Digital Storytelling as an Effective Language Learning Tool

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Abstract

Today teachers know that the Digital Native Generation needs more than just conventional literacy instruction for learning a foreign or second language; so, they must attain new literacy skills to be successful in this century. In this regard, Digital Storytelling has become a powerful technology tool for the 21st Century Classroom. Skouge & Rao [5] state, "Digital storytelling makes use of a wide variety of techniques including standard storytelling, audio and video recording, multimedia publication, and shared "mediated" events". These short and interactive stories help the students to develop a narrative about themselves, their families, friends, culture, or any other important things, in a very convincing and emotionally engaging way. Therefore, from a pedagogical point of view, a digital storytelling activity enhances all four language skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and also promotes lifelong learning skills such as creativity, research skills, critical thinking and reflection.

Stories as explained by Ellis [3] are "motivating and fun and can help develop positive attitudes towards the foreign language" and Banaszewski [1] supports the idea of incorporation of Digital Storytelling in the curriculum by stating, "Digital Storytelling forces schools to answer the question of what is learning, and how can technology be used to truly support the conditions for learning to occur learning". Likewise, experiencing the usefulness of Digital Storytelling, Normann [4] found that the students learn more during the whole digital storytelling process than what they express through the story itself. Barrett [2] also argues that digital storytelling fosters reflection and reflection helps to enhance learning effectiveness and deep learning.

Thus, this paper supports the idea of using Digital Storytelling as a language learning tool and presents an overview of Digital Storytelling: its characteristics and types, and explores Digital Storytelling as a learning tool that promotes language skills. It also examines how instructors can integrate digital storytelling in their teaching and how students can learn to create their own digital stories in order to improve their language skills. Furthermore, this paper discusses the challenges that the teachers and students may encounter while conducting Digital Storytelling activity. The paper concludes with the outcomes of the pilot project conducted by the author to study the impact of Digital Storytelling on the development of her students' language skills.

References

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