Digital Storytelling In Second Language Acquisition

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Abstract
This article focuses on the instructive utilization of advanced narrating inside second language learning from an emic point of view. Advanced narrating, which can be portrayed as a mix of the old narrating custom and new innovation, was initially utilized for different purposes than instruction and learning.

Key words: Digital Storytelling, IT, language acquisition, tools, learning, blended telling stories

Digital Storytelling, born in the early 90s, at the same time as the diffusion of multimedia tools at accessible costs and the diffusion of the Internet, uses IT tools to tell stories. In a simplistic way, it can be defined as a method for combining a personal narration with multimedia elements, to produce a small movie. There are different definitions of Digital Storytelling, but all revolve around the idea of combining digital multimedia elements, such as images, audio and video, with the art of telling stories (Storytelling) creating a form of remediation of the latter. What distinguishes it from the banal practice of combining multimedia materials together is its tendency to assume a narrative form, with strong emotional connotations, and the intent to share it with others through the network. The so-called "story tales" can, therefore, be defined as "blended telling stories with digital technology" (Ohler, 2007) that combine skills in narrating with the potential of technologies.

These digital tales can have a variable length, but usually are between 2 and 5 minutes, reaching a maximum of 10 minutes. In order to create these kinds of stories, subjects are required to acquire a set of seemingly simple technical, communicative, reflective and self-discovery skills, but in reality, they are not trivial, requiring adequate training. It is necessary to know how to recognize and manage the oral/visual narrative model, to have reading and writing skills and to be able to use and interpret the media in an appropriate way, opening up to community participation. What is important is also to be able to involve people on a personal and emotional level, not just a conceptual one. It is, therefore, necessary to know how to calibrate the two components, rational and emotional. Quite simply, one could say that a digital story is basically any combination of a spoken narrative, a certain number of illustrations, perhaps a soundtrack along with new technologies to modify and share history. But then there is the Digital Storytelling, which is a concept where one focuses on the production and sharing of a story based on an experience or a personal memory.

The concept of Digital Storytelling was initially developed by the Center for Digital Storytelling in California, where Joe Lambert, co-director of the centre, was a leading personality. In this line, a digital story is a short, short-lived, 2-3 minute story, where the narrator uses his own voice to tell his story. The personal element is highlighted; it can be connected to other people, to a place, to an interest or to anything that can give a personal touch to the story. Precisely for this personal touch, the digital stories that follow the thread of this tradition are often very exciting and affect the audience, also because digital technology offers powerful means of sharing stories. The oral narrative is based on a story written by the same narrator. In 2007, in support of the narrative process as a whole, Lambert identified seven elements that identify effective digital stories, summarized here briefly: 1) During the writing of the story, the narrator should preferably use the first person. 2) In order for a digital story to attract the attention of the public, it is useful to add a dramatic problem, which is finally solved. 3) Furthermore, the content should thrill in the public. 4) Economics is the last element to think about during the writing: it concerns the length of the text and is perhaps the most difficult feature for both beginners and more experienced writers. The meaning is communicated in many ways in a digital story and not just with the
word, and therefore an ideal text should be short, decisive and straight to the essential. Normally, a correct length is 150 - 300 words. 5) The three final elements concern the editing phase. Rhythm is closely related to the art of storytelling, and it is also important now that the stories are presented digitally. The most effective digital stories are told with a natural rhythm and a diversified flow. 6) The oral story concerns the item in the list of seven elements for Digital Storytelling and is perhaps one of the most important elements in a digital story. 7) The last element concerns the use of a soundtrack to support, contrast or emphasize oral narrative.

The above described refers to an ideal use of Digital Storytelling, which can sometimes be difficult to achieve at school, and therefore adaptations with the students will need to be agreed. The seven elements play an important role in structuring and modelling a good digital story. It is necessary to have a purpose, even if it is not always achieved.

In a teaching perspective, teachers often have to use a broader approach than the one described by the seven elements, so that the Digital Storytelling activity complies with the skills that you want to learn and can be expressed in the form of specific learning objectives. Although the remarkable technological progress of these years has made Digital Storytelling possible and easily accessible in today's schools, its use as a learning tool should always be based on the study plan. This obviously also applies to language teaching. When used as a teaching tool, Digital Storytelling must include more than just the production of the story. Students learn more throughout the Digital Storytelling process than in what they express through the story itself, so it is important to give them the opportunity to document also this part. It can be done in many ways: through a register in which to note this additional knowledge, or students can contact the public with additional information and a "background" study related to the history they will show. An informal discussion on the work process and the choices made by the students can also be organized. When the story is about a particular subject, rather than something personal, one can also test the students about aspects related to the overall understanding of the content. Digital stories in the language course can be of two types. The first concerns Digital Storytelling used to tell something personal: for these stories, it is important to use new technologies together with traditional skills (such as speaking and writing). The DST lends itself perfectly to this use. Students can integrate digital stories as part of the lesson in presenting personal topics related to friends, family, pets or memories, just to name a few. In addition, they can create personal stories about books they have read. The focus of reflection must be on why these people, animals or things are important to them. It is better to avoid purely descriptive stories, even if it is not easy, especially with beginners, and especially when students use their second language in the story. The other type of digital stories that are used in foreign language courses are related to a topic within the same English culture, or otherwise foreign. These stories have above all a historical or literary content, but obviously, they are told in a foreign language. Even stories of this kind can be told in the first person, for example when students take on the role of a character in a book. This shows that even "academic" stories, which focus on school subjects, rather than personal stories, can have a personal element in the story. The other possibility is to use the third-person story. Contextualization is very important in this group of stories, where understanding content is one of the learning objectives.

When students make digital stories in a foreign language, they can first write the story. It does not have to be like that, but this way of proceeding has several advantages: one is that students can practice and develop their writing skills; another is that writing stimulates reflection, so important to encourage in Digital Storytelling. A third advantage is that a written account can be useful for evaluation, both by the teacher and by the other students. In a learning perspective, a student can tell a story about himself, someone or something. The story can be told in first or second person. Within the teaching of the foreign language, Digital Storytelling is particularly interesting because it provides an alternative and perhaps more motivating way to practice oral, written and digital skills. However, if Digital Storytelling must be much more than a novelty tool, and rather be understood as a learning activity used to reinforce language skills and knowledge, systematic teaching is required. The figure below shows how the various subjects can participate in this teaching, starting from different fundamental subjects (in the table the Norwegian must obviously be replaced with the mother tongue of the country where Digital Storytelling is experimented).

In a showing point of view, instructors frequently need to utilize a more extensive methodology than the one depicted by the seven components, so the Digital Storytelling action agrees to the abilities that you need to learn and can be communicated as particular learning destinations. Understudies take in more all through the Digital Storytelling process than in what they express through the story itself, so it is impera-
tive to give them the chance to record likewise this part. It is smarter to stay away from absolutely unmistakable stories, regardless of whether it is difficult, particularly with amateurs, and particularly when understudies utilize their second dialect in the story. This demonstrates even "scholarly" stories, which center around school subjects, as opposed to individual stories, can have an individual component in the story. Contextualization is critical in this gathering of stories, where understanding substance is one of the learning targets.

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