



Storytelling and teamwork in the bilingual classroom at university: Impressions and satisfaction from pre-service teachers in the Kamishibai project

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ABSTRACT

The storytelling technique Kamishibai has shown multiple advantages in educational settings. However, there is a lack of studies that deepen on its implementation in teacher training. A total of 114 pre-service teachers (mean age = 20.76 years), enrolled in the Degree of Primary Education at the University of Málaga, participated in a project where they had to design and perform a paper-based theatre for primary-education pupils as a target audience. A semi-structured online survey was administered to determine pre-service teachers' satisfaction and perceptions towards their Kamishibai and the work in teams. The results revealed that most of the pre-service teachers were satisfied with the team experience. Besides, some benefits were listed: fostering creativity, at university; catching pupils' attention, fostering creativity and promoting reading, in primary-school context. The Kamishibai implementation goes beyond promoting reading and other linguistic skills in both mother tongue and foreign language; it may be considered a multidisciplinary educative resource to strengthen further cross-curricular competences.

1. Introduction

The origins of the storytelling technique called *Kamishibai*—paper-based theatre— dates back to 12th century in Japan. During the second decade of the 20th century a revival of this storytelling phenomenon occurred. Kamishibai storytellers (*gaito kamishibaia*) were people who travelled from town to town by bicycle selling sweets to children and telling their stories through coloured illustrations or slides usually supported with a small wooden structure containing those illustrations (Aldama, 2005; Cid Lucas, 2009; Kasuya, 2012; Zalba, 2019). During World War II, this ancient tradition gained more popularity across Japanese cities, towns, and villages, due to the unemployment increase and to the general problems to access the electric energy (Carreño, 2012).

The Kamishibai-coloured illustrations were big and attractive and they were drawn with very simple outlines (Carreño, 2012). Their plots were varied: adventure, mystery, tragedy, fear, etc. They were simple stories with short sentences and with the possibility to include dialogues. But these stories were not simply read aloud; they were interpreted by a storyteller who could change his/her performance style depending on the audience reactions (Kasuya, 2012). The dual interaction (visual and aural channel) with the audience was an essential part of the Kamishibai, as the illustrations played an important role for catching children's attention together with the storytelling (Zalba, 2019). The story was written behind the illustrations, which were shown one by one at the pace required

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by the audience for the correct story comprehension. The storyteller could also play music with some instruments—for example, the xylophone—to indicate the transition of every illustration (Zalba, 2019).

Several research studies confirm the Kamishibai potential in education from the 1930s (Carreño, 2012; Chacón-Villalobos, Molina-Angulo & Ruiz-González, 2015; Cid Lucas, 2009; Criado, 2011; Paatela-Nieminen, 2008). Some studies focused on the storytelling practice in the context of the language education (Ishiguro, 2017; Vermeir & Kelchtermans, 2020), both in their mother tongue (MT) or with second languages (SL) or foreign languages (FL) (Faneca, 2020; Marqués Ibáñez, 2017; Ramadhani & Rozani Syafei, 2014). This technique was also studied as a multidisciplinary educative resource to work graphic, music, artistic, dramatic, technological or social competences (Carreño, 2012; De las Casas, 2006; Faneca, 2020; Tarnowski Fasanello & Firpo de Souza Porto, 2012) or even to relate different themes with other subject areas (Physical Education, Maths, Music, etc.) (Zalba, 2019). In the teaching practice, some studies stressed its use for teaching cross-curricular content such as hygiene or food habits around the world and with students of all educative stages (Chacón-Villalobos et al., 2015; Cid Lucas, 2009).

Its Japanese origins also led numerous educators around the world to use the Kamishibai in order to increase the intercultural perspective (Carreño, 2012) of both students and teachers. Through a multicultural and literary approach (Marqués Ibáñez, 2017), the Kamishibi becomes an open window to the geography, history, and culture of a great variety of regions around the world, as well as to a reflection of different traditions, values, and beliefs (Norton, 2009).

The storytelling is the key of the Kamishibai, but Flanagan (2015) adds three main advantages in education: i) group cohesion; ii) individual learning; and iii) imagination stimulation and cultural interest. This author also claims that individual connection with the tale occurs in two dimensions: the intellectual and the emotional. The students read the text in public behind the wooden structure containing the slides; this aspect can help them to overcome their fears (Baird, 2010; Zalba, 2019), to gain self-confidence, and to link the oral expression with the positive emotions, as it happens with other techniques, for example, the puppet shows or theatre (Carreño, 2012). Zalba's study (2019) also highlights the supportive dimension of this technique, since older students can tell their Kamishibais to other younger pupils.

The educative innovation can coincide with methodological proposals or teaching actions as well as instruments or objects that foster new practice: 'when innovative artefacts enter schools, they call on school team members to act in line with this script and as such require them to take a stance' (Vermeir & Kelchtermans, 2020, p. 251).

The Kamishibai implementation involves a new and emergent literacy (McGowan, 2017). It is, however, different from the *digital storytelling* in its time dimension, since it implies a live communicative act. The action of storytelling in a Kamishibai does not require complex technology or several materials (Baird, 2010). It only needs simple mediation and adequate management skills by the storyteller (Carreño, 2012), and simple text and images to provide a theatrical fascination (Faneca, 2020).

The collaboration is a feature to remark when creating a Kamishibai. It can be used in educative contexts to practise collaborative writing (in both MT and FL) (Faneca, 2020). In the case of FL teaching practice, Ramadhani and Rozani Syafei (2014) point out the utility of the Kamishibai to approach to different cultures and languages. Ansaldo (2014) highlighted the increase of vocabulary in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, since 'the cognitive and language demands were higher as production was required in order to create a story in group and share it orally with others' (p. 30). Other research demonstrated the benefits of the Kamishibai to develop the literacy process of the students with auditory disabilities (Franco Bracamonte & Barreiro Nova, 2021).

However, the collaborative writing inherent to the creation of a Kamishibai in an educative context is not the unique benefit. The inclusion of teamwork into higher-education degrees has many advantages (Wilson, Ho & Brookes, 2018). Besides, we have passed from considering teamwork skills from desirable to essential, as required in the 21st-century employment market (Riebe, Girardi & Whitsed, 2016). Therefore, it is not strange that many scholars considered teamwork practices in their higher-education classroom. Some even examined students' perceptions towards the benefits when working in teams, as the study presented by Volkov and Volkov (2015), in which a sample of 190 students underlined the improvement of some skills related to collaboration, team unity and cultural diversity.

The implementation of the Kamishibai in the bilingual program of the degree of Primary Education implies double advantage for the students: the discovery of didactic potential of the instrument and the progress in the construction of self teaching identity of every student (Tateo, 2012) through creative writing techniques (Arae, 2014). The Arae's study (2014) with undergraduate students of Primary Education degree demonstrated that the artistic work with the image and word implies a clear formative benefit towards their professional development: 'The individual voices that creative writing techniques inspire also emphasise the potential for expanding the language available to beginning-teachers toward more creative possibilities, from preparatory to generative and responsive' (p. 128).

As Tatli, Uğur and Çakiroğlu (2018) declared, 'pre-service teachers should be trained and should have experience in content knowledge, professional knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge regarding their field' (p. 127). Therefore, considering the multiple educative advantages of the Kamishibai and the lack of specific studies to this respect (Silva Moriki & Gomes Franca, 2017), it is, then, necessary the research study we present in this paper. We coincide with Vermeir and Kelchtermans (2020) in the importance 'to deepen our understanding of implementation practices in educational innovation' (p. 252), rather than to evaluate the educative possibilities of the Kamishibai.

On the other hand, regarding the practice of storytelling, some other studies point out the benefits of motor actions to develop the linguistic competence in a FL or in MT (Iglesia, 2012; Ramos & Ruiz Omeñaca, 2011; Taberero Sánchez, Aliseda García & Daniel Huerta, 2016) and the use of Total Physical Response approach so as to help fostering the learning of a FL, above all, in early years (Macedonia, 2019).

The main aim of this study is to explore the perceptions and satisfaction of pre-service teachers towards the teamwork in an active project of storytelling called Kamishibai. With this purpose in mind, the research questions (RQ) for our study were:

RQ1: What are the pre-service teachers' knowledge towards the Kamishibai technique?

RQ2: What are the pre-service teachers' satisfaction with their work in groups?

RQ3: How do the pre-service teachers perceive the Kamishibai implementation in the higher-education classroom and in the primary-education classroom?

2. Method

The methodology followed was mixed: quantitative and qualitative (Cresswell & Clark, 2018; Headley & Clark, 2020; Pole, 2009). On the one hand, the quantitative part shows a descriptive study as the survey administered to participants (see 2.2. Instrument) throws information related to background, training, behaviour, opinions and ideas (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Romero Oliva & Trigo Ibáñez, 2018). On the other hand, the qualitative part is more extensive and shows an ethnographic study on beliefs so as to gather data about activities, perspectives, and satisfaction of participants in educative scenarios for extracting explanations to delimit behaviour patterns and establish action lines (Mendoza, 2011; Trigo Ibáñez, Rivera Jurado & Sánchez Rodríguez, 2020).

2.1. Participants

The pre-service teachers enrolled in their second year of the bilingual group of Primary Education degree at the University of Málaga (Spain) ($n = 151$) were invited to participate in the Kamishibai Project. They signed an informed consent form once they had received detailed information about the purpose and procedures of the study. Data were confidential and treated with exclusively academic and research goals in accordance with the ethical standards for research on human beings proposed in the Helsinki Declaration.

Participants who did not complete the survey ($n = 28$) or did not participate in the project ($n = 16$) were excluded. A final sample of 114 undergraduate students (male, $n = 17$; and female, $n = 97$) were considered in the study. The participants' ages ranged between 20 and 35 (mean age = 20.76 years, standard deviation = 2.09). The pre-service teachers' sample was collected from two academic years ($n = 59$ from 2017 to 2018 or Group 1, G1; $n = 55$ from 2018 to 2019 or Group 2, G2) and they were enrolled in three subjects of the aforementioned degree. The three subjects included in the project were —the titles of the subjects have been translated into English:

Table 1

Dimensions of the semi-structured survey.

Dimension	RQ	Response type	Scale
Dimension 1. Kamishibai background			
1.1. Before working on the Kamishibai project, did you know what 'kamishibai' meant?	RQ1	Dichotomous	Yes/No
1.2. Can you describe with your own words what a kamishibai is?	RQ1	Open	
Dimension 2. Team procedure			
2.1. How satisfied are you with the process of working with your team on this project?	RQ2	Closed	Likert (1–4) 1 = Strongly dissatisfied 2 = Dissatisfied 3 = Satisfied 4 = Strongly satisfied
2.2. Overall, how effectively did your team work together on the Kamishibai project?	RQ2	Closed	Likert (1–4) 1 = Poorly 2 = Adequately 3 = Well 4 = Extremely well
2.3. How many members of your team participated actively most of the time?	RQ2	Multiple Choice	1 = 100% 2 = 80% 3 = 70% 4 = 60% 5 = 50% 6 = 40%
2.4. Give one specific example you have learnt from your team that you would probably not have learnt when working alone.	RQ2	Open	
2.5. Give one specific example the other team members have learnt from you that they would not probably have learnt otherwise.	RQ2	Open	
2.6. Suggest at least one change the team could have made to improve its performance on the project.	RQ2	Open	
2.7. What are the three ways all of you did well in functioning as a team?	RQ2	Open	
2.8. What problems did you have when interacting as a team?	RQ2	Open	
Dimension 3. Kamishibai experience			
3.1. Can you indicate at least three benefits of the implementation of a kamishibai in the classroom at university?	RQ3	Open	
3.2. Can you indicate at least three benefits of the implementation of a Kamishibai in the primary-school classroom?	RQ3	Open	
3.3. What are the difficulties of using and implementing a Kamishibai in the classroom?	RQ3	Open	
3.4. If you had the opportunity to create your Kamishibai again, which aspect/s or element/s would you change?	RQ3	Open	

- (1) Theoretical and Practical Principles of Teaching a Foreign Language.
- (2) Oral and Written Communication Strategies in Mother Tongue.
- (3) Physical Education Didactics.

Two of the three subjects (Foreign Language and Physical Education areas) were English-Medium Instruction (EMI), that is, their content were entirely taught in English, as they belonged to a bilingual program fostered by the university in those academic years. The other one was taught in Spanish as its content covered the communication strategies in oral and written messages in their MT.

From all the groups (universe) enrolled in second year of the Degree of Primary Education (six groups, from letter A to F, in every academic year), our sample (one group, letter B) was considered representative, as it was the unique group belonging to the bilingual program during both academic years.

2.2. Instrument

For the Kamishibai project, some materials were required to develop the structure and the images: i) a cardboard or wooden structure made by the students; ii) some cards and illustrations drawn by the students. Apart from the structure and the illustrations, a videocamera recording the performance of the students was used to evaluate the project.

Finally, the main instrument was a semi-structured survey. Once the questions of the survey had been designed, they were sent to a panel of five experts in education belonging to different universities. The experts, who reviewed the effectiveness of the instrument, suggested some modifications which were implemented into the final survey. The Cronbach's alpha for the four-point Likert questions about work in teams (see 2.1. and 2.2. from Table 1) was 0.705, suggesting that the questions had an acceptable internal consistency (Taber, 2018).

Apart from personal information (their age, MT, FL level and years of study), three dimensions were proposed. These dimensions and how the instrument was categorised in the collection of sample data are shown in Table 1:

2.3. Procedure

The online survey was administered as a final form to the participants near the end of the semester (after the performance in week 15 in both academic years) to reflect upon the experience and show the students' satisfaction and perceptions towards the Kamishibai itself and the work in teams.

The statistical software packages we used were SPSS for Windows v.23 (IBM SPSS Statistics, Chicago, IL, USA), and Microsoft Office Excel 2016 (Microsoft Corp., Redmond, WA, USA).

Descriptive statistics included frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Independent samples *t*-test were run to analyse differences between males and females regarding teamwork variables. A Pearson product-moment correlation was used to determine the relationship between continuous variables and the chi-square test for independence was run to discover if there was a relationship between categorical variables. The significance level was set at $p > 0.05$.

The qualitative responses were codified and examined with qualitative software such as Atlas.ti, v.9 for Windows (Scientific Software Development GmbH, Berlin, Germany), and corpus management software and tagger such as TagAnt v1.2.0, and AntConc v3.5.8. (Windows).

3. Results

In the variables analysed, no statistically significant differences between males and females were found.

There was a strong and positive correlation between items 2.1. and 2.2., which was statistically significant ($r = 0.546$, $n = 114$, $p < 0.001$). This means that there was an association between teamwork satisfaction and teamwork efficiency: the pre-service teachers who were more satisfied with the process of working with their teams scored higher when they were asked about how effectively their team had worked together on the Kamishibai Project.

There was a statistically significant association between FL level and the teamwork satisfaction ($\chi^2 = 18.483$, $p = 0.030$), showing that those students with a higher language level scored higher in teamwork satisfaction (item 2.1.) than those ones with lower language level. In line with these results, data showed that a greater percentage of pre-service teachers with C1 were strongly satisfied (75%) when compared to the percentage of those with B1 (57.65%).

Detailed analysis of all the items listed in Table 1 are examined per dimension in the following sub-sections.

3.1. Dimension 1: Kamishibai background

The two questions from Dimension 1 required two types of answers: quantitative responses (with a dichotomous scale involving yes/no) and qualitative ones (open answers).

Pre-service teachers were asked if they knew what a Kamishibai was before working in the project (item 1.1.). In G1 only 8.5% ($n = 5$) knew what the Kamishibai was, while in G2 the percentage was higher: 38.2% ($n = 21$). This different result in both groups might be due to the fact that chronologically G1 was the first in taking part in the Kamishibai project (2017–2018), so the participants from G2 (2018–2019) might have gathered some information from the first ones.

The other question (item 1.2.) required qualitative responses from the participants. Most of the respondents coincided in their

description of a Kamishibai, that is, a form of storytelling that originated in Japan consisting of a theatre-like structure and some illustrations. The codification to indicate students' comments was: *K* that stands for Kamishibai Project; *PT*, pre-service teacher; and number. Thus, example of comment from KPT1 corresponds to pre-service teacher 1 from the Kamishibai Project:

KPT13: It is a Japanese way of telling stories that consists of using a wooden structure or cardboard that serves as a small theatre. In that structure, we introduce sheets with drawings related to the story that we are telling.

KPT68: It is a kind of Japanese theatre used to tell stories to children using some sheets with pictures which the storyteller uses to support his/her narration.

With the purpose of detecting the most frequent adjectives used by the participants when defining the Kamishibai in item 1.2., we used the corpus management program AntConc. The procedure followed was:

- Qualitative responses from Excel were previously transformed into a TXT file —as this is the file type recognised by most of corpus management software.
- The TXT file was processed with TagAnt (a freeware Part-Of-Speech, POS, tagger).
- The tagged words contained in the POS-tagged document generated by TagAnt was uploaded into AntConc to extract all the adjectives.

The purpose here was to search for three tags: JJ (tag for adjectives); JJR (tag for comparatives); and JJS (tag for superlatives). We also used the asterisk wildcard character [*] in order to search for the alternatives mentioned before, being the string of search in AntConc the following: [JJ*].

A total of 162 hits were found in AntConc, from which 94 were selected as valid according to the context analysed in the software. We also lemmatised the hits thrown by AntConc so as to classify them with the same or similar meaning —for example: didactic $n = 2$ and pedagogic $n = 1$; therefore, the total for didactic/pedagogic $n = 3$. Table 2 lists the adjectives found and their frequency in the answers for Kamishibai-definition question (item 1.2.).

As observed in the list, most of the adjectives have a positive connotation. Some of them could be interpreted as negative or neutral but their context revealed a positive aspect of the Kamishibai in some of those cases. We refer to adjectives like *Japanese*, *different*, *small*, *wooden*, *simple*, *short*, *ancient*, *basic*, and *traditional*.

On the one hand, the neutral ones *Japanese* and *wooden* refer to the characteristics of the Kamishibai (its origin and the structure material); and *traditional* ($n = 1$) is an adjective used for comparing the traditional form of storytelling with the Kamishibai. On the other hand, other adjectives seemed to be negative but once we had observed their contexts we realised that they hid some positive or neutral aspect: the adjective *different* in some of the sequences denoted a positive aspect of the Kamishibai (for example, 'different way of storytelling') or even neutral as it accompanies words like 'drawing' or 'pictures' (for example, 'made with different pictures', 'telling a story through different drawings'); *small* referred to a feature of the Kamishibai 'theatre'; *simple* and *short* were adjectives used for the texts of the story told aloud; *ancient* showed a feature of this storytelling technique; and lastly, *basic* was employed in combination with language, being in this case positive rather than negative, as the stories were intended to be told to children, so no complex language was supposed to be used.

Table 2
Frequencies of adjectives found in responses from item 1.2.

Adjectives	Frequency detected in AntConc
Japanese	22
Different	17
Small	11
Original/creative	7
Wooden	6
Visual	5
Important	5
Simple	4
Didactic/pedagogic	3
New/innovative	3
Short	3
Ancient	2
Good	2
Popular	2
Interactive	2
Alternative	1
Appealing	1
Basic	1
Childish	1
Dynamic	1
Effective	1
Entertaining	1
Funny	1
Traditional	1
Useful	1

3.2. Dimension 2: team procedure

Two questions' responses were configured with a 4-Likert scale to measure pre-service teachers' satisfaction when working with their teams (item 2.1.) and the efficiency as a team when working on the project (item 2.2.). Students were satisfied (26.3%) or strongly satisfied (69.3%) with the teamwork on the Kamishibai project. Besides, they also considered that their team worked together on the Kamishibai projects well (28.1%) or extremely well (63.2%).

Pre-service teachers were asked how many members of their team participated actively in the project (item 2.3.). Just 19.3% (n = 22) of respondents declared that all of their team members were active participants in the project. As far as the rest of percentages, 28.9% (n = 33) indicated that half of the team members participated properly in the tasks of the project, 21.1% (n = 24) pointed out that more than half were active (around 60%), and with less frequency, that is, 8.8% (n = 10) and 6.1% (n = 7) considered that 70% or 80%, respectively, did work actively on the project. Finally, only 15.8% (n = 18) of the pre-sevice teachers indicated that less than half of the members (around 40%) engaged in their team tasks most of the time.

The rest of items (2.4. – 2.9.) were open questions and involved qualitative analysis. Pre-service teachers were asked what they had learnt from their team (item 2.4.) and what their team had learnt from them (item 2.5.). We categorised the answers from both items as follows: *Art techniques, Cooperation and respect, Creativity, Improve foreign language, Organization, Perform with audience, Story aspects, Stress control, or Nothing*. Table 3 lists the sub-categories together with the frequencies and percentages in both items.

It is worth noting that *Cooperation and respect* was the most frequent aspect the pre-service teachers had learnt from their team in item 2.4. (44.7%; n = 51). In item 2.5. the highest percentages thrown did not show great differences as three of them seemed more balanced (19.3% for *Art techniques*; 18.4% *Cooperation and respect*; and 16.7% *Organisation*). These results shocked with the astonishing and positive percentage of *Cooperation and respect* from item 2.4. Another remarkable sub-category was *Stress control*, as, in item 2.5., 11.4% of respondents indicated they transmitted that aspect to their team, but in item 2.4. only 0.9% perceived as something they had learnt from their team.

Pre-service teachers were asked in item 2.6. to indicate one change their team could have made to improve the project execution. Some sub-categories were proposed for 2.6. item responses: *Improve foreign language; Kamishibai structure and illustrations; Language adaptation to the level; More collaboration amongst members; Performance issues or storytelling according to the audience; Story issues; Work planning distribution; or No changes*.

Very few participants indicated *No changes* at all (2.6%; n = 3). Some claimed (12.3%; n = 14) that they would have improved or embellished their *Kamishibai structure and illustrations*:

KPT1: The kamishibai structure could be better. More professional; at school one door was broken.

KPT95: We are not quite good at drawing, so perhaps we have to improve it for the next time.

Others' opinions (21.9%; n = 25) were towards *Work planning and distribution*:

KPT14: organize the work from the beginning to know who is doing each part.

KPT42: We should have started the project earlier.

A few students' comments (3.5%; n = 4) were related directly to the use of the language, above all when it comes to the *Language adaptation to the level of the audience*: KPT13 'We could have better adapted the story in English to the level of Primary school children'. With similar percentage (2.6%; n = 3) some *Story issues* were also highlighted: KPT87 'We could have made a more creative story'.

Others declared (7.9%; n = 9) that they missed *More collaboration amongst the members* of their team:

Table 3
Frequencies and percentages in sub-categories for items 2.4. and 2.5.

Sub-category		Item 2.4.	Item 2.5.
Art techniques	N	24	22
	%	21.1%	19.3%
Cooperation and respect	N	51	21
	%	44.7%	18.4%
Creativity	N	12	17
	%	10.5%	14.9%
Improve foreign language	N	5	9
	%	4.4%	7.9%
Organisation	N	8	19
	%	7.0%	16.7%
Perform with audience	N	2	5
	%	1.8%	4.4%
Story aspects	N	9	5
	%	7.9%	4.4%
Stress control	N	1	13
	%	0.9%	11.4%
Nothing	N	2	3
	%	1.8%	2.6%

but I have difficulties to express them so that the other ones can understand me'; KPT111 'Sometimes we didn't understand each other'.

3.3. Dimension 3: Kamishibai experience

Four items were analysed according to the participants' responses. They had to list three benefits of creating a kamishibai as a team work at university (item 3.1.) and implementing it in the primary-school classroom (3.2.). Fig. 2 shows two clouds of words for both items' responses:

As observed in both clouds, different perceptions were noted depending on the context. Pre-service teachers recognised that the creation of their Kamishibai helped them to develop their 'creativity' ($n = 43$ cases in item 3.1). However, their perceptions changed when it had to do with the primary-school setting, since they considered 'students' ($n = 26$) the centre of the Kamishibai. The respondents pointed out that the main benefit was to catch students' attention and to motivate students. This drives to the second most frequent word, as observed in the wordcloud for item 3.2.: 'attention' ($n = 23$). The word list created in Atlas.ti allowed us to extract the third most frequent words for item 3.2., that is, 'creativity' and 'reading' (both with an occurrence of 14 cases): participants' responses indicated that the Kamishibai also fosters creativity in pupils from primary-school education, and that it also promotes reading in children.

The word list in item-3.1. responses revealed us that 'work' is the second most frequent word ($n = 36$). Once analysed all its instance context, we observed that it appeared in combination with the notion of cooperation or teamwork, as in the following comments: KPT14 '...fosters creativity and cooperative work'; KPT31 '...work in a cooperative way'; KPT54 '...It fosters group work...'

Besides, the third most frequent word in 3.1. was 'way' ($n = 24$). Its context analysis threw positive adjectives that accompanied the word. For instance: 'meaningful way', 'innovative way', 'interdisciplinary way', 'attractive way', 'easy way', 'new way', 'cooperative way', 'dynamic way' and 'good way'.

Despite the benefits, some difficulties were observed by the respondents (item 3.3.). Only 5.3% ($n = 6$) declared no difficulties at all, but some other comments were towards the following aspects:

- *Difficulties for visualising the performance* (9.6%; $n = 11$): KPT79 'Perhaps not all children can see the images well because of the distance to which they are located from the kamishibai'.
- *English language* (10.5%; $n = 12$): KPT20 'Children have different levels of comprehension or in the language used, so it is difficult to make a story adapted to all of them'.
- *Participation and interest of pupils* (28.1%; $n = 32$): KPT59 'I think that the most difficult things are to attract the attention of all of the students and be able to control their interactions'.
- *The work before performance* (14.0%; $n = 16$): KPT107 'The teacher has to do a hard work'.
- *Time* (32.5%; $n = 37$): KPT54 'I think that the main disadvantage could be the time, the time that you have to spend to do it, and also the time that you use in order to read, interact with the students...'

Finally, pre-service teachers indicated some aspects they would change if they had the opportunity to create their Kamishibai again (item 3.4.): *Aspects of the performance*; *Aspects of the story*; *Distribution of the tasks*; *Kamishibai structure*; *Illustrations*; *Vocabulary of the story*; and *Nothing*.

Most of the responses coincided in changing the *Kamishibai structure* (29.8%; $n = 34$): KPT63 'The structure and the doors, I will create another one in order to attract as much as possible the attention of children'. Other changes (20.2%; $n = 23$) were towards *Illustrations* of the pre-service teachers' stories: KPT99 'I would improve the way of emphasizing the main parts of the story, and I would make the pictures bigger to facilitate the visualization'.

Some pre-service teachers declared that they would change some *Aspects of the story* (25.4%; $n = 29$):

Cloud for 3.1.



Cloud for 3.2.



Fig. 2. Wordclouds for items 3.1. and 3.2.

KPT26: Some of the motor actions and I would include more sounds.

KPT65: Maybe I would make a more dynamic and interactive story for children.

Other comments were towards how the text could have been adapted to the level of children with special mention to the *Vocabulary of the story* (7%; $n = 8$): KPT6 ‘The vocabulary, I will adapt it better’; KPT32 ‘Some vocabulary and some arguments from the tales in order to make them easier to understand’. With similar percentage (7%; $n = 8$), the *Aspects of the performance* were pointed out as well: KPT47 ‘It would change the way of presenting the story to make it more interactive with the audience’; KPT54 ‘The interaction with students, I think that it was poor. And making them participants of the story’.

Very few participants recognised they would change the *Distribution of tasks* (2.6%; $n = 3$): KPT33 ‘Maybe, we should have done a better distribution of the tasks’; KPT55 ‘The organisation and the elaboration of the project’. And, finally, only 7.9% ($n = 9$) declared *Nothing* to change.

4. Discussion

The study we present in this paper has analysed undergraduate students’ opinions and satisfaction on the execution of a Kamishibai project and the work carried out with their teams in the classroom, being the first study on examining how pre-service primary-education teachers perceive the implementation of this Japanese ancient technique of storytelling.

First of all, we explored pre-service teachers’ knowledge towards the Kamishibai (RQ1) and the results in the survey revealed that very few students in G1 (just 8.5%) knew what the Kamishibai was before working on this storytelling project (item 1.1.), while students from G2 showed a higher percentage (38.2%), being, however, less than half of the students. We concluded that this increase on the number of students who knew the technique was due to the information they might have received from previous academic year’s students. After the work on the project, their knowledge and perception on the ancient technique changed. Besides, once they had received instruction on the Kamishibai project and had investigated for its execution, pre-service teachers had a clearer idea of what the technique of Kamishibai was (item 1.2.). The qualitative responses of pre-service teachers were processed in a corpus management program so as to identify the adjectives employed for defining the concept of Kamishibai. Most of the adjectives encountered in their definitions expressed positive connotation.

Secondly, a high percentage of pre-service teachers showed their satisfaction (95.6% in item 2.1.) and considered they worked properly in teams (91.3% in item 2.2.), responding, thus, to RQ2 regarding pre-service teachers’ satisfaction when working with their teams. However, and despite the advantages of working together in higher-education settings (Wilson et al., 2018), previous results are not in accordance with their perception of their team working actively as a whole (item 2.3.), being only 19.3% who recognised that all the team members were totally engaged and had carried out their tasks actively during the Kamishibai project. Some other qualitative questions were posed in the survey: two of them were related to what they had learnt from their team (2.4.) and what their team had learn from them (2.5.). The greatest percentages were obtained in Cooperation and respect (44.7%, highest percentage in 2.4.; and 18.4%, second highest percentage in 2.5.) and Art techniques (21.1%, second highest percentage in 2.4.; and 19.3%, highest percentage in 2.5.) sub-categories. These outcomes are in line with the collaboration advantage stressed by Faneca (2020) and artistic work combined with text claimed by Anae (2014) for future professional careers. Besides, this pre-service teachers’ impression was also reflected in their qualitative answers when they answered what they did well in functioning as a team (2.7.), in which words like ‘cooperation’ and ‘work’ were specially highlighted.

As for the pre-service teachers’ perception on the Kamishibai implementation (RQ3), some open questions were posed. The analysis of the qualitative responses revealed that participants considered that the main benefit of their Kamishibai creation (item 3.1.) helped them to increase their ‘creativity’. They also thought that the main benefit for primary-school students (item 3.2.) was the motivation feature of the technique, which catches pupils’ attention. This last aspect is worth mentioning as pre-service teachers declared that this was one of the main difficulties (item 3.3.) they encountered when performing the Kamishibai in a primary-school classroom (28.1%, being the second most frequent difficulty, after time to carry out the project).

With regard to item 3.2.-group of answers, pre-service teachers also recognised that the Kamishibai in the primary-school context fosters creativity and promotes reading in FL, which, consequently, leads to an improvement of FL vocabulary (Asnaldo, 2014) and linguistic skills (Faneca, 2020; Ishiguro, 2017; Marqués Ibáñez, 2017; Ramadhani & Rozani Syafe, 2014; Vermeir & Kelchtermans, 2020). However, we find surprising that amongst the qualitative responses analysed, none of them mentioned ‘culture’, ‘cultural feature’ (Ramadhani & Rozani Syafei, 2014) or ‘cultural interest’ (Flanagan, 2015) when dealing with a FL in a storytelling, above all, when using this paper-based theatre technique.

Finally, regarding the aspects the pre-service would change if they could create a Kamishibai again (3.4.), many of them coincided in the structure supporting the theatre (29.8%), the illustrations (20.3%), and aspects of their story (25.4%). This last issue highlighted by pre-service teachers’ answers was also related to the aspects of the performance, in which the inclusion of more motor actions, different intonation, or even a more dynamic story were some of the most observed comments, taking into account the well-known advantages of movements in young pupils to improve a FL (Iglesia, 2012; Macedonia, 2019; Ramos & Ruiz Omeñaca, 2011; Taber-nero Sánchez et al., 2016).

5. Conclusions

The Kamishibai is an ancient storytelling technique whose origin is situated in Japan. However, the Japanese storytelling phenomenon landed in the field of education due to its potential benefits (Carreño, 2012; Chacón-Villalobos et al., 2015; Cid Lucas, 2009;

Criado, 2011; Paatela-Nieminen, 2008).

These advantages cannot be seen as isolated with the Kamishibai implementation to promote reading together with other linguistic skills in languages (MT or SL/FL), as discussed before. Besides, the Kamishibai interests exceed these linguistic benefits, due to its versatility to consider a multidisciplinary educative resource to work more competences: social, dramatic, artistic, graphic, amongst others (De las Casas, 2006; Faneca, 2020; Tarnowski Fasanello & Firpo de Souza Porto, 2012). Some studies have also delved into the practice of Kamishibai for teaching cross-curricular content integrating themes from different subjects, such as Maths, Physical Education, Music, etc. (Zalba, 2019) in all educative stages (Chacón-Villalobos et al., 2015; Cid Lucas, 2009).

In this last scenario, we have designed the Kamishibai project so as to include three subjects from different areas (Theoretical and Practical Principles of Teaching a Foreign language, Oral and Written Communication Strategies in Mother Tongue, and Physical Education Didactics) belonging to the bilingual program proposed for the Degree of Primary Education at the University of Málaga as a final teamwork for the undergraduate students, and future teachers, enrolled in these three subjects. Our aim was to analyse the perceptions of these pre-service teachers participating in the teamwork storytelling project in order to know their knowledge and opinions about this form of storytelling and their satisfaction in the execution of the project.

As observed in the results discussed before, most of the participants did not know what a Kamishibai was before working in the project. However, once they had participated on it, many positive adjectives were conferred upon the technique, such as: original, creative, new, innovative, good, appealing, dynamic, effective, entertaining, funny, and useful, amongst others. Besides, they mostly declared to be satisfied with the Kamishibai experience and, above all, with the teamwork. Regarding the teamwork and the implementation of the Kamishibai, it seemed, according to the results, that the lack of agreement had been the main problem and the time spent on the global execution of the project (creation, planning, performance...) the main difficulty. Nevertheless, as benefits, they coincided that the Kamishibai fostered creativity and cooperative work when creating it at university, as well as it motivated pupils, caught their attention, promoted reading and fostered creativity, too, in the context of primary education.

We have shed some light on the investigation of Kamishibai as an educative innovation, due to the lack of studies around this (Silva Moriki & Gomes Franca, 2017). Thus, as future research lines, we expect to continue proposing similar Kamishibai projects in FLs in order to integrate more subjects from degrees and masters' degrees related to education in order to know how they would implement their paper-based theatre for younger pupils (pre-school) and older students (secondary education), as well as in inclusive contexts and in hospitals with the aim of determining the perceptions of the ancient technique of storytelling Kamishibai.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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