additional multimedia features should not be assumed to apply automatically.

Previous Research and the Present Study

Previous research provides a basis for examining digital storytelling in vocabulary instruction. Anggara (2023) reported improvement in junior high school students' vocabulary mastery after watching digital stories. This study is relevant because it addresses a similar educational level and a viewing-based instructional approach. Br Sembiring and Simajuntak (2023) also explored digital storytelling as an alternative technique for developing EFL learners' vocabulary knowledge. Together, these studies establish that the use of digital storytelling for vocabulary learning has already received attention. Other research extends the discussion to different activities and outcomes. Nami and Asadnia (2024) investigated vocabulary learning through students' self-made stories, while Al Ghaithi et al. (2023) examined vocabulary improvement alongside motivation and self-directed learning. These broader outcomes are relevant to understanding the potential educational applications of digital storytelling, but they should not be inferred from vocabulary test scores alone.

Recent work includes Roudhotul Jannah's (2026) study of vocabulary retention among EFL middle school learners and Pratiwi et al.'s (2026) quasi-experimental study of vocabulary instruction using digital storytelling. These studies mean that the rationale for the present research cannot rest on a general absence of research on digital storytelling or middle school vocabulary learning. Its contribution instead concerns a specific classroom application involving target verbs presented in simple past and progressive contexts. The present study offers a preliminary evaluation of changes in one class's test performance following two instructional sessions. Its focus differs from research on learner-created stories and from studies explicitly examining retention. However, the absence of a comparison group limits causal interpretation, and the absence of a delayed test prevents conclusions about lasting learning. The literature therefore supports investigating digital storytelling as a contextual medium for verb instruction while maintaining a clear distinction between observed short-term score changes, specific components of verb knowledge, and evidence of instructional effectiveness.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employed a quantitative pre-experimental approach using a one-group pretest and posttest design. The same participants completed a vocabulary assessment before and after digital storytelling instruction. The design comprised an initial assessment, two instructional sessions, and a subsequent assessment. It was used to examine short-term changes in students' performance on the target verb vocabulary test. Because the study did not include a comparison group, the observed changes cannot be attributed exclusively to digital storytelling. Test familiarity, classroom practice, and learning outside the instructional sessions may also have contributed to the outcomes.

The participants were 30 eighth-grade students from one intact class at SMPN 1 Gubug during the 2026/2027 academic year. The manuscript described the class selection as purposive, based on its suitability for the study objectives and implementation. However, specific selection criteria and the number of eligible classes were not documented. The sample is therefore described as a purposively selected intact class rather than a randomly selected sample. All 30 participating students completed both assessments and the two instructional sessions, providing 30 complete pairs of scores. The available information does not establish whether these participants represented the entire class enrollment. The study was conducted over four meetings. The first meeting was allocated to the pretest, the second and third meetings to digital storytelling instruction, and the fourth meeting to the posttest. No delayed assessment was reported; consequently, the design assessed performance following instruction rather than long-term vocabulary retention.

Instrument and Procedures

Data were collected using an adapted 20-item vocabulary test targeting verbs presented in simple past and progressive contexts. The instrument was adapted from Roudhotul Jannah (2026). Its intended coverage included understanding target verb meanings and their use in context. For the present analysis, the primary outcome was the total test score. Because separate scores for lexical recognition, grammatical form selection, and contextual production were not reported, the total score was interpreted as performance on the tested verb items rather than evidence of improvement in each component individually. The manuscript reported that the original instrument underwent expert validation using the Gregory Index and had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .816. These findings concern the original instrument and do not establish the validity or reliability of the adapted version used in this study. Expert review, internal consistency, and item analysis for the current adaptation were not documented in the available materials. This limits the evidence supporting the measurement quality of the adapted test.

Each correct response received one point, and each incorrect response received zero points. The maximum raw score was 20. Raw scores were converted to a scale from 0 to 100 by dividing the number of correct responses by 20 and multiplying the result by 100. Under this scoring procedure, individual scores occur in increments of five. The manuscript stated that the same type of assessment was used at both measurement points, but it did not establish whether the administrations contained identical items or parallel forms. Possible test familiarity therefore remains a consideration when interpreting score changes.

During the first meeting, students completed the pretest to establish their initial performance on the target verb items. Digital storytelling instruction took place during the second and third meetings. The digital stories were developed using Canva and displayed through an LCD projector. Visual and narrative elements presented target verbs within connected actions and situations, with attention to

simple past and progressive forms. Students observed the stories and were given opportunities to identify and interpret the target verbs in context. The documented procedure involved viewing prepared stories; student creation of digital stories was not reported. During the fourth meeting, students completed the posttest. Their scores were paired with their pretest scores to examine changes following the two instructional sessions. The available description does not specify story titles, scripts, duration, the complete target verb list, exposure frequency, or time allocated to each activity. It also does not confirm whether audio, narration, or animation was used. These features cannot therefore be included as established components of the intervention.

Data Analysis

The pretest and posttest scores were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics included the number of participants, mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, and range for each assessment. These summaries described the distribution of scores before and after instruction. The difference between the two means was used to summarize the overall change in performance, while the rank results described the direction of changes within individual students. The original analysis included separate Shapiro–Wilk tests for the pretest and posttest scores. However, for a paired parametric comparison, the relevant normality assessment concerns the distribution of within-student differences rather than the two score distributions separately. An assessment of these paired differences was not documented. The separate normality tests were therefore not treated as conclusive evidence that a paired parametric analysis was unsuitable.

The reported inferential analysis used the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to compare the paired scores, with a significance level of .05. The test ranked the absolute nonzero differences between each student's posttest and pretest scores and considered their direction. Positive differences indicated higher posttest scores, negative differences indicated lower posttest scores, and zero differences represented unchanged scores. The reported rank summary contained 29 positive differences, one negative difference, and no zero differences. The test statistics table labeled the significance estimate as asymptotic and two-sided. An effect size was calculated using $r = |Z|/\sqrt{N}$. In the calculation reported in this study, N represented the 30 students with complete, nonzero paired differences, rather than the combined number of pretest and posttest measurements. Using the reported Z value of -4.770 yielded approximately $r = .87$ under this convention. This statistic describes the magnitude of the paired difference and does not establish a causal instructional effect.

The reported Z statistic and asymptotic p value require verification against the original SPSS output because the values presented in the manuscript are inconsistent. Participant-level records were not available for checking individual scores, examining the single decrease, or calculating medians, interquartile ranges, and the distribution of paired gains. These additional analyses were therefore not

represented as completed. Interpretation was limited to the reported short-term changes in test performance within the participating class.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The vocabulary scores obtained from the pre-test and post-test were first analyzed descriptively to provide an overview of students' performance before and after the implementation of digital storytelling. The descriptive statistics included the number of participants, minimum and maximum scores, score range, mean score, and standard deviation. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Pretest and Posttest Scores

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Range	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pre-Test	30	85	15	100	33.83	16.799
Post-Test	30	45	50	95	80.33	9.643
Valid N (listwise)	30					

Table 1 shows that all 30 students completed both the pre-test and post-test. Before the treatment, students obtained a mean score of 33.83, with scores ranging from 15 to 100 and a standard deviation of 16.799. The relatively wide range of scores indicates that students entered the treatment with different levels of vocabulary mastery. Following the implementation of digital storytelling, the mean score increased to 80.33, while the scores ranged from 50 to 95. The post-test standard deviation decreased to 9.643, indicating that the distribution of students' scores was less dispersed after the treatment. The difference between the two mean scores was 46.50 points, with the post-test mean substantially higher than the pre-test mean. The descriptive results therefore show a clear change in students' vocabulary scores between the two measurements.

Before conducting the inferential analysis, a normality test was performed to determine whether the pre-test and post-test scores followed a normal distribution. The Shapiro–Wilk test was selected for this analysis, and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Normality Test

Shapiro-Wilk Normality Test						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre-Test	.157	30	.058	.804	30	.001
Post-Test	.152	30	.073	.924	30	.033

As shown in Table 2, the Shapiro–Wilk test produced a significance value of .001 for the pre-test scores and .033 for the post-test scores. Both significance values were below the predetermined level of .05. These results indicate that neither the pre-test nor the post-test data met the assumption of normality. Since the data were not normally distributed, a non-parametric statistical procedure was considered

appropriate for examining the difference between the two related measurements. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was subsequently used to analyze the difference between students' pre-test and post-test scores.

The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was conducted to determine the difference between students' vocabulary scores before and after the treatment. This analysis compared the paired scores obtained from the same group of students at the two measurement points. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test

Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test		
	N	Mean RankSum of Ranks
Post-Test - Pre-Test		
Negative Ranks ^{1a}	1.00	1.00
Positive Ranks	29 ^b	16.00
Ties	0 ^c	
Total	30	
Post-Test - Pre-Test		
Z	-4.770 ^b	
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	

The results in Table 3 show that 29 students recorded higher scores in the post-test than in the pre-test, while one student recorded a lower score, and there were no tied scores. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test produced a Z value of -4.770 with an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) value of .001. The significance value was lower than the established significance level of .05, indicating a statistically significant difference between the two sets of scores. The direction of the score changes also shows that the improvement occurred for almost all participants, as the number of positive ranks was substantially higher than the number of negative ranks.

To provide additional information concerning the magnitude of the difference, an effect-size calculation was conducted using the Wilcoxon test statistic. The effect size was calculated using the formula $r = |Z|/\sqrt{N}$. With a Z value of -4.770 and a total of 30 participants, the resulting effect size was approximately $r = .87$. This value represents a very large effect, indicating that the difference between students' pre-test and post-test performance was substantial in magnitude. The effect-size result complements the significance test by showing not only that a statistically significant difference was observed, but also that the magnitude of the difference was considerable.

Taken together, the descriptive and inferential results demonstrate a consistent pattern of improvement in students' vocabulary scores following the treatment. The mean score increased from 33.83 to 80.33, the variation of scores decreased as reflected in the standard deviation, and the majority of students obtained higher scores in the post-test. The normality analysis showed that the data did not meet the normality assumption, leading to the use of the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test. The resulting p value of .001 and effect size of .87 provide statistical evidence of a

substantial difference between students' vocabulary performance before and after the treatment. These results provide the basis for further interpretation in the Discussion section concerning the role of digital storytelling in students' vocabulary learning.

The main finding was an increase in average performance on the verb vocabulary test following two digital storytelling sessions. The mean difference of 46.50 points and the 29 positive paired differences indicate that higher scores were observed across most of the participating class. The reduction in standard deviation also suggests that scores were more closely grouped after instruction. These findings support a description of substantial short-term change on the measured items. This interpretation must remain aligned with the assessment. The test targeted verbs presented in simple past and progressive contexts, but only an overall score was reported. The results therefore do not show whether students improved primarily in recognizing verb meanings, selecting grammatical forms, or using verbs in context. They also do not establish a separate improvement in distinguishing completed actions from ongoing actions. Such conclusions would require an item blueprint and analyses of the relevant components. The distinction between vocabulary knowledge and grammatical accuracy is particularly important here. Lessard-Clouston (2021) describes vocabulary learning in relation to word forms, meanings, and uses. Research by Tuminah et al. (2021) and Seruni (2023), meanwhile, concerns errors in the use of past forms in written texts. These perspectives are relevant to the instructional focus, but performance on a combined test cannot determine whether lexical and grammatical abilities changed to the same extent.

One possible explanation for the higher scores is that the stories presented target verbs within connected events and visual situations. Context may have helped students relate words to the actions they represented. Rather than encountering each verb only as an isolated item, students observed it within a narrative and participated in activities directing attention to its meaning and form. This interpretation is consistent with the emphasis on contextual vocabulary learning discussed by Lessard-Clouston (2021). The documented use of visual and narrative elements also provides a possible basis for interpreting the observed changes. Belda-Medina and Goddard (2024) investigated digital storytelling in English vocabulary learning, while Tatli et al. (2022) examined vocabulary outcomes in an online EFL setting. However, the present study did not measure the individual contributions of visuals, narrative organization, exposure frequency, or classroom practice. These features should therefore be considered possible explanations rather than demonstrated mechanisms. Digital storytelling was also part of a broader instructional activity. Students viewed stories and received opportunities to identify and interpret target verbs. The observed change may reflect the combined contribution of the materials, teacher guidance, and accompanying practice. The design cannot determine how much of the difference was associated specifically with the digital format.

The observed pattern is broadly consistent with Anggara (2023), who reported improvement in junior high school students' vocabulary mastery after watching digital stories. That study provides a relevant comparison because it involves a similar educational level and a viewing-based approach. Br Sembiring and Simajuntak (2023) also explored digital storytelling as an alternative technique for developing EFL vocabulary knowledge. Nevertheless, differences in assessment content, instructional exposure, and research design limit direct comparisons of the magnitude of improvement. Nami and Asadnia (2024) examined vocabulary learning through students' self-made digital stories. Their approach differs from the present study, in which students viewed prepared materials. Creating stories can involve vocabulary selection, language production, and revision, whereas viewing stories emphasizes interpreting presented content. The present findings therefore do not establish the benefits of student story creation. Roudhotul Jannah (2026) investigated vocabulary retention among EFL middle school learners, while Pratiwi et al. (2026) examined vocabulary instruction through a quasi-experimental design. The present study contributes a more limited account of short-term changes in one class's performance on target verb items. It does not provide evidence about retention or relative effectiveness, and Pratiwi et al.'s study should not be characterized as specifically demonstrating gains in past-tense verbs without supporting information.

The findings suggest that digital stories merit further investigation as materials for presenting verbs in meaningful classroom contexts. Teachers using this approach can align story content and practice activities with clearly defined learning objectives. Assessment should also distinguish understanding verb meanings from selecting forms and producing sentences so that changes can be interpreted more precisely. Several limitations constrain the conclusions. First, the absence of a comparison group prevents separating digital storytelling from test familiarity, ordinary instruction, classroom practice, and learning outside the sessions. Second, the intervention involved only two meetings, and no delayed assessment was reported. The higher posttest scores therefore cannot establish lasting vocabulary retention. Third, the validity and reliability evidence cited in the manuscript concerns the original instrument rather than the adapted version administered to these students.

Further limitations concern the available statistical information. The reported Z statistic and p value require verification, and participant-level records are needed to check the score ranges, examine the single decrease, and calculate additional summaries of paired changes. These unresolved issues limit the strength of the inferential interpretation. The reported results document a substantial increase in performance on the tested verb items following two digital storytelling sessions in one eighth-grade class. They provide preliminary classroom evidence, while stronger conclusions about instructional effectiveness, specific components of verb knowledge, and retention require verified analyses and more comprehensive research designs.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study examined the use of digital storytelling in developing eighth-grade students' vocabulary mastery of target verbs in the simple past and progressive forms. The descriptive results showed an increase in students' mean score from 33.83 in the pre-test to 80.33 in the post-test, indicating considerable improvement in vocabulary performance after the treatment. The students also demonstrated more consistent performance in the post-test, as reflected by the decrease in standard deviation from 16.799 to 9.643. The inferential analysis further demonstrated a statistically significant difference between students' vocabulary performance before and after the implementation of digital storytelling. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test produced a Z value of -4.770 and a significance value of .001, while the calculated effect size of $r = .87$ indicated a very large effect. These results suggest that the use of digital storytelling was associated with substantial improvement in students' mastery of the target verbs. The story-based presentation also provided opportunities for students to encounter verbs in meaningful contexts, allowing them to relate vocabulary forms and meanings to particular actions and situations. Digital storytelling shows potential as an instructional medium for contextualized vocabulary learning, particularly when target verbs involve different grammatical forms such as the simple past and progressive forms. The study contributes to previous research by focusing on the mastery of target verbs across these two forms among eighth-grade Indonesian EFL learners. However, because the study employed a one-group pretest-posttest design without a control group and involved a relatively short treatment period, the results should be interpreted within these limitations. Future research may involve a larger sample, a comparison group, and a longer intervention period to provide stronger evidence regarding the effectiveness and long-term impact of digital storytelling on vocabulary learning.

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