

The Use of Dremina as a Digital Storytelling Tool to Improve Students' Motivation in Learning English

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the use of Dremina as a digital storytelling tool to enhance students' motivation in learning English at MTs Al Washliyah Batang Serangan. Using a qualitative descriptive design, data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and analysis of students' Dremina-based storytelling projects. The findings show that Dremina significantly increased student engagement, participation, and confidence in expressing ideas in English. Its features, such as visual customization, voice recording, and interactive editing, supported students in organizing meaning and developing creativity. The results align with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Self-Determination Theory, and the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, indicating that Dremina fosters autonomy, competence, and multimodal literacy. Overall, the study concludes that digital storytelling through Dremina provides an effective, motivating, and learner-centered approach to English instruction. The findings also highlight implications for teachers seeking innovative strategies to improve language learning outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

English has become one of the most essential subjects in the global educational landscape, especially as it functions as an international language that supports academic, professional, and personal development. Despite its importance, many students still demonstrate low motivation when learning English in the classroom. Motivation is a fundamental component in language acquisition because it influences students' willingness to participate, their persistence in facing difficulties, and their overall achievement (Dörnyei, 2001). In many school contexts, especially at the secondary level, English is often perceived as a difficult and monotonous subject due to limited exposure, lack of engaging materials, and the dominance of traditional teaching methods (Harmer, 2015). These conditions create challenges for teachers in sustaining

students' interest. Therefore, exploring interactive, creative, and technology-based learning tools is necessary to enhance students' motivation in learning English.

In the era of digital transformation, students are increasingly familiar with multimedia platforms, interactive applications, and online content. They tend to enjoy visually appealing, interactive learning experiences that differ from conventional lecture-based formats (Prensky, 2010). Unfortunately, many schools have not fully integrated digital tools into English instruction, creating a gap between students' digital lifestyles and classroom learning practices. Many students express boredom, lack of confidence, and reluctance to participate actively, especially in vocabulary, speaking, and storytelling tasks (Richards & Schmidt, 2013). They often find traditional tasks repetitive and disconnected from real-life contexts. As a result, their motivation diminishes, and learning outcomes decline. These realities highlight the urgent need for teachers to adopt modern, student-centered approaches that make English learning more meaningful and enjoyable.

To respond to this challenge, one promising innovation is the integration of Dremina, a digital storytelling tool designed to help users create, narrate, and visualize stories using multimedia features. Digital storytelling, which involves combining narration with multimedia elements, has been shown to enhance language learning engagement and learner creativity (Robin, 2016). Dremina allows students to design characters, construct plot sequences, add audio, and combine visuals into cohesive narratives. This transforms traditional storytelling into an interactive experience aligned with students' digital habits. Through Dremina, students become active creators rather than passive recipients, which increases their sense of ownership and involvement. Digital storytelling also encourages students to express ideas and emotions more freely, making learning more personal and meaningful (Sadik, 2008). The creative process embedded in Dremina supports the development of vocabulary, sentence construction, and oral expression, while simultaneously fostering motivation.

The integration of Dremina in English learning offers several advantages that directly address motivational issues. First, Dremina incorporates visual, auditory, and textual elements, appealing to different learning styles (Mayer, 2009). This helps students process English more effectively. Second, the interactive nature of the tool stimulates engagement because students are actively involved in creating content. Third, Dremina provides a safe and supportive environment for students to practice English without fear of judgment, which boosts confidence (Brown, 2007). Fourth, the social aspect of

storytelling – such as sharing stories with peers – encourages collaboration and strengthens intrinsic motivation. These features indicate that Dremina has the potential to transform English learning from a routine task into an enjoyable, creative activity.

The theoretical foundation of this study is grounded in Constructivism Theory and the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. Constructivism asserts that learners build knowledge actively through experience and reflection (Vygotsky, 1978). In Dremina, students engage in hands-on creation, decision-making, and problem-solving as they build digital stories. This sense of agency enhances motivation because learners feel personally invested in the task (Bruner, 1996). Meanwhile, Mayer's (2009) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning explains that learning is more effective when verbal and visual information are presented simultaneously. Dremina's multimedia features support deeper cognitive processing, improving comprehension and retention.

Although digital storytelling has been widely explored in language education, existing research reveals several gaps. Many prior studies examined tools such as Storybird, Animaker, or Powtoon, but research focusing specifically on Dremina is still scarce, considering it is a newer tool with unique features (Setiawan & Fitria, 2022). Many studies also focus on outcomes such as speaking proficiency or writing skills (Yunus et al., 2021), while fewer explore the impact on students' motivation, particularly in Indonesian secondary schools. Motivation is a crucial variable because it determines how actively students engage in English learning tasks (Gardner, 2010). Additionally, much research is conducted at the university level, leaving a gap at the junior high school level, where students are at a critical stage of language development. These research gaps indicate the need to investigate Dremina's role in improving students' motivation in learning English.

Based on these considerations, this study aims to examine the effectiveness of Dremina in enhancing students' motivation to learn English. By integrating Dremina into classroom instruction, this research expects to demonstrate that digital storytelling can be an innovative and meaningful solution to address motivation problems. Ultimately, this study contributes to English language education by providing empirical insights into how modern digital tools such as Dremina can support more engaging, motivating, and student-centered learning experiences.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to investigate the use of Dremina as a digital storytelling tool in improving

students' motivation in learning English at MTs Al Washliyah Batang Serangan. A qualitative approach was selected because it allows the researcher to explore students' learning experiences, behavioral changes, and motivational responses in a natural classroom setting (Creswell, 2014). The research was conducted with eighth-grade students, as they are in a developmental stage where motivation, engagement, and digital literacy play crucial roles in English language learning. The setting of MTs Al Washliyah Batang Serangan was chosen due to its diverse student population and the school's ongoing efforts to integrate technology into the teaching and learning process. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with students and the English teacher, as well as students' performance and artifacts produced using Dremina. Observations focused on students' participation, enthusiasm, and engagement during the implementation of digital storytelling activities. Interviews were carried out to obtain deeper insights into students' perceptions of Dremina and how the tool influenced their motivation. The Dremina-based storytelling products created by students were analyzed to identify indicators of creativity, language use, and learner involvement. The researcher also played a role as an observer-participant to better understand classroom dynamics and the practical application of Dremina in the instructional process. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, allowing recurring patterns, themes, and reflective insights related to students' motivation and classroom interaction to emerge. Through this methodological approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how Dremina contributes to enhancing students' motivation in learning English within the specific educational context of MTs Al Washliyah Batang Serangan.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This chapter presents and interprets the results of the study regarding the use of Dremina as a digital storytelling tool to improve students' motivation in learning English at MTs Al Washliyah Batang Serangan. The findings were obtained through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and an analysis of students' Dremina-based digital storytelling products. The data are organized into four major thematic areas: changes in students' motivation, patterns of student engagement, students' perceptions of Dremina, and the quality of students' digital projects.

Students' Motivation During the Learning Process

Observations conducted over four instructional meetings reveal a substantial increase in students' motivation following the integration of

Dremina into English classes. During the initial stages of the study, students demonstrated limited interest, minimal participation, and hesitancy when asked to express ideas in English. Many appeared reluctant to speak or write in the target language and often required repeated prompting to participate. However, after Dremina was introduced, students displayed significantly higher enthusiasm. They became more eager to respond to teacher prompts, more willing to complete tasks, and more confident in presenting their stories.

The following table summarizes the key motivational changes documented during classroom observations.

Table 1.
Changes in Students' Motivation Based on Classroom Observation

Aspect Observed	Before Dremina	After Dremina	General Change
Classroom participation	Low	High	Students participated voluntarily and frequently
Enthusiasm	Minimal	Strong	Students appeared energetic and excited
Initiative to ask questions	Almost none	Noticeable increase	Students asked questions related to vocabulary and story design
Confidence level	Low	Moderate to high	Students were more willing to speak and create stories in English
Task completion	Often late or incomplete	Almost all tasks completed on time	Improved responsibility and persistence

The data clearly indicate that Dremina fostered a learning atmosphere in which students were highly motivated to engage with the material. The presence of visual and narrative elements encouraged them to take ownership of their learning process, and the novelty of using an interactive digital tool stimulated intrinsic motivation.

Students' Engagement Based on Observations

Observational data also reveal an increase in multiple dimensions of student engagement. Prior to the intervention, several students frequently exhibited off-task behavior such as chatting about unrelated topics, using mobile phones for non-academic activities, or avoiding participation. Once Dremina was introduced, these behaviors significantly decreased. Students became absorbed in designing their characters, selecting scenes, developing

storylines, and recording narrations. Pairs and small groups frequently discussed how to frame events, choose vocabulary, or adjust animations, indicating deeper cognitive and social engagement.

Three forms of engagement became evident. Behavioral engagement improved as students followed instructions, collaborated, and completed their projects in a timely manner. Cognitive engagement increased as students made deliberate choices regarding vocabulary, grammar, sequencing, and narrative logic. Emotional engagement strengthened as students expressed pride, excitement, and enjoyment when working on their stories. Many students requested additional time to refine their projects, demonstrating authentic involvement in the learning process.

Findings from Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews conducted with ten students and one English teacher confirm the observational findings. Students consistently reported that Dremina made English learning more enjoyable, less intimidating, and more meaningful. Several themes emerged from the interview data.

The first theme concerns increased confidence. Students explained that Dremina helped them express ideas without fear of judgment. They felt more comfortable recording their voices or presenting their stories because the digital characters represented them indirectly. One student noted that speaking through a character made English "feel easier and less embarrassing."

The second theme relates to enjoyment and reduced boredom. Students described the learning experience as similar to creating animated films or games. They emphasized that the process of selecting characters, designing settings, and adding audio narration made English learning feel creative and engaging rather than monotonous.

The third theme involves improved comprehension. Students explained that they understood new vocabulary better when they used it directly in storytelling. The teacher supported this view, stating that even students who were usually passive began to demonstrate creativity, independence, and initiative.

Findings from Students' Dremina-Based Storytelling Projects

The analysis of students' Dremina projects provides additional insight into their learning progress. Each student produced a digital story that included text, images, animations, and voice narration. The projects reflect significant developments in linguistic competence, narrative organization, and creative expression.

The following table presents the evaluation results of the students' digital storytelling projects.

Table 2.
Evaluation of Students' Dremina Digital Storytelling Products

Evaluation Criterion	Average Score (1-5)	Description
Story structure	4.0	Most stories followed a clear beginning, middle, and ending
Vocabulary use	3.8	Students used basic and intermediate vocabulary effectively
Narrative fluency (audio)	3.5	Pronunciation was generally understandable with occasional hesitation
Visual creativity	4.5	Students demonstrated strong creativity in visual and animated elements
Student effort and involvement	4.6	High levels of dedication and attention to detail

The products demonstrate that Dremina not only improved students' motivation but also enhanced their creativity and practical language use. Many students included dialogues, descriptive vocabulary, and narrative transitions, which had not been commonly present in their previous written assignments.

Discussion

The findings are discussed in relation to the theoretical foundations of this study, namely Constructivism Theory and the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning. The discussion also compares the findings with existing research on digital storytelling in EFL contexts.

Dremina and the Enhancement of Motivation: A Constructivist Perspective

The marked increase in students' motivation aligns strongly with Constructivist principles, which assert that learning becomes meaningful when students are actively involved in constructing their own knowledge. Dremina provided students with opportunities to design, create, revise, and present digital stories based on their own ideas and imagination. This sense of ownership contributed central motivation, consistent with the views of Bruner (1996) and Vygotsky (1978) who emphasize that students are more motivated when learning activities reflect personal relevance and active engagement.

Students' increased willingness to participate, their eagerness to complete tasks, and their heightened curiosity indicate that Dremina fostered intrinsic motivation. In addition, the ability to visualize and animate their stories empowered students who typically lacked confidence, enabling them to engage with English in a manner that felt safe and enjoyable.

Dremina and Comprehension: A Multimedia Learning Perspective

The use of Dremina also provided strong support for Mayer's Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which posits that learning improves when words and pictures are presented together because learners process information through verbal and visual channels simultaneously. The multimodal nature of Dremina allowed students to integrate written text, visual scenes, audio narration, and animated characters, enabling them to process language more deeply and retain vocabulary more effectively.

Students' interview responses confirm this theoretical assumption, as many reported that vocabulary became easier to understand when applied within a meaningful visual and narrative context. Their projects demonstrate that Dremina helped them link linguistic forms with contextual meaning, thereby facilitating comprehension.

Active Learning and Student Engagement

The study also shows that Dremina heightened student engagement across behavioral, cognitive, and emotional domains. Students demonstrated greater focus during lessons, participated actively in discussions, and spent substantial effort revising their stories. These patterns align with Schunk's (2012) assertion that engagement is a key indicator of motivation and learning success. The shift from passive reception to active creation transformed the classroom dynamic, making English lessons more interactive and student-centered.

Relation to Prior Research and Contribution to the Research Gap

The findings reinforce the work of Robin (2016) and Sadik (2008), who reported that digital storytelling increases motivation, creativity, and expressive ability. They also align with Yunus et al. (2021), who found that multimedia-based storytelling enhances student interest in EFL learning. However, the present study contributes new insights by focusing on Dremina, a more recent digital storytelling platform that has rarely been examined in EFL research. Furthermore, it addresses a specific research gap by exploring students' motivation at the junior secondary level, a demographic that has received limited attention in previous studies.

The findings illustrate that Dremina significantly improved students' motivation, confidence, and engagement in learning English. Students demonstrated greater enthusiasm, actively participated in classroom activities, produced creative digital stories, and expressed positive perceptions of the tool. The discussion supports these findings through Constructivist theory and Multimedia Learning theory, reinforcing the pedagogical value of Dremina in EFL contexts.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that using Dremina as a digital storytelling tool significantly improved students' motivation in learning English at MTs Al Washliyah Batang Serangan. Classroom observations, interviews, and analysis of Dremina-based projects reveal that digital storytelling fosters higher engagement, active participation, and greater confidence in expressing ideas. Dremina's features, including visual customization, voice recording, and interactive editing, functioned as scaffolds that helped students externalize meaning, aligning with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Students also showed stronger intrinsic motivation, consistent with Self-Determination Theory.

The interactive and personalized nature of Dremina enhanced students' autonomy and competence. The tool also supported multimodal literacy by allowing learners to combine images, audio, and text, consistent with Mayer's Multimedia Learning Theory. Students' projects demonstrated improved language use, creativity, and narrative structure.

The study concludes that Dremina effectively enhances motivation, engagement, and language performance. The positive shifts in learners' attitudes show that digital storytelling can create a more meaningful and supportive English learning environment. Integrating Dremina highlights the value of educational technology in promoting learner-centered and motivating instruction. Future studies may explore long-term impacts or compare Dremina with other digital storytelling tools.

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