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Informe final del trabajo de Titulación previo a la obtención del título de Licenciado/a en Pedagogía del Idioma Inglés.

Theme:	
	Digital storytelling and writing skills

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Ambato - Ecuador

SUPERVISOR APPROVAL

CERTIFY:

I, Lic. Mg. Edgar Guadia Encalada Trujillo, holder of the I.D No. 0501824171, in my capacity as supervisor of the research dissertation on the topic: "Digital storytelling and writing skills" investigated by Miss Johana Lisbeth Toapanta Basantes with I.D No. 1550107153, confirm that this research report meets the technical, scientific and regulatory requirements, so the presentation of it, is authorized to the corresponding organism in order to be submitted for evaluation by the Qualifying Commission appointed by the Directors Board.

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DECLARATION PAGE

I declare this undergraduate dissertation entitled "Digital storytelling and writing skills" is the result of the author's investigation and has reached the conclusions and recommendations described in the present study.

Comments expressed in this report are the author's responsibility.

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JohanaI

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DEDICATION

To me for demonstrating that I possess the ability to overcome any challenge, regardless of the To my parents circumstances. and siblings their support for and encouragement, pushing me forward in this project.

Johana.

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First, I want to thank God for providing me with the strength and wisdom required to accomplish my goals. To my parents and siblings for their constant support. To my boyfriend for his continued encouragement and motivation. To my friends, who have added joy to this journey. Finally, I thank my tutor and professors for guiding me in learning and patiently imparting new knowledge to me.

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RESUMEN

La narración digital es un recurso que no se utiliza mucho en el aula, sin embargo, el uso de este recurso puede tener muchos beneficios para los estudiantes, especialmente para el desarrollo de sus habilidades de escritura. Por lo tanto, el objetivo de esta investigación fue analizar las perspectivas de los estudiantes sobre la narración digital y las habilidades de escritura. Además, el estudio fue no experimental con un nivel cuantitativo-descriptivo. Los participantes fueron 66 estudiantes correspondientes al nivel A1 del Centro de Idiomas, de los cuales 21 eran hombres y 45 mujeres, con edades comprendidas entre los 18 y los 31 años. Los datos se recogieron a través de una encuesta con 17 ítems en escala Likert y 3 preguntas abiertas, que fue validada a través de una prueba piloto y tres expertos en la materia. Finalmente, a través de la encuesta se analizaron las perspectivas de los estudiantes y los resultados revelaron que la narración digital es una herramienta eficaz para desarrollar habilidades de escritura. Los tipos de narración digital más utilizados por los estudiantes son los educativos y los sociales, que también les ayudan a desarrollar diferentes tipos de formatos de escritura. Por otro lado, los resultados mostraron que los tipos de formatos de escritura más desarrollados en las clases son el expositivo y el descriptivo. Mientras que los menos desarrollados en las clases son el personal y el comparativo. Los resultados revelaron además que la mayoría de los alumnos preferían las estrategias de esquema y de preguntas, que les permiten organizar sus ideas antes de escribir. Sin embargo, la estrategia de agrupamiento no es utilizada con frecuencia por los alumnos en clase.

Palabras clave: narrativa digital, estrategias, destrezas de escritura, tipos de formatos de escritura.

ABSTRACT

Digital storytelling is a resource that is not widely used in the classroom, however, using this resource can have many benefits for students, especially for developing their writing skills. Therefore, the objective of this research was to analyze students' perspectives on digital storytelling and writing skills. Additionally, the study was non-experimental with a quantitative-descriptive level. The participants were 66 students corresponding to the A1 level of the "Centro de Idiomas", of which 21 were male and 45 were female, aged 18 to 31 years old. Data were collected through a survey with 17 items on a Likert scale and 3 open-ended questions, which was validated through a pilot test and three experts in the field. Finally, through the survey the students' perspectives were analyzed and the results revealed that digital storytelling is an effective tool to develop writing skills. The types of digital storytelling most used by students are educational and social, which also help them develop different types of writing formats. On the other hand, the results showed that the most developed types of writing formats in the classes are expository and descriptive. While the least developed in the classes are personal and comparative. The results further revealed that most of the students preferred the outline and questioning strategies, which allow them to organize their ideas before writing. However, the grouping strategy is not frequently used by students in class.

Key words: digital storytelling, strategies, writing skills, types of writing formats

CHAPTER I. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Research Background

Some resources such as papers, articles, thesis, journals and documents were used to support this research work. In addition, information was collected from different databases. The data gathered was about the use of digital storytelling to improve writing skills.

First, Foelske (2014) mentioned that one of the ways to incorporate technology in education is through digital storytelling. The literature review had the aim of assessing how storytelling impacts student involvement and enthusiasm, as well as literacy proficiency and subject matter comprehension across various academic subjects. In this examination, more than thirty specifically chosen peer-reviewed journal articles addressing the influence of digital storytelling on student learning in educational settings were thoroughly scrutinized and assessed. The research findings indicated that digital storytelling enhances student enthusiasm and participation in student-driven projects. It yielded a favorable outcome in enhancing not only literacy skills but also broader subject knowledge and 21st-century competencies, benefiting both typically performing students and those who typically struggle with narrative composition. Students demonstrated higher levels of engagement when they had authority over the process of reflecting, visualizing, and crafting more meaningful digital narratives for a wider audience.

Furthermore, Sarica and Usluel (2015) led a study with the aim of providing an overview of the current situation of digital storytelling in education. To carry out this study, a systematic descriptive review of the research articles was carried out to describe the current situation and offer suggestions for future studies. On the other hand, the qualitative research method was also used to compare with other research approaches. Research articles were obtained from the Web of Sciences database, with no restrictions on year of publication. Additionally, the participants in this study were teachers, high school students, and college students. Through this review process, a total of 57 articles were identified that met the specified criteria. The content of each

article was subsequently analyzed, focusing on key terms, context, countries and important variables. After conducting the analysis, the results indicated that research related to digital storytelling emerged around 2005, especially the studies focused on language teaching, and it is also important to analyze the empirical studies to determine the impact of other studies.

Moreover, Pinar et al. (2019) conducted a study with the objective of describing the experiences and role of digital narratives after using them, as well as providing possible solutions to the difficulties that students may present. The research was conducted in the form of an action research endeavor, in which 22 fourth grade students from a school in Turkey participated. The tools employed for gathering information consisted of observations, diaries of researchers and students, and video recordings. The researchers created personalized educational materials following the digital storytelling process. Subsequently, the data were subjected to content analysis, revealing a notable enhancement in the skills of students who engaged in digital story writing as part of the study. Likewise, these activities improved students' mastery of technology knowledge and positively influenced their attitudes and motivation toward writing. Additionally, it is important to note that incorporating technology into the writing exercises made the course more engaging for students.

The research conducted by Moradi and Chen (2019) highlighted the importance and complexity of technology, particularly digital storytelling, in the field of language education. This research aimed to conduct a systematic analysis of the application of digital storytelling in educational contexts. The review is limited to research published between 1978 and 2019, beginning in 1978 with the introduction of socio-constructive and socio-cultural theories. These theories emphasized the principles of social constructivism, highlighting learning as a socially interactive process, and emphasizing the importance of learners. It extends to the most recent investigations that explore into various aspects of digital storytelling, from its design to its integration in educational contexts. From this research, it can be concluded that contemporary technology empowers learners to actively participate in their learning process, promoting cognitive growth and greatly improving collaborative teaching and learning practices.

Gonzáles (2020) described the application of digital storytelling in an English class at a private school in Colombia. The objective of this research was to look for new information and communication technologies that allow students to develop their skills. This qualitative descriptive study was carried out over six months. To carry out the research, 48 eleventh grade students were selected, who had an A1 level of English according to the CEFR. In addition, instruments such as document data were used to collect information, where students wrote their perceptions before implementing the digital storytelling, as well as student products and interviews with open-ended questions with the aim of obtaining information about the use of the digital tools and the writing process. Once the information was analyzed, the results revealed that the students improved their written skills and digital storytelling are an effective tool. It is also highlighted that collaborative work is very important and contributes to student learning.

On the other hand, Ariyanti and Fitriana (2017) observed that the writing skills of EFL learners in the English Department in Indonesia were poor, hence their essays were poor as well. That is why they conducted a study with the aim of identifying the difficulties EFL learners have when writing essays, as well as determining their learning needs in order to improve their skills. Qualitative research was carried out. Thirty-three fourth semester English Department students in Indonesia participated in this study. In addition, open-ended questionnaires and semi-structured interviews were used. Subsequently, the results showed that students have more difficulties in relation to grammar, coherence and cohesion, as well as organization and vocabulary. In addition, the interview results showed that one of the problems is the limited time and number of students in a class. Finally, it is concluded that some steps should be followed to make students feel comfortable when writing essays and to apply strategies to achieve the learning objectives.

Moreover, Alisha et al. (2019) remarked that there are several theories and perspectives on the teaching of writing. The primary aim of this study was to identify challenges that students encounter when writing in English. A case study with qualitative design was used. Thirty students of SMK KB Pusdikpal Cimahi were selected for this study. The students in this class were especially selected because their level of motivation to write was low. In addition, a questionnaire was used to collect

the data, which consisted of fifteen closed questions and one open question. The results of the study showed that the most significant problems that students have when writing are due to lack of vocabulary and language use. Students assumed that they had limited knowledge which made them feel insecure or confused in their choice of words. In addition, they had spelling problems which caused problems when writing.

Additionally, Fitria (2022) carried out a study with the objective of understanding and identifying the challenges faced by EFL students when writing and completing their thesis. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach focused on providing a detailed description of the subject matter. The population of this study was 40 English language learners from various universities in Indonesia who were completing their thesis. In addition, a questionnaire was used to collect the information, which was conducted through Google Forms. The questions in the questionnaire were related to the internal and external factors that influence students at the time of writing and completing the thesis. After the analysis of the responses, the factors that contribute to the difficulties faced by the students were identified. Some of the internal factors were: difficulties in selecting the appropriate topic, feelings of pessimism, difficulties with grammar, spelling and punctuation. On the other hand, external factors such as: communication problems with teachers and lack of understanding of the suggestions given, lack of access to information and electronic devices. In conclusion there were several factors that affect students, especially those taking a major in English, that is why it is important the process of preparation for writing a thesis.

The previous articles contributed to the topic of the present research by providing a solid foundation on digital storytelling and writing skills. These articles offered a wide range of perspectives and viewpoints on the use of digital storytelling in educational settings. The studies also highlighted the importance of technology, particularly digital storytelling, in the field of language teaching. In addition, these studies emphasize the difficulties that students may have in developing written skills, which is important to know in order to carry out this research.

Theoretical foundation of the variables

Independent variable: Digital Storytelling

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) play a crucial role in our

modern interconnected world, influencing various aspects of society, economy, and

culture. Ratheeswari (2018) stated that information and communication technologies

(ICT) are those technologies that permit access to and sharing of large amounts of

information through various electronic devices, including computers, cell phones, the

internet and other means of communication Likewise, Gupta (2021) mentioned that

information and communication technologies is a very big term and does not have a

universal definition. However, this term generally refers to any device that allows to

store, manipulate, transmit or receive information digitally.

The authors mentioned above were cited in order to compare the

conceptualization of ICT in the past and in more recent years. According to what the

authors argued it can be said that in previous years this concept was defined in a deeper

way and this concept had more importance than nowadays where it is defined in a

simple and not very specific way.

ICT has a great influence on the daily lives of human beings, as it is present in

various aspects of their lives such as work, education and leisure. In addition, the

integration of information and communication technology is currently a very

important element in the advancement of some services such as commerce,

transportation, among others (Singh, 2021). Moreover, recently, technology has been

seamlessly integrated into social life. The collective application of information and

communication technologies significantly influences our global perspective. The

widespread presence of telematic networks promises unrestricted access to

information and the ability to transcend limitations (Alkaromah et al., 2020).

On the other hand, with the above mentioned by the two authors it can be

concluded that information and communication technologies are very important in

daily life, since nowadays technology is present in most people's lives, since they use

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it for communication, studies or work. Likewise, technology has allowed advances in several areas, which has benefited society.

Information and communication technologies in education

Technology has transformed the education system, changing the traditional methods of teaching to more contemporary approaches. It aids educators, particularly in effectively presenting material to students. The influence of technology is evident across all levels of education, including higher education institutions like universities, where it has a crucial role in facilitating the learning process (Aminatun, 2019). In addition, information and communication technologies (ICT) in education encompass a diverse set of tools and methods found in different devices. These resources help both teachers and students throughout the teaching and learning process. For example, in learning, ICT help students acquire technological skills, foster independence, increase motivation and facilitate access to a wide range of information. Similarly, in teaching, ICT provide resources to reinforce lessons and facilitate effective communication between educators and learners (Cueva & Inga, 2022).

Furthermore, the goal of ICT is to provide students with the values, knowledge and skills essential for sustained prosperity in a globally connected business environment undergoing continuous technological and market evolution. ICT is a crucial factor in fostering the growth of students, enabling them to be more competitive in the educational field (Hrehová & Teplická, 2020). Moreover, employing ICT tools empowers students to cultivate abilities in analysis, problem-solving, self-directed learning, time and information management, and fostering creativity. Knowledge is disseminated through collaborative efforts, and critical thinking is enhanced by articulating logical ideas and proposing innovative problem-solving approaches. In general, students exhibit a favorable disposition towards ICT tools in contrast to conventional learning methods (Sánchez, 2020).

Web 2.0

Over the past ten years, the Web 2.0 concept has gained significant traction. Wilson et al. (2011) argued that the impact of Web 2.0 principles and technologies has led to a surge in information and media content on the internet. Both individuals and

businesses are increasingly embracing these technologies. Despite their growing popularity and utility, there is still a lack of a precise definition for the term Web 2.0, and its exact scope remains unclear However, the term "Web 2.0" is commonly credited to Tim O'Reilly of O'Reilly Media, Inc. According to O'Reilly (2005), this term was created to characterize a crucial moment for the internet, where companies that had discovered the dot-com crash started utilizing the web as a platform, rather than primarily producing products and services for use on desktop applications.

On the other hand, Santosh (2017) defined Web 2.0 as the second generation of the World Wide Web, marked by users actively generating content, engaging in online collaboration, and exchanging information. This evolution has established such applications as highly effective tools for interaction and communication. In the same way, Alexander (2008) described the term "Web 2.0" as a method for creating web pages that emphasize concise content and interpersonal links among individuals. Additionally, it serves as a demonstration that digital content can be duplicated, transferred, modified, repurposed, and interconnected to suit specific requirements, preferences, and user proficiencies.

Web 2.0 in education

As time passed, people started employing Web 2.0 technology not just for personal use, but also to enhance and facilitate the learning and teaching experience (Jimoyiannis et al., 2013). Similarly, Hursen (2021) argued that as the adoption of Web 2.0 technologies becomes more prevalent in education, its integration into teacher training has likewise grown in recent times.

The incorporation of technology into teaching and learning has resulted in a significant change in education, primarily enhancing the communication between teachers and students (Alkhataba et al., 2018). In addition, Albayrak and Kıyıcı (2017) shared the same idea and highlighted that because of their functionalities, Web 2.0 tools have the potential to intensify engagement between educators and learners, as well as among peers in educational environments, creating more immersive contexts. In addition, Web 2.0 platforms enrich learning experiences through features such as collaborative multimedia, tagging, and social bookmarking.

Advantages of web 2.0 in language learning

It is evident that incorporating Web 2.0 technology in the ESL classroom yields numerous advantages. These include learner engagement, improved writing proficiency, stablish a learning environment that is more relaxed and adaptable, the provision of visual aids for enhanced learning, the cultivation of social skills, encouragement of peer mentoring, facilitation of communication within and beyond the classroom, and a boost in learners' enthusiasm and self-assurance in acquiring ESL skills (Halim & Hashim, 2019). Moreover, students using Web 2.0 tools shift from passive information consumers to an active community, where they generate, manipulate, and critically evaluate information sources to produce fresh content (Huffman, 2017).

Digital teaching tools

Digital teaching tools is an effective tool that can enhance education by simplifying the creation of instructional materials for instructors and offering novel approaches for individuals to learn and collaborate (Haleem et al., 2022). The rise of information technology has played a fundamental role in disseminating collective knowledge and has been a central catalyst for educational advancements. The integration of innovative technology-aided learning resources has brought about significant changes in educational practices within schools and institutions (Ramamuthie & Aziz, 2022).

Furthermore, the rise of digital learning advancements, including, game-based learning, interactive programs, virtual classrooms, e-learning and computer-based learning, encourages independent learning among students. Education is no longer confined to physical classrooms and set schedules; students can access information online through computers and smartphones. As a result, the 21st century calls for innovation in the learning process (Wahyudi, 2019). However, there are numerous aspects regarding the perception of digital technology by educators and education stakeholders that have not been thoroughly investigated by the global community (Mundy et al., 2012).

Types of Digital Teaching Tools

Numerous cost-free digital resources are available for searching, generating, and publicizing content, while also enhancing collaboration among students and teachers. Likewise, Suwartono (2018) explained that the most effective and most commonly used digital tools in the classroom are the following:

Google Classroom

Google Classroom proves to be a valuable platform for designing courses, enrolling students, incorporating content, facilitating communication, and generating assignments and quizzes. Additionally, Google Classroom provides features for tracking grades and assignment deadlines. Users can also recycle pre-existing materials, modify the schedule, and personalize the homepage (Shaharanee et al., 2016).

ClassDojo

Established in 2011, ClassDojo is an educational platform aiming to "Involve each family in the educational experience." Within ClassDojo, each student possesses a personalized avatar, and educators can monitor student conduct by assigning or deducting points according to their performance. Teachers have the autonomy to define commendable behavior and determine the frequency of communication with parents through this platform (DiGiacomo et al., 2021).

Edmodo

The emergence of web 2.0 brought with it various applications and learning platforms, with Edmodo standing out as a popular choice. Notably, it is recognized for its security, as it is free of advertisements and games (Inayati, 2019). Aligned with this concept, Edmodo is a social networking platform with an educational emphasis. This implies that, similar to social media platforms like Facebook, Edmodo serves the purpose of fostering learning (Okumura & Takasa, 2016).

Kahoot!

Kahoot! is a learning platform that employs game-based techniques to evaluate students' understanding. It serves as a formative assessment tool or a departure from conventional classroom routines (Lunden, 2018). It stands out as one of the leading

platforms in game-based learning, with more than 70 million distinct monthly active users and being utilized by half of K-12 students in the United States. By 2019, Kahoot! had been played by over 2.5 billion individuals across 200+ countries (Vick, 2019).

Socrative

Socrative is a digital tool for assessments and student responses, offering different ways to enhance classroom participation and interaction. More specifically, instructors can use it to conduct in-class surveys, assign homework, and administer quizzes (Balta et al., 2018). The tool also enables real-time aggregation of results and provides reports for tracking and visualizing student progress (Socrative, 2019).

Digital Storytelling

The notion of digital storytelling was presented by Joe Lambert at the Center for Digital Storytelling in California. According to Lambert and Hessler (2018), digital storytelling is the combination of audio, video, images and narration to enrich written and spoken skills. In other words, digital storytelling is creating and sharing stories through text, sounds, images and animation. Moreover, Tatli et al. (2018) stated that Daniel Meadows is renowned as both an author and an educator. The author took a leading role in advancing the field of digital storytelling, defining digital stories as succinct multimedia narratives

In practical terms, digital storytelling encompasses the proficiency in narrating tales through the use of digital mediums, including text, visuals, recorded audio, music, and video (Gurrieri & Drenten, 2019). Through the use of software, these diverse media components are integrated to craft a narrative focused on a particular theme or subject, typically conveying a specific message or purpose (Sintonen et al., 2018).

Moreover, digital storytelling empowers computer users to release their creativity by following the conventional steps of choosing a subject, conducting research, crafting a script, and forming a captivating narrative (Robin & McNeil, 2019). In addition, digital storytelling is seen as a modern approach to applying a variety of media outlets for self-expression through narratives (Jessica & Yunus, 2018).

On the other hand, authenticity in digital storytelling refer to the proficient application of ICT tools in cultivating students' capacity to engage in genuine tasks that are relevant to their real-world experiences. The incorporation of ICT enhances the authenticity and fosters a greater enthusiasm for learning the target language among learners (Alkamel & Chouthaiwale, 2018). In addition, a significant aspect setting digital storytelling apart from traditional forms is that the audience can actively engage in the narrative, potentially exerting a direct influence on its course (Handler, 2020).

Digital storytelling in education

Applying storytelling in English Language classes is a crucial component. Stories serve as a motivating pedagogical resource for enhancing various language abilities and introducing values and cultural understanding. In today's digital age, students often lack the inclination to engage with stories, leading to a deficiency in their reading and writing proficiency (Nassim, 2018).

Digital storytelling has rapidly advanced into a worldwide trend, with educators and professionals worldwide seeking to incorporate digital narratives as a way to integrate technology in classrooms, aiding diverse learning processes, particularly in the advancement of students' skills (Anderson et al., 2018). Likewise, digital storytelling has the potential to enhance students' skills by aiding and reinforcing the language learning process, promoting discussions, and, most importantly, leveraging technology to advance and streamline the learning process (Mirza, 2020).

On the other hand, conventional storytelling and digital storytelling serve as literacy tools employed by teachers to actively involve students in narrating a story, thus establishing links between academic material and their personal experiences (Lisenbee & Ford, 2018). In education, digital stories typically run for about 3 to 10 minutes, although they can be longer. The subjects covered in digital storytelling encompass a wide range, from personal anecdotes to the chronicling of historical events, as well as exploring into the lives of individuals within a community, and everything in between (Mirza, 2020).

For generations, storytelling has proven to be a valuable pedagogical technique for teaching values, fostering appreciation for different cultures, and serving as an instructional approach to enhance students' language proficiency (Wang & Zhan, 2010). Likewise, digital stories can serve as effective instructional aids, allowing teachers to create diverse content and pertinent subjects that students can access from various locations. This familiarity with obtaining information from digital stories aligns with their familiarized methods of gathering knowledge from other sources (Dreon et al., 2011).

Types of digital storytelling

Various dimensions are considered when categorizing digital stories. Burch (2018) highlighted that there are a few types of digital stories, including the following:

Personal o narrative: Personal/narrative digital storytelling involves using digital media, such as images, videos, audio, and text, to share a personal experience or tell a story. It often incorporates elements like emotions, reflections, and insights from the storyteller's own life.

Educational/Instructional: This form of digital narrative is employed to present educational content across various domains. These videos function as step-by-step guides accessible on websites, accessible at any time and from any location worldwide.

Historical: Digital stories can be produced to narrate historical events. Individuals might use archival photos, newspaper articles, speeches, and other accessible resources to construct a narrative that imparts greater insight and significance to events of past eras.

Cultural: These stories highlight cultural traditions, customs, and heritage. They can be used to preserve and share cultural knowledge with a wider audience.

Social Impact: This type of digital storytelling aims to raise awareness and inspire action on social or environmental issues. It often combines emotional narratives with calls to action.

Fictional/Fantasy: These stories are works of fiction that use digital media to create immersive fictional worlds, characters, and narratives.

Characteristics to implement digital storytelling

After over a decade of involvement in this medium, Lambert (2003) determined seven crucial elements for creating impactful digital stories.

Point of view

Determining the point of view in a digital story is crucial as it outlines the specific concepts the author intends for the audience to grasp. Each aspect of the narrative should contribute to this understanding, making the clarification of the point of view a significant aspect of the editing process (Lambert, 2003).

Dramatic Question

A dramatic question is made to introduce either stupefaction, interest, or apprehension regarding a specific subject emphasized in the digital narrative prior to its conclusion. This interrogation will be addressed as the digital tale progresses. Put differently, once the dramatic question is resolved, the narrative concludes (Bouchrika, 2023).

Emotional Content

Emotional content refers to the sentiment the author conveys in the narrative. This emotional content has the potential to cultivate the emotional aspect of the mind. As advocated by Nelson et al. (2005) the development of the emotional aspect of the mind should not be underestimated if educators are dedicated to fostering university students with constructive intelligence in the 21st century.

The gift of voice

Narration through recorded voice is an option for depicting the story's progression, but it is not obligatory. The narrative can consist solely of textual elements, images, sound effects, and music to convey the unspoken tones of interaction, pauses, and reactions (Rofiza & Hairul, 2014).

Soundtrack

In order to enhance the audience's understanding of the narrative, music or songs are carefully selected to set the story's atmosphere. Sohn (2011) clarified that music induces the release of dopamine in the human brain, a chemical known to evoke feelings of happiness.

Economy

Economy in storytelling means being concise. The narrative avoids an excess of data, text, images, and elaborate effects. Effective communication can be achieved with minimal information. The creator of a digital story may come to recognize that their narrative can be compellingly conveyed using just a bit of images and video clips (Bakar, 2019).

Pacing

In the aspect of digital storytelling, pacing can be likened to the natural rhythm of human breathing. A well-crafted narrative maintains a balance between not moving too fast or slowly; it occasionally pauses before continuing. It avoids frustrating the audience with a rapid, robotic tempo, providing space for reflection and internalization (Lambert, 2003).

Below are some websites where students and teachers can create digital stories:

"Storyboard That"

"Storyboard That" serves as a digital platform that allows both teachers and students to effectively communicate their perspectives and emotions about a particular situation, employing the medium of a comic strip to convey their thoughts and feelings (Wahjuningsih et al., 2020). Likewise, "Storyboard That" is a browser-based tool for creating stories. In addition to its narrative potential, it can also be used to clarify a process, represent connections between elements, and showcase the passage of time (Shedd, 2019).

StoryBird

StoryBird is a language arts resource designed to enhance children's abilities in visual storytelling. It compiles artwork from illustrators, amassing a library of over 10,000 images. Using these images, students can craft books, comics, and poetry, supported by a wealth of educational materials including 600 lessons, quizzes, and writing prompts contributed by seasoned educators and authors. The platform has facilitated the creation of over 5 million stories, establishing StoryBird as one of the most extensive storytelling communities worldwide (Andrés & Poler, 2017). In addition, StoryBird proves to be an excellent tool for captivating students in the art of crafting narrative texts. By providing exciting and visually appealing images, it invites students into the field of virtual storytelling, offering a canvas for users to skillfully create their own tales (Andriani & Wahyuni, 2018).

StoryJumper

StoryJumper is an online platform for digital storytelling, enabling students to generate, narrate, and distribute their stories to a diverse audience (Mousazadeh et al., 2018). In addition, StoryJumper is a user-friendly tool designed for effortless creation of children's books. The result of this application is a concise story accompanied by freely available pictures, characters, and objects. It also allows for the addition of text, which can be formatted to some extent (Mohammad & Yamat, 2020).

Dependent variable: Writing skills

English Language

The emergence of the English language can be attributed to the arrival of Germanic settlers in the British Isles. Like any other language, English initially served as a means of communication between different communities on a global scale. The language's persistence has played a significant role in assimilating new cultural characters (Mijwil, 2018). Additionally, English belongs to the Germanic language group within the larger Indo-European family. Currently, it holds the position of being the second most commonly used language globally, following Chinese. Nevertheless, English is the most prevalent language worldwide and is gradually progressing towards becoming a universal language (Murphy, 2022).

Moreover, the English language encompasses conventional spoken, signed, or written forms of communication utilized within a social community, engaging actively in its cultural practices. In addition, people initially acquire one language—their native or maternal tongue, which is the language spoken by those who care for them from early childhood (Robins & Crystal, 2021). However, Ilyosovna (2020) argued that mastering English enables you to engage with a broader online community and access a wealth of resources. The potential is unlimited. Proficiency in English will open up a wide range of leisure opportunities.

Furthermore, in today's interconnected world, global communication predominantly occurs in a shared language, which is English. This language has reached the status of a universal means of communication, spoken worldwide. English finds extensive application in various domains including, instruction, commerce, tourism, media, software development, healthcare, scientific research, information technology, investment, and more. It stands as the primary choice for business communication and online interactions (Rao, 2019). Moreover, according to Peña (2019), the English language experienced standardization and gained prominence in London in the modern era. It has a gradual transformation and started to make significant progress. Additionally, colonization led to alterations in pronunciation, particularly impacting the long vowel sounds in the language's standardization. During

the early stages of modern times, English gained importance in the British Isles and subsequently proliferated worldwide.

Language skills

English is acknowledged as a global means of communication, attainable through various methods adapted to the specific skill a student aims to enhance. According to Rao (2019), proficiency in English encompasses four important skills: reading, listening, speaking, and writing. Speaking and writing are considered as active or productive abilities, whereas reading and listening belong to the category of passive or receptive skills.

Listening and reading abilities are considered receptive skills. These skills, alternatively referred to as passive skills, are cultivated by both native and non-native speakers in the initial stages. Through these skills, English learners have the capacity to receive, interpret, extract, decode, recognize, examine, assess, comprehend, and understand the intended meaning from various forms of communication, such as discourses, messages, utterances, audios, videos, texts, songs, and other modes conveyed by speakers or writers (Nuraeningsih, 2022). In addition, listening holds the highest prominence among language skills, employing a significant impact on the development of other language proficiency abilities (Yuzar & Rejeki, 2020).

On the other hand, productive language skills involve the capacity to actively generate and communicate language through either speaking or writing (Brown & Yule, 2019). Likewise, productive skills involve the creation of tangible products or items that directly apply language skills. Within the aspects of the four language competencies, speaking and writing play crucial roles in these productive abilities (Erzad et al., 2022).

Furthermore, effective speaking requires an open-minded approach and contemporary perspectives. It also demands a level of articulation, allowing the speaker to convey their thoughts with confidence. Certain speaking scenarios involve a degree of interaction, particularly when addressing a live audience. In terms of communication, writing should be clear and easily understood.

Productive skills

It is essential to emphasize the importance of productive skills in enabling learners to actively participate in real-life scenarios, both within the classroom and in international settings. Likewise, it is useful to have a fundamental understanding of sentence structure, particularly in a second language, to facilitate smoother conversations (Majeed & Ilankumaran, 2022). Productive skills serve as a valuable tool in the classroom, offering insights into the extent of students' learning progress. In essence, the development of productive skills is not merely a means of effective expression, but a key determinant of personal growth, academic achievement and professional advancement (Chicho, 2022).

Applying writing as a part of classroom activities offers diversity. It provides learners with tangible proof of their progress, allowing for visible improvement. Additionally, it aids in the acquisition of vocabulary and sentence structure, complementing the development of other language skills (Sreena & Ilankumaran, 2018). In general, both oral communication and written expression are crucial for effective interaction in personal, academic, and professional settings (Bygate et al., 2022).

Writing skill

Writing skill involves inscribing signs and symbols on a surface, composing letters and words, linking them into phrases and sentences, and organizing paragraphs to convey coherent messages. Nevertheless, for both individuals who speak the language naturally and those who have learned it as a second language, becoming proficient in writing tends to be the last and most challenging language skill to acquire (Kahveci & Şentürk, 2021). Similarly, mastering writing is challenging as it involves composing and managing diverse processes, along with the utilization of an array of language and cognitive capabilities (Putri & Dyah, 2021).

Writing skills have held an essential role for an extended period, as being literate encompasses being skilled in both writing and reading. This approach has been extended to the instruction of second languages, encouraging students not only to comprehend through reading and listening but also to actively produce the language

through writing and speaking. This proficiency is heavily emphasized in the classroom; in fact, exercises derived from texts are often extracted and collectively assessed (Pitts, 2020). Additionally, there is an increasing need to develop writing skills for both professional and academic pursuits. In addition, the assessment of educational proficiency is strictly connected to an individual's writing capability. In educational institutions like schools, colleges, and universities, written assessments serve as the primary method for formal evaluation. This extends to various job positions, where written exams are a common part of the selection process. In contemporary society, writing has evolved into an essential tool for success and survival (Rae, 2020).

Writing abilities are essential for proficient communication in diverse areas, encompassing academic, professional, and personal spheres. Proficiency in writing allows individuals to convey their thoughts, ideas, and information in a clear, organized, and compelling manner. Moreover, strong writing skills are often a key factor in academic success, career advancement, and personal development.

Sub-skills of writing

For English learners to enhance their writing abilities, it is crucial to teach specific sub-skills (Spratt et al., 2011). These include the accuracy sub-skills and the communication sub-skills:

The accuracy sub-skill centers on the organization and structure of language; for instance, it encompasses tasks like forming letters, spelling accurately, linking letters coherently, writing legibly, constructing sentences, understanding grammar structures, and selecting appropriate vocabulary for effective written communication.

Conversely, communicative sub-skills rely on the proficiency to communicate effectively in various social and institutional settings. This entails employing a suitable style and using the correct registers, arranging ideas logically, and connecting words into sentences to express a written message appropriately.

Writing Process

To write correctly it is necessary to follow a process. As Harmer (2007) explained, there are numerous writing processes, including the following:

Planning: Prior to start the writing process, the author should have a clear plan regarding the content to be conveyed in the paper. The material for the writing can be derived from personal experiences or external sources.

Drafting: The initial delivery of a written work is referred to as a draft. This first attempt at composing the text is usually carried out with the anticipation of making revisions in a subsequent phase.

Editing: After creating a draft, writers generally review their work to assess what is effective and what needs improvement.

Final version: This is the final stage of the writing process. After writers have revised their draft, implementing changes they think essential, they generate their ultimate version. This version may appear significantly altered from both the initial plan and the first draft, as modifications occur during the editing process.

Aspects of writing

A writer must take into account certain elements in order for his or her writing to be effective. As Jacobs et al. (1981) pointed out, these elements are described below:

Content: Content pertains to the essence of writing, summarizing the central idea or experience. It encompasses a collection of interconnected statements that a writer presents as a cohesive unit in the development of a subject.

Organization: Organization involves the systematic arrangement of content. It encompasses more than just an attempt to assemble a collection of facts and ideas in a disorganized manner.

Vocabulary: Vocabulary pertains to the choice of words that align with the content.

Language use: Language use encompasses the use of accurate grammatical structures and syntactic patterns to delineate logical relationships within paragraph

writing. This involves the expert arrangement, combination, and grouping of ideas in words, phrases, clauses, and sentences.

Mechanic: Mechanic involves applying the graphic conventions of language, which entails organizing letters, words, and paragraphs based on an understanding of their structure and their interrelationships.

Types of writing

There are four primary writing styles: descriptive, persuasive, expository, and narrative (Robin, 2020).

Descriptive: This type of writing tries to create vivid mental images for the reader, establishing a powerful link to the text by engaging their senses. Moreover, this type of writing employs different literary methods such as allegory, metaphors, and various others to describe a thing, place or person.

Persuasive: In this type of writing, the author aims to persuade the person who is of the reliability of a specific argument or position. Furthermore, this type integrates the writer's perspectives, along with offering reasoning and substantiation to reinforce their assertions.

Expository: Expository writing aims to clarify a concept and convey information to a broader audience. In addition, it presents factual information, including statistics, evidence, or research results, concentrating on the objective aspects of a specific subject. It is not designed to convey personal opinions.

Narrative: Commonly found in more extended written works, this type of writing seeks to deliver information through a narrative structure. Narratives should incorporate elements such as characters, conflicts, and settings.

In addition, there are other types of writing formats that are commonly developed in classrooms (Hayal, 2022).

Reflective: Reflective writing involves contemplating and analyzing an event or experience from various perspectives. It is a specific mode to viewing the world, and many individuals find it beneficial when they seek to explore the connections between their own experiences and those of others.

Personal: Personal writing encompasses the writer's personal experiences, emotions, and thoughts. This can manifest in forms such as a diary, journal, or memoir. Whether situated in the past or projecting into the future, personal writers typically explore into events that have directly impacted them, as well as their thoughts and reflections on these situations.

Compare and contrast: Comparison and contrast writing is a form of composition that examines the similarities and differences between two or more subjects. In addition, this type of writing is employed across various disciplines, including history, science, economics, and others.

Written genres

Various authors across different research papers, scientific articles, and books have delineated numerous genres of writing. However, following a comprehensive examination, the most pertinent categories are identified as academic writing, job related writing, and personal writing.

Academic writing

Academic writing encompasses all forms of written and spoken expression within the educational setting. This includes work generated by students like papers, presentations, theses, exams, and also contributions from educational professionals like manuals, essays, articles, and monographs (Brown, 2019).

Job-related writing

Job-related writing encompasses various forms such as phone messages, formal emails, labels, letters, signs, memos, schedules, reports (including job evaluations and projects), journals, manuals, and announcements (Brown, 2019). Likewise, job-related writing fulfills six primary purposes: offering practical information, presenting factual content (not opinions), briefly summarizing information with the help of visuals, providing precise measurements, clearly

delineating responsibilities, and persuading while giving recommendations (Kolin, nd).

Personal writing

Individual or personal writing encompasses a range of forms including letters, text messages, questionnaires, reminders, informal emails, greeting cards, notes, forms, shopping lists, invitations, personal journals, job applications, medical reports, blogs, diaries, calendar entries, creative works like poetry and short stories, financial documents like loan applications and checks, as well as immigration-related paperwork (Brown, 2019).

Writing strategies

Brainstorming: The brainstorming strategy was created with the aim of aiding students in collecting and generating thoughts about their writing topic prior to the actual writing process. This strategy involves the organization of ideas through techniques like mapping or listing, followed by linking them using subordinate concepts to facilitate the development of high-quality writing (Alqasham & Al-Ahda, 2021).

Outline: Writers employ an outline as an organizational instrument to monitor the topics and points they intend to incorporate in a piece of writing. Basic outlines plan the subjects you intend to address and the sequence they will follow. They are typically divided into short paragraphs, each accompanied by its supporting information such as statistics or logical evidence. When it comes to composing the initial draft, the writer follows to the outline, ensuring they have a clear roadmap of what to write and in what sequence (Ellis, 2022).

Wh-questions writing strategy: Questions beginning with Wh-words serve as guiding prompts that can lead students to generate fresh ideas when composing a text (Norlaili et al., 2020). In addition, Wh-questions strategy involves responding to inquiries about the subject using interrogative words like who, what, where, when, how, and why prior to initiating the writing process (Seow, 2002).

Free writing: The free writing strategy allows students to spontaneously generate thoughts on a given topic, promptly writing down ideas and concepts without concerning themselves with punctuation, grammar, structure, presentation, or spelling. This exercise typically lasts between one to two minutes, although the duration may vary at the discretion of the instructor (Seow, 2002).

Listing: The process of producing thoughts through listing entails composing a thorough catalog of creative solutions or concepts for complex problems or subjects. When faced with a challenging problem or topic that is more complex than anticipated, idea listing offers an alternative approach for finding a resolution. Through the organization and prioritization of elements, students can proficiently navigate the complexities and identify which aspects to handle initially (Kaner et al., 2007).

Clustering: The clustering strategy, also known as mind mapping or concept mapping, is a visual brainstorming and organizational method used to generate and organize ideas around a central topic or concept. This strategy is similar to a visual representation or chart in which students draw a central circle, and encircle it with others to write down the main subject in the middle. Around it, they add associated ideas, intending to establish connections with the main topic (Ayunisa, 2020).

1.2 Objectives

General objective

To analyze students' perspectives on digital storytelling and writing skill.

Specific objectives

- To identify the types of digital storytelling that students use in class to develop writing skill.
- To determine the types of writing formats that are developed in EFL classrooms.
- To recognize the writing strategies that students use the most.

Fulfillment of objectives

All research objectives were achieved by collecting data through a survey, successfully addressing all three research questions.

It was necessary to introduce students to digital storytelling and familiarize them with its operation and tools. The survey allowed students to identify the different types of digital storytelling most commonly used in the classroom.

Moreover, the survey made it possible to analyze what types of writing formats students use in class to develop their writing skills. The main types of writing they used were expository and descriptive.

Through the survey, it was possible to identify the strategies that students use to improve their written skills. The most important strategies they use are outline and Wh-question writing strategy. In addition, they use the brainstorming strategy to develop some ideas before starting to write a text. Finally, they develop the strategies of listing, free writing and clustering when they are going to write.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

2.1 Materials

This study was conducted in collaboration with a research tutor, review tutors, a researcher and students from the "Centro de Idiomas" at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. These individuals served as valuable human resources, demonstrating their willingness to actively participate in the research process. Furthermore, academic articles, journals, and papers were used as resource materials to gather additional information for this research. Additionally, some technological tools such as laptops and cell phones were used to complete the survey. Finally, data was gathered through Google forms and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) software.

2.2 Methods

Research approach

Quantitative approach

Quantitative research gives priority to unbiased measurements and the application of mathematical, statistical, or numerical analysis to data obtained through surveys, questionnaires, polls or the manipulation of existing statistical information using computational systems (Babbie, 2010).

This research had a quantitative approach because it was necessary to use a validated survey. Where the perspectives regarding digital storytelling and writing skills were known and the information collected based on the results obtained was analyzed. The quantitative approach was very beneficial during the research process because it allowed for a better construction and elaboration of the study, as it was based on the analysis, description, tabulation and interpretation of the information of the results obtained.

Modality

Bibliographic research

Bibliographic research is an observational, retrospective, and systematic methodology focused on selecting, analyzing, interpreting, and discussing theoretical perspectives, findings, and conclusions presented in recent scientific articles on a chosen topic. Its aim is to acquire pertinent information that aids in addressing specific issues (Ocaña and Fuster 2021).

This study relied on bibliographic research, drawing information from a diverse range of sources including articles, online documents, journals, and books that reinforced the study. Additionally, these references aided in comprehending the distinct features of the variables.

Type of research

Descriptive

Descriptive research seeks to provide a precise and methodical depiction of a situation, population, or phenomenon. It can address questions pertaining to what, where, when, and how, but does not explore into why. In addition, a descriptive research design can encompass an array of research approaches to study one or multiple variables. In contrast to experimental research, the researcher does not apply control or manipulation over any of the variables; rather, they solely observe and measure them (McCombes, 2019).

This study employed descriptive research to present and analyze data and findings, aiming to discover the viewpoints, perceptions and thoughts of the students.

Techniques / tools

This study involved the application of a survey to 66 students from the "Centro de Idiomas" at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. The survey was organized into three main sections, each corresponding to the following research questions: What types of digital storytelling do students use in class to develop writing skills? What types of writing formats are developed in EFL classrooms? What are the writing strategies do students use the most?

The survey consisted of 17 items employing a Likert scale (always, frequently, occasionally, rarely and never) and included three open-ended questions. It was

structured into three sections corresponding to the objectives and research questions. The initial section focused on the types of digital storytelling that students use in class, comprising 6 items and an open-ended question. The second section addressed the types of writing formats that students develop in class, encompassing 5 items with a single open-ended question. The last section encompassed 6 items with an open-ended question regarding the writing strategies that students use the most.

On the other hand, the data obtained were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software.

Furthermore, the primary aim of a survey is to gather data that accurately represents the surveyed group, enabling researchers to make well-founded decisions or derive conclusions. To design an effective survey, it is crucial to formulate questions that are concise, and impartial (McCombes, 2019).

Population

The population of this study was 66 students of level A1 of the "Centro de Idiomas" at Universidad Técnica de Ambato. There were 45 females and 21 males. The majority identified themselves as mestizos, and Spanish was their native language. The ages of the participants ranged from 18 to 25. It's important to note that all participants completed the survey voluntarily.

Table 1Population

Population	Participants	Percentage
Females	45	68,2%
Males	21	31,8%
Total	66	100%

Note: Research participants.

Procedure

The study was carried out with careful and a systematic approach, following a well-defined process to ensure a detailed investigation of the topic. The primary and crucial phase consisted of an efficient review of the relevant literature on digital storytelling and writing skills. Exhaustive efforts were made to gather relevant information from a variety of sources, including books, articles, and academic databases such as Redalyc, Research Gate, Google Scholar, Taylor and Francis, etc.

Next, the research continued with the development of a survey comprising 19 items rated on a Likert scale, along with three open-ended questions. This survey was constructed in accordance with the theoretical framework related to Digital storytelling and writing skills, aligned with the three research questions. Then, the operationalization of variables was made (see annex 2). For the independent variable, the following dimension was considered: types of digital storytelling. While for the dependent variable, dimensions such as types of writing formats and writing strategies used to develop writing skills were considered.

Later, a pilot test was conducted. The purpose of this preliminary phase was to gather initial responses and employ the Cronbach's coefficient for each question to reformulate them if necessary.

Then, students received a brief introduction to the topic, preparing them for the administration of the survey to attain the final results. The survey was conducted within the students' familiar classroom environment, where they felt comfortable. The primary goal was to gather data through the survey and subsequently provide a description of the students' responses based on their unique perspectives and experiences. After that, the survey data collected were thoroughly examined using SPSS software. Quantitative data were subjected to relevant statistical methods, including calculation of means and creation of data tables. At the same time, qualitative data from the open-ended questions were assessed manually. Subsequently, the analyzed data provided valuable insights that led to the formulation of meaningful conclusions and relevant recommendations.

Research questions

- 1. What types of digital storytelling do students use in class to develop writing skills?
- 2. What kinds of writing formats are developed in EFL classrooms?
- 3. What are the writing strategies do students use the most?

CHAPTER III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Analysis and discussion of the results

This section presents the information analyzed, with the intention of answering the three questions related to the objectives of the study. The results derived from the survey will be presented, and the data were processed using SPSS to calculate the mean and facilitate tabulation of the results of the open-ended questions.

- 1. What types of digital storytelling do students use in class to develop writing skills?
- 2. What kinds of writing formats are developed in EFL classrooms?
- 3. What are the writing strategies do students use the most?

Table 2Types of digital storytelling

Item	Mean
I use digital stories to present information about a specific topic in class.	3,33
I like to use digital stories to share personal experiences or narrate a story.	3,12
I create digital stories to narrate historical events such as the "Civil War", the "Industrial Revolution", and the "First World War", etc.	2,76
I use digital stories to explain cultural traditions such as "Inti Raymi", "Halloween", "The day of the dead", etc.	2,88
I use digital stories to inspire actions on social or environmental problems.	3,21
I create digital fiction and fantasy stories such as "The Hobbit", "Harry Potter" and "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland", etc.	2,48

Note: The measures were derived using the following scales: 5. Always, 4. Frequently, 3. Occasionally, 2. Rarely, 1. Never.

Analysis and interpretation

Research question: What types of digital storytelling do students use in class to develop writing skills?

The survey results indicated that students tend to use digital stories to present information about specific topics with a mean of 3,33 and to inspire action on social or environmental problems with a mean of 3,21. This suggested that digital storytelling is a powerful tool for conveying information and advocating for social and environmental causes. In addition, mean scores revealed that students frequently use digital storytelling to share personal experiences or narrate stories with a mean of 3,12, indicating a strong inclination towards personal expression and storytelling through digital media. On the other hand, lower mean scores for creating digital stories about cultural traditions with a mean of 2,88, as well as digital stories to explain historical events with a mean of 2,76 and fiction and fantasy stories with a mean of 2,48, suggested that these types of digital storytelling are less used by students.

This provided valuable information about the types of digital storytelling activities that are most prevalent in EFL classrooms, highlighting areas where students may benefit from further exploration and engagement. Overall, the results provided an overall understanding of the types of digital storytelling used by students to develop their writing skills, indicating their preferences and engagement with different storytelling formats.

Table 3Types of writing formats

Item	Mean
I like to write texts to describe a person, place or thing.	3,26
I write texts to clarify a concept, using real information, such as statistics, or research results.	3,55
I prefer to write texts to narrate stories including elements such as characters, conflicts and settings.	3,02

I like to write texts about personal experiences.	2,74
I write texts about the similarities and differences between things, people and places.	2,73

Note: The measures were derived using the following scales: 5. Always, 4. Frequently, 3. Occasionally, 2. Rarely, 1. Never.

Analysis and interpretation

Research question: What kinds of writing formats are developed in EFL classrooms?

The results of this part focused on the mean scores of the different types of writing formats developed in EFL classrooms. The results indicated that learners most like to write texts to clarify concepts using real information, such as statistics or research results with a mean of 3,55. This suggested that learners are inclined toward writing informative and explanatory texts that convey factual information and knowledge. In addition, the high mean score obtained in writing texts describing a person, place or thing highlights the students' proficiency in descriptive writing, indicating their ability to vividly describe various topics with a mean of 3,26. Moreover, the lower mean scores on writing texts about stories with a mean of 3,02, texts about personal experiences with a mean of 2,74, and texts about the similarities and differences between things, people, and places suggested that these particular writing formats are less used in class by students with a mean of 2,73.

This provided valuable information about the types of writing formats students are most inclined to use and offers an overall understanding of their preferences and their mastery of different writing styles.

 Table 4

 Strategies students use for writing

Item	Mean
Before writing, I write some ideas in any order about the topic of	3,50
the text.	

First, I make a plan of the topics I am going to cover in the text and their sequence.	3,53
Before writing, the teacher asks me Wh-questions about the topic, as a guide to write the text. For example: "What do you think about the topic?", "Why is it important?", "When did the event occur?"	3,53
Before writing, I take 1 or 2 minutes to write my ideas about the topic, without taking into account punctuation, grammar, structure, or spelling.	3,30
To write a text, I make a list of ideas about the topic, prioritizing the most important points	3,48
Before writing, I draw a circle with the main topic and add other circles around it with ideas related to the topic.	2,68

Note: The measures were derived using the following scales: 5. Always, 4. Frequently, 3. Occasionally, 2. Rarely, 1. Never.

Analysis and interpretation

Research question: What are the writing strategies do students use the most?

This section presents the mean scores of various writing strategies used by students to improve their writing skills. The results revealed that students tend to engage in pre-writing activities, the most used strategies are planning topics and their sequence, and answering quick response questions about the topic with a mean of 3,53 followed by the strategy of generating ideas in any order with a mean of 3,50. This indicated that students employ various strategies to generate ideas and organize their thoughts before composing their texts. The high mean scores obtained on these prewriting activities highlight their importance in the writing process and highlight the students' proactive approach to planning and structuring their writing. In addition, the frequent use of enumeration as a writing strategy suggests that students prioritize the organization and categorization of their ideas when preparing to write with a mean of 3,48, as well as the free-writing strategy where students write for a few minutes

without regard to punctuation, grammar, structure, or spelling with a mean of 3,30. However, the lower mean score on the use of visual aids, such as drawing circles with the main topic and related ideas, indicated that this particular strategy is less employed by students with a mean of 2,68.

This provided valuable information about the writing strategies that students rely on to develop their writing skills, offering an overall understanding of their approaches to prewriting and organization.

Table 5 *Open-ended questions*

Question 1	Answer	Total
	Personal	39
	Cultural	15
	Social	1
What types of digital storytelling do you use the most	Educational	2
in class?	Historical	1
	Fictional	2
	Other answers	6
	Total	66
Question 2	Answer	Total
	Expository	16
	Descriptive	22
What types of writing are the most developed in class?	Narrative	12
	Personal	14
	Persuasive	1
	Argumentative	1
	Total	66
Question 3	Answer	Total

	Brainstorming	34
What writing strategies do you use the most?	Listing	18
	Outline	11
	Clustering	3
	Total	66

Note: Qualitative findings derived from the open-ended questions.

Analysis and interpretation

The first open-ended question, "What types of digital storytelling do you use the most in class?

The results indicated that personal digital storytelling is the most commonly used type of storytelling, with 39 students indicating it as their primary type of digital storytelling. This suggested that students prefer to share their personal experiences and stories through digital storytelling, indicating a strong emphasis on self-expression and individual creativity in the classroom. Likewise, 15 students indicated cultural storytelling as their primary type, emphasizing the importance of cultural themes and traditions in students' digital storytelling activities. However, a smaller number of students stated that digital storytelling types such as social, educational, historical, and fictional are used the least in classes, which demonstrated the diversity of digital storytelling used by students, reflecting their engagement with diverse topics and genres in the EFL classroom even though they are not used very often. In addition, some students offered other responses, including methodological phenomenological ones. It is important to note that these types mentioned do not fall under the category of digital storytelling types and belong to a different category.

The second open-ended question, "What types of writing are the most developed in class?" The responses revealed that descriptive writing is the most developed type of writing in class, with 22 students affirming this. This suggested a significant emphasis on vivid and detailed descriptions in their writing. Expository writing follows closely, with 16 students identifying it as the second most developed type. This indicated that students focus heavily on conveying information, explaining concepts, and providing factual details in their writing activities. In addition, narrative

and personal writing were prominent, reflecting students' engagement with narrative and personal expression. The inclusion of persuasive and argumentative writing, although noted by fewer students, indicated exposure to persuasive and argumentative techniques in the classroom, which contributes to the development of critical thinking and persuasive skills.

Finally, the third open-ended question, "What writing strategies do you use the most?". The results of the survey showed that brainstorming is the most frequently used writing strategy, with 34 students mentioning it. This highlighted the students' inclination to generate and organize ideas before starting the writing process, indicating a strong emphasis on pre-writing activities. In addition, listing, noted by 18 students, plays an important role in organizing thoughts and ideas prior to writing. Likewise, outlining was another strategy mentioned by some students, which allows students to make a plan of what they are going to write. On the other hand, the strategy of clustering was mentioned by only 3 students. This could be due to the fact that it is not a strategy that teachers use frequently. However, these results underlined the importance of prewriting techniques to facilitate the students' writing process and improve the organization of their ideas.

Discussion

The following three research questions were formulated to investigate students' viewpoints regarding the digital storytelling, with a specific focus on its influence on writing skills.

Question 1: What types of digital storytelling do students use in class to develop writing skills?

Upon analysis, it was observed that most students use educational and social types of digital storytelling to develop their writing skills, as digital storytelling is a powerful tool for conveying information and advocating for social and environmental causes.

According to Hett (2012), digital storytelling empowers students by allowing them to articulate their thoughts through various literacy media. This allows them to share their narratives with a wider audience, enhancing their understanding of content

and improving their reading and writing skills. For educators, integrating technology into the classroom is a dynamic and motivating resource that appeals to both readers and writers. In addition, Lowenthal (2008) mentioned that sharing a narrative that links personal experiences and existing knowledge helps learners better remember information about the content they are studying. Such connections actively involve learners in the material being presented. Digital stories, with the added dimension of voice, captivate listeners in a way that print stories cannot replicate.

Likewise, Castaneda (2013) stated that the incorporation of digital storytelling involves the knowledge that students acquire in real-life scenarios. In this way, students establish personal and emotional bonds through their stories, using the foreign language in the context of their own experiences, making this approach beneficial for retaining classroom content. However, Kieler (2010) argued that digital stories go beyond just presenting information to the audience. They require a personal viewpoint that gives the writer a voice and ensures that the information is conveyed with an individual perspective.

Question 2: What kinds of writing formats are developed in EFL classrooms?

The results showed that the types of writing that students develop the most are expository and descriptive, since they prefer to write texts that convey factual information and knowledge, as well as describe different things.

Likewise, Graham (2019) demonstrated that in classrooms there are two predominant types of writing, narrative and expository, which enable students to develop their writing skills. He mentioned that narrative writing is a creative and expressive form that invites students to create stories, allowing the development of imaginative thinking and the art of storytelling. Whereas expository writing takes a more informative stance, equipping students with the skills necessary to articulate clear and structured information. Together, the emphasis on narrative and expository writing in the classroom creates a comprehensive approach to language education. On the other hand, according to Persky et al. (2003), in the early grades, teachers encourage students primarily in narrative writing, which includes the development of narratives, descriptions of personal experiences, and various forms of storytelling. In contrast, as students progress through middle and high school, writing tasks tend to be oriented

toward expository writing. These tasks involve activities such as analyzing factual information, reporting, summarizing and expressing opinions supported by evidence. Particularly in college, expository writing becomes the most commonly assigned task.

Question 3: What are the writing strategies do students use the most?

Previous results showed that the main writing strategies used by students are outline and Wh-questions writing strategy, due to the fact that students tend to perform pre-writing activities giving priority to organizing and categorizing their ideas when preparing to write.

Perin and Graham (2007) argued that prewriting activities consist of guiding students through activities designed to facilitate the generation and organization of ideas for their compositions. In addition, they demonstrated that involving students in these activities prior to their initial writing significantly improves the overall quality of their writing. Prewriting tasks encompass actions such as gathering potential information for a paper through reading or creating a visual representation of ideas before beginning the writing process. Examples of such prewriting activities are encouraging collaborative and individual planning, structuring prewriting concepts, guiding students in planning after a brief demonstration or assigning relevant reading materials, and encouraging students to plan their work in advance. Likewise, Shamiyeva (2018) proved that educators who incorporate shared experiences and seek additional information evidenced to be the most effective in reducing students' frustration and increasing their confidence in writing. Examples of this are taskoriented questions, such as asking for more information or suggesting a connection between the introduction and the main purpose of the text. This inspires deeper reflection on ideas rather than focusing solely on rectifying superficial errors. In addition, this offers students the opportunity to raise questions related to the writing process or the final product.

CHAPTER IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Conclusions

Upon analyzing and processing the findings from the survey, the following conclusions were drawn:

After analyzing the results of the study, it can be concluded that digital storytelling is a valuable tool for developing writing skills in EFL classrooms. The study revealed that the types of digital storytelling most commonly used by students in classrooms are educational, social, and personal or narrative. This indicates that digital storytelling is a versatile tool that can be used to develop various types of writing, including descriptive, expository, and narrative writing. However, some students indicated that they use digital storytelling to explain cultural traditions, narrate historical events, and tell fictional stories. In addition, it is important to note that by using digital storytelling, students can improve their writing skills by practicing different writing formats and styles.

In addition, the study revealed that students engage in various types of writing formats in EFL classrooms. These formats include descriptive, personal, expository, narrative, and comparative writing, of which descriptive and expository types of writing are the most developed in classrooms according to the survey results. While narrative, personal and comparative are not developed frequently. However, this indicated that teachers use a diverse approach to writing development, which can help students develop their writing skills, since by developing different writing formats, students can learn to write for different purposes and audiences, which is an essential skill for effective communication.

Finally, the study showed that students use various strategies to develop their writing skills. According to the results, the most commonly used strategies are outlining, Wh-question writing strategy, and brainstorming. These strategies highlight the importance of prewriting activities in the development of writing skills because, by engaging in prewriting activities, students can organize their thoughts and ideas, which can help them write more effectively. In addition, free writing and listing are

other strategies that students use. However, it is important to note that only a few learners claimed to use the clustering strategy.

4.2 Recommendations

Teachers should incorporate different types of digital storytelling into their lesson plans to help students develop their writing skills. By providing students with opportunities to use digital storytelling to present information, share personal experiences, and narrate stories, teachers can foster the development of descriptive, expository, and narrative writing. Likewise, teachers should provide students with opportunities to use digital storytelling to explain cultural traditions, narrate historical events, and tell fictional stories. This will not only enhance students' understanding of different writing formats, such as comparative, personal, and narrative writing, but will also promote cultural awareness and creativity. In addition, it is important for teachers to provide feedback on students' digital storytelling projects to help them improve their writing skills.

Moreover, teachers should continue to use different types of writing formats to help students develop their writing skills. By incorporating different writing formats, such as descriptive, personal, expository, narrative, and comparative writing, into their lesson plans, teachers can provide students with a comprehensive understanding of different writing styles and purposes. This can be achieved through a combination of individual and collaborative writing activities that cater to different learning preferences and strengths. In addition, teachers should focus on developing writing formats that are less frequently practiced, such as narrative, personal, and comparative writing. Providing specific exercises and assignments that address these writing formats can help students expand their learning of writing skills.

Teachers should use different strategies to help students develop and improve their writing skills. That is why it is important for teachers to encourage students to use the clustering strategy, because based on the survey results, it is the strategy least used by students. By highlighting the benefits of this strategy for organizing and visualizing ideas, teachers can empower students to effectively use grouping in their writing process. In addition, providing guidance on how to effectively apply clustering,

as well as incorporating visual aids and examples, can improve students' understanding and application of this strategy in their writing efforts.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1: Institution approval letter

CARTA COMPROMISO

Ambato 08 de agosto de 2023

Doctor Marcelo Núñez Presidente UNIDAD DE TITULACIÓN Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación

Yo, Miryan Consuelo Salazar Tobar, en mi calidad de Directora del Centro de Idiomas de la Universidad Técnica de Ambato me permito poner en su conocimiento la aceptación y respaldo para el desarrollo del Trabajo de Titulación bajo el tema: "DIGITAL STORYTELLING AND WRITING SKILLS" propuesto por la estudiante Johana Lisbeth Toapanta Basantes, estudiante de la Carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros Facultad de Ciencias Humanas y de la Educación en la Universidad Técnica de Ambato.

A nombre de la institución a la cual represento, me comprometo a apoyar en el desarrollo del proyecto.

Particular que comunico a usted para los fines pertinentes.

Atentamente,

Miryan Consuelo Salazar Tobar

DIRECTORA DEL CENTRO DE IDIOMAS

Annex 2: Operationalization of variables

Independent Variable

Digital Storytelling	Dimensions	Indicators	Items
Digital storytelling takes on		Educational/Instructional	1
diverse forms, utilizing unique		Personal/narrative	2
components to communicate	Types of	Historical	3
narratives across digital channels.	digital	Cultural	4
The types of digital storytelling	storytelling	Social Impact	5
encompass a range of multimedia		Fictional/Fantasy	6
platforms, integrating various			
elements like text, visuals,			
recorded audio, music, and video.			
(Gurrieri & Drenten, 2019).			
Writing Skills	Dimensions	Indicators	Items
According to Kahveci and		Descriptive	8
Şentürk (2021), writing skills		Persuasive	9
involve making signs and		Expository	10
symbols, composing letters and	Types of	Narrative	11
words, linking them into phrases	writing	Personal	12
and sentences, and organizing		Compare and contrast	13
paragraphs to convey coherent		Reflective	14
messages. Effective writing			
encompasses a variety of types		Brainstorming	16
and employs diverse strategies.		Outline	17
As individuals refine their writing	Writing	Wh-questions technique	18
skills, they often explore different	strategies	Free writing	19
types of writing and employ		Listing	20
various strategies to effectively		Clustering	21
convey their ideas and messages.			

Source: Theoretical framework **Elaborated by:** Toapanta, J (2023).

Dependent Variable

Digital Storytelling	Dimensions	Indicators	Items
Digital storytelling takes on		Educational/Instructional	1
diverse forms, utilizing unique		Personal/narrative	2
components to communicate	Types of	Historical	3
narratives across digital channels.	digital	Cultural	4
The types of digital storytelling	storytelling	Social Impact	5
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Source: Theoretical framework **Elaborated by:** Toapanta, J (2023).

Annex 3: Cronbach's alfa validation

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,912	17

Annex 4: Survey

Link for the survey: https://forms.gle/EkNmSPmiJ7pyteeP9

Annex 5: Turnitin report



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