

Student English Teachers' Vantage Points of the Digital Short Stories They Designed for Young Learners

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ABSTRACT

Literature review unveils the need for exploring what student teachers of English think about their experiences of preparing digital stories for young learners, and investigating their perceptions with regard to the use of digital storytelling in the teaching of English to young learners. This instrumental case study aims to unpack pre-service English teachers' conceptions of their experiences of creating digital short stories and incorporating them into young English language learner classes. The qualitative data collected through conducting a qualitative survey and an in-depth interview with Turkish student teachers of English following their experiences of designing digital short stories for young learners was analysed, performing inductive content analysis. The results demonstrated the student English teachers held strong beliefs in the beneficial effect of digital short stories on fostering young English language learners' learning, and the process of developing digital short stories was not extremely challenging and furthered their technological competence.

KEYWORDS

Digital Short Stories, Student English Teachers, Young Learners

INTRODUCTION

Using stories as a component of instructional practices is conceived to serve as a medium for teaching, motivating and inspiring students (Bowman, 2018; Rajabi et al., 2018), engaging them in the learning process (Rutta et al., 2021; Moradi & Chen, 2019), and developing their critical thinking skills (Grigsby et al., 2015). As a result of developments in digital technologies over the last two decades, having shaped the way education is provided at diverse levels, digital storytelling has cultivated genuine appreciation of educators from discrete disciplines. For instance, digital storytelling has been used to promote second/foreign language teaching (e.g., Tour et al., 2021). In view of the affordances of digital storytelling such as awakening students' curiosity about what is covered in the lesson, it is unsurprising that it has been employed in the teaching of a second/foreign language as well.

The beneficial effect of using digital stories on teaching and learning the target language requires initial English language teacher programs to reframe their current coursework so that it can corroborate pre-service English teachers in acquiring and harnessing knowledge and skills they will

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need as designing and using digital storytelling in the teaching of English. That could enable pre-service English teachers to practice designing, shooting and using digital stories to teach English to students of different ages. A literature review done in an effort to find research into exploring pre-service English teachers' reflections upon their experiences of creating digital short stories (DSSs) for young learners of English has shown this topic has not been scrutinized up to date. In light of this gap, the present research targeted broadening the literature on both digital storytelling and pre-service teachers' reflections on their experiences of creating DSSs through presenting findings as to pre-service English teachers' perceptions of the use of DSSs in young English language learner classes and their experiences of developing DSSs for them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Storytelling

Digital storytelling has accompanied other traditional teaching practices due to a number of advantages it offers, reported in the studies on it. For example, working in small groups to design and shoot videos could increase student engagement and motivation as was reported in the research by Niemi and Multisilta (2016). Likewise, the study by Flórez-Aristizábal et al. (2019) reported that interactive storytelling on computers increased student engagement and motivation. It was reported in Yüksel Arslan et al.'s (2016) study that the early childhood education teacher participants used digital storytelling because of its functions as a tool for increasing student motivation, converting abstract knowledge into concrete one, ameliorating children's misbehaviours, monitoring and demonstrating child learning. It was also demonstrated in Ryan and Aasetre's (2021) study that digital storytelling enabled deep learning. In addition, digital storytelling could enhance student literacy skills (Kearney, 2011). Çıralı Sarıca and Koçak Usluel (2016) explored the impact of digital storytelling on primary school students' visual memory capacity and writing skills. The findings indicated the statistically significant gains in the experimental group's writing skills as opposed to those of the control group and while the gains in the experimental group's visual memory capacity were higher, there was no statistically significant difference in it between the two groups. Pointing to the likelihood of resistance mounted by those used to traditional methods, Barber (2016) also reported the affordances that could be drawn from using digital storytelling such as improvements in critical thinking and digital literacy. Reporting similar results, Del-Moral-Perez's et al.'s (2019) research demonstrated digital stories created collaboratively by primary school students were effective in improving their communicative and digital competence.

The effect of digital storytelling on student learning has been investigated at primary and secondary education. Alongside its impact on student learning below higher education, that in higher education has been explored, too. For example, Suwardy et al. (2012) reported in their study that digital storytelling helped university students majoring in accounting contextualize accounting. Seeing the importance of contextualized teaching in facilitating student learning, that finding indicates the significant contribution that could be made by digital storytelling to accelerating student learning. Carried out in a higher education context, Ribeiro's (2016) study demonstrated that digital storytelling increased students' intercultural awareness.

Digital Storytelling in Language Learning

Though not as much as the ones on the impact of storytelling in promoting student learning (e.g., Brownlee, 2021; Kirsch, 2016; Walan, 2019), the use of digital storytelling in an attempt to enhance the effectiveness of language teaching, and linked to this, to stimulate language learner learning has also captured the attention of researchers (e.g., Schmoelz, 2018). The review of the studies on using digital storytelling in language teaching and learning unearths that it brings about beneficial effects on language learning and teaching. For instance, reviewing the studies on digital storytelling

carried out between 2008-2018, Wu and Chen (2020) reported that digital storytelling was effective in the development in linguistic domain in addition to the one in affective, cognitive, conceptual, academic, technological, identity-related and social ones. The differences in the improvement in lower-intermediate level English learners' literacy skills which could result from the use of offline and online digital storytelling were examined in Rahimi and Yadollahi's (2017) study. The results showed that the literary skills of the students designing online digital stories improved more than those who designed offline digital stories. Language teachers using digital storytelling could create learning environments in which language learners are active and scaffold them in and out of the school (Hur & Suh, 2012). The research conducted by Parsazadeh et al. (2021) indicated elementary school students' motivation increased and their English language learning was boosted owing to the integration of computational thinking into digital storytelling.

As well as the appreciable effect of digital stories prepared in the target language on language learning, multilingual storytelling was also found to be effective in language learning (Anderson et al., 2018). To illustrate, multilingual digital storytelling was shown to provide opportunities to students for demonstrating their native tongues and cultures in the English classroom (Hirsch & Macleroy, 2020). Digital storytelling could also wield a positive influence on raising second language learners' cultural awareness. Reporting English language learner empowerment as an outcome of engaging with digital stories, Kim et al.'s (2021) research yielded that English language learners used them to share their cultural backgrounds and personal feelings. Australian middle school students prepared digital stories about their daily lives and local culture in Chinese whereas Chinese middle school students prepared digital stories about their own culture and daily lives in English in Oakley et al.'s (2018) study. The results indicated that cross-cultural storytelling helped the students make gains in language learning and cultural awareness.

The results of the one-year quasi-experimental study conducted by Yang and Wu (2012) showed that the experimental group in which digital storytelling was used outperformed significantly the control group subjected to lecture-type instruction with respect to their academic achievement in English, critical thinking and motivation. Likewise, digital stories were reported to bolster critical thinking amongst EFL teacher candidates in Medina's (2022) research. Incorporating digital storytelling into the teaching of English is demonstrated to develop English language skills of students of different ages. For example, the college students taking the speaking and listening course in Fu et al.'s (2021) research improved their speaking competence via engaging in digital storytelling. The research undertaken by Hava (2019) reported that digital storytelling developed college EFL students' writing and speaking skills and extended their vocabulary knowledge. Carried out with young learners, the investigation by Hwang et al. (2016) revealed that storytelling with web-based multimedia system improved sixth grade EFL learners' speaking skills. Similarly, digital storytelling was shown to be effective at developing seventh graders' creative thinking and becoming fluent speakers in the quasi-experimental study conducted by Yang et al. (2022).

Practicing designing and shooting digital storytelling can be effective in developing pre-service teachers' digital literacy skills and professional learning. For instance, it was demonstrated in Çetin's (2021) study that digital literacy and professional skills of the pre-service teachers majoring in the department of Computer Education and Instructional Technologies increased as a result of digital story creation. Considering the potential benefits that the teacher and the student of any age can obtain from designing and using DSSs, it is obvious that the initial English teacher education program needs to serve for aiding pre-service English teachers in gaining the knowledge of how to design, shoot and use DSSs in the teaching of English in the field. What is more, the delivery mode of education has been digitalized unprecedentedly and will highly likely continue being digitalized as a result of the emergence of the Covid 19 pandemic, which was unanticipated but has had a wide range of influence on the way education is provided. This makes the availability of a fine-tuned initial English teacher education curriculum a *sine qua non* for equipping the future teacher with abilities to conduct quality online teaching and/or accompanying face-to-face teaching with the online one, for the realization

of which supporting the pre-service English teacher to create DSSs could be conceived to be one of the steps. In addition, studies to be carried out into what works well on helping pre-service English teachers gain and broaden the knowledge of the use of DSSs as well as their vantage point of it may guide teacher trainers and practitioners towards enriching their own teaching using DSSs.

Literature review uncovers that pre-service teachers' conceptions of the use of DSSs in the teaching of English to young learners and their experiences of developing DSSs for young learners have not been looked into heretofore. This unresearched topic constitutes the focus of the present study aiming to seek answers to the following research questions:

1. What are pre-service English teachers' perceptions of the use of DSSs in the teaching English to young learners?
2. What do pre-service English teachers think about their experiences of producing DSSs to teach English to young learners?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Procedure

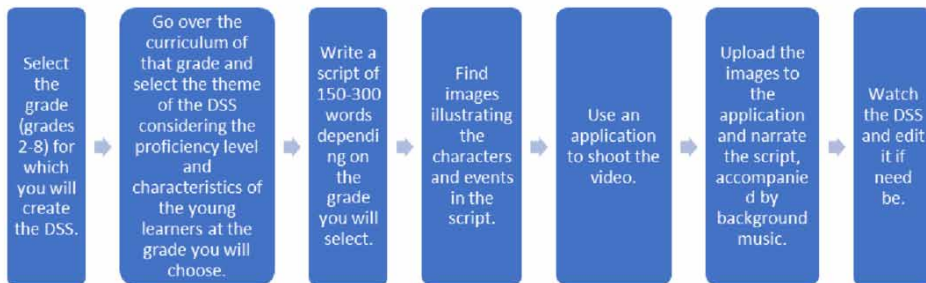
This study was designed as an instrumental case study, as noted by Creswell (2012), an instrumental case study is conducted to gain insights into an issue or theme. In light of the research questions in this research and the rationale behind carrying out an instrumental case study, it becomes obvious why the present research was designed as an instrumental case study. "Young learners" is a term used to refer to students aged 7-14 and studying at grades 2-8 in the present study.

The participants were 40 junior pre-service English teachers (female $n=23$; male $n=17$; mean age = 21.2) studying at a state university in Turkey. Convenient sampling was used in the selection of the participants. As is stated by Creswell (2012), the researcher selecting participants using convenience sampling cannot guarantee that they represent the population; nonetheless, the sample can provide significant insights into the topic and disclose valuable information about research question/s. Prolonged engagement (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) increased the credibility of this research because the researcher and the participants had known each other for two and a half years when the study was undertaken. The researcher also believes that prolonged engagement encouraged the participants to express their real thoughts both in the qualitative survey and in-depth interview. The participants were enrolled in the course of Teaching English to Young Learners I offered by the researcher. The primary purpose of the course is equipping pre-service English teachers with the knowledge and skills they will need to use in teaching English to young learners. Furthermore, pre-service English teachers learn about the differences in the characteristics of young and adult learners, misconceptions about young learners, young learners' learning styles and developing activities and materials conducive to young learners in the course. Pre-service teachers taking the course are to take a midterm examination (40% of the final grade), a final examination (60% of the final exam). The DSSs created by the participants constituted 20% of the study participants' final exam grade.

The participants were informed at the beginning of the fall term of the academic year 2021/2022 (lasting for 14 weeks) that they would create a DSS in pairs, which they would form. The rationale behind asking the participants to work in pairs was getting the participants to collaborate with each other and to gain experience in supporting each other. Following the lecture on the use of and how to prepare DSSs delivered in the seventh week of the term, the researcher provided more detailed info about how to design and shoot DSSs for young learners. Figure 1 illustrates the steps in creating DSSs the participants took.

The lecturer informed the participants that they could contact her anytime they needed while developing their DSSs. Following the end of the eighth week of the term in which midterm examinations were administered, each pair was required to give a 5-minute-presentation on the DSS

Figure 1. The steps in creating DSSs the participants followed



they created. In the presentation, after playing the DSS, they provided information about for whom they designed it and how it could be used in a real classroom environment. Following the explanations provided by the pair, the lecturer gave feedback on the DSS in light of the rubric worth 20 points and involving four criteria: educational value, appropriateness to the proficiency level of the selected grade, appropriateness to the cognitive developmental level of the selected grade and appropriateness to be accompanied by the follow-up teaching activities. Besides the lecturer feedback, all the participants were invited to offer their feedback on how effectively the presented DSS could be used in a real classroom and its shortcomings, if any, could be remedied. Twenty DSSs were archived and shared with all the participants so that they could use them when they begin to do their practicums and/or teach after graduation.

Data Collection Tools and Analysis

Qualitative Survey

A qualitative survey involving four open-ended questions and conducted in English was used to gather information about the participants' perceptions of the use of DSSs in teaching English to young learners and their experiences of creating them. The questions in the survey were produced according to the research questions to gain insights into the participants' perceptions of whether the process of creating DSSs was challenging, of the impact of engaging in designing and shooting DSSs on their technological competence and of working in pairs to develop DSSs. The questions in the survey are:

1. What do you think about using DSSs in teaching English to young learners? Please explain.
2. How would you define the process of creating your DSS? Please explain.
3. What do you think about the effect of creating a DSS on your technological competence? Please explain.
4. What do you think about working in pairs to create a DSS? Please explain.

Subsequent to the end of the presentation on the last DSS, the participants were given 25 minutes to answer the survey questions. The data gathered from the survey was analysed using thematic analysis. Coding was done in agreement with the steps put forward by Creswell (2012). At the outset of the analysis, the responses of the participants were read to gain an overall idea about them. Then, one randomly selected survey was used to find out what was meant in the answers. Following that, coding started. The completion of coding was continued by reviewing the codes and merging the overlapping ones with a view to preventing redundancy. Afterwards, the participants' responses were gone over to ensure no code was left out and to extract quotations leading to the development of the codes. Finally, themes were developed from the codes.

To ensure the credibility of the findings obtained from the survey, member checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) was used. The findings were emailed to the participants in an attempt to make sure they were consistent with the answers they had in their minds to the survey questions. As sharing quotations from the participants' answers, labels such as participant 1, participant 23 etc. will be used rather than their names to protect their privacy and guarantee anonymity.

In-Depth Interview

An in-depth interview was conducted in English with eight randomly selected participants. The questions in the interview were generated taking into account the participants' responses to the survey questions and the research questions. This enabled gaining deeper insights into the participants' perceptions as regards the use of DSSs, the process of creating them and the effect of that process on their technological learning. In other words, the in-depth interview data offered detailed answers to the research questions. The interview questions are:

1. Tell me your ideas about how using DSSs could improve young learners' English language learning.
2. Tell me your ideas about the effectiveness of working in pairs as creating your DSS.
3. Tell me your ideas about how creating a DSS helped you develop your technological competence.

Each interview lasted for 10-15 minutes and were recorded. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and used to support the findings yielded by the qualitative survey. Labels such as interviewee 2, interviewee 7 etc. will be used as presenting quotations from the interviewees' responses to ensure anonymity in this study.

FINDINGS

Participants' Perceptions in Regard to the Use of DSSs in Young English Language Learner Classes

The findings pertaining to the participants' perceptions of using DSSs in teaching English to young learners were obtained from the responses they gave to question 1 in the qualitative survey, which will be backed up with their responses to interview question 1. Table 1 displays the theme and the codes that led to its production and the examples for each code.

Table 1. The participants' perceptions of the use of DSSs in young English language learner classes

Theme	Code	Example
Fosters young learners' English language learning	Increased learner engagement	DSSs are catchy and if the teacher uses DSSs, young learners may be more interested and active in English lessons. In other words, using DSSs could motivate young learners.
	Appealing to different learning styles	There are students with different learning styles and I think DSSs can attract the attention of young learners with different learning styles. For example, visual learners and auditory learners can benefit from them.
	Improvement in four language skills	DSSs help young learners develop their listening, speaking, writing and reading skills.
	Permanent learning	Teaching a topic with a DSS makes it more memorable for young learners. So, they cannot forget what they learn easily.

As displayed in Table 1, the participants' responses to the question of what they thought about the use of DDSs in teaching English to young learners produced the theme *fosters young learners' English language learning*. It was argued in the responses that DSSs could function as an instrument to engage young learners in English lessons. For example, participant 4 stated in their answer:

I believe that using DSSs is an effective way of teaching English to young learners. They can attract their attention and be more interested in the lesson, and consequently, they can learn better.

Similarly, interviewee 6 stated:

DSSs are miraculous tools for me to teach English to young learners because they have everything to attract young learners' attention: colorful images, music and interesting topics like animals.

In addition, the participants' responses indicated that they viewed DSSs as a resource addressing young learners with different learning styles. The extract taken from the response of participant 32 epitomizes the answers of the other participants:

I think DSSs are proper materials to use in young learner classes because visual, kinesthetic, auditory and read/write learners can benefit from them.

Similarly, interviewees 7 and 8 expressed that DSSs could meet the needs of young learners of diverse learning styles as they were rich in pictures accompanied by subtitles and background music, and young learners would be active as carrying out the follow-up activities after watching DSSs.

The participants also noted in the survey that the use of DSSs could engender development in four language skills. Participant 27 stated:

Using DSSs offers lots of advantages. Young learners can improve their listening skills by watching DDSs, their speaking skills by roleplaying the short story, their reading skills by reading subtitles and writing skills by writing a different ending to the story.

In line with the expressions of participant 27, interviewee 3 stated:

I believe that young learners can develop their language skills thanks to DSSs in that listening to the DSS and doing the follow-up activities can help young learners improve their four language skills.

The participants also noted in their answers that young learners can retain what they have learned longer, that is to say, long-lasting learning could be promoted by using DSSs. To explicate their point of view, participant 18 addressed multisensory teaching:

I think using DSSs is a way of employing multisensory teaching because multisensory teaching is a kind of teaching appealing to different senses and DDSs can appeal to different senses, too. Young learners can hear and see, and engage in a lot of activities related to DSSs after watching them, which will also appeal to different senses. When young learners learn in this way, they can remember what they learn for a longer period of time.

Confirming the viewpoints of participant 18, six interviewees highlighted that the use of DSSs could enable permanent learning for young learners can learn and remember what they learn well only if teaching is supported by visual aids illustrating the topic of concern. According to them,

exclusively listening to the teacher and/or recordings was inadequate for learning to take place in young learner classrooms, and enriching teaching through integrating DSSs into it activated young learners' different senses, which enabled permanent learning.

Findings in Relation to the Participants' Perceptions of the Process of Creating DSSs

Findings in relation to the participants' thoughts on the process of creating DSSs are displayed in Table 2, which will be detailed in the following paragraphs.

Table 2 shows that one of the themes with regard to the participants' perceptions of the process of creating DSSs is *neither too easy nor too difficult*. The participants' explanations as to the process they went through indicated that they encountered difficulties with finding appropriate images with the same or similar characters. Participant 29 noted:

It was easy for us but finding pictures linked with the story was quite difficult.

Drawing the attention to the use of applications, interviewee 2 stated:

Although it was not too difficult, we needed to use programs that we did not know and use before to prepare the DSS.

In addition, the participants' responses revealed that adjusting the script to the proficiency level of the grade they selected was tough as they had to write expressions not too challenging for them. Participant 14 was one of the six participants stating the process was easy for them:

It was joyful and we did not have any problems.

Table 2. Participants' perceptions of the process of preparing DSSs

Theme	Code	Example
Neither too easy nor too challenging	Easy process	It was easy for me.
	A bit challenging	Finding images and shooting videos was a little bit difficult.
Resulting in development in technological competence	Learning to use applications	I am not good at using technology as a tool to teach English, but creating a DSS taught me how to use applications to prepare short stories for young learners.
	Searching for info about creating DSSs	I had had no experience of creating a DSS before but thanks to the one we created for the course, I visited lots of websites and read forums and learned a lot about how to shoot a video.
Facilitated learning by virtue of pair work	Eased the process of shooting a DSS	I would not have been able to prepare a DSS if I had created it alone. My partner knew the things I did not know about how to shoot a story and that helped me a lot.
	Facilitated generating ideas	Writing a script is not easy but we talked to each other and produced ideas together, which made it easier.

The findings indicated that creating DSSs helped all the participants enhance their technological competence. For instance, participant 20 stated:

I believe that I developed my technological competence. I am not good at using digital tools, but preparing a DSS developed my technological competence. I can prepare DSSs for my students in the future.

Similar to the views of participant 20, interviewee 1 verbalized:

I had had no idea about how to shoot a video by using an application before preparing our DSS. Now, I have learned that I am, in fact, good at using technological tools to prepare materials. In the future, I will prepare digital stories for my students.

Consistent with these statements, participant 38 wrote:

I learned how to add background music to a video. I surfed on the internet a lot to learn about it and eventually I succeeded in doing that. Because of that, I believe that my technological competence developed.

The findings also revealed that working pairs aided the process of preparing DSSs for the participants. The participants' elucidations on how the pair work promoted the process for them revealed that it enabled them to come up with bright ideas, facilitating the process of writing the script. To illustrate, participant 7 jotted down:

Working with my friend was so useful because we talked to each other a lot, produced ideas together and wrote the script easily. I know that if I had done it on my own, I would not have been able to write the script.

The participants also emphasized that working in pairs helped them to shoot the video because they either learned how to do it from scratch or one of them had rudimentary knowledge of it. Participant 39:

My friend is better than me at using digital tools and he was more active than me when we shot the DSS. I have learned how to shoot a DSS from her.

DISCUSSION

One of the two objectives of this research was uncovering the pre-service English teachers' conceptions of the use of DSSs in young learner classes. The findings demonstrated that the participants held strong beliefs in the facilitative effect of using DSSs on young learners' English language learning. They expounded their viewpoints putting forward a number of points one of which is the probable effect of the use of DSSs on increasing young learners' engagement with the English lesson as they could feel more motivated to follow what is done in the lesson. This finding seems to be in line with the ones in Yüksel Arslan et al.'s (2016) in that the early childhood teacher participants believed that digital storytelling could strengthen student motivation. Similarly, the studies by Niemi and Multisilta (2016) and Flórez-Aristizábal et al. (2019) reported digital storytelling led to increased student engagement and motivation. The findings of this study also showed that the participants contended the use of DSSs could yield improvement in young learners' language skills. The extant research in the literature exploring the effect of DSSs on students' language learning appears to confirm the

study participants' perceptions with regard to seeing the use of DSSs as a means to improve young learners' language skills. For instance, Rahimi and Yadollahi's (2017) study reported that using DSSs enabled development in the students' literacy skills and the one by Fu et al.'s (2021) yielded the improvement in students' speaking skills resulting from the use of DSSs. As well as enhancing young learners' engagement with the English lesson and improving their language skills, brought by the use of DSSs, the participants believed that it might appeal to young learners with different learning styles and enable permanent learning. The findings with respect to the participants' perceptions of the use of the DSSs could underlie the projections to be made about their future teaching practices. They indicate that the participants are highly likely to use DSSs to foster young learners' English language learning. It is promising that the participants believed in the beneficial effect of the use of DSSs on young learners' English language learning because they may enrich their teaching by using DSSs, and as a result of that, ably support young learners in their English language learning journey. Furthermore, knowing why you are doing what you are doing might equal believing in attaining success in what you are doing. For this reason, the participants had the desire to incorporate DSSs into their teaching wholeheartedly as they seem to be knowledgeable about what DSSs are and what benefits could be reaped from using them. What is more, once the teacher sees that using DSSs impacts on young learners' language learning positively, they might use them to facilitate adult learners' language learning.

The findings also revealed that the participants regarded creating a DSS as a task of moderate level of difficulty. Pre-service teachers must be scaffolded by the lecturer to cope with the hurdles they might confront in the process of preparing a DSS. Moreover, as was pointed out by the participants, pair-work could ease the process of shooting a DSS as producing ideas to be used in the script and shooting the DSS were not threatening for them owing to the help they received from their partners. This finding brings to the forefront the advantage learners could draw from collaborative work, pointing to the significance of encouraging pre-service teachers to work collaboratively to complete a task. It could be asserted that pre-service teachers experiencing collaborative work and benefitting from it can have an inclination to get their prospective students to engage in it, too. The participants' expressions pinpointed that preparing a DSS improved their technological competence. A similar finding was reported in Çetin's (2021) in that the pre-service teachers' digital literacy improved by virtue of designing DSSs. Considering the importance of acquiring technological competence for teachers in this digital age, the role to be played by the pre-service teacher education program in aiding pre-service teachers in gaining technological competence becomes evident. Moreover, promoting pre-service teachers to create DSSs for teaching English to young learners, as was done in the present study, can develop their technological competence, which they can transfer into practice in designing and using DSSs when teaching adult language learners as well.

CONCLUSION

In view of the lack of research on unravelling pre-service English teachers' perceptions of the use of DSSs in the teaching of English to young learners and of the process they went through as preparing DSSs, this study targets filling the gap in the literature by investigating them. The analysis of the data showed that the participants deemed that the use of DSSs promoted young learners' English language learning and producing the DSSs in pairs eased the process of preparing them and developed their technological competence.

A follow-up study will be carried out to observe at least 5-8 participants' classroom practices in the teaching practicum they will do in the following academic year and in which they will use the DSSs they and/or their classmates created. Depending upon the results to be obtained from carrying out an interview with the pre-service teachers whose teaching practices will be observed, their viewpoints on the influence of using DSSs on the teaching of English to young learners and if any changes in them have taken place will be examined. Since this study is designed as an instrumental case study,

the findings cannot be generalized to other contexts, which indicates the need for further research to be carried out in different pre-service English teacher education programs. Moreover, though the study participants are the pre-service English teachers, pre-service teachers of diverse subject areas could be encouraged to shoot DSSs and their perceptions with respect to the process of preparing them and their influence on the quality of lessons they will teach can be scrutinized.

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