



E-Stories

Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

E-Stories Course Design

(WP2 Final Output)

(Development of an eight-week innovative educational course design incorporating digital storytelling, language education, and social integration)

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



Co-funded by
the European Union



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1 Introduction

As part of the E-Stories project, this report documents the development of one of its four key intellectual outputs: an innovative eight-week language course that integrates Digital Storytelling (DST) methodologies. This course was designed to enhance international and immigrant university students' language production — particularly in storytelling and narrative writing in the host country's language — while also improving their technology use and digital literacy.

By integrating digital competencies with core language use skills such as speaking, writing, and narrating in the target language, the course aims to support not only their academic achievement but also social integration. By creating an inclusive learning environment, the course aims to address the project's broader objectives by offering equal learning opportunities through a thoughtfully designed instructional program.

This report is structured in alignment with the course development process carried out under Work Package 2, beginning with the Research Plan, followed by a detailed Needs Assessment and Analysis to identify the specific linguistic and educational needs of the target group. An Overview of Good Practices across partner countries provides further pedagogical grounding. Building on this foundation, the report presents the Theoretical Framework that guided course design, a Digital Storytelling Toolkit, introducing several tools and models for digital storytelling, and the Course Curriculum, including course goals, syllabus, story themes, and sample scenarios. The development of Teaching and Learning Materials, a coherent Evaluation and Assessment Framework, and a summary of the Implementation and Piloting Results are also included.

Developed collaboratively by experts from consortium partners—Necmettin Erbakan University (TR), University of Paderborn (DE), University of Crete (GR), University of Malaga (ES), Konya Technical University (TR), and Western Balkans Institute (RS)—this document serves as a comprehensive record of the course's design, methodology, and expected impact.

This document presents the complete course design and outlines the steps taken throughout its development.

2 Research Plan

This section describes the research plan outlining the steps and methodologies the E-Stories consortium used to develop an effective language course design. This plan includes a comprehensive process to ensure that the course meets its objectives of enhancing digital skills and language production while fostering social integration. The research plan developed here is a clear roadmap for the course design process (Table 1). Each step in the plan is designed to systematically build and refine the course content, instructional strategies, and assessments, ensuring that it effectively supports international and immigrant university students in their academic and social development.

Developing a language course involves multiple components, and numerous prominent models illustrate course design processes. Notable models include those by Taba (1962), Tyler (1949), Brown (1995), Johnson (1989), Nunan (1988), Richards (1990), and Graves (2000). These models generally encompass setting objectives based on a needs assessment, determining content, materials, and methodology, and conducting assessments.

In designing the E-Stories language course, our research consortium has agreed on the model developed by Kathleen Graves (2000) since this course design model is a framework widely used in language teaching and curriculum development due to its systematic approach. Graves' framework emphasizes adapting the curriculum to meet learners' specific needs, goals, and contexts. Unlike hierarchical models, where processes are sequenced linearly, Graves' model is highly regarded for its learner-centered approach and flexibility. As the figure below illustrates, it promotes responsiveness to learner needs, continuous refinement, and structured planning.

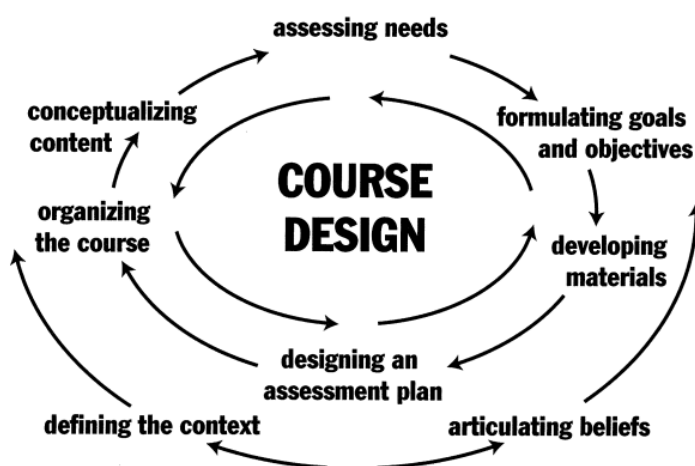


Figure 1. Graves' Course Design Model (2000)

Graves' model is particularly useful for language course design as it encourages a holistic view of curriculum development, encompassing needs analysis, evaluation, and revision. It is especially relevant when integrating innovative teaching methods, such as digital storytelling, because it supports incorporating new technologies and pedagogical strategies in alignment with learners' needs and course objectives. Facilitating a dynamic interplay between content, learning activities, and assessment methods ensures that digital storytelling effectively enhances language learning, making the experience more engaging and contextually relevant for students.

The model follows a comprehensive process that includes:

- Establishing learner needs
- Setting goals and learning objectives
- Conceptualizing the framework
- Structuring the content
- Selecting materials and activities
- Deciding on assessment methods

Accordingly, the research plan for the development of this eight-week E-Stories course followed the steps suggested by Graves, which are outlined and briefly described in the table below.

Table 1. Research Plan for Developing the E-Stories Course Design

Steps	Description
<i>Needs analysis</i>	E-Stories will conduct a needs assessment and analysis to define the context and identify immigrant university students' specific language learning needs, preferences, and challenges.
<i>Literature review& Overview of good practices</i>	E-Stories will review existing literature on language teaching through digital storytelling, especially those relevant to teaching languages to immigrant or second language learners. E-Stories will identify successful approaches and best practices regarding digital storytelling in foreign language teaching.
<i>Course goals& Learning outcomes/objectives</i>	The general goals of the course are already defined as the development of students' language use and technology use skills. E-Stories will clearly state the specific learning outcomes based on the needs assessment findings and relevant literature.
<i>Educational framework/ Conceptualizing the content</i>	Jerome Bruner's social constructivism and Jean Piaget's constructivism theories will be adopted to define the educational framework. Themes to be handled throughout the course will be specified here.
<i>Methodology</i>	E-Stories will describe the teaching methodologies and strategies for the course. Technology-enhanced/assisted teaching through digital storytelling has already been adopted. It must only report its rationale through a literature review and good practices.
<i>Instructional content& materials</i>	E-Stories will identify or develop appropriate instructional content and materials, including textbooks, multimedia resources, and online tools, to support language learning in the course. E-Stories will create lesson plans for the 8-week language course.
<i>Assessment plan</i>	E-Stories will outline the assessment methods used to evaluate students' language proficiency, digital literacy, and progress throughout the course. This may include exams, assignments, presentations, and language proficiency tests.
<i>Implementation plan</i>	E-Stories will detail the timeline and logistics for implementing the course, including scheduling, staffing, and classroom resources.
<i>Evaluation and feedback</i>	E-Stories will describe how the effectiveness of the course will be evaluated and how feedback from students and instructors will be collected and analyzed for continuous improvement.

3 Needs Assessment and Analysis

To begin this research plan, the consortium has conducted a thorough needs analysis, which forms the foundation for the course design. This initial step is crucial in defining context and identifying immigrant university students' specific language learning needs, preferences, and challenges.

The needs assessment process involves several key activities to ensure that the course content is accurately tailored to meet the target group's requirements. These key activities the consortium has also conducted are as follows:

- Identifying the target group,
- Designing and distributing surveys,
- Analyzing existing data,
- Identifying specific learning needs and challenges,
- Reporting the findings.

By following these steps, the consortium has gathered essential information to tailor the E-Stories course to the specific needs of immigrant and international university students, thereby enhancing the course's effectiveness and relevance through a survey in the contexts of five project partners: namely, in Türkiye, Spain, Germany, Serbia, and Greece. The survey attached to this paper (APPENDIX 1) plays a crucial role in gathering detailed information about both language educators and language learners, particularly focusing on international and immigrant students. It aims to collect quantitative and qualitative data on demographics, language proficiency facilities, and the specific needs and challenges faced by these students and their instructors. As Graves states, "you need to know as much as possible about the context to make decisions about the course. The more information you have about the context, the easier it will be for you to make decisions about what to teach and how." (2000, p. 14). This data will help us understand the current landscape and identify areas for improvement in language education.

In addition to the overall evaluation, the results from each project partner country are also separately reported, as shown in APPENDIX 2. Each country-specific report provides a contextualized view of the local language education environment and the particular needs of the learners. Furthermore, a synthesis of common and recurring challenges encountered across all participating countries has been compiled and is presented in a comparative table format below. This table highlights shared issues and insights that will

inform the overarching course design, ensuring that the educational intervention is both locally responsive and internationally coherent.

To briefly present the findings drawn from the results of the surveys, please see the table below:

Table 2. Insights across Countries

Category	Insights Across Countries
Main Challenges	Language barriers (especially speaking/listening), social integration, cultural differences, housing issues, financial pressures, bureaucracy, and discrimination.
Preferred Learning Methods	Conversational practice, storytelling, audio-visual tools (TV, movies, YouTube), tandem exchanges, and repetition-based learning.
Language Skills Gaps	Speaking and listening are generally weaker; reading is often the strongest.
Cultural Learning Interests	Students are interested in learning about local customs, slang, festivals, history, cuisine, daily life, and notable local figures.
Feedback Preferences	Direct, regular, constructive feedback—preferably oral and individualized.
Educators’ Effective Practices	Use of communicative approaches, gamification, group work, inclusion of cultural content, and storytelling.
Digital and Academic Needs	Students seek interactive digital tools, more authentic real-life language use, and academic language development.
Institutional Recommendations	More buddy systems, conversation clubs, structured feedback, integration with locals, and specialized courses for academic/professional vocabulary.
Educators’ Perspectives	Top challenges noted by educators include speaking and pronunciation, grammar, insufficient communication in the target language, and writing. Challenges like understanding idioms and complex sentence structures are also highlighted.
Support Systems	Key supports include textbooks, online materials, digital tools, and personalized assistance.
Suggestions for Improvement	Recommendations include using technological tools, providing online resources, interactive activities to enhance speaking skills, group activities, extracurricular events, and personalized support. Examples include integrating additional grammar support through platforms like Moodle in Spain and assigning peer mentors in Germany.

The findings highlight a strong alignment between the language learning needs of immigrant students and the pedagogical potential of digital storytelling. DST can serve not only as a tool for language practice but also for identity expression, cultural exchange, and community integration.

Key implications drawn for the course design include:

- Incorporate student voice and experience through personal storytelling to enhance relevance and motivation.
- Prioritize speaking and listening activities, especially through story-based interviews, audio diaries, and oral narration.
- Use multimodal digital tools (video, animation, sound, visuals) that allow students to convey meaning beyond limited vocabulary or grammar.
- Facilitate cultural storytelling exchanges—students reflect on both their native and host cultures.
- Embed peer feedback loops within DST activities to foster collaboration, confidence, and self-awareness.
- Scaffold DST assignments to support development across all language skills (planning/writing scripts, reading peer stories, oral presentations).

The E-Stories needs analysis confirms that digital storytelling is not only pedagogically sound but also emotionally and socially resonant for immigrant university students. By responding to the actual conditions identified—such as linguistic insecurity, limited cultural integration, and a desire for authentic engagement—DST becomes a transformative language learning approach.

The diverse contexts across Türkiye, Germany, Spain, Greece, and Serbia reaffirm that local adaptation, learner-centered design, and inclusive digital practices are critical in crafting impactful language education for immigrant students in higher education.

4 Overview of Good Practices in the Partner Countries

In this phase of planning the course design, the E-Stories consortium has produced a collaborative output- a cross-national synthesis of successful educational practices and initiatives that integrate digital storytelling into language teaching and learning.

It was created to identify, showcase, and analyze exemplary uses of digital storytelling in various educational settings, especially language education. Its primary purpose is to inform, inspire, and guide educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers by sharing real-world examples of how digital storytelling can be effectively applied to foster language acquisition. By highlighting successful models from multiple countries, this section aims to promote pedagogical innovation, strengthen digital and linguistic competencies, and bridge the cultural and communicative gaps often experienced by immigrant learners in higher education.

Moreover, the collection of good practices serves as an important reference for institutions seeking to implement DST in their curricula, offering both theoretical grounding and practical insights (see APPENDIX 3). It also underlines the broader objective of the E-Stories project: to support inclusive, creative, and technology-enhanced language education across Europe.

In this context, “good practices” are defined as concrete, well-structured, and impactful examples of integrating digital storytelling into language education. These practices stand out for their:

- Clear educational objectives linked to language learning outcomes.
- Innovative use of digital tools (e.g., Pixton, Storybird, Voicethread, Book Creator).
- Successful engagement of learners through multimedia, creativity, and collaboration.
- Evidence of effectiveness, whether through research, learner feedback, or teacher observation.
- Adaptability across different age groups, proficiency levels, and cultural contexts.

Each country’s section presents 4–5 such practices (APPENDIX 3). For example:

- Türkiye showcases projects like Storyland (an adult education toolkit), a TÜBİTAK-supported teacher training program on DST, and Okuvaryum, a digital story library for children.
- Germany highlights DST with tablets in primary English education, visual teaching methods, and job-related language projects using explanatory videos.

- Spain introduces creative initiatives, such as Storytelling Robots, Create Your Own Adventure, and a Horror Tales Podcast—all of which integrate DST with collaborative, inclusive, and immersive learning.
- Greece explores DST MOOCs, immigrant-focused programs like “Let’s Speak Greek,” and the use of visual tools like Storybird for younger learners.
- Serbia features diverse applications of digital storytelling, including university-level projects where students create multimedia narratives in English and German courses, and inclusive education practices supporting children with intellectual disabilities through simple, expressive digital stories. Primary schools retell familiar fairy tales in English to enhance vocabulary and pronunciation, while teacher training programs integrate DST to equip future educators with both pedagogical and technical storytelling skills.

5 Theoretical Framework of the Course

The theoretical framework of the E-Stories course is grounded in both pedagogy and practice, tracing the evolution of storytelling from its traditional, oral forms into the dynamic realm of digital storytelling. At its core, the course draws upon principles of constructivism and social constructivism, emphasizing that learners actively construct knowledge through meaningful engagement and collaboration. By integrating digital tools into narrative practices, students not only develop language competence but also enhance their critical and creative skills. Importantly, the framework is not abstract but directly embedded in the course structure: the detailed description of how these principles are rooted in the course design is provided below, demonstrating how each stage of the program—from initial story creation to collaborative digital production—reflects a learner-centered, participatory approach to language education.

5.1. Digital Storytelling; Pedagogy Theory and Teaching Practice

From Storytelling to Digital Storytelling

According to Mello (2001), throughout history, storytelling (ST) has been a common educational practice that has been used extensively from ancient times to the present day. It is as old as human existence itself, yet there is still much that remains unsaid about this concept. Stories have a unique ability to initiate and strengthen relationships, as well as provide insight into new experiences and situations. Through the use of storytelling, a person can subconsciously elicit various cognitive and emotional reactions from their audience (Martinidou, 2022). Storytelling plays a significant role in language learning contexts, as it supports the development of communication skills and enhances the literacy, cooperative competencies, and critical thinking capacities of students. Additionally, it also allows students to express their unique character traits and cultural backgrounds, making it an indispensable task in the classroom. The inclusive power of Storytelling lies in its ability to cultivate empathy and unity among participants while rejecting any form of discrimination based on nationality, religion, or language differences (Perdikari, 2021).

Over the last few years, technology has evolved significantly, and with it, a plethora of digital tools have emerged. As a result, even traditional forms of art like storytelling need to adapt to meet the growing needs of people worldwide. This has led to the development of

digital storytelling, which emerged in the 1990s when Lambert and Atchley recognized the potential of combining storytelling with digital tools to create compelling personal narratives (Lambert, 2009). Boydell et al. (2015, as cited in de Jager, 2017) argue that digital storytelling is a valuable tool in language learning settings as it acknowledges the increasing interest in arts-based genres.

Different definitions of digital storytelling have emerged over time. These definitions all centre around the use of technology to narrate stories. Ohier (2007) defines digital storytelling as anything that uses digital technology to construct a narrative. Normann (2011) emphasizes the personal element of the story, as storytellers link themselves with the people, places, or experiences they talk about. The Digital Storytelling Association (2011) defines it as a modern expression of the ancient art of storytelling, merging old traditions with the use of new technology. Brailas (2021) provides a comprehensive definition of digital storytelling as any digital artefact that can be experienced online or offline, that serves a specific aim, communicates a message, tells a story, and utilizes more than one modality.

Digital stories can be divided into three basic types, as stated by Robin (2016):

- a) Personal narratives that showcase pivotal elements or circumstances in an individual's life.
- b) Historical documentaries that aim to examine historical events to facilitate their understanding thoroughly.
- c) Stories that are intended to enlighten viewers or introduce them to a particular concept or practice.

[Digital Storytelling as a Pedagogical Technique](#)

The benefits of using digital storytelling as a pedagogical technique are numerous. It allows students to express their experiences and ideas in a dynamic and impactful manner that may not be possible with traditional linear print-based text. By incorporating multimedia content into educational contexts, students can develop skills in creativity, meaning-making, engagement in innovative projects, and digital literacy. Furthermore, students who create their own digital narratives can enhance their critical thinking and media literacy skills. These skills are essential in today's society, as argued by Chen and Chuang (2020).

One of the most interesting things about DST is that it plays a dual role in both presenting the subject technically and approaching the content critically for learners

(Shelby-Caffey et al., 2014). Digital storytelling offers a unique opportunity for students to revisit their past experiences from a different perspective, helping them to reflect on their lives positively. Additionally, it provides a powerful means for individuals to construct their identities and express themselves through language and communication. As identities are shaped over time, digital storytelling can be a valuable tool for personal growth and development (Kendrick et al., 2022). The DST interaction facilitates synchronous and asynchronous collaboration among students from diverse groups. It creates formal and informal fields for collaborative learning. When students create digital stories, they are not merely passive recipients of information; they actively engage in researching, scripting, and producing content, which enhances their critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Robin, 2008).

Benefits of Digital Storytelling in Foreign Language Learning

Various studies suggest that digital storytelling can effectively aid in enhancing student engagement and motivation, improving language skills in the host language, strengthening creativity and critical thinking, and enhancing socio-emotional well-being among students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The summary of the teaching practices employed and their effects in three studies is presented below.

Enhancing student engagement and motivation

In their recent study, Kendrick et al. (2022) demonstrate the effectiveness of digital storytelling in engaging refugee students. By allowing students to incorporate their personal experiences and interests into the curricular content, DST keeps them highly engaged and invested in learning. This approach fosters emotional awareness and agency, enhancing motivation by creating a stronger connection between students, their education, and the broader school community.

Improving language skills in the host language

Kendrick et al. (2022) introduced a high school program for refugee students. This program focused on using digital storytelling to connect curricular content with the students' interests and experiences. By drawing from their unique backgrounds, the students were able to leverage DST to express their narratives in a way that facilitated language development. Furthermore, Martinidou (2022) involved migrant-background students in collaborative digital storytelling projects in a Greek primary school. Creating digital stories allowed students to actively participate in language-rich activities actively, thereby enhancing their proficiency in the host language.

Strengthening creativity and critical thinking through enhancing digital skills

In the studies conducted by Kendrick et al. (2022) and Martinidou (2022), students worked together to create digital stories, gaining proficiency in operating digital tools and multimedia platforms. Fokides (2016) emphasized the way DST helped an immigrant student to record her personal experiences, using digital tools for autobiographical narration. This not only enhanced her digital skills but also facilitated her self-expression, emotional processing, creativity, and critical thinking.

Enhancing feelings of resilience and belongingness

According to Kendrick et al. (2022), DST or digital storytelling helped refugee students establish their identities and feel a sense of belonging in their new communities. Through storytelling, they were able to express and cope with challenging emotions that ultimately contributed to their resilience. Martinidou (2022) found that migrant-background students who participated in collaborative DST projects demonstrated increased resilience. The sense of accomplishment and connection built through teamwork contributed to students' emotional well-being. Finally, Fokides' study (2016) showed how digital storytelling can act as a form of narrative therapy for immigrant students. By externalizing their thoughts and emotions through DST, students were able to explore their personal experiences. This helped them feel a greater sense of belonging and improved their self-image, which in turn positively impacted how native classmates perceived them.

In essence, incorporating digital storytelling into educational practices can provide a comprehensive solution to cater to the diverse learning needs of students. DST enables students to express themselves, collaborate, and reflect on their work, thereby not only enhancing academic skills but also promoting resilience, creativity, and socio-emotional growth among learners from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

5.2. Digital Storytelling based on Constructivism and Social Constructivism Principles

The learning theories of constructivism and social constructivism are well-suited for integrating digital storytelling into education due to its significance as a powerful pedagogical tool. Implementing digital storytelling using the principles of constructivism and social constructivism has several benefits, including enhancing active learning through story creation, facilitating collaborative learning and sharing through digital media, personalizing and contextualizing content to make learning more relevant, organizing

students' principles and skills, and embodying principles of shared authority and student-centred learning.

Firstly, constructivism highlights that learners should actively construct knowledge from their experiences, which resonates with DST's interactive and creative nature since students create narratives that reflect their understanding of the world, thus actively constructing their knowledge and meaning. Furthermore, digital storytelling is a learning method that involves creating narratives using different forms of media such as video, audio, and text. As mentioned previously, this approach aligns with constructivist learning environments by engaging students in actively developing stories, which leads to a deeper understanding and retention of information. Engaging in digital storytelling requires students to research, script, and produce content, enhancing their critical thinking and problem-solving abilities.

Additionally, social constructivism stresses the collaborative nature of learning, emphasising the importance of interactions with others in knowledge construction, which is also a key feature in DST. DST provides a platform for learners to collaborate with peers and educators, sharing ideas, perspectives, and cultural backgrounds while co-constructing narratives through digital media. Creating digital stories allows students to actively participate in language-rich activities, thereby enhancing their proficiency in the host language.

Moreover, both constructivism and social constructivism underscore the importance of reflection and metacognition in learning. Similarly, DST encourages students to reflect on their experiences and perspectives, allowing them to evaluate their understanding and learning strategies. Thus, the use of these metacognitive processes results in fostering their self-awareness and critical thinking.

Linking this to how personalization and contextualization of content, according to constructivist and social constructivist theories, make learning relevant, it can be observed that digital storytelling facilitates a personalized and contextualized learning experience by engaging students in reflecting on their own experiences and perspectives. Through DST, students can connect their personal experiences to the content being learned, making it more relevant and meaningful to them. This personalised approach to learning aligns with the principles of constructivism and social constructivism, which emphasise the importance of connecting new knowledge to existing experiences and understanding. As students engage in reflective practices within the context of DST, they not only personalise their

learning but also deepen their understanding of the content by relating it to their own lives. This process enhances the relevance and applicability of the learning experience, ultimately fostering a more meaningful and effective educational outcome.

Furthermore, DST aligns with the transferability principle in constructivist learning by enabling students to create organising principles and skills that they can transfer to other learning settings and contexts. As mentioned, DST enables students to engage in the process of creating narratives that reflect their understanding of the subject matter. Through this process, they develop organising principles or frameworks that help them make sense of the content. These organising principles are not limited to the digital storytelling project itself, but they can also be applied to other learning settings and contexts. For example, students may develop storytelling, critical thinking, and digital literacy skills through DST that can be transferred to other academic subjects. Additionally, the ability to construct narratives and organise information meaningfully can benefit students in various aspects of their academic and personal lives.

Finally, DST embodies the principles of shared authority, student-centred learning, and the facilitator role of the educator by providing students with opportunities to take ownership of their learning, express their creativity, and collaborate with peers in a supportive environment. More specifically, in DST, students have a significant role in determining how and what they learn. They have the freedom to choose the topic, the theme, or the message of their digital story, allowing them to take ownership of their learning process. Students are actively engaged in their narratives' creation, which gives them a sense of autonomy and empowerment. Furthermore, students' participation in the digital storytelling process, from planning to production, strengthens their voice and agency. This aligns with the principle of shared authority, where both educators and students have a say in the learning process, as well as with student-centred learning, which prioritises the needs and interests of students. Therefore, in DST, the role of the educator shifts from being the sole source of knowledge to that of a facilitator or guide. Educators provide support, guidance, and resources as students navigate the digital storytelling process. Also, they create a supportive learning environment where students feel comfortable expressing their ideas and exploring new concepts. Finally, they encourage students to take initiative, make decisions, and solve problems independently, fostering a sense of responsibility and self-directed learning. By accepting student

autonomy and initiative, educators employ the role of facilitator, empowering students to participate actively in their learning, which is a central tenet of constructivist pedagogy.

In terms of the educational framework of the course, constructivist and social constructivist principles support the holistic development of students as DST does. As mentioned earlier, DST allows students to enhance their language skills, develop critical thinking, and gain digital literacy while expressing themselves creatively. Additionally, the collaborative nature of DST fosters student engagement and participation, creating a supportive learning environment where students feel empowered to share their voices and experiences. Additionally, DST encourages students to reflect on their narratives, fostering resilience, a sense of belonging, and identity affirmation. By integrating constructivism and social constructivism principles into the educational framework of the course, DST becomes an effective tool for promoting academic success and socio-emotional well-being among students, especially those from diverse backgrounds.

Constructivism and social constructivism are theoretical frameworks suitable for implementing digital storytelling in educational settings. These learning theories, based on the ideas of Dewey, Piaget, and Vygotsky, emphasize active engagement, social collaboration, and the contextualized construction of knowledge. More analytically:

Constructivism is a learning theory that emphasizes the active role of learners in constructing their knowledge through interactions with the world around them. Digital storytelling involves creating narratives using digital tools, requiring students to actively participate in the learning process, apply their prior knowledge, and explore new ideas. From a constructivist perspective, learners are encouraged to explore different viewpoints, experiment with various digital formats (such as video, audio, and text), and reflect on their learning experiences. This active and reflective process helps students internalize new concepts and understandings, making learning more meaningful and transferable. Furthermore, the constructivist approach's focus on knowledge being constructed in response to new experiences is ideally suited to the dynamic and evolving nature of digital media.

Social constructivism, based on Vygotsky's work, emphasizes social interaction and collaboration in learning. Digital storytelling supports these principles by providing a platform for collaborative creation. In this framework, knowledge is co-constructed through interaction with peers, educators, and the community. Digital storytelling projects involve group work, enhancing understanding, and developing social and communication skills.

Additionally, social constructivism emphasizes the contextual nature of learning, where cultural and social contexts play a crucial role. Digital stories often reflect students' cultural backgrounds, making language learning relevant. Through scaffolding, educators can guide students, building confidence and competence in digital literacy and subject-specific knowledge.

Incorporating constructivism and social constructivism into digital storytelling creates a powerful educational framework that fosters active learning, collaboration, and contextualized knowledge construction. These theories support the development of critical thinking, creativity, and communication skills, essential for students in the digital age. By leveraging these learning theories, educators can create engaging learning environments where students construct knowledge, express themselves in the target language, and connect with others through digital stories. Constructivism and social constructivism align seamlessly with digital storytelling, emphasizing the active role of learners in constructing knowledge and the importance of collaboration. These theories provide a strong foundation for the effectiveness of digital storytelling as an educational approach.

To sum up, incorporating digital storytelling into the educational framework based on constructivism and social constructivism not only enhances academic skills but also promotes socio-emotional well-being among students. DST fosters resilience, a sense of belonging, and identity affirmation, especially for those from diverse backgrounds. By integrating these principles, DST becomes a powerful tool for promoting both academic success and personal growth, ensuring that students are not only knowledgeable but also emotionally and socially competent.

6 Digital Storytelling Toolkit

The Digital Storytelling Toolkit serves as a practical foundation for the E-Stories course, equipping both educators and learners with the resources needed to transform narrative ideas into engaging digital productions. It brings together a range of digital storytelling tools, such as platforms for video editing, animation, and interactive media creation, which enable students to experiment with different formats and modes of expression. Alongside these tools, the toolkit also introduces key digital storytelling models—including pedagogical frameworks and creative approaches—that guide the design, structure, and evaluation of student work. Together, these components provide a structured yet flexible support system, ensuring that the process of digital storytelling is accessible, pedagogically sound, and aligned with the course's language learning and integration objectives.

6.1. Digital Storytelling Tools

In this chapter, we embark on a comprehensive examination and comparison of several prominent digital storytelling tools, each offering unique features and functionalities to support the creation of compelling narratives. The tools under consideration include Adobe Spark, Powtoon, Canva, Storybird, Microsoft Sway, and Book Creator, each chosen for its widespread usage, accessibility, and suitability for educational contexts. Additionally, we will explore additional digital storytelling tools to provide a comprehensive overview of available options.

Adobe Spark



Adobe Spark is a digital storytelling platform that is both versatile and easy to use. It provides a variety of tools for producing captivating multimedia material. Users can easily combine text, images, and videos with Spark to create visually spectacular tales due to its straightforward interface and seamless interaction with Adobe Creative Cloud. It is a well-liked option for both instructors and students due to its extensive features, which include collaboration capabilities, animation effects, and customisable layouts.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intuitive interface for easy navigation and creation. • Wide range of customisable templates and design options. • Seamless integration with Adobe Creative Cloud for enhanced creative capabilities. • Collaboration features allow for group projects and real-time editing. • Accessible across various devices, including desktops, tablets, and smartphones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some advanced features may require a subscription to Adobe Creative Cloud. • Limited options for audio integration compared to other platforms.

POWTOON



Powtoon is a web-based digital storytelling and animation tool that allows users to create engaging animated videos and presentations. Designed with ease of use in mind, Powtoon offers drag-and-drop functionality, pre-made templates, and a vast library of characters, props, and music tracks. It is widely used in education, marketing, and training contexts to deliver content in a visually appealing and memorable format. For educators and students, Powtoon enables the creation of digital stories that combine images, voiceovers, and animated sequences without requiring advanced technical skills.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powtoon is easy to use with a simple drag-and-drop interface. • It offers many ready-made templates for fast, professional results. • Animations and visuals are engaging, ideal for storytelling. • You can add voiceovers and music to enhance your videos. • It's cloud-based, so you can access it from any device. • It's great for education, supporting student projects and presentations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free features are limited; many tools require a paid plan. • Free videos include a watermark, which may look unprofessional. • You need a stable internet connection to use it properly. • Customization is limited compared to advanced tools. • Export options are restricted in the free version. • Large projects can be slow and may lag on weaker devices.

Canva



Canva is a major player in the graphic design and digital storytelling space, providing a wealth of resources and tools for producing eye-catching content. Canva gives users the freedom to let their imaginations run wild and tell their stories through beautiful illustrations, interactive presentations, and infographics. Teachers and professionals who wish to deliver their messages effectively choose Canva because of its intuitive interface and large collection of templates and design elements.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive library of customisable templates, graphics, and design elements. • User-friendly interface with drag-and-drop functionality for easy creation. • Collaboration features enable seamless teamwork and feedback. • Integration with popular social media platforms for sharing and distribution. • Accessible across multiple devices with cloud-based storage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some advanced features may require a subscription to Canva Pro. • Limited animation and interactivity compared to specialised digital storytelling tools.

Storybird



With an emphasis on collaborative storytelling, Storybird provides a distinctive method for digital storytelling. Storybird's extensive library of carefully chosen images and graphics gives users the motivation and tools they need to let their imaginations run wild and create captivating narratives. For instructors and students who wish to explore narrative themes and utilize storytelling as a means of self-expression, this platform is ideal due to its user-friendly design and straightforward storytelling approach.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive library of high-quality artwork and illustrations for inspiration. • Intuitive interface with simple drag-and-drop functionality for creating stories. • Collaboration features enable students to co-create stories with peers and educators. • Built-in feedback and commenting tools for constructive critique and reflection. • Suitable for a wide range of educational contexts, from language arts to digital literacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited customisation options compared to other digital storytelling platforms. • Restricted to the use of Storybird's artwork and illustrations for visual storytelling.

Microsoft Sway



(Microsoft Sway, n.d.)

Microsoft Sway provides a dynamic and interactive framework for making captivating presentations and digital tales. Sway lets us blend text, photos, videos, and interactive features to effectively communicate our ideas. Its emphasis on multimedia material and smooth connection with Microsoft Office apps further enhance this ability. It is an invaluable resource for instructors and students looking to build dynamic and captivating digital narratives because of its user-friendly design and real-time collaborative features.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration with MS Office applications for seamless content creation and sharing. • Dynamic design templates and layout options. • Multimedia support, e.g. embedded videos, interactive elements. • Real-time collaboration features enable simultaneous editing and feedback. • Accessibility across various devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited customisation options compared to dedicated design software. • Some advanced features may require a Microsoft Office subscription.

Book Creator



BOOK CREATOR (Book Creator, n.d.)

Book Creator provides a variety of tools and features for publishing and storytelling, enabling users to easily create interactive e-books and digital stories. Teachers and students may express their creativity and share their stories with the world with Book Creator, which offers a variety of interactive e-books featuring audio narration and animations, multimedia-rich narratives, and more. Because of its cross-platform compatibility and user-friendly design, it's a useful tool for digital storytelling.

PROS	CONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intuitive interface with drag-and-drop functionality for easy creation. • Multimedia support, including images, videos, audio recordings, and animations. • Interactive features, such as audio narration, video embedding, and hyperlinking. • Collaboration options enable students to co-create and share stories with peers and educators. • Cross-platform compatibility with support for various devices and operating systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited customisation options compared to professional design software. • Some advanced features may require a subscription to Book Creator Pro.

Additional Digital Storytelling Tools to Consider

Twine is a tool for making interactive, non-linear stories. It's especially appropriate for *more advanced students* or projects that try to investigate intricate storylines. Its open-source design permits great personalisation and adaptability.

Storyboardthat is a digital storytelling tool that lets users use a storyboard to tell a tale; it works similarly to how you would create a comic strip. Students have a plethora of alternatives at their disposal while crafting a narrative. You can use scenes, people, objects, speech bubbles, and icons. There are multiple selections for every menu item.

Animoto is a tool which can help one produce captivating digital narratives in the form of videos. The range of templates accessible in the free version is really astounding. You can achieve a lot just by dragging and dropping the components into position, adding some text, and selecting some music. It's a popular tool among many people for making book trailers fast.

HP5 is an open-source platform that can be used to create interactive presentations, multimedia experiences, and quizzes. Because of its broad material library and ability to integrate with learning management systems (LMS), it is an invaluable resource for developing engaging and instructive courses.

However, when it comes to these additionally considered tools, some of them require advanced expertise, paid subscription for some basic features, a time-consuming process of mastering the key features of the tool, lack aesthetic features, require online access, etc.

While these additional tools—such as Twine, Storyboardthat, Animoto, and H5P—offer valuable opportunities for creating diverse and engaging digital stories, they also come with certain limitations regarding accessibility, cost, and ease of use. Therefore, it becomes equally important to not only evaluate the tools themselves but also to reflect on the broader pedagogical frameworks that guide their effective application. To this end, the following section introduces and compares established digital storytelling models, which can provide a structured foundation for integrating these tools into meaningful learning experiences.

6.2. Digital Storytelling Models

In the following, three models of digital storytelling will be introduced and compared to each other. In the end, there will be a recommendation of which model should be used for E-Stories.

1. Joe Lambert's Seven Steps of Digital Storytelling

Joe Lambert came up with seven steps of digital storytelling when looking for a way to create a good digital story. This model is already widely used in educational settings and is relatively straightforward to understand and apply. Its structured approach guides students through the process of crafting their digital stories, from drafting a script to editing the final product.

Step 1: Owning Your Insights

The first step is about navigating storytellers through a journey of self-discovery regarding the underlying purpose or motivation behind their stories. Here, questions like “What is the story about?” or “What is your meaning in that story?” are being asked to let the storyteller dive into their experiences and help them navigate their life's journey. By focusing on what stands out to you in the story, you can connect it to your present circumstances. Stories reflect the current context of our lives and evolve with us over time. Writing serves as a means of self-reflection, helping us understand our past, present, and future selves. Revisiting stories can unveil new insights and understanding as we mature. Insight into a story can prompt additional questions for the storyteller. Even after addressing the core insight and crafting a unique voice, there may be a desire to adapt the story for a specific audience or purpose or to provide more context for clarity. However, fixating on external expectations early on can hinder the exploration of why the story holds personal significance. It's important to create a safe atmosphere as the process towards gaining deeper and more lucid insights. This endeavour isn't without its difficulties and can be a humbling experience for those facilitating it. However, it also has the potential to be immensely rewarding, strengthening, and inspiring in every aspect.

Step 2: Owning Your Emotions

The second step is about finding one's own emotions and allowing to have deep emotions within the storytelling. Here, the meaning of the story and the emotions of the teller come together. The storyteller should ask themselves about the meaning of the story

and what feelings come with it. When the storyteller is aware of their emotional connection to their story, they can think about how others might get this emotional connection, too. Thus, they should ask themselves which emotion might help with understanding the content of the story. Understanding the intricate emotions within a story is crucial for grasping its essence and deciding which emotions to include and how to present them in order to convey the story's meaning effectively. Taking ownership of these emotions also facilitates a deeper connection with the audience. However, merely evoking emotions isn't the sole objective, as an exaggerated emotional appeal can come across as insincere, while a lack of emotion can render the story unconvincing. The emotional depth of a story varies across cultures, influenced by the storyteller's familiarity with their community's norms and cues. When storytellers trust their intuition and consider the reception of a specific audience, they share what's culturally appropriate and resonant.

Step 3: Finding the Moment

Often, just moments can change everything. That is why, in the third step, the storytellers should find the moment of change in their life that they can talk about. The moment which changes everything for them, where they have insight and can emotionally connect with. Compelling stories immerse the audience in events, prompting reflection on personal experiences and universal truths. Effective storytellers construct scenes that depict the process of change, revealing who they were before, how they dealt with the change, and who they became afterwards. Sharing insights within the story communicates to the audience, "This is what happened, and this is what I've learned," showcasing the transformation through vivid scenes rather than direct narration. In a three to five-minute digital story, scenes must be carefully chosen and clearly established to contribute meaningfully. While the story guides the audience towards understanding, they are encouraged to actively engage and participate in the narrative, making their own discoveries along the way.

Step 4: Seeing Your Story

In step 4, the storyteller is supposed to find visual and audio support for telling their story digitally. When creating a digital story, it should be explored how visuals and sound enhance the audience's experience. Designing how the audience perceives the story visually and aurally involves numerous decisions. It should be prioritized to discuss visual

choices early in the story development process, helping storytellers articulate the images in their minds, interpret their meaning, locate or generate them, and decide on their optimal use to convey the intended message. They should find images or sounds which bring their emotions and meaning into their story for the audience to hear and see. The images can be either direct (explicit), like showing exactly what the story is about, or indirect (implicit) and let the audience imagine the connection to the story. Every image can change the meaning of the story and give themselves meaning. Having a picture or pictures in their mind helps with creating a narrative.

Step 5: Hearing Your Story

In step 5, the storyteller is underlying their story with a sound. The sound should be connected to the emotions of the story with the emotions of the audience. Not only can the sound be a voice or a tone, but it can also be music. In digital storytelling, voice not only narrates but also embodies the narrator's essence and connection to their experiences. It's a powerful tool, fostering immersion and contemplation as it guides us through the narrative. You can play with the sound by playing high and low, loud and soft, fast and slow sounds; thus, sounds can be used in a very creative way. For example, everyday noises, like cars or birds, help create a sense of where the story takes place. Recording nearby sounds or using voices can make the story more interesting. Using instrumental music, like background tunes, can make stories more meaningful without drowning out the speaking parts. While using songs with lyrics can be okay, it's essential to ensure the song's meaning doesn't conflict with the story being told. Sometimes, purposely mixing different meanings can make the story even richer and more interesting.

Step 6: Assembling Your Story

In step 6, the narrative, visions, and sounds come together. Here, the storyteller should think about how to tell their story and create a basic structure. When the structure of the story is settled, the visuals and sounds are getting aligned. At the end of this step, the digital story should be reviewed and adapted.

Step 7: Sharing Your Story

Now that the story's layers are pieced together, the journey of self-understanding for the storyteller has likely evolved. It's crucial to reconsider the initial context of the story and

determine what information is relevant to share when presenting it. Questions about the audience, purpose, and presentation format help guide this process. Before finalizing the digital story, they should think about how it will be presented to the audience and what contextual information is needed to accompany it. Some storytellers prefer to let their story speak for itself, while others provide additional context. When sharing stories, giving background information about the storyteller and their motivations can deepen the audience's appreciation and understanding.

Source: Lambert, J. (2013). Digital Storytelling. Capturing lives, creating community (4th ed.). Routledge.

Although Lambert's model is more directly applicable to the pedagogical aims of E-Stories due to its clarity and structured guidance, it is also helpful to consider Joseph Campbell's model, which frames storytelling within the universal archetypes of the Hero's Journey and thereby offers a complementary perspective on narrative design.

2. Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey

This model provides a universal framework for storytelling that can resonate with students across cultures and disciplines. Its clear stages can be easily adapted to various storytelling assignments or projects.

The Hero's Journey serves as a detailed guide to personal transformation, particularly within the context of higher education. It outlines three phases that help individuals understand where they are in their journey of change, what challenges they may face, and what actions are necessary to overcome obstacles and resolve life problems. Emphasizing the necessity of addressing significant issues, the Hero's Journey underscores the importance of personal growth. By following this framework, students can navigate the trials and challenges of their academic and personal development. The Hero's Journey also highlights the acquisition of new skills and the exploration of one's authentic self as essential aspects of the transformative process. Ultimately, the Hero's Journey suggests that through facing challenges and embracing change, individuals can experience rewards such as increased self-awareness and a deeper connection to their true identity.

Step 1: Introduce the Hero

Present a protagonist who encounters a significant change in circumstances, whether intentional or unforeseen. This change leads to a major life problem that challenges the Hero's existing knowledge and skills.

Step 2: Establish the Call to Adventure

Describe how the Hero is compelled to address the life problem, either through their own motivation or external circumstances.

Step 3: Navigate the Unknown

Illustrate how the Hero must leave their familiar world behind and venture into unfamiliar territory to confront the problem. This journey into the unknown presents the Hero with trials and challenges that require new skills and insights.

Step 4: Confront Trials and Challenges

Show how the Hero encounters various obstacles and struggles that test their abilities and resolve. Each trial represents a step towards solving the life problem and requires the Hero to push beyond their comfort zone.

Step 5: Embrace Personal Transformation

Highlight the Hero's journey of self-discovery and growth as they confront challenges, acquire new skills, and gain a deeper understanding of themselves and the problem they face.

Step 6: Resolve the Life Problem

Illustrate how the Hero ultimately overcomes the challenges they've faced, whether through personal growth, newfound knowledge, or external support. The resolution should reflect the Hero's transformation and newfound wisdom.

Step 7: Reflect on the Journey

Encourage reflection on the Hero's journey and the lessons learned along the way. Consider how the experience has shaped the Hero's identity and prepared them for future challenges.

Three phases of the Hero's stages

Separation: The hero knows that something is off and starts to change. The separation refers to the known world beginning to separate into something new and unknown.

Initiation: The hero starts to face the unknown, unfamiliar, and unwanted situation that a problem, change, or trial can cause.

Return: The hero can analyse the problem and start to resolve it. In this phase, the hero is determined and motivated.

By following these steps inspired by Campbell's Hero's Journey, digital storytellers can create compelling narratives that resonate with audiences and convey themes of personal growth, resilience, and transformation.

Source: Williams, C. (2019). The Hero's Journey: A Mudmap for Change. In Journal of Humanistic Psychology, 59 (4), pp. 522-539.

While Campbell's model emphasizes the archetypal and mythological dimensions of narrative through the Hero's Journey, Pixar's storytelling framework translates these timeless structures into a modern, audience-centered practice that highlights clarity, emotional resonance, and accessibility in digital story creation.

3. Pixar Storytelling

The Pixar formula emphasizes the importance of character development, emotional resonance, and thematic coherence in storytelling. This model can be particularly useful for students interested in animation, film, or creative writing, as it provides practical guidelines for creating engaging narratives.

1. You admire a character for trying more than for their successes.
2. You got to keep in mind what's interesting to you as an audience, not what's fun to do as a writer. They can be very different.
3. Trying for a theme is important, but you won't see what the story is actually about until you're at the end of it. Now rewrite.
4. Once upon a time there was _____. Every day, _____. One day _____. Because of that, _____. Because of that, _____. Until finally _____.

5. Simplify. Focus. Combine characters. Hop over detours. You'll feel like you're losing valuable stuff but it sets you free.
6. What is your character good at and comfortable with? Throw the polar opposite at them. Challenge them. How do they deal?
7. Come up with your ending before you figure out your middle. Seriously. Endings are hard, get yours working up front.
8. Finish your story, let go even if it's not perfect. In an ideal world, you have both but move on. Do better next time.
9. When you're stuck, make a list of what WOULDN'T happen next. Lots of times, the material to get you unstuck will show up.
10. Pull apart the stories you like. What you like in them is a part of you; you've got to recognize it before you can use it.
11. Putting it on paper lets you start fixing it. If it stays in your head, a perfect idea, you'll never share it with anyone.
12. Discount the 1st thing that comes to mind. And the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th – get the obvious out of the way. Surprise yourself.
13. Give your characters opinions. Passive/malleable might seem likable to you as you write, but it's poison to the audience.
14. Why must you tell THIS story? What's the belief burning within you that your story feeds off of? That's the heart of it.
15. If you were your character, in this situation, how would you feel? Honesty lends credibility to unbelievable situations.
16. What are the stakes? Give us a reason to root for the character. What happens if they don't succeed? Stack the odds against.
17. No work is ever wasted. If it's not working, let go and move on - it'll come back around to be useful later.
18. You have to know yourself: the difference between doing your best & fussing. The story is testing, not refining.
19. Coincidences to get characters into trouble are great; coincidences to get them out of it are cheating.
20. Exercise: take the building blocks of a movie you dislike. How do you rearrange them into what you do like?

21. You got to identify with your situation/characters, can't just write 'cool'. What would make you act that way?
22. What's the essence of your story? Most economical telling of it? If you know that, you can build out from there.

Source: <https://nofilmschool.com/pixar-story-structure>

To compare the approaches, we are using seven criteria. To make sure that a clear structure is provided, we are focusing on the number of steps within the approaches. In addition to that, the core focus of the models is crucial. Regarding the role of the person involved, we can differentiate between a clear focus on creating a separate character within a storytelling approach or with regard to the situation in which the storytellers become involved in the provided story. The fourth criterion for comparison provides an initial insight into its use in educational contexts, as it emphasizes the importance of feedback. Feedback can be given directly or indirectly, and some models integrate clear feedback mechanisms, while others don't. With an educational background, feedback is crucial and the basis for development processes. The educational focus is used as the next criterion. Under this topic, we focus if the model is used in educational settings or if it is stronger in focusing on other issues.

Last but not least, the international use of a model is important in educational contexts of Erasmus+. Therefore, we are focusing solely on our comparison of models that are suitable for international use. Moreover, the last criterion, integration in real-life settings, is also crucial for the use of E-Stories because we are not creating fictional literature or storytelling approaches, but rather using storytelling in settings where students have authentic real-life situations in mind. This must be reflected in the chosen model approach.

Table 3. Comparison of Models of Digital Storytelling

	Joe Lambert's Seven Steps of Digital Storytelling	Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey	Pixar Storytelling
Steps	7	7	22
Focus on	The process of digital storytelling	The hero as the main character	The main character
Role of the person involved	Creates a character, or sometimes the storytellers involve themselves	The storyteller is usually/often the hero	Creates a character, or sometimes the storytellers involve themselves
Feedback mechanisms	Yes	Just sometimes	Yes
Educational focus	Stronger focus on literature studies	Possible	Yes
International use	Often used in international contexts	Often used in international contexts	Often used in international contexts
Integration in real-life settings	Books, screenplay	Movies, psychology, books	Movies, life journey

In the E-Stories course implementation, we benefited from Lambert's model of digital storytelling for our project implementation because it provides a comprehensive and well-structured approach that aligns with our project's objectives and needs. Here are the key reasons why Lambert's model is appropriate:

1. **Process Orientation:** Lambert's model emphasizes the process of creating a digital story, which ensures that each component is given due attention. This process orientation helps participants understand and engage with each step, from conceptualization to the final production.
2. **Comprehensive Framework:** The model includes all essential components of digital storytelling, such as story development, scriptwriting, voiceover, music, and visual elements. By addressing each component, the model ensures that the final product is well-rounded and impactful.
3. **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Lambert's model is adaptable to various educational contexts and can be tailored to meet the specific needs of our project. This flexibility allows us to modify and integrate the model seamlessly into our project's framework.
4. **Engagement and Creativity:** The model encourages creativity and personal expression, which are crucial for engaging participants and fostering a deeper

connection to the content. This engagement is particularly important in educational settings where motivation and interest are key to successful learning outcomes.

5. **Focus on Reflection:** Lambert's model places a strong emphasis on reflection, enabling participants to analyze their work and learn from the storytelling process critically. This reflective component is essential for developing critical thinking and self-assessment skills.
6. **Support for Diverse Learners:** The model is designed to support diverse learners, including those with different learning styles and needs. By incorporating multiple media and storytelling techniques, Lambert's model provides multiple entry points for learners, making it inclusive and accessible.
7. **Proven Effectiveness:** Lambert's model has been widely used and validated in various educational and professional settings. Its effectiveness in enhancing learning outcomes and fostering digital literacy has been well-documented, making it a reliable choice for our project.
8. **Alignment with Project Goals:** Our project aims to enhance digital literacy, critical thinking, and creative expression through digital storytelling. Lambert's model aligns perfectly with these goals by providing a structured yet flexible framework that supports these key areas.

By using Lambert's model, we can ensure a holistic and effective approach to digital storytelling that will benefit our participants and contribute to the overall success of our project.

7 Course Curriculum: Learning Goals, Weekly Syllabus, Suggested Themes and Scenarios

The Course Curriculum outlines the pedagogical backbone of the E-Stories language course, translating the theoretical foundations and toolkit into a concrete teaching and learning plan. It begins with clearly defined goals and learning objectives, ensuring that participants understand the language, digital, and intercultural competences they are expected to develop. Building on these objectives, the weekly syllabus provides a structured progression of activities and learning outcomes, guiding students step by step from initial storytelling exercises to the creation of complete digital stories. To further inspire and contextualize the learning process, the curriculum also offers a set of suggested themes and sample scenarios for digital stories, reflecting real-life issues, cultural diversity, and personal experiences relevant to international students. In this way, the curriculum connects theory with practice, ensuring coherence, inclusivity, and meaningful engagement throughout the course.

7.1. Goals and Learning Objectives of the E-Stories Language Course

This section outlines the goals and learning outcomes of the E-Stories language course. For an eight-week language course designed around digital storytelling, specific learning outcomes have been meticulously crafted to encompass various facets of language development, storytelling, speaking, writing abilities, and digital competence. The course should aim to improve language skills and enhance learners' ability to convey stories effectively through both written and digital media. Here's how these outcomes might be structured.

These goals should be practical, aligned with the course's overall educational framework, and set within achievable timelines. To ensure that the learning objectives for the E-Stories language course are effective and achievable, we have employed the SMART principles, first suggested by Doran (1981). SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable/Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound/Timely. Here's how we apply these principles:

- *Specific*: Objectives should be clear and specific, leaving no room for ambiguity. Each learning objective should clearly state what the learner will be able to do upon completing the course.

- *Measurable*: Objectives should be measurable so that progress can be tracked and assessed.
- *Achievable/Attainable*: Objectives should be realistic and attainable given the resources and time available, as well as within the learners' capabilities.
- *Relevant*: Objectives should be relevant to the learners' needs and aligned with the overall goals of the course.
- *Time-bound*: Objectives should be time-bound, with a clear deadline for achievement and a specific timeframe within which the objective should be met.

The goals of the E-Stories language course involve the enhancement of international or immigrant students' host language use skills, more specifically, storytelling and story writing, technology use skills, digital literacy, and social integration. Upon completion of the project, the following main objectives are expected to be achieved:

Students will be able to...

1. understand the concept of digital storytelling.
2. create a coherent story flow.
3. design digital visual texts.
4. merge personal narratives with reflective creativity.
5. produce digital stories.
6. acquire knowledge of narrative text genres.
7. gain the ability to create their own stories using basic concepts of visual storytelling and storyboarding.
8. develop the ability to design visual stories in digital environments by learning to use digital storyboard applications. They will also enhance their ability to use techniques such as colour theory, perspective drawing, character design, and animation techniques in their visual stories.
9. acquire the ability to use composition rules in visual storytelling to convey their stories effectively using the most suitable composition.
10. gain knowledge in the use of dialogues, sound effects, and music to create compelling audio stories that they can effectively narrate.
11. understand the importance, methods, and differences of digital storytelling from traditional narratives.
12. be able to brainstorm ideas to reach the target audience with their story effectively.

13. combine visual, textual, audio, voice-over, video, and/or music elements for storytelling.
14. utilize various digital tools to create and disseminate information.

Regarding the specific learning outcomes for this eight-week digital storytelling language course, they are categorized into distinct skill areas to ensure comprehensive development in language use, digital competence, social inclusion, cultural sensitivity, and additional essential skills. Each category is designed to target specific aspects of language learning and digital storytelling, providing students with measurable and achievable objectives.

A. Writing Skills

Narrative Writing

- Students will be able to identify and describe key elements of a story, such as setting, characters, plot, conflict, climax, and resolution.
- Students will be able to write a coherent and structured narrative in the host language using sensory details and vivid language, with at least 80% accuracy in grammar and punctuation.
- Students will be able to write stories incorporating complex sentence structures and diverse vocabulary.

Creative Writing

- Students will enhance their ability to write creatively and expressively, using descriptive language and varied sentence structures to evoke imagery and emotions.

B. Storytelling

- Students will be able to deliver a 5-7 minute narrative presentation, incorporating feedback from peers and instructors.

C. Digital Competence

Digital Storytelling Tools Proficiency

- Students will gain comprehensive knowledge of digital storytelling concepts and principles.
- Students will be able to use digital storytelling tools to create and edit a short story.
- Students will be able to integrate text, images, audio, and video to produce a comprehensive digital story.

Visual Storytelling

- Students will be able to create a storyboard for their digital story, applying principles of visual composition.
- Students will be able to use colour theory, perspective drawing, character design, and animation techniques in their digital stories.

D. Social Inclusion into the Host Country

Increased Social Interaction

- Students will be able to engage more confidently in social interactions within the host country, utilizing improved language skills and cultural knowledge to form meaningful connections and friendships.

Understanding Social Norms and Practices

- Students will gain insights into the social norms, behaviours, and practices of the host country, aiding in their adaptation and integration into the society.

Appreciation of Cultural Diversity

- Students will develop a deep appreciation for the cultural diversity of the host country, recognizing and valuing the differences and similarities between their own cultures and those of the host country.

Critical Cultural Awareness

- Students will cultivate the ability to critically reflect on cultural stereotypes, biases, and assumptions, leading to more nuanced and respectful intercultural interactions.

E. Additional Skills and Knowledge Areas

Critical Thinking and Analysis

- Students will cultivate the ability to analyze and critique storytelling elements, fostering deeper comprehension and appreciation of narrative techniques.

Digital Collaboration

- Students will participate in collaborative storytelling projects, utilizing online platforms for teamwork, feedback, and peer review, thereby enhancing their digital communication skills.

Ethical and Responsible Use of Digital Tools

- Students will become aware of the ethical considerations in digital storytelling, including copyright issues, digital footprint management, and respectful online communication.

These refined and categorized learning outcomes, based on the SMART principles, will guide the structure and delivery of the eight-week digital storytelling language course, ensuring that students achieve clear, measurable, and relevant language skills within a specified timeframe.

7.2. Weekly Syllabus

The E-Stories eight-week course syllabus (Table 4) was shaped through a combination of evidence-based planning, pedagogical principles, and project-based learning approaches. The foundation of the syllabus lies in the consortium's initial needs analysis, conducted across partner countries. This analysis identified the specific language learning needs, digital literacy levels, and educational contexts of immigrant and international university students. In response, the course was designed to support the development of both language production skills—such as speaking, writing, and narrating—and technology use through the medium of digital storytelling. To ensure alignment with learners' abilities and expectations, the course begins with diagnostic assessments and surveys in Week 1, which also serve as benchmarks for measuring progress at the end of the course.

The overall structure of the course follows a backward design model, starting with the final goal of having each student create and present a digital story. Working backward from this goal, the syllabus breaks the process into logical, manageable phases across the eight weeks. The first two weeks focus on laying the groundwork by introducing students to the concepts of storytelling and digital storytelling, as well as building classroom community and confidence. From there, the course gradually scaffolds skills, allowing students to learn how to develop narrative elements, write scripts, create storyboards, and utilize digital tools to combine multimedia content, such as images, videos, sound effects, and voice recordings.

The course adopts a project-based learning approach in which each week's sessions build progressively toward the completion of the final digital story. Each major phase of the digital storytelling process—story ideation, script writing, storyboard creation, digital editing, and presentation—is addressed through practical tasks, peer collaboration, and iterative feedback cycles. Students first produce written drafts, then receive teacher and peer feedback at key stages (e.g., scripts, storyboards, rough cuts), allowing them to refine their work before moving to the next step. This iterative structure ensures deeper learning

and encourages students to engage critically with both the content and their creative process.

Another notable feature of the syllabus is its tight alignment between activities, learning outcomes, and assessments. Each session clearly outlines what students will do, what they are expected to learn, and how their learning will be assessed—whether through rubrics, peer evaluations, or self-reflection surveys. Importantly, the same diagnostic tools used in the first week are reapplied in the final week to evaluate students' progress over time, offering both educators and students insight into the effectiveness of the course and individual development.

Table 4: E-Stories Eight-Week Syllabus

Week	Session	Topic	Activities	Learning Outcomes	Assessments
1	1	Introduction to the course	-Course overview -Implementation of pre-implementation surveys & tests	-Understand the course objectives and structure.	1. Diagnostic Writing Task & Story Writing Assessment Rubric 2. Self-Assessment Survey 3. Pre-Course Survey on Students' Experiences and Expectations
	2	Introduction to Digital Storytelling	-Ice-breaking activities -Introduction to digital storytelling	-Develop a sense of community through ice-breaking activities. -Gain an introductory understanding of digital storytelling and its significance in language learning and techno use.	
	3	Elements of a Story	-Teaching key elements of a story: the setting, characters, plot, conflict, climax, solution/resolution, etc.	-Identify and describe key elements of a story such as setting, characters, plot, conflict, climax, and resolution. -Analyze examples of these elements in various stories to understand the structure of storytelling.	
2	1	Elements of a Digital Story	-Presenting sample digital stories -Teaching the elements of digital storytelling, such as point of view, dramatic questions, emotional content, voice (narrator), soundtracks, economy (length of the script), and pacing (tone & pace).	-Understand the elements of digital storytelling, including point of view, dramatic questions, emotional content, voice (narrator), soundtracks, economy (length of the script), and pacing (tone & pace). -Critically evaluate digital stories to identify these elements.	Session Feedback Form 1
	2	Digital Storytelling Tools & Phases	-Introduction to various digital storytelling tools and software -Introducing the phases in a digital story creation task- idea generation, writing, script, storyboard, locating multimedia, creating the digital story, editing, and sharing.	- Explore various digital storytelling tools and software. -Understand the phases involved in creating a digital story-- idea generation and planning, writing, scripting, storyboarding, locating multimedia, making the digital story, editing, and sharing.	
	3	Story Ideation and Brainstorming & Developing the Story Concept	-Introducing the suggested themes and scenarios -Brainstorming session on a digital tool like Padlet -Story idea generation	-Examine suggested themes and scenarios for digital storytelling. -Generate and develop story ideas through brainstorming sessions using collaborative tools like Padlet.	
3	1	Teacher feedback on students' initial narratives	-Providing feedback on each student's initial story (their assignment)	-Edit and correct their stories depending on teachers' feedback and rubric.	The students' initial narratives will be evaluated by teacher before the session, through the rubric used in Week 1, and the students will be provided with teacher feedback in this session.
	2	Script Writing	-Guiding students to turn their narratives into scripts -Providing sample scripts	-Write a script for a digital story, incorporating key elements and structure.	
	3	Evaluating the First Draft Scripts	-Peer review and feedback	-Provide and receive constructive peer feedback on initial script drafts. -Revise and improve scripts based on feedback.	

4	1	Creating Storyboards	-Introduction to storyboarding -Teaching how to create storyboards	-Understand the purpose and components of a storyboard. -Create initial storyboards to plan out digital stories visually.	Peer Feedback & Evaluation Form 2
	2	Refining the Storyboard	-Peer review and feedback	-Provide and receive peer feedback on storyboards. -Refine and improve storyboards based on feedback.	
5	1	Visual Elements: Images and Videos	-Teaching how to select and edit images and videos for the story	-Select and edit images and videos to enhance digital stories. -Understand the impact of visual elements on storytelling.	Session Feedback Form 2
	2	Audio Elements: Music and Sound Effects	-Teaching how to select and insert appropriate music and sound effects, editing audio	-Choose appropriate music and sound effects to complement digital stories. -Edit audio elements to enhance the storytelling experience.	
	3	Voice Recording Techniques	-Presenting techniques for effective voice recording, practice sessions	-Learn techniques for effective voice recording. -Practice and refine voice recording skills.	
6	1	Building the Digital Story	-Combining elements to build the digital story, initial assembly	-Combine visual, audio, and narrative elements to build an initial assembly of the digital story.	Teacher Review & Feedback Form
	2	Editing and Refining	-Editing digital stories, teacher reviews and feedback	-Edit and refine digital stories based on teacher review and feedback. -Improve the coherence and quality of the final digital story.	
7	1	Finalizing the Digital Story	-Final touches and polishing the digital story	-Apply final touches and polish the digital story for presentation.	Digital Story Evaluation Rubric (for the evaluation of the final digital story) Class Feedback Form
	2	Presenting Digital Stories	-Students present their digital stories to the class	-Present digital stories to the class. -Develop presentation skills and confidence in sharing creative work.	
	3	Peer Feedback and Reflection	- Providing and receiving feedback, reflecting on the storytelling process	-Provide constructive feedback to peers on their digital stories. -Reflect on the storytelling process and personal learning experiences.	
8	1	Post-implementation Assessment	- Evaluating students' digital stories they created independently outside the classroom	-Practise further on digital storytelling	Post-implementation 1.Re-application of Diagnostic Writing Task (as in the 1 st week) & Story Writing Assessment Rubric 2.Re-application of Self-Assessment Survey (as in the 1 st week)
	2	Course Wrap-up and Celebrations	-Reviewing the course -Course wrap-up -Sharing final thoughts, celebration	-Review the overall course and assess the implementation of digital storytelling projects. -Identify areas of improvement and personal growth. -Share final thoughts and reflections on the course. -Celebrate the achievements and progress made throughout the course.	Overall Course Evaluation & Student Reflection

7.3. E-Stories Suggested Themes & Sample Scenarios for Digital Stories

The suggested themes and scenarios for the E-Stories course were designed to reflect the real-life experiences, interests, and cultural backgrounds of immigrant and international university students. Many topics—such as culture shock, studying abroad, or migration—allow learners to tell personal stories, fostering self-expression and emotional engagement. Others, like gender equality, racism, or technology use, encourage critical thinking and promote awareness of global and social issues.

These themes also support inclusivity and flexibility, offering both personal and creative options that suit different interests and comfort levels. By providing structured yet diverse prompts, the scenarios guide students through the storytelling process while allowing space for individual creativity. Ultimately, they help build language skills, digital literacy, and intercultural understanding—core goals of the E-Stories course.

1. Creating a story about culture shock in a foreign country

Scenario: A student moves to _____ (a foreign country) for _____ (reason for moving abroad, i.e. a year-long exchange program). They navigate cultural differences, from unique customs and etiquette to the language barrier. Their story explores initial struggles, humorous misunderstandings, and eventually, their adaptation and appreciation of its culture.

2. Being a student in a foreign country

Scenario: An international student in _____ (a foreign country) shares their experiences, focusing on the differences in the education system, making new friends, overcoming homesickness, and discovering local traditions and cuisines. The story highlights their academic journey and personal growth.

3. Creating a local story/tales from their own country

Scenario: Students create digital stories based on folklore or traditional tales from their home countries. For example, a student from Nigeria retells the story of Anansi the Spider, integrating personal reflections and contemporary settings to make the story relatable to modern audiences.

4. Re-editing classic fairy tales in the context of gender equality

Scenario: Students take classic fairy tales like Cinderella or Snow White and rewrite them to promote gender equality. For instance, they might create a version of Cinderella where she is an entrepreneur who uses her ingenuity to escape her circumstances, emphasizing empowerment and independence over traditional romantic themes.

5. The theme of war in the 21st century

Scenario: Students research and create stories about contemporary conflicts, such as the Syrian Civil War. They include personal narratives of refugees, explore the causes and consequences of the conflict, and discuss the global response and the quest for peace.

6. Create a story based on your interests (arts, sports, handicrafts, etc.)

Scenario: A student passionate about soccer narrates their journey from playing in local leagues to becoming a star player in their school team. The story includes highlights of important matches, lessons learned from the sport, and how soccer has shaped their identity and aspirations.

7. The benefits and harms of technology use

Scenario: A group of students collaborates to create a story contrasting two families: one that embraces technology for education and communication, and another that struggles with over-reliance on screens, leading to issues like social isolation and cyberbullying. The story aims to present a balanced view of technology's impact on daily life.

8. Presentation of the cultural characteristics of their own country

Scenario: A student from Brazil creates a digital story showcasing Brazilian festivals like Carnival, traditional foods, and the diverse cultural heritage of the country. The story is enriched with photos, videos, and personal anecdotes that highlight the vibrancy and richness of Brazilian culture.

9. Create a story about your dreams and goals

Scenario: A student aspiring to become a doctor shares their journey from childhood fascination with medicine to the steps they are taking to achieve their dream. The story includes inspirational moments, challenges, and a vision for their future in healthcare.

10. Characteristics of the country and its people from the perspective of foreign students

Scenario: A group of international students in Germany collaborates to create a story that presents Germany through their eyes. They discuss German hospitality, multiculturalism, and natural beauty, providing a unique perspective on what makes Germany special.

11. Creating stories related to the concepts of equality, freedom, and justice

Scenario: Students create stories inspired by historical and contemporary figures who fought for equality, freedom, and justice. For example, a story about Malala Yousafzai's advocacy for girls' education or the civil rights movement in the United States.

12. Creating stories about important historical events of their country

Scenario: A student from India creates a digital story about the Indian independence movement, highlighting key events, figures like Mahatma Gandhi, and the struggle for freedom from British rule. The story includes archival footage, photographs, and narrations of significant milestones.

13. Life story of an important figure

Scenario: Students choose a notable figure from their country and create a biography that highlights their achievements and contributions. For example, a student might tell the story of Nelson Mandela's life, focusing on his fight against apartheid and his legacy as a leader and peacemaker.

14. Celebrating diversity and inclusion

Scenario: Students create a story about a diverse group of friends who come together to celebrate their different cultural backgrounds through a festival or event. The narrative highlights the beauty of diversity, the importance of inclusion, and the richness of a multicultural society.

15. The story of migration

Scenario: Students create a story about a family migrating from their home country to a new land in search of better opportunities. The narrative explores the reasons behind their decision to migrate, the challenges they face during the journey, and their experiences adapting to a new culture and environment. The story highlights themes of resilience, cultural identity, and the impact of migration on individuals and families.

16. Combating racism and discrimination

Scenario: Students create a story about a diverse group of friends who confront and combat racism and discrimination in their school or community. The narrative focuses on their experiences, the actions they take to promote understanding and inclusion, and the impact of their efforts on their community.

8 Course Content: Teaching and Learning Materials

The lesson plans and associated teaching and learning materials for the E-Stories course were developed using a structured, modular template designed to support clarity, consistency, and pedagogical alignment with the project's overarching goals. This template served as a guiding framework for the creation of weekly modules that combined language learning with digital storytelling practices. Each lesson plan began with a module outline that included the week number, title, and a clearly defined aim. This was followed by a set of learning objectives that articulated what students would be able to achieve by the end of the lesson, ensuring that every activity and material served a specific purpose within the learning journey.

A key feature of the lesson plan design was the detailed content description, which provided an overview of the topics and skills to be addressed in each session. This ensured that the course content remained focused on enhancing students' abilities in storytelling, narrative writing, and spoken communication in the host country's language, while also fostering digital literacy. The template divided each module into two sessions, with suggested instructional activities and tasks tailored to support both language development and digital expression. These activities were interactive and learner-centered, encouraging student participation, collaboration, and personal expression.

To support these tasks, a variety of teaching and learning materials were identified or developed. These included worksheets, charts, handouts, didactic videos, excerpts from books or manuals, and mind maps. The selection of materials was guided by the aim of making lessons engaging, accessible, and adaptable for diverse learning styles and cultural backgrounds. Each lesson also included a step-by-step procedure section, offering educators clear instructional guidelines on how to deliver the content and manage classroom activities effectively.

In terms of pedagogy, the lesson plans promoted the use of varied content delivery methods such as lectures, discussions, group work, and multimedia. This diversity encouraged active learning and helped students apply language and digital skills in meaningful ways. Assessment methods were also embedded into each module, combining formative strategies like peer review and participation with summative tools such as reflection papers and rubric-based evaluations of digital stories. These assessments

allowed both students and instructors to monitor progress and ensure that learning objectives were being met (see the next section on Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework).

The sample lesson plans below, included in this output, were initially created in English to provide a general framework and shared understanding of expectations among project partners. These English versions served as reference models to guide each partner in designing equivalent lesson content tailored to their own linguistic and educational contexts. Each partner was responsible for developing similar modules in their respective national languages, intending to teach the host country language through digital storytelling techniques. However, due to space constraints, the complete set of lesson plans and teaching materials developed in partner languages could not be included in this report. Instead, these localized materials will be presented in their original languages in the Teacher's Guidebook, which will be produced under Work Package 4. This approach ensures both consistency in design and flexibility in implementation, allowing educators in each partner country to deliver the E-Stories course using resources that are pedagogically and linguistically appropriate for their learners.

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling
Module 1

Week	Title	Duration
Week 1	<i>Introduction to Storytelling</i>	40'x3=120'
Aim of the module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To introduce students to the concept and importance of digital storytelling in the context of language learning, - To familiarize them with the course structure and objectives, - To introduce the elements of storytelling. 	
Learning objectives	<p>At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the course objectives and structure. - Explain the concept of digital storytelling and its role in language and technology use. - Identify and describe key story elements (setting, characters, plot, conflict, climax, resolution). - Analyse short stories/film clips to recognize and evaluate these elements. 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Course overview & expectations - Pre-implementation surveys & tests - Introduction to digital storytelling (definition, importance, examples) - Story elements: setting, characters, plot, conflict, climax, resolution 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1: Introduction to the course</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course Overview Presentation – Outline objectives, expectations, assessments. 2. Icebreaker Activity – Students share their favourite story/film and discuss why they like it. Teacher links their answers to storytelling concepts. 3. Pre-implementation Surveys & Tests – Students complete diagnostic surveys/tests to assess skills and expectations. <p>Session 2: Digital storytelling</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Group Discussion – “What is digital storytelling and why is it important in language learning?” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students work in groups to explore aspects (education, media examples, tools). - Class discussion to share insights. 5. Didactic Video & Q&A – Watch project consortium video on digital storytelling. Teacher leads a short Q&A afterwards. 	

	<p>Session 3: Elements of a Story</p> <p>6. Brainstorming – Students suggest possible story elements (Padlet or whiteboard).</p> <p>7. Story Elements Exploration – Teacher presents story elements using a text or video example.</p> <p>8. Group Analysis Exercise – In groups, students analyse a short story/film clip and complete a story structure chart. Groups present findings.</p> <p>9. Didactic Video & Wrap-Up – Watch video on story elements. Summarize and review key takeaways.</p>
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video on digital storytelling https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSKagc596VQ - Video on the elements of a story: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arCy-oZDjfU - Online Mind maps (on a digital tool like Padlet) for brainstorming story elements. - Story structure charts (teacher-provided or student-drawn).
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecture (course overview, key concepts) - Discussion (icebreaker, group sharing) - Group Work (story analysis, brainstorming) - Media Use (videos, real examples)
Assessment	<p>Pre-implementation assessment tools (provided in the chapter of Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework)</p> <p>1. Diagnostic Writing Task & Story Writing Assessment Rubric</p> <p>2. Self-Assessment Survey</p> <p>3. Pre-Course Survey on students’ experiences and expectations</p>
References (if necessary)	

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling
Module 2

Week	Title	Duration
Week 2	<i>Introduction to Digital Storytelling</i>	40'x3=120'minutes
Aim of the module	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduce students to elements, tools, and phases of digital storytelling. - Enable students to generate and develop their own story concepts. 	
Learning objectives	<p>At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify and explain the elements of digital storytelling: point of view, dramatic questions, emotional content, voice, soundtrack, economy, pacing. - Critically evaluate sample digital stories to recognize these elements. - Explore and compare different digital storytelling tools and software. - Understand the phases of digital story creation (idea generation → writing → scripting → storyboarding → multimedia → editing → sharing). - Examine suggested themes and scenarios for DST. - Generate and develop story ideas through collaborative brainstorming (e.g., Padlet). 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital storytelling (DST) elements - DST tools and phases - Story Ideation & brainstorming - Developing story concepts 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1: Elements of a Digital Story</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sample Stories – Show some examples. 2. Mini-Lecture + PPT – Explain DST elements (point of view, dramatic questions, emotional content, voice, soundtrack, economy, pacing). 3. Worksheet Task – Students work individually or in pairs to match elements to parts of the sample story. 4. Peer Evaluation – Students exchange worksheets and check each other's answers. <p>Session 2: Digital Storytelling Tools & Phases</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Class Discussion – Ask students what DST tools/software they already know (video editing, audio recording, story creation tools). 6. Video – Introduce popular and easy-to-use tools for video, audio, and creation through a video on digital 	

	<p>storytelling tools.</p> <p>7. Phases of DST – Walk students through the stages of story creation: Idea → Writing → Script → Storyboard → Multimedia → Editing → Sharing.</p> <p>8. Practice Activity – Give students a sample topic and let them outline the phases for that topic.</p> <p>9. Group Discussion – Students share their outlines and self-evaluate.</p> <p>Session 3: Story Ideation & Developing the Story Concept</p> <p>10. Themes & Scenarios – Present the <i>E-Stories Suggested Themes and Scenarios for DST</i>.</p> <p>11. Idea Generation – Students propose story topics they are interested in.</p> <p>12. Collaborative Brainstorming – Use Padlet (or similar tool) for group brainstorming of story ideas.</p> <p>13. Story Concept Drafting – Each student begins drafting a short concept for their digital story.</p>
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video on digital storytelling https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSKagc596VQ - Video on digital storytelling tools https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4eLZ15T6X_I - Sample digital stories - PowerPoint slides (DST elements, tools, phases). - Worksheets (matching DST elements). - Padlet (or similar tool) for brainstorming.
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures (elements, phases, tools). - Discussions (class and group sharing). - Group Work (brainstorming, concept development). - Collaborative Digital Tools (Padlet, multimedia examples).
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer-checking of worksheets (Session 1). - Self-evaluation & group discussion (Session 2). - Brainstorming participation (Session 3). - Session Feedback Form 1 (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework). - Homework: Written story draft for Week 3.
References (if necessary)	<p>Lambert, J., & Hessler, B. (2018). <i>Digital Storytelling</i> (5th ed). Taylor & Francis.</p> <p>Miller, C. H. (2014). <i>Digital Storytelling: A Creator's Guide to Interactive Entertainment</i>. Routledge.</p>

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling
Module 3

Week	Title	Duration
Week 3	Script Writing	40'x3=120'minutes
Aim of the module	Enable students to develop, edit, and finalize their digital story scripts by transforming their written narratives into structured scripts, supported by teacher and peer feedback.	
Learning objectives	At the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Revise and correct their narratives based on teacher feedback and the assessment rubric. - Write a script for a digital story that incorporates key storytelling elements. - Provide and receive constructive peer feedback on draft scripts. - Revise and improve their scripts through multiple feedback rounds. 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Writing narratives in a foreign language - Transforming narratives into scripts - Composing digital storytelling (DST) scripts - Evaluating first drafts - Peer review and constructive feedback 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1: Teacher feedback on narratives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rubric Introduction – Teacher reviews the rubric used for evaluating narratives (criteria: thematic coherence, clarity, vocabulary/grammar, presence of DST elements). 2. Class Feedback – Teacher highlights common strengths and mistakes from student submissions. 3. Peer Evaluation – Students exchange narratives and give feedback guided by the rubric. 4. Individual Feedback – Teacher gives short individual comments while circulating. 5. Q&A Session – Class discussion on challenges and ways to improve narratives. <p>Session 2: Script Writing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Mini-Lecture – Introduction to scripting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differences between narrative writing and scripting. - Adding visuals, dialogues, stage notes. 7. Sample Scripts – Teacher presents 1–2 examples and identifies key features. 	

	<p>8. Guided Practice – Students transform their narrative into a script draft.</p> <p>9. Editing Support – Teacher circulates, giving individual feedback.</p> <p>10. Sharing – Volunteers read short sections to the class for feedback.</p> <p>Session 3: Evaluating the First Draft Scripts</p> <p>11. Evaluation Criteria – Teacher explains how draft scripts will be reviewed (clarity, story flow, integration of DST elements).</p> <p>12. Peer Review – Students exchange scripts and provide structured feedback using Peer Feedback & Evaluation Form 1.</p> <p>13. Teacher Feedback – Teacher comments on common issues observed.</p> <p>14. Revision Time – Students revise scripts based on feedback.</p> <p>15. Wrap-Up – Summarize key lessons and explain expectations for Week 4.</p>
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worksheets (script planning, peer evaluation) - Presentation slides (script writing basics, examples) - Feedback rubrics (from Week 1 & Week 3) - Mind maps for story creation - Sample scripts (short, clear examples) - Handouts on script structure (narrator, dialogue, scene directions) - Didactic videos on scriptwriting and storyboarding https://youtu.be/aaxCKrXpLc?si=WX90JiH38PhI3bKw
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lectures – introducing scriptwriting concepts. - Discussions– around rubric use, mistakes, and feedback. - Peer Review – evaluating and revising peers' work. - Group Work – collaborative editing of sample texts. - Individual Work – drafting and revising own scripts.
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher evaluation of initial narratives (based on rubric). - Ongoing formative assessment during workshops. - Peer Feedback & Evaluation Form 1 for structured peer review. - Teacher observation of revisions and improvements in scripts.
References (if necessary)	

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling
Module 4

Week	Title	Duration
Week 4	Storyboard	40'x2=80'minutes
Aim of the module	To develop students' understanding of storyboarding as a planning tool for digital storytelling and strengthen their ability to create, evaluate, and refine storyboards.	
Learning objectives	At the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain the purpose and components of a storyboard. - Create an initial storyboard to visually plan their scripts. - Provide and receive constructive peer feedback on storyboard drafts. - Refine and improve storyboards based on peer and teacher feedback. 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introduction to storyboarding (purpose, benefits, examples) - Creating storyboards from scripts - Peer feedback on storyboard clarity & visuals - Refining and finalizing storyboard drafts 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1: Introduction to Storyboarding</p> <p>1. Explain</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a storyboard and why is it needed in digital storytelling? - Brief history and applications (film, animation, digital media). - Components of a storyboard: frames, visuals, narration/dialogue, transitions. - Show examples of effective storyboards (animated films, short films, educational projects). <p>2. Hands-on Activity – Creating Initial Storyboards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students use their scripts from Week 3. - Teacher guides them to transform key scenes into visual frames (drawings, stick figures, or digital tools). - Focus: sequence, flow, and clarity of story. <p>Session 2: Polishing the Narrative Canvas: Fine-Tuning Your Storyboard</p> <p>3. Peer Review Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students present storyboards in small groups. - Feedback focus: <p><i>Narrative clarity (is the story easy to follow?)</i> <i>Visual effectiveness (do visuals support the story?)</i> <i>Completeness (are all major scenes covered?)</i></p>	

	<p>4. Revision & Refinement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students use peer and teacher feedback to improve their storyboards. - Teacher circulates and provides additional feedback. <p>5. Wrap-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Highlight common strengths and issues observed. - Remind students that refined storyboards will serve as the blueprint for multimedia production in the following weeks.
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Handouts on storyboard components - Flip charts, Post-it notes, markers, or storyboard worksheets - Digital storyboard tools (e.g., StoryboardThat, Canva, or PowerPoint) - Technology to display storyboard examples (projector or screen share) - Video on storyboarding https://youtu.be/aaxCKrXxpLc?si=mclbbJnsF_sq6mAI
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interactive instruction (mini-lectures with examples) - Hands-on practice (storyboard creation) - Group work (peer review & feedback) - Open dialogue (class discussions, Q&A)
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Peer feedback using the Evaluation Form (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework). - Teacher observation of storyboard creation, clarity, and revisions. - Students' ability to refine drafts based on feedback.
References	<p>Rousseau, D.H. (2013). <i>Storyboarding Essentials: SCAD Creative Essentials (How to Translate Your Story to the Screen for Film, TV, and Other Media)</i>. Watson-Guptill.</p>

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling Module 5		
Week	Title	Duration
Week 5	<i>Audio-visual elements of Digital Storytelling</i>	40'x3=120 minutes
Aim of the module	To equip students with practical skills in enhancing digital stories by selecting and editing images, videos, music, sound effects, and voice recordings, while understanding their impact on narrative clarity and emotional depth.	
Learning objectives	At the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select and edit images and video clips to enhance story narratives. - Explain the impact of visual elements on mood, theme, and message. - Choose appropriate music and sound effects to support storytelling. - Edit audio elements for clarity, emphasis, and emotional effect. - Apply effective voice recording techniques (diction, tone, pacing, emotion). - Record, edit, and refine voiceovers with peer and teacher feedback. 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selecting and editing visual elements (images, videos). - Selecting and editing audio elements (music, sound effects). - Voice recording: techniques, practice, and refinement. 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1 – Visual Elements: Images and Videos</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present examples of digital stories with strong and weak visuals. 2. Class discussion: How do visuals change how we experience a story? 3. Show image/video editing basics (cropping, filtering, adjusting brightness/contrast, layering). 4. Students select images and short video clips for their own stories. 5. Apply demonstrated editing techniques. 6. Volunteers share results with the class for short discussion. <p>Session 2 – Audio Elements: Music and Sound Effects</p>	

	<p>7. Discuss how sound shapes narrative (mood, pace, emphasis).</p> <p>8. Show examples of stories with contrasting soundscapes.</p> <p>9. Demonstrate audio editing techniques: trimming, fading, volume control, layering tracks.</p> <p>10. Students select music and sound effects that align with their story’s mood.</p> <p>11. Edit and synchronize audio to fit their storyboards/scripts.</p> <p>Session 3 – Voice Recording Techniques</p> <p>12. Explain importance of narration: clarity, pacing, emotion.</p> <p>13. Discuss common pitfalls (mumbling, monotone, background noise).</p> <p>14. Show recording setup and techniques using microphones/software (e.g., Audacity, Adobe Premiere, Canva).</p> <p>15. Students record their own short voiceovers for their stories.</p> <p>16. Exchange recordings in pairs for peer feedback.</p> <p>17. Revise and refine recordings based on feedback.</p>
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers or tablets with image, video, and audio editing software (e.g., Adobe Premiere, Audacity, Canva). - Microphones for voice recording. - Example digital stories that showcase effective use of visual and audio elements. - Handouts on basic editing techniques and voice recording tips.
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lecture & demonstration – introducing key techniques - Hands-on workshops – practicing with editing tools - Peer review sessions – exchanging feedback on visuals, audio, and narration - Collaborative discussion – reflecting on choices and impact
Assessment	Session Feedback Form 2 (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework)
References (if necessary)	

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling
Module 6

Week	Title	Duration
Week 6	<i>Digital Story - Creation</i>	40'x2=80 minutes
Aim of the module	To guide students in assembling their digital stories by integrating visual, audio, and narrative elements, and to enhance the quality and coherence of their projects through structured editing and teacher/peer feedback.	
Learning objectives	At the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combine visual, audio, and narrative elements into an initial digital story assembly. - Apply editing techniques to refine pacing, transitions, and overall flow. - Revise their digital story based on structured feedback. - Improve coherence, clarity, and emotional impact in their final draft. 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assembling digital story components (visuals, audio, narration). - Editing digital stories for coherence and impact. - Teacher and peer feedback for refinement. 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1 – Building the Digital Story</p> <p>1. Teacher Demonstration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Show how to integrate visuals, narration, and audio into a digital storytelling platform (e.g., Adobe Premiere, Canva, iMovie). - Highlight alignment of visuals with narration and the role of audio in mood and tone. <p>2. Hands-On Practice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students begin assembling their own digital stories using prepared materials (scripts, visuals, audio). - Teacher circulates, providing guidance on sequencing and synchronization. <p>3. Checkpoint Sharing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A few students briefly present their progress to the class. - Teacher emphasizes common strengths and areas needing attention. <p>Session 2 – Editing and Refining</p> <p>4. Peer/Teacher Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students share their first draft digital story (short preview). 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use structured feedback forms to comment on pacing, transitions, clarity, and balance of elements. <p>5. Revision Workshop</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students edit their stories based on received feedback. - Teacher provides targeted advice on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Narrative clarity (is the message clear?) - Transitions (are they smooth and purposeful?) - Audio-visual balance (does sound support, not overpower, visuals?) <p>6. Wrap-Up & Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher summarizes key editing principles. - Remind students that final refinements will be done in the next module before presentation.
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers with digital storytelling software (Adobe Premiere, Canva, iMovie, etc.) - Pre-selected student materials: scripts, images, videos, audio files - Example digital stories for reference - Teacher and peer feedback forms (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework)
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher demonstration of integration/editing process - Hands-on individual work (assembling/editing) - Peer review using structured forms - Guided feedback from teacher
Assessment	Teacher review and feedback form (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework)
References (if necessary)	

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling
Module 7

Week	Title	Duration
Week 7	<i>Final Touches to Digital Stories</i>	40'x3=120'
Aim of the module	To prepare students to finalize, present, and evaluate digital stories, strengthening their editing, presentation, and reflection skills, while boosting confidence in sharing creative work.	
Learning objectives	At the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Apply final edits and polish their digital story for presentation. - Present their digital stories confidently to the class. - Engage in Q&A discussions to explain creative choices. - Provide constructive peer feedback using structured forms. - Reflect critically on the digital storytelling process and personal learning journey. 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalizing digital stories (editing and polishing) - Student presentations of digital stories - Peer feedback and reflection on process and outcomes 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1 – Finalizing the Digital Story</p> <p>1. Editing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students apply final touches using the Final Editing Checklist (pacing, transitions, clarity, balance of visuals/audio). - Teacher circulates, providing targeted feedback. <p>2. Final Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher gives last-minute recommendations to ensure coherence and technical quality. - Students prepare stories for presentation. <p>Session 2 – Presenting Digital Stories</p> <p>3. Class Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students present their digital stories on a projector/large screen. - Each presentation is followed by a short Q&A session. <p>4. Teacher Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate presentations, ensuring equal time for all students. - Encourage confident delivery and supportive class 	

	<p>atmosphere.</p> <p>Session 3 – Peer Feedback & Reflection</p> <p>5. Peer Assessment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students complete Peer Assessment Forms during presentations. - Focus areas: creativity, clarity, emotional impact, technical execution. <p>6. Class Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guided reflection on what students learned from the process. - Sharing of challenges and breakthroughs in digital storytelling. <p>7. Reflection Journals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students write a short reflection on their personal learning experience (skills gained, confidence developed, future applications).
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Computers with digital storytelling software - Projector or large screen - Final Editing Checklist (teacher-prepared) - Peer Assessment Forms (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework) - Digital Story Evaluation Rubric (teacher use) - Reflection journals or templates
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual work (final editing) - Class presentations (story showcase) - Peer review (structured evaluation) - Reflection activities (discussion + journal writing)
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital Story Evaluation Rubric (for the evaluation of the final digital story) - Peer Assessment Form (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework)
References (if necessary)	

E-Stories Language Course through Digital Storytelling
Module 8

Week	Title	Duration
Week 8	<i>End-course-evaluation</i>	40'x2=80'
Aim of the module	To provide students with the opportunity to practice, reflect, and evaluate their digital storytelling journey, review their progress, identify areas for improvement, and celebrate their personal and collective achievements.	
Learning objectives	At the end of the lesson, students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Present and practice their final digital stories created independently. - Review the overall course and critically assess their learning progress. - Identify personal strengths, challenges, and areas for future growth. - Share final reflections on the course experience. - Celebrate achievements and gain recognition for their development. 	
Content overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-implementation Assessment - Course Wrap-up and Celebrations 	
Instructional activities and tasks	<p>Session 1 – Post-Implementation Assessment</p> <p>1. Student Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students present the final digital stories they created independently outside the classroom. - Stories are shown via projector/large screen. <p>2. Evaluation & Feedback</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher and peers evaluate stories using the Digital Story Evaluation Rubric. - Feedback focuses on creativity, coherence, and integration of visual, audio, and narrative elements. - Constructive feedback highlights both strengths and suggestions for improvement. <p>Session 2 – Course Wrap-Up and Celebration</p> <p>3. Course Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Teacher gives a short summary of the course, revisiting: - Digital storytelling elements - Steps of the DST process (script, storyboard, editing, presentation) - Skills gained (technical, creative, linguistic, reflective). 	

	<p>4. Reflection Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students complete a structured reflection worksheet/journal with guiding questions (e.g., What was your biggest challenge? What are you most proud of? How will you use these skills in the future?). - Group discussion: students share key insights and personal growth. <p>5. Celebration of Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Acknowledge students’ work and effort throughout the course. - Optionally distribute Certificates of Completion. - Class celebration (applause, short group photo, or symbolic activity such as a “story wall” of key learning moments).
Resources and materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital copies of independently created digital stories - Evaluation rubrics for digital stories - Projector or large screen for viewing presentations - Reflection journals or worksheets - Certificates of completion (optional)
Teaching methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation & review – showcasing student work - Discussion & reflection – evaluating personal and group progress - Individual reflection – structured self-assessment - Celebration – recognizing growth and achievements
Assessment	<p>Post-implementation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-application of Diagnostic Writing Task (as in the 1st week) & Story Writing Assessment Rubric - Re-application of Self-Assessment Survey (as in the 1st week) - Overall Course Evaluation & Student Reflection (from Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework)
References (if necessary)	

9 Course Evaluation & Assessment Framework

The assessment and evaluation stage in the E-Stories Course plays a critical role in guiding the course's design, implementation, and ongoing improvement. By strategically distributing various diagnostic tools, feedback forms, self-assessments, and evaluation rubrics across the eight-week curriculum, this stage ensures that learning is not only monitored but also enhanced through continuous feedback, reflection, and targeted support.

From the outset, assessment is used diagnostically (Week 1) to establish a baseline of students' language proficiency, storytelling ability, and digital literacy. Tools like the Diagnostic Writing Task, Story Writing Rubric, and Self-Assessment Survey serve to map learners' entry-level skills. Simultaneously, the Pre-Course Survey explores learners' prior experiences and expectations, ensuring the course content aligns with their needs and learning goals.

As the course progresses, assessment transitions into formative and collaborative feedback processes (Weeks 2–6). Regular use of Session Feedback Forms, Peer Evaluation Forms, and Teacher Feedback Sheets fosters an interactive learning environment where both instructors and peers guide learners in refining their narratives and digital stories. This phase empowers students through self-reflection and peer learning, encouraging them to take ownership of their development.

By Week 7, evaluation shifts to a summative focus, where final digital stories are assessed using comprehensive rubrics from both teacher and peer perspectives. The use of a Digital Story Evaluation Rubric and Peer Assessment Form provides structured insight into students' creative and linguistic growth, as well as their ability to effectively integrate multimedia tools.

In Week 8, the post-course diagnostic writing task and repeated self-assessments allow for comparative analysis against Week 1 results, showcasing measurable progress. The Overall Course Evaluation and Student Reflection Form not only gathers student satisfaction data but also informs future improvements of the course by capturing learner insights on course delivery and impact. The table below explains in detail what each tool functions for and where they are located (Table 5).

This structured, multi-phased evaluation approach has aimed:

- to identify individual learning needs early on,
- to promote continuous learning through feedback,
- to foster peer collaboration and reflection,
- to measure learning outcomes effectively,
- to ensure the course remains learner-centered and adaptable.

Table 5: Overview of Tools for Assessment and Evaluation

Week	Task Title	Task Description	APPENDIX
Week 1	Diagnostic Writing Task	This task has been designed as an in-class performance-based writing task to be done in the first week. It aims to assess students' initial language use & story writing skills in the host language before the course implementation.	APPENDIX 4
	Story Writing Assessment Rubric	This rubric has been designed to assess and score students' narratives produced through the diagnostic writing task above, and evaluate various aspects of a narrative, including its structure, content, character development, setting, language and vocabulary use, mechanics, and grammar.	APPENDIX 5
	Self-Assessment Survey	This survey has been designed to make students self-assess their skills in language use, story writing and telling, and technology use, before the course implementation, providing a baseline for comparison of post-implementation	APPENDIX 6
	Pre-Course Survey on Students' Experiences and Expectations	This short survey has been designed to seek students' previous experiences with digital storytelling, perceptions of digital storytelling, and expectations of the course.	APPENDIX 7
Week 2	Session Feedback Form	This short feedback form has been designed for students to evaluate some sessions, focusing on content delivery, engagement, and perceived learning outcomes.	APPENDIX 8
Week 3	Story Writing Assessment Rubric	This rubric has been designed to assess and score students' narratives produced as the assignment for the 3rd week, through which students will complete and bring their (paper-written) narratives/stories of the idea they have selected among the suggested themes and scenarios for the E-Stories. These initial student narratives will be evaluated through this rubric, and the students will be provided with teacher feedback on various aspects of a narrative, including	APPENDIX 5

		its structure, content, character development, setting, language use, mechanics, and grammar.	
	Peer Feedback & Evaluation Form 1	This structured form has been designed for students also to provide constructive feedback on each other's first draft scripts.	APPENDIX 9
Week 4	Peer Feedback & Evaluation Form 2	This structured form has been designed for students to provide constructive feedback on each other's storyboards.	APPENDIX 10
Week 5	Session Feedback Form	This short feedback form has been designed for students to evaluate some sessions, focusing on content delivery, engagement, and perceived learning outcomes.	APPENDIX 8
Week 6	Teacher Review & Feedback Form	This form has been designed for teachers to provide structured, constructive feedback on students' digital stories so that students can edit and refine their digital stories before the finalisation of the digital stories.	APPENDIX 11
Week 7	Digital Story Evaluation Rubric	This comprehensive rubric has been designed for teachers to evaluate the students' final digital story, including language accuracy, creativity, narrative structure, and effective use of technology.	APPENDIX 12
	Class Feedback Sheet	This peer assessment has been designed for peers to evaluate the final digital stories created by their classmates. It provides a structured way for students to give constructive feedback, encouraging thoughtful reflection on both the strengths and areas for improvement in each digital story.	APPENDIX 13
Week 8	Diagnostic Writing Task	Post-implementation writing task, the same as the pre-implementation to measure improvement in language, and story writing.	APPENDIX 4
	Self-Assessment Surveys	Post-implementation surveys where students reassess their skills and compare their progress.	APPENDIX 6
	Overall Course Evaluation and Student Reflection	This form will be administered at the end of the course to evaluate the overall success of the course from students' perspectives, including satisfaction with the learning experience and the perceived impact on skills development.	APPENDIX 14

10 Course Implementation Report & Piloting Results

10. 1. Results collected from Participant Students

A final overall evaluation survey was conducted with the participant students as part of the last activity of the work package within the course implementation. This activity involved the implementation of an eight-week language course through digital storytelling, identified by the consortium as a key approach to language learning and teaching for international and immigrant students. Between October 2024 and March 2025, the course was delivered at all partner universities, engaging a total of 51 students: 13 at Necmettin Erbakan University (including Selçuk University and Konya Technical University students), 17 at the University of Crete, 3 at the University of Paderborn, and 18 at the University of Malaga. The evaluation instrument was distributed in English to all participating students, with the University of Malaga also providing a Spanish translation for its attendees. This evaluation forms part of the project's quality monitoring methodology (PQA), while detailed course content and implementation processes are presented in individual partner reports.

The survey results are briefly described here, but detailed in Appendix 15. The results reveal that the eight-week course was broadly successful in achieving its primary aims of enhancing language skills, cultural understanding, and creative expression among international and immigrant university students. Across partner universities, participants reported a high level of satisfaction with the programme, with nearly all respondents rating their overall experience positively. They perceived the course as well-structured, engaging, and relevant to their learning needs, and most felt motivated throughout its duration.

One of the most notable outcomes is the course's impact on language development. The majority of students agreed that their language skills—particularly speaking, writing, and cultural knowledge—improved significantly. The digital storytelling format also proved to be an effective medium for self-expression, with most participants affirming they were able to convey their ideas and creativity in new ways. This suggests that integrating creative, narrative-based tasks into language education can foster both linguistic competence and personal engagement.

The module-specific feedback indicates that participants found value in all stages of the course, with particularly strong appreciation for the introductory sessions, audio-visual elements, and the final wrap-up. Script writing, storyboarding, and digital story creation

emerged as favourite components, reflecting the appeal of hands-on, creative work. However, several challenges were reported—most notably difficulties with animation tools such as Powtoon, integrating voice recordings, and managing a relatively heavy workload in a short timeframe. These issues were generally linked to a lack of prior digital skills rather than course design flaws, highlighting the need for more technical support and gradual tool familiarisation.

Students also expressed a desire for more interactive activities, such as discussions, peer exchanges, and speaking exercises, suggesting that increasing real-time communication opportunities could further strengthen language outcomes. In addition, they recommended expanding content to include advanced storytelling techniques, professional-level editing, and field-specific applications (e.g., tourism, medicine), which would make the course more adaptable to diverse academic and career goals.

Overall, the findings suggest that the course was effective, engaging, and well-received, successfully blending language learning with digital creativity. Minor refinements—such as enhanced digital tool training, greater emphasis on oral communication, and customisation to learners' academic disciplines—could elevate the programme further, ensuring it remains both pedagogically strong and highly relevant to its target audience.

10. 2. Results collected from Participant Teachers

The final evaluation survey was also conducted with the participant teachers as part of the last activity of the work package within the course implementation. The survey involved Necmettin Erbakan University (2 staff), University of Crete (1 staff), University of Paderborn (3 staff), and University of Malaga (1 staff). The survey gathered the perceptions of all staff who implemented the course, using a questionnaire in English as part of the project's quality monitoring approach. All participants gave informed consent and fully completed the survey.

The survey results are briefly described here, but detailed in Appendix 15. The survey results reveal an overwhelmingly positive reception of the eight-week digital storytelling course from the staff's perspective. Overall experience ratings were high, with a majority describing the programme as excellent or good, and unanimous agreement that

module topics flowed logically and aligned clearly with the course objectives of improving language skills through digital storytelling.

Feedback on individual modules was consistently strong. Weeks 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8 were unanimously rated as highly effective, with staff highlighting the combination of theoretical and practical learning, strong student interest, and the logical step-by-step structure. Weeks 4, 5, and 6 also received very positive evaluations, though a few respondents rated them slightly lower, mainly due to time pressures and occasional student difficulties with technical tools. Across the course, the integration of creative tasks—such as scriptwriting, storyboarding, and incorporating audiovisual elements—proved effective in enhancing students' engagement and confidence.

One of the most significant insights was that 100% of respondents felt digital storytelling helped students overcome language barriers. Staff noted that the process encouraged active participation, creativity, and meaningful language use. However, they also identified challenges: limited time for story development (42.9%), sustaining student engagement over the voluntary programme duration (42.9%), occasional technical issues with software (14.3%), and—in one case—a lack of specific language-teaching expertise (14.3%).

Suggestions for improvement were modest. While most staff did not see a need for major changes, some recommended providing storyboard templates, allowing more in-class writing time, and offering opportunities for peer discussion. Others proposed enhancing the course's institutional value by awarding ECTS credits or official recognition, which could boost student commitment. Additional resources, such as asynchronous lesson recordings and shared vocabulary documents, were also valued for supporting flexible and reinforced learning.

In conclusion, the pilot course demonstrated clear strengths in structure, content, and delivery, successfully combining linguistic and digital skills in an engaging way. With minor refinements—especially in pacing, technical facilitation, and institutional integration—the programme has strong potential to further improve its impact and sustainability across partner universities.

11 Final comments

In conclusion, the E-Stories project represents a significant effort to enhance the language learning experience for international and immigrant students through an innovative, technology-enhanced approach. By following a systematic research plan and leveraging a well-established course design model, the project aims to create a comprehensive, inclusive, and effective language course that improves language proficiency and fosters social integration and digital literacy.

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APPENDIX 1- Survey for Needs Assessment and Analysis

E-Stories Survey for Needs Assessment and Analysis

SECTION 1: Context-Related Demographic and Background Information

1. Immigrant/international students in numbers:

Please write here about the population of international/immigrant students in the university.

2. Distribution of their countries of origin:

Please write here about which countries they come from.

3. Distribution of these students in the faculties/programs:

Please write here about what programs or faculties they are studying.

4. Distribution of these students' academic level:

Please write here about what academic level they are studying (undergraduate, graduate, doctoral)

5. Communication with these students:

Please write here about how you ensure communication with them. Tell whether there are any units responsible for orienting these students and communicating with them or any policies or strategies ensuring inclusivity and accessibility in its communication strategies.

6. Challenges faced by these students:

Please write here about the primary challenges international/immigrant students reported regarding language education and social integration.

SECTION 2: Context-Related Facilities for Language Education

7. Medium of instruction:

Please write here about what language or languages are used as the medium of education in the university.

8. A language teaching centre:

Please write here about whether your institution has a specific office or unit to ensure that immigrant/ international students' language proficiency is met (e.g., a language teaching center). How can language learning resources, such as language centers or tutors, be integrated into the university's support structure for international/immigrant students?

9. An examination to test their proficiency:

Please write here about how the international/immigrant students' language proficiencies are assessed. Is there a standard examination that international students must take to prove their language proficiency? What methods does the university employ to assess the language proficiency of international/immigrant students? (Exams, presentations, written assignments, etc.)

SECTION 3: Needs Analysis Questionnaire

1. For Students:

1. What is your native language?
2. How proficient do you feel in the host country's language (A1, A2, B1.. naming the levels of CEFR)?
3. What are your main reasons for wanting to learn the host country's language?
4. What specific language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) do you feel most confident in? Least confident in?
5. What are your preferred learning styles or methods for language acquisition?
6. What resources or support do you currently use for language learning outside of the classroom?
7. What are the biggest challenges you face in learning the host country's language?
8. How do you prefer to receive feedback on your language skills?
9. What topics or aspects of the host country's culture would you like to learn more about through language learning?
10. What are your expectations for a language course in the host country?

2. For Instructors:

1. How would you describe the current language proficiency level of immigrant university students in the host country's language?
2. In your experience, what are the most common language learning challenges faced by immigrant university students?
3. What teaching methods or strategies have you found to be most effective for teaching language to immigrant students?
4. What resources or materials do you currently use for teaching language to immigrant students?
5. What are the main differences you observe in teaching language to immigrant students compared to teaching native speakers?
6. How do you assess the language proficiency of immigrant students at the beginning and end of a course?
7. What additional support or resources do you think immigrant students need to succeed in language learning?
8. How do you accommodate cultural differences in your language teaching approach?
9. What do you believe are the most important language skills for immigrant students to develop?
10. How can the university better support language teaching and learning for immigrant students?

APPENDIX 2- Reports of Needs Assessment and Analysis



E-Stories

Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A2: Needs Assessment & Analysis in the Turkish Context

Necmettin Erbakan University
Konya, Türkiye



Date:
15.03.2024

Reference Number:
2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



Co-funded by
the European Union



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

SECTION 1: Demographic and Background Information

1. Immigrant/international students in numbers:

About 2000 international students are enrolled in NEU, but the number of immigrant students is unknown. Still, it is considered that there are more than 800 students with an immigrant background since almost half of the international students are from conflict areas around the world, such as Syria, Ukraine, Palestine, Sudan, Afghanistan, Yemen, and Pakistan. On the other hand, approximately 100 international students receive intensive Turkish language education every year at NEU TÖMER- a Turkish language center.

2. Distribution of their countries of origin:

The international students at NEU come from a huge variety of countries worldwide- almost 70 countries. Most of these students come from African countries, Asian and Middle Eastern countries, and the Balkans. Countries such as Syria with more than 600 students; Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan with more than 120 students; and Yemen, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, and Palestine with more than 50 students stand out.

3. Distribution of these students in the faculties/programs:

In our context, all study programs ranging from medicine and health studies to education and educational sciences, dentistry to engineering, aviation to veterinary, arts to theology, law to applied sciences, and humanities to politics involve international students. As also visually seen in the following figure (Figure 1), engineering programs are populated with over 300 international students; medicine and health sciences with more than 200 international students; education programs with almost 200 international students; theology faculty with more than 230 international students; applied sciences and political sciences with 100 international students each; arts and architecture with more than 70 international students; tourism, humanities, and aviation with almost 50 international students; and dentistry with 30 international students. Similarly, the students enrolled in TÖMER are currently populated in the fields of theology, education, medicine, and engineering.

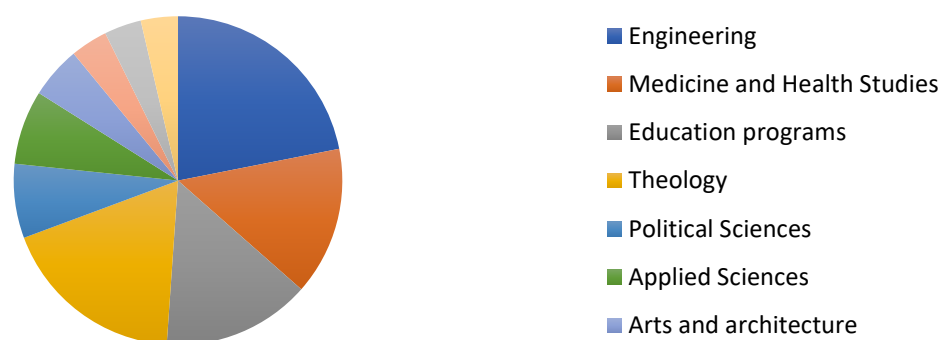


Figure 1: Distribution of international students by faculties/ programs

4. Distribution of these students' academic level:

Education levels of students vary as follows (Figure 2).

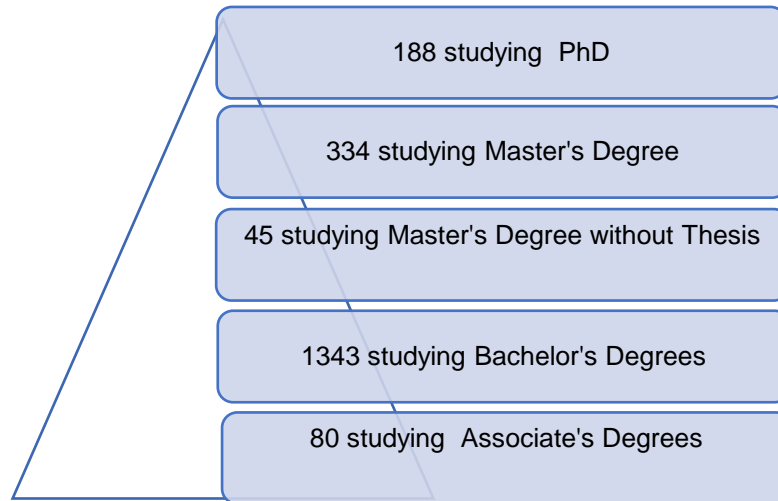


Figure 2: Distribution of international students by education levels

5. Communication with these students:

The International Student Coordination Office (ISCO) at NEU is responsible for orienting these students and communicating with them or applying policies or strategies to ensure their inclusivity and accessibility. Their main purpose is to advocate for the rights and interests of international students and provide support and resources to help them succeed academically, socially, and culturally. ISCO operates with the vision of providing support and guidance services that international students studying at our university will need in educational, cultural, and social fields; to guide our international students in their academic goals that they plan to pursue at our university, to contribute to the academic life of students with solution-oriented administrative procedures and to contribute to their graduation by increasing their satisfaction level with Necmettin Erbakan University. As well as ISCO, TÖMER also creates opportunities for their international students studying the Turkish language to adapt to their newly encountered settings and facilitate their integration through such events as city tours, social meals, cultural activities, and orientation tasks. Finally, the International Student Union also helps their international peers get informed about the procedures of studying at NEU and facilities both on campus and in the province of Konya. The union also plays a crucial role in supporting the well-being and success of international students, enhancing their overall university experience, and contributing to a more inclusive and welcoming campus environment through the activities and events they carry out.

6. Challenges faced by these students:

As stated by both the International Student Office and the TÖMER, it is observed that international students have such main problems as language learning difficulties and communication breakdowns, culture difference-related problems, lack of interest in the course/ disengagement from education, and adaptation problems. Frequently encountered problems in teaching Turkish to foreigners arise from alphabet and sound differences, language structure and syntax differences, problems arising from method and material inadequacies, and problems in learning academic language.

SECTION 2: Facilities for language proficiency

7. Medium of instruction:

Turkish is the medium of education in the university, whereas English is also the medium of education in such programs presented below, along with the percentage of English used in the courses;

- Industrial Engineering (100% English)
- Metallurgy and Materials Engineering (100% English)
- Political Science and International Relations (100% English)
- Aviation Management (30% English)
- Aircraft Engineering (30% English)
- Space and Satellite Engineering (30% English)
- Psychology (30 %English)

8. A language teaching center:

Teaching Application and Research Center (TÖMER) was established in 2012 within Necmettin Erbakan University to teach Turkish to its international students, based on the language centers operating in Türkiye and the world and today's changing conditions and other foreign language courses are also opened within the Center.

It aims to assist hundreds of international students who come to our university, as well as individuals who want to learn Turkish as a foreign language for various reasons, in language learning. TÖMER, which was established for this purpose, teaches language skills and vocabulary at basic, intermediate, and advanced levels following the European Language Development File (ELP) criteria. Apart from this, foreign language courses are also opened for students who want to learn other foreign languages for general and academic purposes.

9. An examination to test their proficiency:

Placement Tests and Turkish Proficiency Exams are held at TÖMER for individuals who want or need to document their Turkish knowledge.

SECTION 3: Needs Analysis Results

1. Results drawn from Students

This section reports the results drawn from the data collected through interviews with a total number of 16 international students currently studying at TÖMER.

For Students:

1. Distribution of international students' native languages

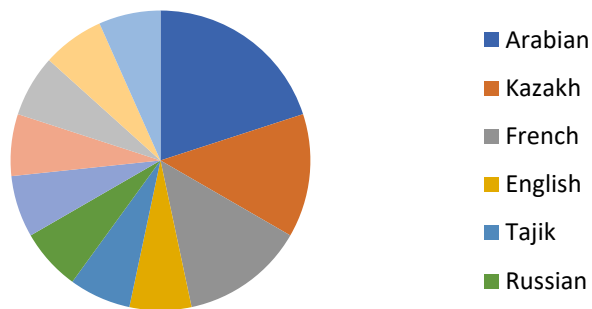


Figure 3: Distribution of international students by native languages

2. Distribution of their perceived proficiency levels of international students (by CEFR)

Number of Students	Proficiency Level
5	proficient
3	less proficient
7	insufficient

International students studying the Turkish language start from the A2 level and now they are considered to be at the B1 level.

3. The reasons lying behind international students' Turkish language learning

14 out of 16 students stated studying at university in Türkiye was their main reason for learning Turkish. On the other hand, among the other reasons reported by the students, were getting acquainted with Turkish culture, adapting to the environment, living in Türkiye, job opportunities, and understanding the TV series.

4. Language use skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) international students feel most confident in to least confident in.

Each student responded regarding his/her competence in four language skills as such.

Number of Students	Most confident	Least confident
8	reading	
8		listening
6		speaking
3		writing

1	speaking	
1	speaking, writing, listening, reading	

* Student responses might fall into more than one category.

5. International students' preferred learning styles or methods for language acquisition

Number of Students	Preferred Learning Styles or Methods
9	Chat in Turkish
6	Turkish TV series and movies
2	Listening to Turkish songs
1	Visual learning and storytelling
1	Taking a language course
3	Reading books in Turkish

* Student responses might fall into more than one category.

6. Resources international students currently use for language learning outside of the classroom.

Number of Students	Source of Input in Turkish
9	From chats with their Turkish friends
7	Reading Turkish books
7	Watching Turkish TV series and movies
1	Turkish posts on social media
5	Watching Turkish lessons on the Internet (Youtube)
1	Using a translation program (Google)
1	Online chat groups

* Student responses might fall into more than one category.

7. Challenges faced by international students in learning the host country's language.

Number of Students	Challenges
6	Speaking Turkish
1	Pronunciation of vowels
4	Finding grammar complicated
3	Word order
3	Words with unknown Meanings
2	Listening
1	Sounds not in their native language

* Student responses might fall into more than one category.

8. International students' preferred ways to receive feedback on their language skills.

Number of Students	Feedback
All students	Direct feedback from teachers
2	Discussion and evaluation once or twice a week
3	Motivational speeches
2	Written feedback

* Student responses might fall into more than one category.

9. Topics or aspects of the host country's culture international students would like to learn more about through language learning.

They want to learn about a rich variety of topics as such:

- Turkish Customs,
- Ways of Life,
- Village Culture,
- History,
- Stories,
- Family Life,
- Legends,
- Fairy Tales,
- Holidays,
- Celebrations,
- Food,
- Well-known people such as Rumi and Shams.
- Heroes,
- Movies,
- Weddings,
- Ottoman-Seljuk Period,

10. International students' expectations for a language course in the host country.

Number of Students	Expectations
All Students	They expressed that they wanted to speak fluent Turkish.
1	Expressed that they want to be competent in all 4 language skills.
1	Want to learn grammar in all its aspects.
1	Gain cultural and social awareness
1	Making new friends

* Student responses might fall into more than one category.

2. Results drawn from Instructors

This section reports the results drawn from the data collected through interviews with a total number of three language educators currently working at NEU TÖMER.

For Instructors:

1. How would language educators of international students describe the current language proficiency level of their students in Turkish?

All three educators think that students have the required proficiency in Turkish at the end of the course, and they are adequate for daily communication, but their academic language proficiency is not at a good level.

2. From educators' experiences, what are the most common language learning challenges faced by immigrant university students?

Among the challenges reported by the three educators, are pronunciation difficulties, understanding and constructing complex sentence structure, understanding and constructing idioms and proverbs, vowel harmony, difficulty in speaking and writing skills, and noun phrases.

3. What teaching methods or strategies have language educators found to be most effective for teaching language to immigrant students?

They reported that the use of various speaking activities, the combination of various methods, integration of multiple intelligences, auditory-visual, communicative, and collaborative methods are the most effective ways for teaching their international students Turkish.

4. What resources or materials do language educators currently use for teaching language to immigrant students?

They usually rely on textbooks, reading books, online materials, selected videos from TRT (the national TV channel), and TRT documentaries.

5. What are the main differences language educators observe in teaching language to immigrant students compared to teaching native speakers?

It is seen as similar to the language acquisition process. While Turkish students are not given details due to their familiarity, foreign students should be given details.

6. How do language educators assess the language proficiency of immigrant students at the beginning and end of a course?

They move from basic-level users to proficient-level users. Their communication and comprehension skills improve. There is an increase in vocabulary knowledge and daily communication skills.

7. What additional support or resources do language educators think immigrant students need to succeed in language learning?

Reading books, level-appropriate texts, listening-watching texts, speaking texts, and academic writing texts are needed.

8. How do language educators accommodate cultural differences in their language teaching approach?

There are different views such as prioritizing Turkish culture, following a path from universal culture to Turkish culture, seeing cultural differences as a richness, and developing an understanding that students will respect each other's cultures.

9. What do language educators believe are the most important language skills for immigrant students to develop?

While all language skills are interconnected and contribute to effective communication, there is a prevalent view that writing holds paramount importance among them. However, it's crucial to recognize that each skill—writing, listening, and speaking—plays a significant role in language proficiency and should be developed concurrently.

10. How can the university better support language teaching and learning for immigrant students?

International students should be provided with opportunities, such as conversation clubs utilizing a peer-supported learning model, and social learning environments that facilitate interaction between international and Turkish students. These clubs provide a structured platform for international students to practice language skills in a comfortable and supportive environment, fostering confidence and fluency. Moreover, creating social learning environments that bring together international and Turkish students can significantly enrich the cultural exchange experience.



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Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A2: Needs Assessment & Analysis in the German Context

Helene Lindenthal / Marc Beutner
University Paderborn, Paderborn, Germany



UNIVERSITÄT
PADERBORN

Date:
10.03.2024

Reference Number:
2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



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SECTION 1: Demographic and Background Information

1. Immigrant/international students in numbers:

The following answers all come from the perspective of the University of Paderborn in Paderborn, Germany. In the winter semester 2023/2024, the total number of students from abroad was 2658. The number of students who obtained their higher education entrance qualification in Germany was 437. The number of students who obtained their higher education entrance qualification abroad was 2147. In the same semester, 438 students from abroad were newly enrolled at the University of Paderborn. From this group of students, 72 obtained their higher education entrance qualification in Germany, and 366 of them abroad.

2. Distribution of their countries of origin:

The following numbers are from the winter semester 2022/2023.

The total number of students from the European Union was 209. Most of them came from Italy (38), Greece (33), France (18), Croatia (18), and (Spain).

The total number of students from Europe was 370. Most of them came from Türkiye (215), Russian Federation (49), and Kosovo (22).

The total number of students from America was 48. Most of them came from Mexico (13), Colombia (7), and USA (6).

There was one student from New Zealand (1).

The total number of students from Africa was 520. Most of them came from Morocco (185), Cameroon (120), and Nigeria (62).

The total number of students from Asia was 1510. Most of them came from India (454), China (314), and Pakistan (185).

3. Distribution of these students in the faculties/programs:

The following answers are from the winter semester 2023/2024.

A total of 1027 students from abroad were enrolled in a Bachelor's program. Most of them are studying Mechanical Engineering (128), Computer Science (118), and International Business Studies (114). A total of 1377 students from abroad were enrolled in a Master's program. Most of them are studying Computer Science (330),

International Economics and Management (264), and Electrical Systems Engineering (235). A total of 156 students from abroad were enrolled in a Doctoral program.

4. Distribution of these students' academic level:

The following answers are from the winter semester 2023/2024.

A total of 1027 students from abroad were enrolled in a Bachelor's program.

A total of 1377 students from abroad were enrolled in a Master's program.

A total of 156 students from abroad were enrolled in a Doctoral program.

5. Communication with these students:

The International Office of Paderborn University is responsible for the internationalization at the University. They are responsible for all incoming and outgoing students. Not only do they offer help with the information about going abroad or coming in, but also help with the application processes, language courses, activities, living situations, organizational stuff and more.

There is a service centre at Paderborn University that looks after students with disabilities. They offer various forms of assistance. For problem-free communication within the university, they offer, for example, a writing assistant for events and at home in the case of motor impairments, readers and companions in the case of visual impairments and (sign language) interpreters in the case of hearing impairments.

6. Challenges faced by these students:

In Germany, international/immigrant students report different kinds of challenges. Especially, with regard to language education and social integration they report language barriers, needs for cultural adjustment and the challenges of housing issues. Moreover, they focus on the need to build up social connections, the challenges of bureaucracy and how to deal with it. Some students also report aspects of discrimination and prejudices against them. Concerning the language barrier it seems to be the most significant challenge for them. Many international students may not be fluent in German upon arrival. The problem concerning this is that while many universities offer courses in English, everyday interactions outside the classroom

often require proficiency in German. So, they can take often easily part in their courses but a lack of language skills hinders academic performance and social integration. This is a crucial issue because cultural adjustment goes hand in hand with social activities and the need for social integration. Adapting to a new culture can be challenging. In Germany, some daily behaviours can be different from the experiences the students have in their countries. Cultural norms, social etiquette, and academic expectations in Germany may differ significantly. A problem can be that this may lead to feelings of isolation or alienation. Building social connections with German students and locals can be difficult, especially if language barriers exist. International students may struggle to find a sense of belonging and may gravitate towards socializing primarily with other international students, limiting their exposure to the local culture. Concerning housing issues it important for them to find a suitable accommodation. This can be challenging in popular university cities like Berlin or Munich. But also in Paderborn this is not quite easy to handle. Limited availability, high rental costs, and unfamiliarity with the local rental market can add to their challenges. This is accompanied by the challenge of handling and managing of finances. They have to deal with accommodation costs and daily expenses, but also dealing with sometimes occurring tuition fees, can be stressful for international students. They may face restrictions on working hours due to visa regulations, making it difficult to supplement their income. The combination of these challenges can be tough for international students. Also dealing with German bureaucracy, including maybe needed visa and residency permit processes, health insurance requirements, and banking procedures, can be complex and overwhelming for international students, especially if they are not fluent in German. Unfortunately, some international students may experience discrimination or prejudice based on their nationality, ethnicity, or language proficiency. This can negatively impact their overall well-being and integration into German society. To address these challenges, universities and support organizations in Germany often offer language courses, orientation programs, cultural exchange events, and counselling services tailored to the needs of international students. Additionally, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment within universities and local communities can help facilitate the social integration of international and immigrant students.

SECTION 2: Facilities for language proficiency

7. Medium of instruction:

At the University of Paderborn, there are Bachelor programs in the following languages: German (128), English (16), French (10), and Spanish (9).

There are Master programs in the following languages: German (134), English (25), Spanish (11), French (11), and Dutch (1).

8. A language teaching center:

The international students' language proficiency is a part of the International Office of UPB. They offer different kinds of language courses (before the start of the semester, needed for studying at a University in Germany, or during the semester). The language courses for preparing for the University entrance exam are offered by the Faculty of Cultural studies.

As part of the University's International Office, language courses are offered from the start of the application process. In addition, the staff at the Service Centre for incoming students provide information about this in personal meetings. In addition, there are regular writing meetings during the semester in which questions about German academic writing are clarified and support is provided.

9. An examination to test their proficiency:

Please write here about how the international/immigrant students' language proficiencies are assessed. Is there a standard examination that international students must take to prove their language proficiency? What methods does the university employ to assess the language proficiency of international/immigrant students? (Exams, presentations, written assignments, etc.)

“The DSH is the German language test for university entrance. It tests the language skills required for international applicants to study a subject at C1 level in the areas of listening comprehension, reading comprehension, academic language structures, text production and oral expression. Applicants should be able to understand lectures by listening, take notes, deal with subject-related texts and develop oral and written forms of presentation. Paderborn University offers international applicants the

opportunity to take German language courses to prepare for the DSH and the subsequent degree programme.”

Of the 83 exchange students currently enrolled in the current winter semester 23/24, the following language courses are being taken:

- 51 students on the German crash course (semester preparation) - DAZ/DAF section
- 55 students on the German semester course (semester-accompanying) - DAZ/DAF area
- 7 exchange students take part in 7 different ZfS English courses, some of them take several English courses (a total of 14 places)
- 2 exchange students take Italian courses
- 2 exchange students take Spanish courses

The number of exchange students includes all exchange students, regardless of whether they are here at UPB via Erasmus+ or from other partner universities worldwide.

There are currently 227 DSH participants enrolled in the DSH courses to learn German.

A language test within the DSH contains the following test areas: Listening comprehension, reading comprehension, academic language structures, text production and oral expression.

“The DSH consists of a written and an oral examination.

The written exam

It consists of three parts and is graded with a total of 70%:

1. listening comprehension (20%)

A text of 5500 to 7000 characters is presented twice. You are allowed to take notes during the presentation. You should answer questions in keywords or your own formulations, reproduce key aspects of the content and/or present the idea of the text. You will have 10 minutes after the first lecture and 40 minutes after the second lecture to complete the test.

2. reading comprehension (20%) and scientific language structures (10%)

You will work on a text of 4500 to 6000 characters, which may also be accompanied by a graphic, a diagram or a chart. You will be asked to recognise and paraphrase grammatical structures from this text. This part of the examination lasts approx. 90 minutes.

3. text production (20%)

You will write a text of approximately 250 words on a study-related and science-orientated topic. You will be given key points to integrate into your text product. This part of the examination lasts 70 minutes.

The oral examination

The oral examination consists of one part and is graded at 30%.

You give a short presentation on a topic for which you are given information in the form of a text, a graphic, a chart or a diagram. You then discuss the topic with your examination partner. The oral examination lasts approx. 35 minutes (20 minutes preparation and 15 minutes in front of the examination board).

Determination of the examination result

DSH-1: with at least 57% in both the written (39.9 points) and oral (17.1 points) examinations.

DSH-2: at least 67% in both the written (46.9 points) and oral (20.1 points) examinations.

DSH-3: at least 82% in both the written (57.4 points) and oral (24.6 points) examinations.

Admission to the degree programme

At Paderborn University, an overall result of at least DSH-2 is a prerequisite for admission to all Bachelor's degree programmes. Information on the language requirements for other degree programmes can be found [here](#).

Can the exam be repeated?

The DSH can be repeated once.

If the result is DSH-1, further retakes are permitted.

Failed DSHs at other universities are taken into account in this procedure."

SECTION 3: Needs Analysis Results

1. Results drawn from Students

The report consists of answers from eight students abroad who are currently enrolled at the University of Paderborn. The participants represent a balanced gender distribution, consisting of four female and four male participants. The age range is from 21 to 36 years old. The students learn various languages such as German (4), English (1), and Spanish (3). The respondents are spread across Bachelor's degree programmes, including Computer Science (1) and International Business Studies (3), as well as various Master's degree programmes such as Management Information Systems (1), Industrial Engineering Mechanical Engineering (1), Taxation, Accounting and Finance (1), and Business Education (1).

For Students:

1. English: What is your native language?

The geographical origin of the interviewees included Germany (4), Cameroon (2), Iran (1), and Türkiye (1). The diversity of mother tongues is reflected in German (2), French (2), Bosnian (1), Croatian (1), Persian (1) and Turkish (1).

2. English: How proficient do you feel in the host country's language (A1, A2, B1.. naming the levels of CEFR)?

Three of four students who are currently learning German, assign to the language level of C1. The other one assigns to B2.

All students who are currently learning Spanish, assign to the language level B2 and B. The one who is currently learning English, assigns to B.

3. English: What are your main reasons for wanting to learn the host country's language?

The main reason for the students wanting to learn the language is because the language is part of their study program. They need the language for understanding the contents and to successfully finish the study program. Most of the respondents are interested in other languages and cultures and therefore want to learn the language. Most of them are currently or have been living abroad in the country where

the language they are learning is the spoken language. They want to be able to communicate in every situation throughout the day. One of them also sees general benefits in learning a language. Another seeks employment in Germany after the study program and therefore wants to learn the language by heart.

4. English: What specific language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) do you feel most confident in? Least confident in?

The respondents feel most confident in the language skill of reading. One of them stated the reason that you have more time when reading. In terms of understanding, there is more time to go through the sentence, look at the words, and the grammar of the sentence and understand the content.

One respondent is most confident in speaking because the person spent some time abroad and actively used the language until the point where it was no longer uncomfortable. So the more the person was speaking, the better the skill.

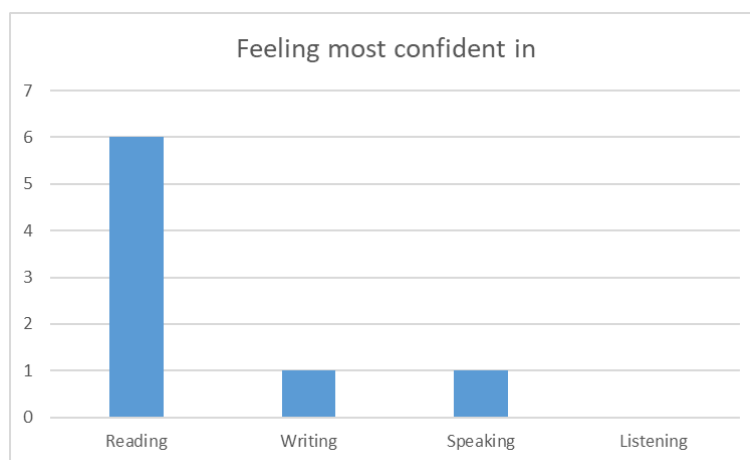


Figure 1: Respondents feeling most confident in (language skill)

Four of the respondents named listening as the language skill in which they feel least confident. Some of them stated the reason that there are different dialects of languages which makes it hard to understand. The second language skill which three of the respondents feel least confident in is speaking. Many of them stated that they had only a few opportunities to actively use the language in speaking which led to having no confidence in speaking and being ashamed of how bad they were speaking although they could speak the language theoretically.

One respondent feels least confident in writing.

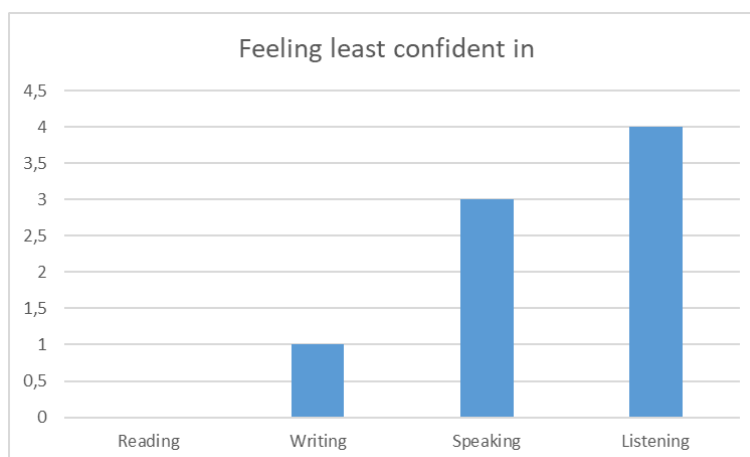


Figure 2: Respondents feeling least confident in (language skill)

5. English: What are your preferred learning styles or methods for language acquisition?

The respondents use different kinds of methods for language acquisition. All of them try to use the language in different contexts, such as in communicating with others in or outside of the university, and social media. Four of them use videos, series, or movies to watch and listen to the language. This can also be used for learning new sentences. Same with listening to music in the language to broaden the vocabulary. Three of them prefer classical methods like getting instructions first and then using them in tasks.

6. English: What resources or support do you currently use for language learning outside of the classroom?

Outside the classroom, seven of the respondents watch videos, series, or movies either in the language or use subtitles for language learning. Two of them actively use the language in social media. One of them likes to read newspapers in German and also listens to the news. One of them also actively tries to talk to Germans. One of them is participating in the Tandem program of the university in which they meet others who want to learn a language and so they meet to teach and learn from each other. One of them translates its script from the courses and learns new vocabulary.

7. English: What are the biggest challenges you face in learning the host country's language?

The biggest challenge the respondents are facing in their language process is the lack of communication. Four of them wish for more opportunities to actively use the language through verbal communication. Unfortunately, there are not so many opportunities in either the classes or outside the classroom. Two of them struggle to connect with native speakers and have the feeling of rejection. This goes hand in hand with listening, as they have no one whom they can practice their listening skills with despite the lecturers who don't speak with them individually.

Another challenge is the grammar of the language, as well as the sentence structure and different rules, which are different to their native language.

One of them finds it difficult to expand their vocabulary because it's always the same context they are using the language in.

One of them finds it hard to dive deep into the language, at least at the beginning of the learning process. It takes time to get a feeling of the language, the rhythm, and the sentences.

One of them is similarly learning another language because of the study program, which makes it difficult to learn the languages. Especially, when a course of the study program is in one language but the test at the end of the course is in the other language.

8. English: How do you prefer to receive feedback on your language skills?

All of the respondents want to receive feedback on their language skills. Six of them want feedback directly from their correspondent when talking to them. The feedback should include the mistake they have made and how they should do it next time.

One of them also wants regular feedback about their current language proficiency.

One of them doesn't need explicit feedback from others, as they think they know their mistakes themselves.

9. English: What topics or aspects of the host country's culture would you like to learn more about through language learning?

All of the respondents are interested in the culture of the country whose language they are learning. They are interested in the culinary culture, the nightlife, differences, do's and don't's, politics and political system, economy, people and their lifestyle, traditions, values and festivities.

10. English: What are your expectations for a language course in the host country?

All of the respondents want a language course which really challenges them. They want to get a lot of tasks and practices, especially for their speaking skills. They would like to communicate, maybe through roleplay. One of them would be hoping for new connections to other students.

Four of them would like to learn grammar through instructions, books, and a lot of tasks.

Three of them would like to have the course regularly, like everyday, once, twice or three times a week, depending on the language level. Maybe at a lower level more often.

Two of them would like to have less people in a course. A maximum of 30 in total and 4-6 for group work. One of them would like to learn about the culture and politics within the course.

2. Results drawn from Instructors

Report the results here.

For Instructors:

1. English: How would you describe the current language proficiency level of immigrant university students in the host country's language?

All three instructors would describe the current language proficiency level of immigrant university students in the host country's language as very different. They often don't know about the number of non-native students and can therefore only guess. There are always some students who have a high language level and some who have a mediocre with a downward trend. This could be the case because some of the students have learned the country's language in school and some just started. There have been also cultural differences as students from Asia had good language

proficiency but problems with the German culture and others who were familiar with being abroad had fewer problems with the foreign culture.

2. English: In your experience, what are the most common language learning challenges faced by immigrant university students?

The most common language learning challenges faced by immigrant university students were learning and understanding the content of the studies. Also speaking and speaking formally as well as writing are common challenges. One of the instructors named their expectations of speaking perfectly as a challenge because it hinders them from using the language at all.

3. English: What teaching methods or strategies have you found to be most effective for teaching language to immigrant students?

Two of the instructors named group work and also mixing groups of native and non-native students as a teaching method. Two of the instructors named additional courses as a teaching method, in which the students can ask questions concerning the content in order to make sure they understand the German content correctly. One instructor offers the learning material in English. One instructor offers question forums on the learning platform where students can ask questions about the lecture or the content and the other students and the instructor can answer. One instructor offers consultation hours as well as email correspondence. One instructor pays particular attention to a simple formulation of the contents during the lecture.

4. English: What resources or materials do you currently use for teaching language to immigrant students?

All of them are open to help individually after class. Two instructors offer (additional) material in English. One of them allows dictionaries also for the examination. One of them uses group work and offers different topics so that the students can choose their preferences.

5. English: What are the main differences you observe in teaching language to immigrant students compared to teaching native speakers?

The three instructors observed various differences between immigrant and native students. One instructor observed students from abroad being very committed and motivated at the beginning of the semester which became less to the end. They have been asking a lot of questions after class, were active in class and later not so much anymore. The instructor also assumes that many of the immigrant students were confused by the university system in Germany when the German students were familiar with it. One instructor observed that the immigrant students were often building groups with their peers which was not helpful for their language development. One of the instructors observed that the elaboration of the exercises is significantly worse for immigrant students because they have difficulties with understanding the exercise.

6. English: How do you assess the language proficiency of immigrant students at the beginning and end of a course?

The instructors don't assess the language proficiency of immigrant students in their courses. They can only observe their development throughout the semester. When they are taking their examination at the end of the course, language plays an important role but is not being assessed. The instructors only assess the content.

7. English: What additional support or resources do you think immigrant students need to succeed in language learning?

The three instructors have mentioned different additional support or resources that they think immigrant students need to succeed in language learning. One instructor thinks it would be helpful to give everyone a partner (native and non-native speakers) so that they feel responsible for each other, learn together, and speak German together. The instructor also thinks that group work and an additional group for immigrant students would help answer all their questions. Another instructor has a similar idea of offering additional courses after lectures so that the language difficulties within the lectures can be solved right away. One instructor thinks it's important to give students from abroad a good feeling and a safe learning space. They should feel understood and supported so they are not afraid to contribute to the class and make mistakes. One instructor thinks it would be helpful to have additional

devices which help with translating the lectures. Another idea is to have the lecture in English.

8. English: How do you accommodate cultural differences in your language teaching approach?

Cultural differences are only an issue for one of the three instructors. This instructor includes for example the student's native languages as well as their holidays and discusses the differences in class.

9. English: What do you believe are the most important language skills for immigrant students to develop?

Two of the three instructors believe that writing and listening skills are important for immigrant students to develop. One of them would also add reading and speaking skills. One instructor believes that the skill of not being afraid of making mistakes and developing a certain frustration tolerance would be helpful. This instructor would also name open-mindedness as an important skill for immigrant students.

10. English: How can the university better support language teaching and learning for immigrant students?

Two of the three instructors think the university could offer buddy systems for native and non-native students. One of the instructors would also suggest offering tandem language learning, for students who both would like to learn the other's native language. The instructor would also offer the culture fellow program in which students from the same faculty come together and teach others about their habits and culture. One instructor would like to know about the number of students from abroad at the beginning of the semester so that they can better plan. All of the instructors would like to have an additional course for teachers to talk about their best practices, and their experiences with students from abroad and learn how to best support and work with them. One of the instructors would like the university to offer devices for real-time translations during lectures.



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WP2-A2: Needs Assessment & Analysis in the Spanish Context

Julio Ruiz Palmero, Giovanny Durán, María Rubio-Gragera

University of Málaga, Spain



UNIVERSIDAD
DE MÁLAGA

Date:

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INTRODUCTION

The University of Málaga (UMA) was founded in 1972. Nowadays, it is one of the largest public higher education and research institutions in Spain. UMA is a young and dynamic university that grows looking ahead: constantly innovating, developing international talent while investing in research and achieving academic excellence.

The UMA is made of more than 35,000 students and 2600 teachers within its 20 faculties and schools hosting more than 70 bachelor programmes, more than 70 master programmes and 22 PhD programmes. In terms of research, our University has more than 300 research groups working on more than 300 national and international projects.

SECTION 1: Demographic and Background Information

1. Immigrant/international students in numbers:

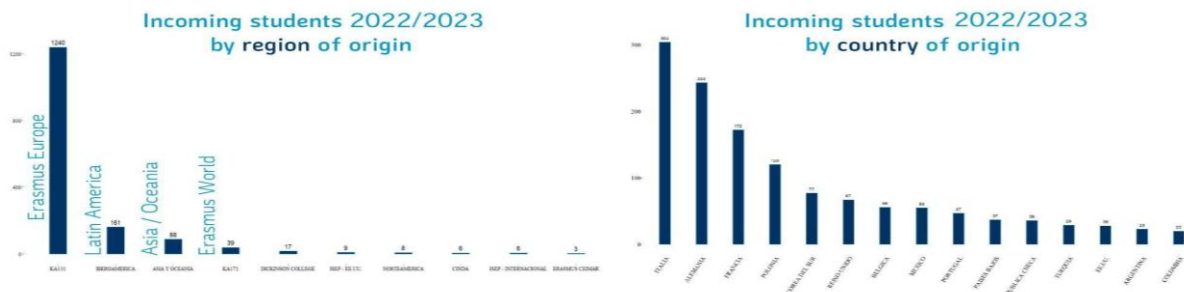
In 2023, the University of Málaga welcomed more than 1700 new incoming international exchange students, as a result of more than 1000 bilateral agreements with Higher Education Institutions from all over the world.

2. Distribution of their countries of origin:

Incoming students are mainly European, due to the mobilities of the KA131 Erasmus+ project, the most predominant countries of origin are ranked as follows: Italy, Germany, France and Poland. These European countries are followed by regions of Latin American (Mexico), Asia and Oceania (South Korea) as well as the United States. The University of Málaga also host a great number of international students from the United Kingdom.

The incoming students sorted by region and country of origin are shown in the graph below:

Mobility Students at UMA

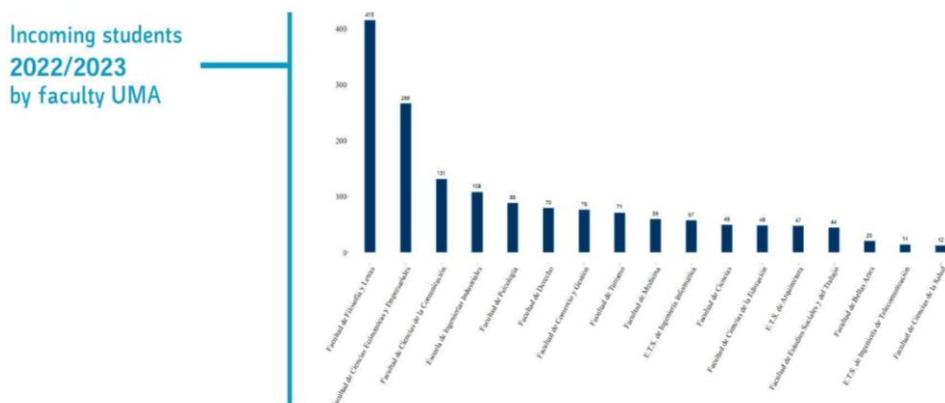


3. Distribution of these students in the faculties/programs:

For the 2022/2023 academic year, incoming students in the University of Málaga were mainly enrolled in the Philosophy and Humanities Faculty (with 415 students out of 1700), followed by the Economics and Business Management Faculty. The third faculty in the ranking with a higher number of international incoming students was the Faculty of Communication, being the fourth one the Faculty of Industrial Engineering.

Faculties still hosting international students but with less than 80 incoming ones were Psychology, Law, Commerce, Tourism, Medicine, Computer Sciences, Education, Architecture, Social Studies, Arts, IT, and Health Sciences.

Mobility Students per Faculty



4. Distribution of these students' academic level:

Around 78% of incoming students at the University of Málaga are enrolled in bachelor/undergraduate programs, since the academic offer is higher at this academic level.

5. Communication with these students:

The University of Málaga has a very efficient International Relations Office, whose staff establishes a meaningful and active communication with our present and future incoming students.

International Relations Office has some procedures to be followed that ensure, for example, the correct application process of incoming students. Students receive first log-in details per email to the IR website to upload their passport or ID card, application form, acceptance letter, certificate of arrival, enrolment, certificate of attendance and, finally, academic record of each of our international students.

There is an orientation event at the beginning of each semester, possibility to take a Spanish Course, Welcome events and other activities organised by the Erasmus Student Network Málaga as well as a buddy program.

6. Challenges faced by these students:

One of the main problems international students find regarding social integration is related to housing. The current cost of living at the Coast of the Sun (South of Spain) has been highly increased during the past decades. This makes it very challenging for our students to afford a rent in Málaga.

Our IR office also offers support concerning this through different agreements with student residences, student rooms or even host family programmes.

SECTION 2: Facilities for language proficiency

7. Medium of instruction:

Spanish is the language used for lectures at the University of Málaga, except for those subjects integrated in bilingual programmes that are specifically taught in English.

8. A language teaching centre:

The International Centre for Spanish (CIE-UMA) is the specific structure of the University of Málaga which is responsible for training related to the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language and Spanish culture. All activities are carried out according to university quality criteria and designed to meet the expectations of its stakeholders. The service is committed to ethical values and the international projection of the University.

This language teaching centre is a service which promotes the teaching of Spanish as a second language and as a language for higher education. The CIE is committed to becoming a national and international benchmark. It is at the forefront in its progress towards excellence, as well as in the development and innovation of its activities, and achieving the full satisfaction of its staff, users and society. Since 2020, our language school offers not only face-to-face courses, but also online ones.

9. An examination to test their proficiency:

Students can take intensive face-to-face courses in which they have 4 hours of classes from Monday to Friday, where instructors implement an active methodology in small groups of 8-10 students per group. Students also have access to the Virtual Campus of the University of Málaga, therefore the implementation of a technology-based methodology is also ensured.

The assessment of their level is made according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, having courses to obtain certification from A1 to C1 level. Students can simply have a certificate awarded by the University of Málaga and obtain the designated ECTS credits; or they also have the option to prepare the official DELE exams, which are official titles certifying degree of competence and mastery of the Spanish language, granted by Spain's Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport.

The Spanish Language Center from the University of Málaga offers, in addition, special tailor-made courses such as: culture and society; Spanish literature, Business Spanish, or Spanish for Tourism.

SECTION 3: Needs Analysis Results

To complete this section, a questionnaire was designed by the E-Stories consortium and converted online through Google forms to be distributed within the Spanish national context at the University of Málaga.

1. Results drawn from Students

A total of 10 international students from the University of Málaga answered the questionnaire. The gathered results answered to the questions below:

1. *What is your native language?*

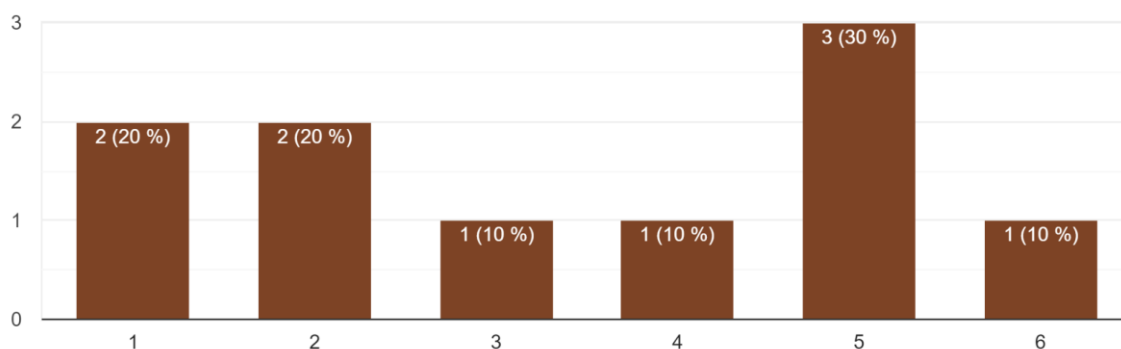
Our respondents' native languages are: English (3); French (3); Italian (2); and Portuguese (2).

2. *How proficient do you feel in the host country's language (A1, A2, B1.. naming the levels of CEFR)?*

The Spanish language proficiency varied greatly among our respondents. Answers are shown in the graph below, meaning 1 the lowest level (A1 according to the CEFR), and 6 the highest one (C2).

How proficient do you feel in Spanish (A1, A2, B1.. naming the levels of CEFR)?

10 respuestas



3. *What are your main reasons for wanting to learn the host country's language?*

When asking about the reasons to learn Spanish, there is also a great assortment of answers, some of the most repeated ones are:

- Travelling
- Learning one of the main languages in the world

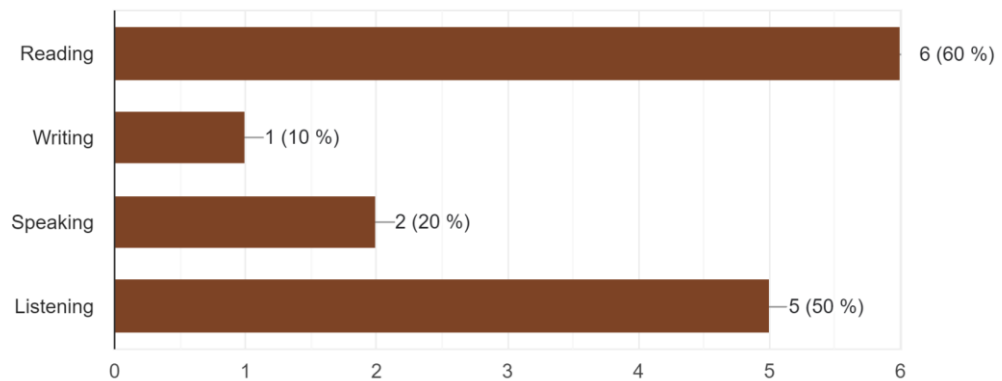
- Wanting to learn more about Hispanic culture, aside from the linguistic aspect.
- Knowing new people
- Living and working in Spain

4. *What specific language skills (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) do you feel most confident in? Least confident in?*

According to the results we gathered, the majority of our respondents feel most confident in reading skills, while speaking is the skill in which they feel least confident in. Results are shown in the graph below:

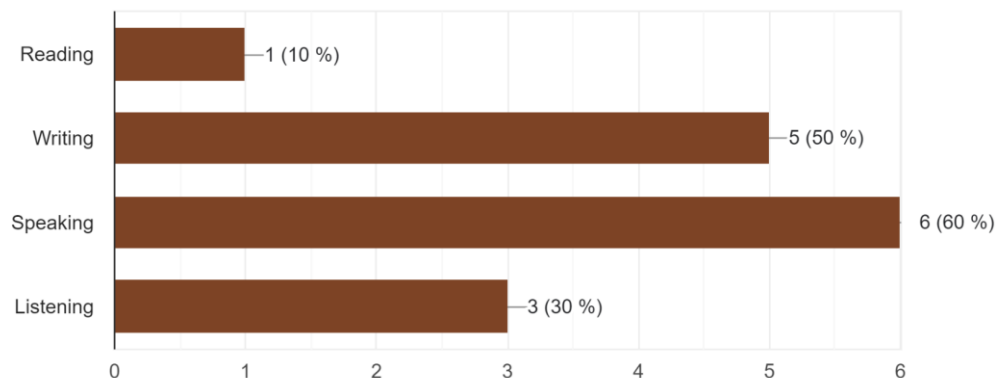
What specific language skills do you feel most confident in?

10 respuestas



What specific language skills do you feel least confident in?

10 respuestas



5. *What are your preferred learning styles or methods for language acquisition?*

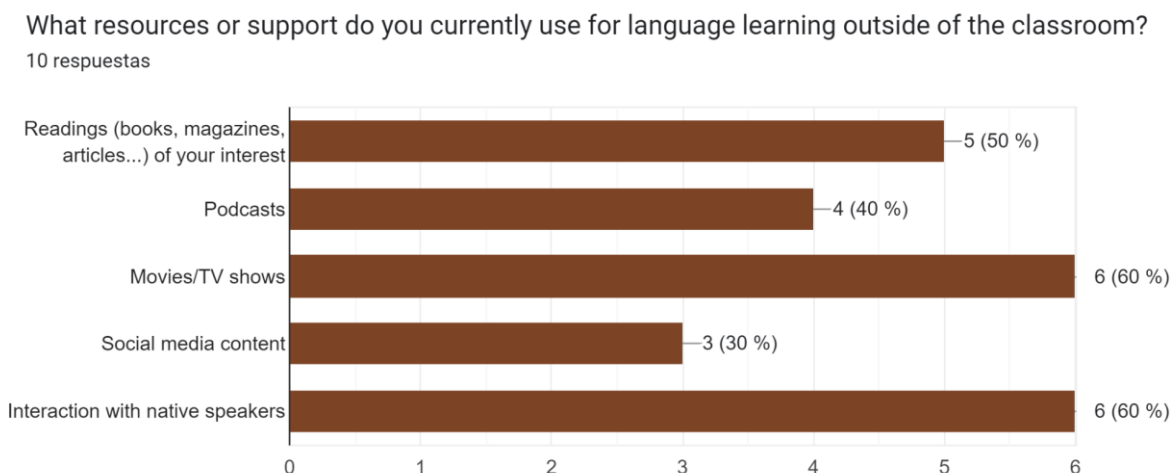
Some of the most common answers to this question were the following ones:

- Talking
- Watching films and YouTube videos
- Listening and practising through repetitions/scenarios
- Oral practice in daily life situations

According to those answers, it can be said that the audio-visual and the communicative method are the most preferred methodologies for second language acquisition by our international students. We also got one answer regarding reading as a preferred method to learn Spanish.

6. What resources or support do you currently use for language learning outside of the classroom?

Concerning the obtained results, movies and TV shows and interaction with native speakers are the resources that our students currently use for learning Spanish outside the classroom, followed by readings. Evidences are shown in the graph below:



7. What are the biggest challenges you face in learning the host country's language?

Within this question, the answer seems to be very clear: the greatest challenge while learning Spanish is the conjugation of its verbs. Speaking, writing, and false friends are also mentioned.

8. *How do you prefer to receive feedback on your language skills?*

Regarding the feedback, our respondents stated different options, such as being corrected while they are performing in Spanish, being given personal or written feedback; or starting with positive aspects before receiving feedback to work on. Most of them agree that constructive feedback is always positive for their learning path.

9. *What topics or aspects of the host country's culture would you like to learn more about through language learning?*

In these questions, we got a different answer per respondent, some examples are shown below regarding the aspects of the Spanish culture that our students would like to learn about within the language courses:

- Slang and cultural words in casual- native speaking
- Spanish writers
- Body language
- Origins of folklore events
- Food and Gastronomy
- Art and music (with especial mention to Flamenco)

10. *What are your expectations for a language course in the host country?*

Some of the expectations of the students taking a Spanish course in Málaga (Spain) are the ones quoted below:

- "I believe that the ideal is to arrive in Malaga already knowing the grammar of Spanish and learn in the classroom what we don't see in normal language classes, such as slang, regional words or different forms of words that we don't normally write."
- Being able to walk around the city and being able to understand everything around the city
- I would want authentic interactions with locals and daily life situations.
- Learn quickly
- Improving my speaking
- Meet locals and be able to speak confidently

- Communication and activities
- Becoming more fluent in Spanish”.

2. Results drawn from Instructors

A total of 3 language instructors from the University of Málaga answered the questionnaire that was proposed by the E-Stories consortium and translated into Spanish. Results are summarised and translated into English for reporting purposes.

For Instructors:

1. How would you describe the current language proficiency level of immigrant university students in the host country's language?

All instructors agreed that there is a great variety of levels (from beginners - A1- to high proficiency - C1).

2. In your experience, what are the most common language learning challenges faced by immigrant university students?

The most common challenges according to instructors are oral expression (speaking), as well as grammar (in accordance with students' answers). Also, another challenge observed by instructors is the lack of linguistic immersion that international students have in Málaga, since most of them don't get to integrate themselves with locals.

3. What teaching methods or strategies have you found to be most effective for teaching language to immigrant students?

In this case, another common point between students and instructors' answers can be found: the communicative method. Tasks-based learning and gamification are also mentioned as effective ways of teaching international students.

4. What resources or materials do you currently use for teaching language to immigrant students?

Our instructors generally work with Spanish textbooks, online materials, and personal teaching resources.

5. What are the main differences you observe in teaching language to immigrant students compared to teaching native speakers?

Instructors stated that it is completely different to teach international students compared to native ones, the way to teach grammar for example. Native speakers already “speak”, they are not conscious of the reasons for the language. Internations learn language and seek for communication, that is why pragmatic is so important.

6. How do you assess the language proficiency of immigrant students at the beginning and end of a course?

Firstly, students passed an initial evaluation, to group them according to their level. During the course, they also had written and oral testing. Another type of assessment is the systematic observation of the students' performance.

7. What additional support or resources do you think immigrant students need to succeed in language learning?

We got three different answers to this question, one per respondent. The gathered data are the following:

- Integrating themselves in the city, having more curiosity to speak and having social interaction with local people.
- Additional resources through the Moodle platform.
- Additional support with grammar aspects.

8. How do you accommodate cultural differences in your language teaching approach?

According to the collected answers, there are not significant aspects to be accommodated concerning cultural differences within the Spanish course class. At the University of Málaga, we got many different nationalities and cultures and that does not mean a problem concerning their learning path or the classroom atmosphere. The classroom is an international space where, not only Spanish is learnt, but also different cultures are shared.

Instructors also mention that they used different materials and examples reflecting on the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Spanish-speaking world.

9. What do you believe are the most important language skills for immigrant students to develop?

Our instructors seem to have a hard time answering this question, since all the basic linguistic skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) are equally important for their students, that is way the communicative method is so relevant and effective, since it blends all skills, at the same time that considers the correct use of grammar.

10. How can the university better support language teaching and learning for immigrant students?

Some of the ideas obtained from the answers to this question are:

- Linguistic exchange activities
- Activities to promote interaction with local students (field trips, parties, etc.)
- Cultural visits around the city
- Additional language courses



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Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A2: Needs Assessment & Analysis in the Greek Context

Eleni Katsarou, Panagiota Samioti & Irini Kassotaki
University of Crete, Rethymno & Heraklion, Greece



Date:
08.04.2024

Reference Number:
2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



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SECTION 1: Demographic and Background Information

1. Immigrant/international students in numbers:

The international/immigrant students of the University of Crete come from very different backgrounds. Their total number is very high (1418 in all studies levels) but it includes students from Cyprus whose mother tongue is Greek and who have special ties with Greece, also second-generation students from Albania (some born in Greece and are bilingual students), others who arrived in Greece as refugees (mainly from Ukraine and Syria), others whose parents arrived in Greece as economic migrants and others who come to study in Crete because they chose to do so. So it is obvious that many of these 1418 students speak Greek fluently as they have lived in Greece for many years. Only around 20% of them have arrived recently, don't know any Greek and seek help at the Welcome Office. Some of them decide to follow Modern Greek Language Courses offered by the University.

2. Distribution of their countries of origin:

The immigrant/ international students of the University of Crete come from various countries, all around the world. Here are the countries where most of them come from: Egypt, Albania, USA, UK, Philippines, India, Argentina, Venezuela, Bulgaria, Germany, Georgia, Iran, Spain, Italy, China, Nigeria, Ukraine, Pakistan, Romania, Russia, Syria, and Türkiye.

3. Distribution of these students in the faculties/programs:

Most of them study in Heraklion university campus: Medicine, Biology, Computer Science, Science and Technology of Materials and Physics/Chemistry. But some others study in Rethymno University campus: History and Archaeology, Economics, Education Sciences, Social Sciences, and Philology.

4. Distribution of these students' academic level:

Undergraduate	Postgraduate	PhD candidates	Total
1238	121	59	1418

5. Communication with these students:

The Welcome Office of the University of Crete ensures communication with all international students even before they arrive at Crete. Its main mission is to support international students during their settlement in the country (orientation, accommodation, visa, social events). Additionally, it offers information about the Modern Greek language courses the University offers.

Additionally, the International Relations Dept manages exchange and mobility programs of the University of Crete and acts as a contact point for Erasmus & other international students.

The facilities are described in two special sites on the University's main website in which the student can find information and courses offered in English:

Welcome Office (<https://welcome.uoc.gr/>)

International Relations Department (<https://www.uoc.gr/intrel/en/>)

6. Challenges faced by these students:

They require knowledge of the Greek language to communicate with the local community and for their studies, as well (i.e. practice or work at the University Hospital).

SECTION 2: Facilities for language proficiency

7. Medium of instruction:

In Modern Greek courses for beginners, the medium of instruction is the English language. At advanced levels, a mix of English and Greek is preferred.

8. A language teaching center:

The Welcome Office of the University of Crete (welcome.uoc.gr) serves as a central hub for all incoming international students, providing them with comprehensive support and guidance throughout their academic journey. The Welcome Office offers a wide range of services, including language courses, cultural events, accommodation assistance, and visa support. So this Office arranges and offers

Greek language courses for international students, including those participating in the Erasmus program.

9. An examination to test their proficiency:

At the beginning of the courses, a placement test is conducted to assess students' proficiency in Greek. Interviews have also been proven helpful in evaluating their knowledge. At the end of every semester or module, the students take written exams. Throughout the semester, classroom presentations and group activities are included, which are also added to the students' portfolios.

SECTION 3: Needs Analysis Results

1. Results drawn from Students

1. What is your native language?

English, Slovenian, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, Tagalog (Philippines), Italian, Persian, Arabic

2. How proficient do you feel in the host country's language (A1, A2, B1. naming the levels of CEFR)?

Ranging from A1 to B1

3. What are your main reasons for wanting to learn the host country's language?

Motives include cultural immersion, communication with natives, work requirements, visiting Greece again, and personal interest in the language itself.

4. What specific language skills (reading, writing, speaking, listening) do you feel most confident in? Least confident in?

Generally confident in reading, while least confident in writing and speaking.

5. What are your preferred learning styles or methods for language acquisition?

Methods include repetition learning, interaction with native speakers, podcasts, social media, apps like Duolingo, and reading materials.

6. What resources or support do you currently use for language learning outside of the classroom?

Utilization of native speaker interactions, Duolingo, social media, and extensive reading (books, magazines, articles, etc.).

7. What are the biggest challenges you face in learning the host country's language?

Challenges include adapting to the new alphabet, grammar complexities, vocabulary retention, and limited practice opportunities.

8. How do you prefer to receive feedback on your language skills?

Preference for corrections during practice, exams or homework, and face-to-face feedback on both strong and weak skills.

9. What topics or aspects of the host country's culture would you like to learn more about through language learning?

Topics include holidays, culture and traditions, cuisine, history, and everyday conversation topics, slang and polite expressions.

10. What are your expectations for a language course in the host country?

Expectations vary but generally include gaining basic grammar skills, vocabulary, and fluency in communication (basic understanding).

2. Results drawn from Instructors

1. How would you describe the current language proficiency level of immigrant university students in the host country's language?

Two (2) of the instructors describe the current language proficiency level of their immigrant university students as closer to A2 and one (1) instructor as A1 (Absolute Beginners).

2. In your experience, what are the most common language learning challenges faced by immigrant university students?

Educators highlighted various challenges encountered by learners in mastering Greek. Teacher 1 emphasized difficulties with the alphabet, pronunciation, writing, and grammar and she responded that learners find vocabulary acquisition easier due to familiarity with Greek-rooted terms, especially in scientific fields like medicine. Teacher 2 identified that the rapid speech of native speakers is causing difficulties in both listening comprehension and oral production. Teacher 3 pointed out the scarcity of real-life language usage opportunities, with English often prevailing in daily interactions, potentially undermining students' motivation to engage with Greek actively.

3. What teaching methods or strategies have you found to be most effective for teaching language to immigrant students?

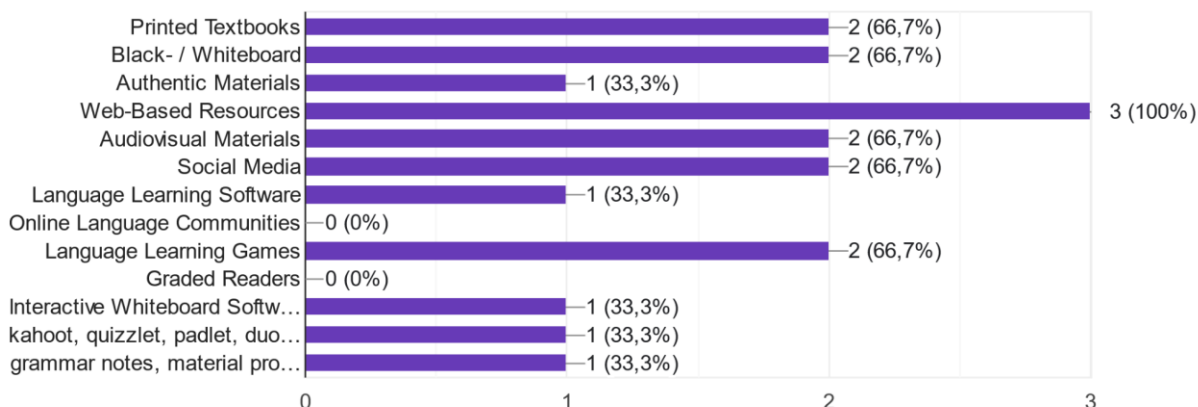
The instructors seem to prioritize active student involvement and practical application for effective language learning. Instructor 1 advocates for a collaborative learning approach with assigned roles, complemented by a communicative teaching style. Instructor 2 promotes a systematic approach to knowledge acquisition, emphasizing the direct application of learned concepts in everyday communication settings. She endorses various methods, including oral participation, playful learning through online platforms, group activities, and interactions with native speakers. Instructor 3 underscores the importance of student engagement, suggesting that encouraging self-expression, creativity, and improvisation leads to successful teaching outcomes.

4. What resources or materials do you currently use for teaching language to immigrant students?

The three teachers stated that they utilize a variety of resources and materials in their teaching. These include authentic materials, Greek songs, printed textbooks, black/whiteboards, web-based resources, audio-visual materials, social media, language learning software, language learning games, interactive whiteboard software, and digital games and platforms such as Kahoot, Quizlet, Padlet, Duolingo classroom, and Microsoft Teams.

4. Ποιους πόρους ή υλικά χρησιμοποιείτε αυτήν τη στιγμή/πιο συχνά για τη διδασκαλία της γλώσσας σε μετανάστες φοιτητές;

3 απαντήσεις



5. What are the main differences you observe in teaching language to immigrant students compared to teaching native speakers?

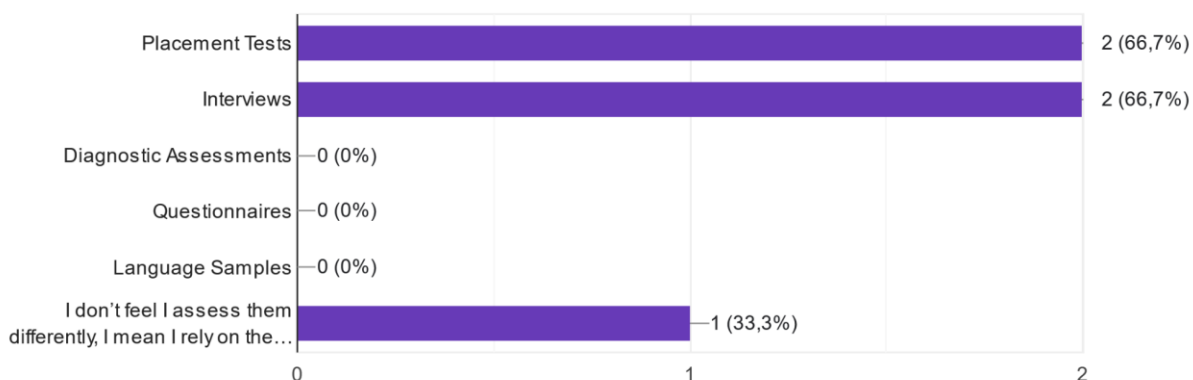
The insights of three educators highlight the importance of a nuanced approach in teaching Greek to both native and non-native learners. Educator 1 stressed the significance of considering the previous knowledge of adult foreign students, including their native language and other foreign languages, while teaching Greek as a foreign language. Educator 2 pointed out the challenges faced by immigrant students, such as the differences in grammar between their native language and the target language, and the limited exposure to the new language compared to native speakers. However, immigrant students often show greater receptiveness and dedication to language learning. Finally, Educator 3 highlighted the fundamental difference between teaching non-natives from scratch and teaching natives who already possess language skills that require further refinement.

6. How do you assess the language proficiency of immigrant students at the beginning and end of a course?

The two instructors assess the language proficiency at the beginning of the course through a placement test and interview. On the other hand, one instructor responded that she doesn't assess them differently but she relies on the same criteria.

6.1. Πώς αξιολογείτε τη γλωσσική επάρκεια των μεταναστών φοιτητών στην αρχή ενός μαθήματος;

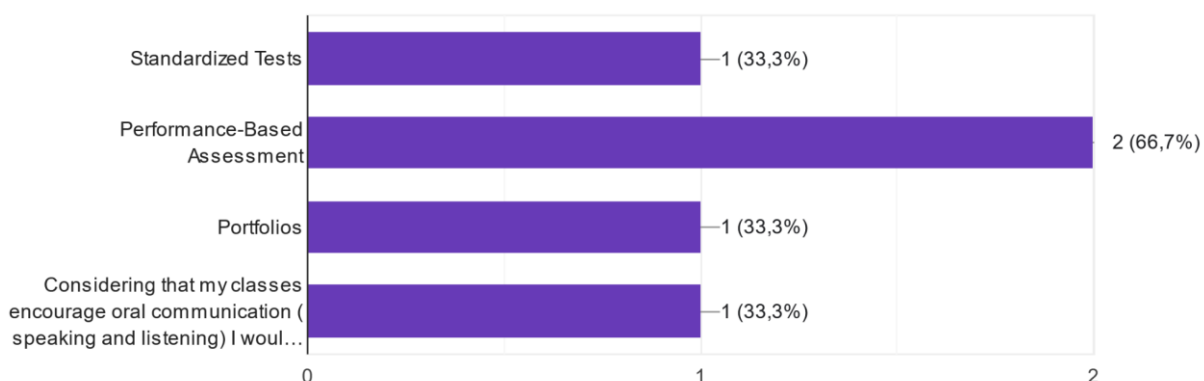
3 απαντήσεις



The assessment methods at the end of courses vary and include standardised tests, performance-based assessments, and portfolios. Oral communication is given more weight, as speaking and listening are encouraged.

6.2. Πώς αξιολογείτε τη γλωσσική επάρκεια των μεταναστών φοιτητών στο τέλος ενός μαθήματος;

3 απαντήσεις



7. What additional support or resources do you think immigrant students need to succeed in language learning?

The approaches referred by the educators aim to enhance students' language acquisition through practical experiences, technological support, and meaningful interactions. Educator 1 advocates for experiential learning in communicative contexts.

relevant to students' daily life, such as ordering in cafes, shopping, or interacting with locals. Educator 2 suggests utilizing online platforms with organised teaching materials, interactive exercises, and forums to support language learning, supplemented by technological equipment. Printed materials may also be provided. Educator 3 emphasizes the importance of providing opportunities for language use, whether through tandem learning or real-life situations, as more than e-materials are required.

8. How do you accommodate cultural differences in your language teaching approach?

The three educators emphasize the value of cultural exchange and understanding in language learning, fostering connections and mutual appreciation among students. Educator 1 advocates for an intercultural teaching approach, incorporating various cultures into the curriculum through activities like presentations, music, customs, and traditional recipes. Educator 2 promotes communicative and cooperative teaching methods, encouraging students to collaborate on projects related to their countries of origin, fostering cultural understanding and lasting friendships. These methods emphasise the importance of communication, cooperation, humour, and creating a welcoming environment to appreciate cultural differences. Educator 3 highlights the significance of cultural elements in lessons, focusing on Greek culture as a starting point for students to share and learn about each other's cultures.

9. What do you believe are the most important language skills for immigrant students to develop?

The educators' perspectives underscore the adaptive nature of language learning strategies based on individual needs and circumstances. Educator 1 stresses the importance of all language skills, which may vary in priority depending on the learner's specific goals, such as daily communication or professional interactions like those with patients in a hospital. Educator 2 highlights spoken language production as a crucial skill for immigrant students, necessary for everyday interactions with native speakers. She emphasizes the need for corresponding practice in

understanding spoken language. Educator 3 contextualizes the importance of language skills based on the duration of the student's stay and their level of studies. For short-term stays, basic oral communication skills are essential, while for longer stays and higher levels of education, a comprehensive understanding of the language and specialized terminology becomes indispensable.

10. How can the university better support language teaching and learning for immigrant students?

The educators have shared their ideas to improve language learning opportunities and support for international students in the university context. Educator 1 outlines the already integration of Greek language courses for international students within the university curriculum, since the University offers ECTS credits for participation, particularly in programs like Erasmus+. She suggests extending similar opportunities to other international students attending the course. Educator 2 proposes implementing systematic C2 teaching programs and providing ample opportunities for students to practice the language. Educator 3 suggests fostering cooperation within international programs, encouraging students to complete their studies in the country, improving administrative and educational frameworks for international students, and financing specialized courses for long-term doctoral and post-doctoral students focusing on language for specific purposes.



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Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A2: Needs Assessment & Analysis in the Serbian Context

Jelena Nastić Stojanović & Sanja Kovačević
WEBIN, Belgrade, Serbia



Date:
15.3.2024

Reference Number:
2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



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SECTION 1: Demographic and Background Information

1. Immigrant/international students in numbers:

The space of the former Yugoslavia, which encompassed the majority of the countries present in the Western Balkans today, was a gathering place for a large number of students from around the world, especially from countries that belonged to the so-called Non-Aligned Movement. After the dissolution of the former Yugoslavia and the civil war during the 1990s, there was a disruption in the influx of foreign students to the countries that constituted Yugoslavia, Serbia included. After many years of recovery, both economically and in every other aspect, in 2010 Serbia initiated the project *World in Serbia* with the idea of re-opening its higher education institutions to international students. As a result, the number of international students has been steadily increasing every year. However, it appears that to this point no research has been conducted on this particular population.

It appears that there is no systematic tracking at the national level regarding the number of enrolled foreign students each year. In the research process, it appeared impossible to access the official statistics at the national level that addressed the overall number of international students enrolled in studies in Serbia or, at the very least, the number of international students enrolled in individual universities in Serbia. Therefore, it was necessary to resort to researching some other unofficial sources such as newspaper articles, reports, media coverage, and the like.

According to available sources, 200 new international students on average enrol for the University of Belgrade every year (through the programme *World in Serbia*). As of March 2023, the latest available data indicate that there were 506 international students at the University of Belgrade. They came from more than 60 countries, with 462 participating through the "World in Serbia" project and 44 through the "Serbia for Serbs from the Region" project.

After the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, within a span of a few months as many as 197 students came to Niš, a city in southern Serbia. They all enrolled for the Faculty of Medicine. The studies of medicine in Niš have been offered in English since 2019 and this was probably one of the reasons why the aforementioned students chose the University of Niš.

The private University of Singidunum, another university located in Belgrade, is one of the best options for international students, especially because their postgraduate studies are entirely provided in English. This feature has attracted people from all over the world to come here for their education. Singidunum can boast students from as many as 40 countries, including Libya, Nicaragua, Russia, Ukraine, the United States, Canada, and various countries in Western Europe. This university has the largest number of foreign students enrolled for their study programmes.

The University of Kragujevac has also accredited the studies of medicine in English and it expects students from India, Ukraine and Russia. They can enrol as many as 300 foreign students.

The University of Novi Sad receives foreign students through Erasmus + programme but there is no verifiable source regarding the exact number of international students studying in Novi Sad to obtain their degrees at this University (it is presumed that there are 700 such foreign students).

Generally speaking, some data testify that there are over 4000 foreign students only at the University of Belgrade, around 700 foreign students at the University of Novi Sad, and around 200 foreign students at the University of Niš at the moment. In 2019, prior to the pandemic, the number was somewhat higher but it is on the rise again.

2. Distribution of their countries of origin:

The foreign students in Serbia mostly come from Africa, the Caribbean, India, Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Middle East, Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Canada, Western Europe, etc.

3. Distribution of these students in the faculties/programmes:

The largest number of foreign students in Serbia attend the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Political Sciences, the Faculty of Organisational Sciences, the Faculty of Civil Engineering, the Faculty of Architecture, the Faculty of Electrical Engineering, the Faculty of Agriculture.

4. Distribution of these students' academic level:

When it comes to the academic levels attended by foreign students, there is no available statistics which could be used to specify the number of students attending undergraduate, graduate or doctoral studies, respectively. One can assert, however, that foreign students attend all three academic levels. According to available resources, PhD students attend those study programmes which are offered in English exclusively. The same applies to those who attend graduate studies. However, students who attend study programmes in Serbian are required to take a test in the Serbian language, i.e. obtain the certificate which confirms that their knowledge of Serbian is sufficient to enrol for and attend HE studies in Serbia. Some data from 2020, just before the outbreak of the pandemic, indicate that there were eight scholarship recipients in doctoral studies in Serbia at that time, while there were 73 at the graduate level. A total of 135 students received their diplomas from Serbian universities, according to the 2020 data.

5. Communication with these students:

If they are a part of the *World in Serbia* programme, international/immigrant students in Serbia have the same conditions for accommodation, learning, and meals as other students. Within the complex of the University of Belgrade, there is also a medical centre at the Student Polyclinic, and student organisations, along with everything that accompanies life in this largest campus and complex in the Balkans.

The Students' Affairs Office at every faculty is in charge of helping all students, including foreign students to obtain every necessary information, as well as instructions and help regarding their studies.

It is not clear whether some faculties or other higher education institutions have the institute of big brother/sister, i.e. a peer assistant or a tutor for foreign students to help them adapt much easier to the new environment and language.

6. Challenges faced by these students:

If they are not part of the *World in Serbia* programme, a specific challenge for foreign students is accommodation and meals in our country. They do not have the right to

apply for dormitory placement, so they are essentially left to fend for themselves. They rent apartments, which are quite expensive in Belgrade.

Likewise, one of the biggest obstacles for foreign students in Serbia is the language. Some foreign students say that only Chinese is more difficult than Serbian.

A complicating factor in the previous period for the arrival of foreign students was the recognition of high school diplomas, a process that has now been greatly simplified.

SECTION 2: Facilities for language proficiency

7. Medium of instruction:

In Serbia, there are accredited studies in English and Serbian, depending on the higher education institution. Some higher education institutions have undergraduate, graduate and PhD study programmes in English and Serbian, and some have accredited only PhD studies in English. However, the majority of studies are available only in Serbian.

In the north of Serbia, however, in the province of Vojvodina, at the University of Novi Sad, in addition to Serbian and English, one can also encounter studies accredited in Hungarian, as well as in some other languages of ethnic minorities (such as Roma).

8. A language teaching center:

1. At the University of Novi Sad, Faculty of Philosophy, there is a Centre for Serbian as a Foreign Language (Let's Learn Serbian) which is intended for all those who wish to learn Serbian and who are more than 17 years old. Foreign students on exchange (Erasmus + and similar programmes) at the University of Novi Sad can attend these courses for free.

<https://srpski-strani.com/>

<https://www.ff.uns.ac.rs/sr/fakultet/o-fakultetu/centri/centar-za-srpski-jezik-kao-strani>

Within this particular centre located in Novi Sad it has been emphasised that exchange students do not pay any fees.

2. At the University of Belgrade there is also a Centre for Serbian as a Foreign Language which can be attended by all those interested in learning Serbian for the

purposes of their studies and/or work, etc. However, at this particular centre all participants need to pay course fees.

<http://www.learnserbian.fil.bg.ac.rs/people.php?id=c>

3.A Centre for Serbian as a Foreign Language can also be found at the University of Niš, on the Faculty of Philosophy, Department of Serbian Studies.

<https://learn-serbian.filfak.ni.ac.rs/>

All above-mentioned centres are available to international/immigrant students and they are integral part of the universities on which they are located.

4.For 12 years, Student Resort *Radojka Lakić*, Avala has been the starting point in the education of foreign students within the "World in Serbia" programme. After learning Serbian there and receiving confirmation that they had mastered the language, they take the entrance exam at one of Serbian faculties and enroll for the desired studies. In July this year there were 215 students from Asia, Africa and South America learning Serbian for 5 hours a day. Since they have come to Serbia through the programme *World in Serbia* implemented by the Government of the Republic of Serbia through two relevant ministries - the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in addition to having the guaranteed accommodation and sustenance and Serbian language classes at the resort on the Avala mountain, they have their monthly scholarships that they receive during their stay in Serbia.

<http://usob.rs/?script=lat>

9. An examination to test their proficiency:

As it has previously been mentioned, the international students who arrive to Serbia through *World in Serbia* programme have a much easier path in the process of their studies in Serbia, including the process of language learning. They have the opportunity to attend language courses for several months (usually 6) prior to taking their entrance exams. Upon finishing the course, they take an exam and receive the certificate.

When it comes to international/immigrant students who come independently of the *World in Serbia* programme, their process of enrolment and HE studies in Serbia is

somewhat more complex. They can take some of the courses offered in Centres for Serbian as a Foreign Language, which all offer adequate programmes and valid certificates, but students will probably have to pay attendance fees.

SECTION 3: Needs Analysis Results

In order to obtain direct information from the field in relation to the process of language learning and language proficiency of international/immigrant students, the authors conducted an online survey among higher education students who do not speak Serbian as their native language, as well as with three representatives of higher education staff, i.e. professors of Serbian language in the higher education context who teach Serbian to international/immigrant students.

1. Results drawn from students

International students attending higher education study programmes in Serbia have been invited to participate in the research in two iterations. The online questionnaire was available to students until the required number of students (10) responded to the survey. Consequently, the deadline for collecting the students' feedback was slightly exceeded. Therefore, we can assert that the online questionnaire was filled by 10 international/migrant students, 7 of which filled the Serbian version and 3 of which filled in the English version of the questionnaire. Anticipating that collecting data from this particular group of students will be demanding, we arranged two versions of the questionnaire in order to collect the sufficient number of responses. The analysis of the responses, however, will be presented in a consolidated form.

The questionnaire comprised five demographic questions and ten questions relating to the field of research. The questions were posed in an open-ended form. Both forms of the distributed questionnaire (English and Serbian) can be found in the Annexe I of this report.

The questionnaire was filled by 7 female students (70%) and 3 male students (30%). The age structure of the respondents is quite diverse. The largest number of respondents belong in the category between 21 and 25 years of age (3), 2 respondents are 31 years old, 2 respondents belong in the category between 15 and

20 years of age, 2 respondents are between 26 and 30 years old, and 1 respondent is 38 years old.

When it comes to higher education institutions that respondents attend, 3 students come from the University of Belgrade, 1 student from the University of Niš, while 6 students come from the Academy of South Serbia (the towns of Leskovac and Bujanovac). Concerning the level of studies, nine out of ten respondents attend undergraduate studies, while one respondent attends master's studies. Six (6) out of ten respondents attend a study programme educating prospective pre-school teachers, two (2) respondents study medical sciences, and 1 student attends the Faculty of Organisational Sciences. One (1) respondent merely stated that he/she attended undergraduate studies without specifying the study programme.

When it comes to the first research question (*What is your native language*), six (6) respondents stated that it was Albanian, 1 Bulgarian, 1 Belarusian, 1 Dutch and 1 Russian.

When asked how proficient they perceive themselves in Serbian language, A1 level was claimed by 2 respondents, A2 by 1, B1 by 3, B3 by 3 and C1 was claimed by one student who in fact wrote that his/her knowledge was estimated to be between B2 and C1.

When asked about the reasons why they wanted to master the Serbian language, the respondents replied in the following manner:

I live in Serbia, I need to master it.

To know how to use it.

To have a better future.

To master my studies well, to achieve success, to be able to improve and continue with my studies.

I want to stay here and continue my studies.

I like studying here. I want to stay here and try to continue my studies.

To find a job

For my studies

It is important for my education.

My mother is from Serbia and I would like to become proficient in Serbian because I may want to stay here.

When asked about specific language skills they felt most and least confident about, the respondents provided the following answers:

Listening

I am confident when I listen. I am not confident when I speak.

I feel confident reading and writing. I can also speak quite nicely but I am a perfectionist and I sometimes refrain from speaking or writing if I don't feel that it will come out perfectly.

Of course, I am confident in Albanian, but I have a problem speaking Serbian.

Listening

I am more confident with Albanian and less with Serbian.

I am most confident when I read and listen, least when I talk.

I feel most confident when I write and read, and least when I have to speak quickly.

It's easiest for me to listen and read, but I'm slowly starting to feel good when I talk to people who speak Serbian.

It's a little harder for me to speak when I need to say something quickly. I read and write easily.

When asked about their preferred language learning styles or methods (watching video content, listening to audio content, communicating with native speakers, online language learning platforms, etc.), the respondents provided the following answers:

Communicating with native speakers

Communicating with native speakers. I also like watching movies and other funny video content

All of the above.

My method is: I read some books and watch TV, but it doesn't work

Listening to audio

I benefit the most from talking with my colleagues. I watch a lot of TV in my spare time and it helps me.

I like talking to native speakers the most.

I like to talk with friends who speak native Serbian.

I speak with native speakers, and I use the Internet to watch video content in Serbian.

When asked about the resources or support they currently used for language learning outside of the classroom, the respondents stated the following:

I have a bilingual book, in Serbian and Albanian, I am reading that book.

To study

User course

We have a textbook, but I watch video clips, listen to music, play online knowledge quizzes.

I use a lot of online materials, platforms, video clips.

I listen to music, watch TV, solve online tests and exercises.

Books in two languages, so I read them at the same time.

Video content, books

Online materials that I can find and textbooks.

I read books, watch TV shows and seek fun online content in Serbian.

When asked about the biggest challenges they faced in learning Serbian language, the respondents provided the following answers:

Lack of communication

I don't speak a lot when I am not in the class. I think I need to speak more.

Grammar.

When I speak, I need to think slowly, what is the right word, how should I speak...

To study

None

Serbian grammar is quite difficult. It takes time to learn.

The most difficult is grammar and cases. I need to have time to think about how to say something.

Serbian is sometimes difficult to pronounce. It takes time to get used to sentences, words, grammar.

The classes we have are not enough. I think we need more.

When asked about how they preferred to receive feedback on their language skills (one-on-one in communication with the teacher, in direct communication with the native speaker, test, self-assessment, feedback via online application, and similar) the respondents stated the following:

Test

I prefer tests.

I prefer to speak with native speakers, preferably friends, and receive necessary feedback from the people I trust.

Improved communication with the teacher

One-on-one communication

Online applications

I like to talk with the professor the most, but also with my colleagues.

I like to communicate one-on-one with the professor, but I also have a lot of friends from Serbia, so we speak in Serbian.

I like to take the test.

I like to talk with the teacher.

When asked about what topics or aspects of the Serbian culture they would like to learn more about through language learning, the respondents provided the following answers:

Culture

I like Serbian cooking and literature.

Cuisine, film, music, art, customs.

I need to learn more about all subjects, because I attend two faculties.

To learn the language

Grammar topics

Music, film.

I like to learn about everything, especially music and film.

About everything. It's interesting here. The food is great.

About everything.

Finally, when asked what their expectations were from a language course in Serbia, the respondents stated the following:

To improve my language skills

To improve my language enough to speak better and read books without dictionary.

To become proficient and comfortable when using Serbian.

I think it's very good

To learn new things

Great expectations.

To master the language well so that I can be successful in my studies.

To improve the language a lot and to communicate without problems.

To additionally master the language and speak without problems.

To learn to speak Serbian without mistakes.

As it can be seen from the respondents answers, the majority of respondents has average skills when it comes to Serbian language but they aspire to master it for the sake of their academic achievement and future prospects of finding a job in Serbia and/or finding their permanent residence here. The main obstacle in language learning is the language itself which the respondents find difficult to master. They favour communication with native speakers as the best means of language learning, though not all of them have the opportunity to develop a conversation with a native speaker outside the classroom. Furthermore, when not in the classroom students resort to TV and films, or various digital contents in Serbian to keep building their language skills as they mostly agree that classroom time is not enough. When it comes to language skills, the most difficult to master is (fluent) speech, while they all feel more or less comfortable with listening, reading and writing.

2. Results drawn from instructors

Serbian language teachers (instructors) providing Serbian language courses for international/immigrant students within higher education study programmes in Serbia have been invited to participate in the research in two iterations. The online questionnaire was available to instructors until the required number of them (3)

responded to the survey. Therefore, we can assert that the online questionnaire was filled by 3 instructors. The questionnaire was available in the Serbian language.

The questionnaire comprised four demographic questions and ten questions relating to the field of research. The questions were posed in an open-ended form. The questionnaire can be found in the Annexe II of this report.

The questionnaire was filled by 3 female instructors (100%). Two (2) respondents belong in the category between 46 and 55 years of age, and one (1) respondent is in the category between 36 and 45 years of age.

When it comes to higher education institutions that instructors belong to, 2 instructors come from the University of Niš, while one instructor teaches at the Academy of South Serbia. Concerning the level of studies they teach, all 3 respondents teach at the undergraduate level, and one of them also teaches at the master's level.

When it comes to the first research question inquiring into the current level of knowledge of the Serbian language of exchange students/immigrant students, the respondents offered the following answers:

Their knowledge of the Serbian language is highly individual. Some of the students master the language very quickly, and some constantly use English as an auxiliary tool to bridge the barrier and share information. In general, their knowledge does not exceed the B1 level.

In general, their level of knowledge of the Serbian language is quite elementary, but they manage to communicate. So I could assess that their knowledge is in the domain between A2 and B1.

Their knowledge is individual. Some students have language skills at the B2 level, while some are at the initial level of learning the Serbian language. Most are at A2 level.

When asked, based on their experience, to pinpoint the most common language learning challenges exchange/immigrant students face the instructors stated the following:

Students usually stumble over Serbian grammar, although we encourage them to focus on the information itself to begin with, and less on the form. Also, some

students often move in circles of their peers who use either their mother tongue or English, so they are often not forced to use the Serbian language in communication. As far as I could observe, they seem to lack constant communication in the Serbian language in order to further progress and expand their vocabulary. Very often, students who speak the same language have a habit of socialising outside the teaching process, and this prevents them from further progressing in communication. They need to communicate more with their peers in Serbian, to use the language more in real life situations.

Insufficient communication in Serbian, resorting to English as an auxiliary means for those students who speak it. In my experience, those who do not know any other language than their mother tongue make more progress in learning Serbian because they are forced to use Serbian in everyday situations.

When asked what teaching methods or strategies they found most effective for teaching language to exchange students/immigrant students the instructors stated the following:

Communication is always the best way to learn the language; establish contact with speakers of the Serbian language in everyday situations; the use of content that is real and used in everyday life and leaving the purely academic framework when it comes to teaching the language.

It is certainly a communicative method and an interactive approach through content that is close to students, whether it is cultural, entertaining, informative or some other form of content.

The use of materials that are receptive to students, the discussion of topics that are close to them, the avoidance of a dry professor-student relationship and continuous communication that starts from simple language structures and slowly encourages more complex expressions and complex topics. What is certainly not part of language learning in my lectures is dry reading and translation of the given text.

When asked about the resources or materials they used to teach languages to exchange/immigrant students, the respondents provided the following answers:

There are standardised textbooks/manuals for learning Serbian languages (Serbian language for foreigners), but I also create my own materials that are adapted to the group I work with and their interests.

I am currently using the textbooks Serbian for foreigners - Step into Serbian and Grammar of the Serbian language for foreigners, and I prepare most of the material myself.

Let's learn Serbian 1 & 2, authored by Biljana Bobić.

When asked about the main differences they noticed in teaching languages to exchange students/immigrant students compared to teaching native speakers, the instructors provided the following answers:

The differences are incomparable. Native speakers were acquiring the language and the focus of their teaching is on honing the language form, while for foreign students the focus is on training them to start using Serbian in direct communication, to be able to use Serbian literature and use their knowledge in a practical way.

Students who are not native speakers of Serbian have difficulties in mastering pronunciation and grammar. The learning differences are of course incomparable. Students whose mother tongue is Serbian acquire the language from birth and master it naturally in a Serbian-speaking environment. This process is unconscious and native speakers of Serbian master syntax, grammar and pronunciation without being aware of their complexity. With students whose mother tongue is not Serbian, the situation is quite different. Since they start learning the language when they are already adults, they often encounter obstacles such as adapting to a different language pattern, sounds, language clusters, pronunciation, and the like.

The differences are immeasurable. The teaching approaches are completely different, so it cannot be compared. The differences are reflected in the content, topics, pace, approach, criteria, and the like.

When asked how they assessed the language skills of exchange students/immigrant students at the beginning and the end of the course, the instructors stated the following:

There is always a significant difference in language proficiency at the beginning and the end of the course. Students are successful in mastering the basics of the language and raising the general level of knowledge, but the level of skills also depends on individual commitment, talent and work.

At the beginning of the course, the language of most foreign students is generally between A1 and A2. When they finish the course, their knowledge is at B1 level with a tendency of further improvement. Some students, of course, already have knowledge of B1, but they had previous experience with learning Serbian before coming to our institution.

Students definitely improve after attending the course. Their knowledge is improved by at least one level on the CEFR scale.

When asked about what additional support or resources the exchange students/immigrant students needed in order to be successful in learning the Serbian language, the respondents provided the following answers:

They need more time and more resources that can provide them with independent language development in an interesting and practical way.

They need a more intensive Serbian language course, but also the organisation of extracurricular events to make their learning more intensive.

More non-curricular activities are needed to further motivate students: perhaps assigning a peer-mentor to each student so that the student has to use the language in extra-curricular contexts as well. It would be good to create a programme for the student-mentor that would follow specific activities and avoid randomness and arbitrariness. Online groups for students to encourage communication could be one solution, etc. A larger body of interesting online materials that would give students independence in learning and help them learn the language at their own pace would be another potential solution.

When asked how they incorporated cultural differences into their approach to language teaching, the instructors stated the following:

I take care of the materials I use, I start discussions on different topics and we try to talk about cultural differences to encourage love for diversity.

I usually supplement the material with elements such as film, music, art, and the like. We often talk about the customs and traditions of the country they come from and this motivates them to try to talk more. In today's digital age, we have at our disposal various digital content such as podcasts and newspaper articles. We often analyse the most interesting content.

By talking about the basic cultural aspects of the country the students come from and comparing them with elements of Serbian culture. We look for similarities and differences and emphasise the beauty of diversity.

When asked to provide their opinion concerning the most important language skills that exchange/immigrant students should develop, the respondents stated the following:

First of all, speaking skills, and immediately after that, reading skills to be able to read different types of texts, so that it would be easier for them to master the content, enrich their vocabulary and be successful in the study process.

Ability to communicate in Serbian (so speaking), but also to read and understand what is written.

Communication, reading, writing.

Finally, when asked in what way the university could better support language teaching and learning for immigrant/exchange students, the instructors stated the following:

By providing students with more modern and interesting approaches and ways of learning the Serbian language (applications, resources, materials, conditions).

By organizing additional trainings and involving students in events specifically organised for them (extracurricular activities such as language clubs, workshops, theater, excursions).

By providing more resources that students can use independently to learn the language at their own pace (virtual platforms, forums, digital content, organisation of clubs for non-native Serbian students, cultural workshops, etc.).

As one can see from the provided answers, the instructors agree that international/immigrant students' knowledge of Serbian language as well as their learning skills are highly individual. However, they also agree that the lack of real-life communication and the apparent difficulty of Serbian grammar constitute the main challenges when it comes to mastering the Serbian language. Even though they use the available textbooks to work with foreign students, the instructors also try to be as creative as possible by resorting to other widely available resources, most of which can be found online. They do point out that one comprehensive online repository would be of utmost significance for both students and instructors. Cultural differences in the process of language teaching are observed as a highly welcome topic and the units covering these aspect of language learning are used to emphasise the importance and beauty of diversity. All respondents emphasise that additional extra-curricular activities would be most welcome as they would support language learning even beyond the scope of the formal classroom.

SECTION 4: Summary

International/immigrant students can attend HE studies in Serbia either independently, or through *World in Serbia* programme initiated and funded by the Government of the Republic of Serbia.

The programme *World in Serbia* greatly facilitates the process of enrolling in universities in Serbia because it offers future students free Serbian language courses, accommodation, sustenance and all other benefits that students who live in Serbia have. If international students/immigrants come to study in Serbia independently of the afore-mentioned programme, they still have ample opportunities to learn Serbian and enrol for the desired faculty but they should be prepared to pay for all those services.

There is no systematic tracking (no database available) at the national level regarding the overall number of enrolled foreign students each year. There are 8 public and 10 private universities in Serbia, and all of them enrol foreign students. However, one cannot find the precise number or average number of foreign students enrolled for each one of them. This is something that leaves ample room for improvement. In this report we place emphasis on 4 largest public universities, but

we also presented the available information from certain private universities, such as University of Singidunum, which is the single largest university in Serbia when it comes to the number of students who attend this university.

Generally speaking, some data testify that there are over 4000 foreign students only at the University of Belgrade, around 700 foreign students at the University of Novi Sad, and around 200 foreign students at the University of Niš at the moment. In 2019, prior to the pandemic, the number was somewhat higher but it is on the rise again. This is a piece of information relating to the four biggest public universities in Serbia. The number of foreign students is much higher, but the precise number appears to be unavailable.

International/immigrant students attend all three academic levels. Students who attend HE studies in Serbian are required to take a test in the Serbian language, i.e. obtain the certificate which confirms that their knowledge of Serbian is sufficient to enrol for and attend HE studies in Serbia.

Centres for Serbian as a Foreign Language can be found on all major public universities in Serbia. They are available to all international/immigrant students, and they usually include course fees. They are all located on the premises of the Faculty of Philology/Philosophy within their respective universities.

Concerning the field research, the majority of respondents has average skills when it comes to Serbian language but they aspire to master it for the sake of their academic achievement and future prospects of finding a job in Serbia and/or finding their permanent residence here. One of the main obstacles reported by international/immigrant students is the Serbian language itself. They favour communication with native speakers as the best means of language learning, though not all of them have the opportunity to develop a conversation with a native speaker outside the classroom. Furthermore, when not in the classroom students resort to TV and films, or various digital contents in Serbian to keep building their language skills as they mostly agree that classroom time is not enough. When it comes to language skills, the most difficult to master is (fluent) speech, while they all feel more or less comfortable with listening, reading and writing..

Students who come to study in Serbia through *World in Serbia* programme have the opportunity to learn Serbian for six months prior to enrolling for the desired faculty.

The courses are organised as a part of the programme and students receive the certificate. Students who come independently of this programme have the opportunity to study Serbian at all major public universities in Serbia and obtain a valid certificate, but they need to be prepared to pay course fees.

Last but not least, the instructors participating in the field research agree that international/immigrant students' knowledge of Serbian language as well as their learning skills are highly individual. However, they also agree that the lack of real-life communication and the apparent difficulty of Serbian grammar constitute the main challenges when it comes to mastering the Serbian language. Even though they use the available textbooks to work with foreign students, the instructors also try to be as creative as possible by resorting to other widely available resources, most of which can be found online. They do point out that one comprehensive online repository would be of utmost significance for both students and instructors. Cultural differences in the process of language teaching are observed as a highly welcome topic and the units covering these aspects of language learning are used to emphasise the importance and beauty of diversity. All respondents emphasise that additional extra-curricular activities would be most welcome as they would support language learning even beyond the scope of the formal classroom.

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APPENDIX 3- Overview of Good Practices in the Partner Countries



E-Stories
*Digital Storytelling in Supporting
Immigrant University Students'
Language and Technology Use Skills*



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E-Stories

Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A3: Overview on existing good practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling for Türkiye

Derya YILDIZ, Ayten BÜLBÜL, Hayriye ULAŞ TARAF
Necmettin Erbakan University, Konya, Türkiye



Date:

10.04.2024

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



Co-funded by
the European Union



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SECTION 1: The importance of digital storytelling in language teaching and learning contexts

Digital storytelling, a modern innovative technique integrating the art of telling stories with digital media, is frequently employed in different language teaching and learning contexts, as reported by many studies carried out in Turkish settings, ranging from the teaching of Turkish both as a foreign language to its non-native speakers (Aydın, 2019) and as the medium of instruction to its native speakers (Yamaç & Ulusoy, 2016) to the teaching of English and German to Turkish learners (Akdamar, 2021; Avcı & Hol, 2023; Esen, 2019; Gündoğdu, 2022; Kaya & Tekiner Tolu, 2017; Ölmez, 2023). Digital storytelling is suitable for all ages and education levels. Türkiye has a distinctive fusion of Eastern and Western influences due to its strategic location and rich cultural legacy. Digital storytelling enables students to investigate and communicate intricate cultural tales by utilizing this diversity of cultures. For native and non-native speakers learning Turkish, this enhances the learners' comprehension and admiration of Turkish culture. Learning to conceive and produce a digital story stimulates critical and creative thinking in students. To make their stories come to life, they must choose pertinent content, determine the most effective way to deliver their message and employ digital tools imaginatively. This improves cognitive engagement with the language at a deeper level and sharpens problem-solving abilities. Teachers can better engage students and create a more stimulating learning environment using technology in language instruction. Students who produce their stories using multiple digital tools and platforms also gain technological proficiency. In the modern digital age, this ability is becoming increasingly crucial, and learners can use it for more than just learning a new language.

This is very helpful when teaching non-native Turkish speakers and Turkish learners of second languages like English and German. Speaking, listening, reading, and writing are just a few language abilities that can be fully developed when using digital storytelling in language instruction. To create a digital tale, students must write rough drafts of screenplays, speak and listen to others tell stories, and read various sources for ideas and background information. It takes a comprehensive engagement of skills to learn a language effectively.

SECTION 2: Presentation of examples for existing practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling in Türkiye

Türkiye has been relatively underrepresented in leading Erasmus projects focused on using digital storytelling in language learning and teaching contexts of university students. This gap signifies a missed opportunity for innovation and cultural exchange in the educational technology landscape in Türkiye. The E-Stories project, currently the only initiative from Türkiye, is pivotal as it aims to fill this void. By focusing on digital storytelling, E-Stories will enhance creative pedagogies and intercultural dialogue, providing Turkish language learners with crucial digital literacy and language use, specifically storytelling and story-writing skills. The following five best practices regarding Turkish contexts are limited to only a few Erasmus+ KA2 projects and TÜBİTAK projects led by Turkish institutions.

Presentation of best practice 1: STORYLAND

STORYLAND is a complete Erasmus+ KA2 Adult Education project numbered 2020-1-TR01-KA227-ADU-098764 and titled "New e-Artistic English Learning Approach for Adults - STORYLAND" prepared by a Turkish institution, namely Van Provincial Directorate of National Education and approved by the Turkish National Agency. The project is partnered with five more institutions ranging from universities to NGOs.



Figure 1: The logo of the project from <https://storylandproject.com/>

The general objective of STORYLAND was to increase adults' digital competencies and foreign language proficiency. The specific objectives of the project are as follows:

- to increase the foreign language proficiency of adults and eliminate negative emotions such as anger, fear, anxiety, and stress due to the pandemic through production.
- to enhance the basic skills of the target groups in an interdisciplinary manner by providing interdisciplinary contributions through artistic activities and to provide them with qualified employment opportunities
- to foster intercultural dialogue among adults and ensure sustainable development within the principle of social inclusion.

Two concrete outputs were produced in the project.

- Digital Storytelling (DST) Training Toolkit
- E-learning Platform (StoryLand)

The first output has been a resource for adult learners to develop their foreign language skills, digital proficiency, digital storytelling, and artistic skills. With the toolkit produced, it is aimed at those who use this resource to start from basic digital competencies and reach the level of producing a professional digital story. The output consisted of five chapters and was created in accordance with adult education. In the output, it is assumed that the users are at the beginner level. However, it is designed in such a way that users with basic digital competencies can continue from the following sections. In addition, this is a resource that trainers can use. The second output is prepared for the artistic, cultural, and social contributions of foreign language teaching to adults. This platform aims to set an example for self-learning and distance education practices in adult education. The platform has ready-made video lessons, external resources, self-learning sections, and interactive sections where users can share their content.

Presentation of best practice 2: The Use of Digital Tools in 3 Stages in Foreign Language Education Supported by Stories: Story Creation, Story Writing, and Storytelling

Another good practice is a short-term project but has a long-lasting effect on the teaching practices of future language teachers. It was conducted by a state university in Türkiye, under the coordination of Assist Dr. Eda Duruk. The project was supported under the scope of TUBİTAK-Scientific and Technical Research Council of Türkiye in 2021. The project "The use of digital tools in foreign language education supported

by stories in 3 stages: story creation, story writing, and storytelling" aimed to provide online practical training to prospective English language teachers by eight faculty members who are experts in second language teacher education. In line with these objectives, the use of digital tools in foreign language education, which has recently been addressed in many projects, was narrowed in terms of "story creation-writing-telling" in the proposed project and discussed in depth with hands-on practices. What makes the digital story important in foreign language education is that, unlike classical stories, it can be easily enriched by being supported with audio and visual elements, transferred to digital media, and accessed repeatedly from multiple perspectives (Chun, Smith, & Kern, 2016). In addition, through digital storytelling, a combination of technology and creativity, students begin to see, hear, and perceive the world from different perspectives (Toki & Pange, 2014). Lastly and perhaps most importantly, all four basic language skills can be successfully developed by transforming stories into effective educational materials for the new generation of learners in a way that appeals to them.

Through the project, teacher candidates of English language from the departments of English language teaching at different state universities throughout the country were provided two day-training and engaging hands-on experiences on digital storytelling and various technologies used through digital storytelling in English language teaching and learning. More specifically, the training involved these sessions: digital storytelling with augmented reality; creation of visual animal tales using MAKEBELIEFCOMIX and COMIC Life; creating comic stories using Pixton; creating mind maps with digital applications in stories; creating and writing stories with Web 2.00 tools like Padlet and Storyboardthat; creating graphic novels; and the use of Scratch in the creation of digital stories and designing games through coding.

Briefly, the training provided in the project equips teacher candidates with cutting-edge tools and methods, such as augmented reality and various storytelling applications like MAKEBELIEFCOMIX, COMIC Life, and Pixton. This not only enhances their teaching toolkit but it also prepares them to innovate in their classrooms. While the project's training lasted only two days, the skills and knowledge imparted had a long-lasting impact on the participants' teaching practices. This sustained effect helps continuously improve the quality of English language

education. By focusing on the creative and practical use of digital tools in storytelling, the project not only enhances the teaching capabilities of future English language teachers but also enriches their students' learning experiences, making it a valuable contribution to the field.

Presentation of best practice 3: VISI-teaching

VISI-teaching project is an Erasmus+ KA2 SCH project titled "Visual Teaching and Digital Story Telling as an Educational Tool / Visi-Teaching" (with reference number 2015-1-TR01-KA201-022591), coordinated by Izmir Provincial Directorate of National Education with the regional partnership of the Directorate of Education of Crete and the support of local project partners in two regions, started in 2015 and ended in August 2018.

The Visi-Teaching Project was designed to disseminate visual learning methods at the classroom education level, mediate teachers to become visual teachers, develop their skills to prepare digital storytelling in their lessons, and use visual literacy techniques or mental diagrams.



Figure 2: The logo of the project

The target group of the project is primary and secondary school teachers. The project's main objective is to prepare VISI-e-GUIDE (e-guides) to provide them with pedagogical, methodological, and technical information on visual teaching. These e-guides are available to all European schools on the open-source VISI-e-PLATFORM. Sample lessons (VISI-COURSES) and educational digital games (VISI-BOARD GAMES) developed by the Turkish and Cretan partners have been uploaded to the VISI-e-PLATFORM. VISI-e-PLATFORM is a valuable educational tool where visual lesson examples can be shared. Since visual teaching can be used to every sector of basic skills education and knowledge is communicated through ICT, a domain of transversal skills, it is envisaged that Visi-Teaching might improve both basic skills education and transversal skills.

- make learning more relatable and foster strong relationships between educators and students. This is because visual teaching transforms the traditional role of the teacher into one of a visual storyteller, and the content is presented in a way that makes it more engaging, amusing, and current, thanks to the use of Visi-Courses.
- encourage creative thinking since Visi-Teaching encourages communication through visuals and, from the perspective of the perceiver, knowledge obtained through visual data is flexible, improving children's creativity as well as their sense of self and identity.
- create an international visual language since visual language predates both written and aural communication and is a legacy of visual literacy throughout all cultures.

Presentation of best practice 4: Okuvaryum

Okuvaryum is an educational platform with hundreds of digital original stories created by expert educators, writers, illustrators, voice actors and software engineers. These digital stories, created in line with the principle of child-friendliness, have been meeting with young readers between the ages of 4-10 since 2020. As of 2023, the Okuvaryum digital library will grow even richer with YKY's popular books. It contributes to the development of reading skills and the acquisition of reading culture by internalizing reading in preschool and primary school children.

This digital library can be accessed via web or application. This digital library, which is available for a fee, offers the opportunity for individual reading, as well as special services such as creating a book list, follow-up list, etc. (<https://okuvaryum.com.tr/>) Okuvaryum Children's Books mobile application, which has been among the most downloaded in the education category in the App Store and Google Play Store since the first weeks of its launch, was also selected as the "Featured Application for Children" by the App Store in March 2020 among thousands of applications released in the same month.

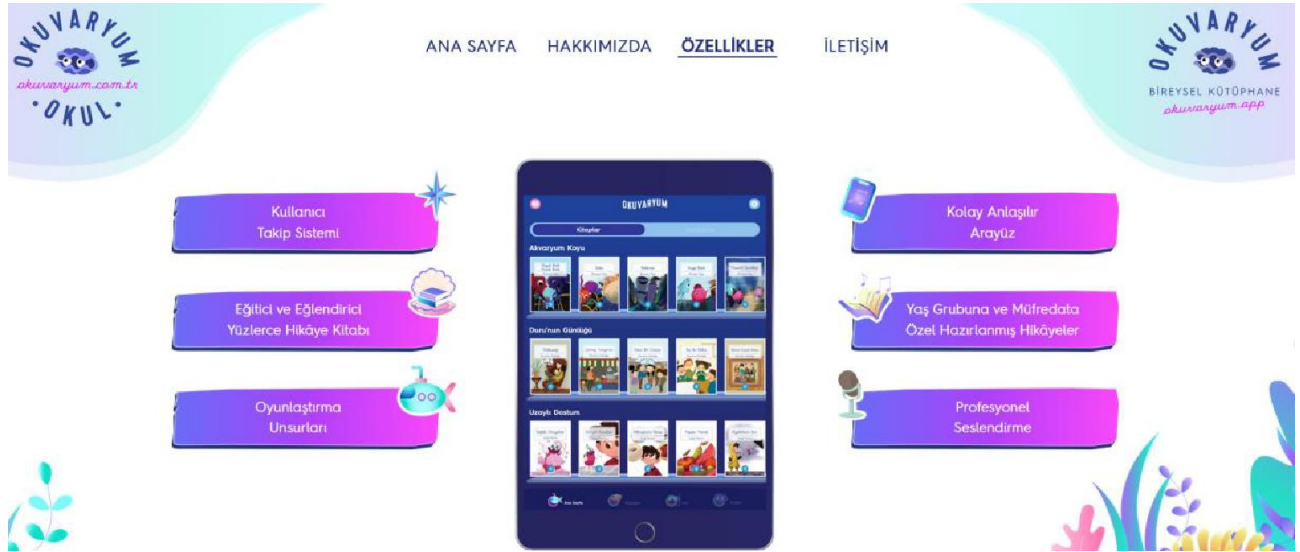


Figure 3: The interface for the Okuvaryum digital story platform

Presentation of best practice 5: Digital Stories in Education

The purpose of this TÜBİTAK project is to conduct digital storytelling workshops for teachers and prospective teachers as a tool for professional self-understanding, to use the digital stories created in these workshops in teacher training, and to develop a web-based environment for storing and distributing these digital stories. In line with this purpose, DSWs related to the professional experiences of 15 Information Technology teachers have initially been conducted. Subsequently, prospective teachers' perceptions of these stories in these workshops were examined.

Fifteen teacher candidates studying in the Computer and Instructional Technologies Education Department participated in the reception process. Ethnographic research techniques were utilized in the study. Data were collected through semi-structured focus group interviews, audio recordings, digital stories, and observation notes. Lastly, a web environment was developed at <http://dijitalhikayeleregitimde.com/> for storing and circulating digital stories. Specifically, the problems teachers face, such as being expected to perform technical tasks like technical staff, being asked to split the lesson to do other tasks, high expectations, and inadequate curricula, have led teachers to portray themselves as striving, researching, self-improving; they experienced weariness and demotivation regarding their self-respect; they became disillusioned with their jobs; they questioned their job perceptions, and in terms of future perspectives, there were cases where they desired a change of specialty or

continuation as administrators. Prospective teachers noted that the digital stories were instructive on finding solutions to potential problems they might face in their professional lives and kept them informed about real-life classroom management.

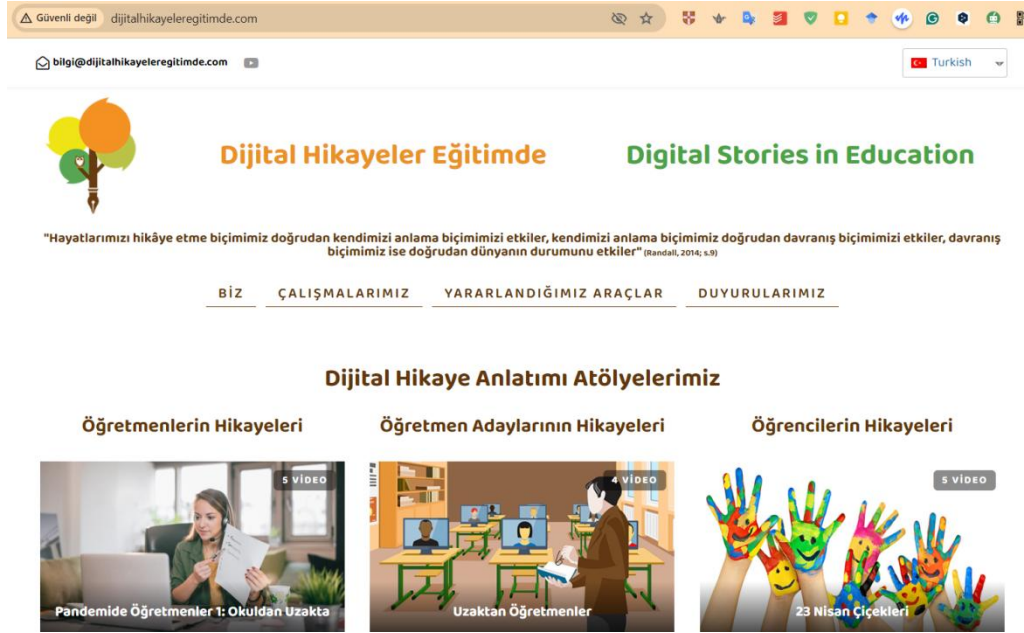


Figure 4: The interface for the project website

Final comment

These practices illustrate how digital storytelling can effectively enhance language learning and teaching, providing students with a richer and more engaging educational experience. They highlight the adaptability of digital storytelling across different age groups, language proficiency levels, and educational settings. The three projects above also offer training programs for teachers and prospective teachers on effectively integrating digital storytelling in education. Briefly, these examples showcase how digital storytelling is being used as a dynamic educational tool in Türkiye to enhance language learning and teaching across different levels of education.

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E-Stories
**Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students'
Language and Technology Use Skills**

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

**WP2-A3: Overview of existing good
practices in teaching a foreign language
through digital storytelling for Germany**

Helene Lindenthal



University Paderborn, Paderborn, Germany

Date:

09.04.2024

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



Co-funded by
the European Union



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SECTION 1: The importance of digital storytelling in language teaching and learning contexts

People love stories; they love listening to stories, reading them, or telling or writing them themselves. In today's world of digital media, stories are also told visually or with the help of music, and there are numerous variations. The so-called digital storytelling (DST) method aims to make digital storytelling learnable. This is why it is receiving more and more attention in the school context. Teachers use this method in various subjects, but especially in foreign language lessons, as the method is very promising. While using DST, students can develop essential skills, especially writing, reading, speaking and media skills. Writing, reading and speaking particularly promote foreign language skills. Nowadays and in the future, media literacy will not only be needed in everyday life but also professionally, which makes it so important that pupils learn these skills early enough.

The DST method has also become increasingly popular in Germany and is used in several classrooms. In addition to developing skills, this method has the advantage that lessons are organised in a modern way. The content is developed creatively and the learners become active, which motivates them and makes them happy. Due to a wide range of different forms, DST can be created multimodally. The learning processes can be personalised and different strengths of the learners can be discovered and used.

SECTION 2: Presentation of examples for existing practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling in Germany

Digital storytelling has become integral to education in Germany, especially in primary schools where tablets enhance English instruction through collaborative learning activities. Seminars explore inclusive approaches to multimedia learning, fostering media literacy and subject-specific competence. Comprehensive concepts provided by institutes empower students and educators, enriching learning experiences and promoting innovative teaching methodologies. Moreover, job-related language projects emphasize the importance of tailored language skills for professional contexts, utilizing explanatory videos to enhance language proficiency

through project-based learning. Overall, digital storytelling transcends traditional boundaries, offering immersive learning experiences that foster creativity, collaboration, and language development.

Presentation of best practice 1: StoryTimeE: Digital Storytelling with the tablet in the English classroom of a primary school

StoryTimeE is an interdisciplinary research project focusing on digitally supported English instruction in primary schools. Grounded in an understanding of teaching as a co-construction of actions between teachers and students regarding a subject matter, constructive learning support is examined as a process feature of primary school English instruction from a subject didactic, primary education, and media didactic perspective. This project combines findings on the process quality of instruction from empirical teaching research with insights from research on Technology-Enhanced Teaching (TET). Digital media are regarded as components of a complex teaching-learning arrangement, considering the mediating role of the teacher. A practical example of this in teaching is Digital Storytelling, whose didactic concept encompasses the reception and production of stories through a combination of various modes of representation. The tablet serves as a mobile device for implementing Digital Storytelling, offering various forms of representation, modes of control, and procedural structures.

The project investigates how teacher support during Digital Storytelling with tablets in primary school English instruction can be characterized in terms of its nature, frequency, and quality. Additionally, it explores the opportunities that tablet-supported instructional design offers for students' oral and written language production.

To address the research questions, a sequence developed specifically for the project titled "Story time – Let's create our own digital fairy tale" is conducted in the English instruction of fourth-grade students and analyzed using instructional videos.

Led by Prof. Dr. Maria Eisenmann in modern foreign languages didactics and Prof. Dr. Sanna Pohlmann-Rother in primary education pedagogy, the team includes researchers Nadine Krüger, Julia Fromm, Dr. Katharina Kindermann, and Dr. Caroline Jacobi-Theurer from University Würzburg, Germany.



Source: <https://www.neuphil.uni-wuerzburg.de/anglistik/abteilungen/fachdidaktik-moderne-fremdsprachen-tefl/research-1/storytime-digital-storytelling-mit-dem-tablet-im-englischunterricht-der-grundschule/>

Presentation of best practice 2: English lessons using Digital Storytelling in a primary school

The education server of the state of Baden-Württemberg in Germany suggests concrete embedding activities of the digital storytelling method for English lessons at primary schools.

A Storytelling unit typically consists of three phases:

1. Pre-Telling Activities:

Introduction of Vocabulary: The teacher presents a picture card with a new word, names it, and lets students pantomime it. Variations in speaking tempo, pitch, or volume are used, with students repeating the words. The "Kim" game involves displaying picture cards, covering some, and having students name them.

Introduction of the Main Character: Using props like stuffed animals or toy figures, the teacher introduces the main character(s).

Introduction to the Theme: Through an imaginary journey, students are taken into the story's world, followed by a discussion. A related song is sung or played, setting the mood for the story.

Picture or object as a silent prompt: A picture or object related to the story is placed in the center for students to express their thoughts, transitioning into the story.

For Picture Books: Examining the Cover Image: Students analyze the cover image,

possibly reading the title and predicting the story's content.

2. While-Telling Activities:

Choral Speaking: The teacher encourages students to join in speaking recurring phrases during narration, using pauses and facial expressions to boost participation.

Language-supporting Actions: Students receive pictures of scenes to arrange in sequence as the story unfolds, either on the board or on a worksheet. Students use pantomime to complement the narrative or act out the story using self-made props.

Content-related Work: The teacher pauses the story for students to speculate on its progression. Students discuss their reactions and actions if they were in the main character's shoes at a pivotal moment.

3. Post-Telling Activities:

Activities accompanying repeated storytelling: Students add pre-discussed sound effects to enhance the story's ambiance (e.g., wind, bird chirping, car engine). The story transforms into an action narrative as students pantomime the teacher's narration. Students arrange story pictures in the correct sequence. Students perform specific actions (e.g., standing, clapping) in response to mentioned words, which can be colors, numbers, animals, or broader categories. The teacher substitutes words with whistling, beeping, or pauses, prompting students to identify them. Factual errors and amusing changes are introduced for students to recognize and correct during narration.

Further Language Work: Students listen to/learn/sing a story-related song. The teacher presents story-related pictures, stating sentences for students to repeat if true. In small groups, students toss a ball, naming story-related words. Students draw story-related pictures for classmates to identify. The teacher guides students on an imaginary journey to a story location, followed by sharing experiences. Students organize sentences or keywords correctly.

Students fill in missing words in a gapped text:

Variation 1: The teacher gradually erases story words on the board until students can recall the narrative.

Variation 2: Working in pairs, students create gapped texts for classmates to complete.

Additional Activities: In groups, students illustrate the story as a picture narrative. Students act out the story with assigned roles. In groups, students perform the story as a puppet show. Students write and illustrate a parallel story collectively or in groups. Students create a class book or audio play, with groups designing scenes. Students watch a filmed version of the story (if available).



Landesbildungsserver
Baden-Württemberg

Source: <https://www.schule-bw.de/faecher-und-schularten/schularten/grundschule/faecher/englisch/storytelling/story3.html>

Presentation of best practice 3: Digital Storytelling in MuxBooks - An Inclusion-Sensitive Approach to Everyday Phenomena

A seminar of the Freiburg University of Education. In this seminar, the aim is to demonstrate ways in which children can be led away from a purely consumptive attitude towards digital stories, offering an engaging approach to multimedia, exploratory learning. Using Multimedia User Experience Books (MuxBooks) created with tablets, participants will have the opportunity to supplement written and drawn documentation with diverse multimedia elements. There will be an explanation of the technical and didactic fundamentals of digital storytelling, sharing of experiences from implementation with children, and a discussion of how digital storytelling can not only promote media literacy but also become an effective interdisciplinary teaching and learning method for gaining scientific knowledge.

The interdisciplinary teaching project aims to develop and integrate teaching concepts for multimedia and media practical learning. Digital Storytelling with MuxBooks addresses four educational areas in particular: Students acquire media literacy skills authentically through the production of digital stories – from producing and editing various audio and video tracks using different apps or computer programs to developing competencies related to societal and legal aspects such as copyright,

data protection, and public disclosure. Digital storytelling fosters subject-specific competence in the process of story writing. Students engage in an in-depth and problem-oriented exploration of biological study content (among others, using scientific research methods). Additionally, students further develop their pedagogical skills by systematically incorporating concepts of inclusion in the realization of a digital story. By using digital tools, they contribute to reducing barriers and adapting content and methods (e.g., through adaptive learning aids), and they continue to develop inclusion-affirming attitudes. Furthermore, media-related teaching competencies are developed as students collaboratively plan, implement, and publish a digital teaching and learning arrangement based on their media-related, subject-specific, subject-didactic, and pedagogical knowledge.



Source: <https://www.ph-freiburg.de/biologie/digitales-storytelling-materialien-fuer-den-unterricht.html>

Presentation of best practice 4: IfaK (Institut für angewandte Kindermedienforschung): a concept

The IfaK (Institute for Applied Children's Media Research) provides a concept for introducing the digital storytelling method into the classroom.

The teaching unit (Example English lesson)

For the teaching unit, sufficient personnel should be allocated for implementation, and a subject should be chosen to which the storytelling method will be applied. For easier visualization, this concept takes English lessons as an example.

Students should be introduced to the storytelling method at the beginning and use this method to learn and internalize new vocabulary in English lessons. However, the principle can also be applied to other subjects. The teachers should thoroughly familiarize themselves with the storytelling method before conducting the teaching unit so that the method can be explained clearly to the students. Additionally, they should decide on a theme to be addressed and print or organize the corresponding materials. To start, the teacher gives a brief introduction to the storytelling method,

explains the course of the lesson, and then presents the theme for which the students are to develop a story. For example, the theme of "Moving" can be chosen. The children receive the necessary vocabulary related to this theme, which they will learn and incorporate into the story. Then, the students are divided into small groups.

Each group now develops its own story using the given vocabulary. Firstly, a core idea is determined, followed by constructing the story by defining the protagonists and the problem, creating profiles for the characters, deciding on the settings, considering how to build the plot, and choosing narrative characters or perspectives. Sketches can be recorded on the storyboard template, and the handout with information about the method and the vocabulary list can be used as support.

Subsequently, the story can be visualized using suitable tools, such as those found in the toolbox.

Following this, the children present their stories to each other in the plenary, possibly with the help of visualization tools. After the presentations, a feedback discussion takes place, possibly in the form of a group discussion. To reinforce the learned words, the children can (re)write the story at home and review the new vocabulary.



Source: <https://ifak-kindermedien.de/theorie-und-praxis/paedagogische-konzepte/storytelling-im-unterricht/>

Presentation of best practice 5: Job-related language projects

The focus on developing language skills tailored to professional contexts is a key objective in German language instruction for non-native speakers. This emphasis aligns with the communication-intensive nature of contemporary workplaces, underscoring the rising importance of social competencies. Explanatory videos, increasingly popular in professional settings, serve as dynamic tools for conveying complex information comprehensibly, leveraging visual and auditory elements. Their interactive nature allows learners to engage actively, aiding in vocabulary acquisition and facilitating comprehension. Furthermore, the flexibility afforded by online access

benefits learners by enabling repeated viewing, particularly aiding those struggling with complex concepts. In educational contexts, learners are often provided with abundant information, which is distilled and structured into narrative forms for explanatory videos. Theoretical underpinnings draw from multimedia research, suggesting that leveraging multiple channels aids cognitive processing and knowledge construction. Dynamic visualizations not only cater to diverse learning styles but also promote independence in learning, with learners actively participating in the production process. Collaboration is central to this approach, fostering the creation of digital narratives that can serve as valuable learning resources. These projects, spanning a wide range of topics, are ideally conducted in collaboration with industry partners, leveraging project-based learning methodologies to empower learners and enhance their language proficiency.



Source: <https://fremdsprachedeutschdigital.de/download/fd/FD-59-Mazepa.pdf>

Final comment

In Germany, digital storytelling is transforming education across various fronts. From primary school English classrooms leveraging tablets for collaborative storytelling to inclusive approaches in multimedia learning seminars, innovative methods are enhancing student engagement and media literacy. Institutes like the IfaK provide comprehensive concepts for integrating storytelling into classrooms. At the same time, job-related language projects emphasize tailored language skills through dynamic explanatory videos, promoting both language proficiency and professional readiness. Overall, these best practices reflect a dynamic shift towards interactive and inclusive learning environments in German education.



Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A3: Overview on existing good practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling for Spain

Giovanny Durán-Eyzaguirre, Julio Ruiz-Palmero & María Rubio-Gragera
University of Málaga, Spain



10.04.2024

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



Co-funded by
the European Union



Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.



SECTION 1: The importance of digital storytelling in language teaching and learning contexts

Studies carried out in several Spanish universities have proven that Digital Storytelling (DST) can be very beneficial to help students learn in an enjoyable and meaningful way. Some examples of this type of research have been implemented not only focused on Spanish as a second language, but also in Higher Education, focusing on English as a second language for specific purposes. An example of this are the papers published by Alcalde-Peñalver and Santamaría-Urbieta from the University of Alcalá and the International University of La Rioja; or the ones published by García-Jiménez et al., and Lucena-Rodríguez et al., both from the University of Granada. All of them have served as a reference for the contextualization of this collection of digital storytelling good practices in the Spanish learning context.

In the first place, it must be considered that these studies show that the fact that this topic is a focus of interest of the scientific community in Spain. One of their main conclusions is that DST demonstrates how research can be done on social and cultural aspects from a digital approach without losing true essence, personal and group identity while it also promotes language skills and abilities. DST is considered a tool to connect students with narrative and audiovisual media, a way to empower them and make them the main characters of their own learning paths.

In some other studies carried out in Spain, DST is also seen as a biographical-narrative methodology that allows the visibility of vulnerable groups, becoming a very useful tool for social and educational interventions in different contexts that serves at the same time as a literacy tool. Through these digital narratives, complex and silenced realities can be visualised while practising a second language.

SECTION 2: Presentation of examples for existing practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling in Spain

As mentioned above, digital storytelling as a way of teaching a foreign language is a topic of interest for the Spanish scientific community, so some of the good practices collected for this report belong to the formal Higher Education context. However, there are some exceptional professionals in the field of Education who do not belong to academia but they

also publish how DST helps them to improve their students skills in the language classroom. Therefore, some of these good practices have been collected through the search of professional blogs and websites of language teachers.

Presentation of best practice 1: Digital Storytelling as a project in Spanish as a Foreign Language project within a Study Abroad experience.

This practice was implemented in the University of Navarra (North of Spain). A total of 162 international students before the project, 98 ones after the project, and 46 students in both cases participated in the digital storytelling practice. Students belonged to all levels from A1 to C1.

The methodology that was implemented for this project was inspired by the autobiographical model proposed by Story Center (storycenter.org) but adapted to the Spanish as a Second Language context. The implemented pedagogical method was a task-based learning approach.

The main topic of the story was telling the changes students felt in their second language concerning their experience studying abroad.



The stages of the projects were the following:

- Presentation of a writing task and creativity brainstorming
- Display of previous alumni examples in the repository of the centre
- Writing and proofreading
- Creation of the storyboard
- Speaking practice in class
- Recording and editing (the video must last around 3 minutes)
- Final presentation of the video in class

The practice/project was carried out within 1-2 weeks (in 4 days/week courses), and 2-3 weeks (in 2 days/week courses).

According to researchers who carried out this practice, its weakness point was that participants were inexperienced with video editing tools, which meant a source of stress. This resulted in an interference within the learning as many of them spent a significantly higher time editing than working on the second language, which was the essential task of the digital storytelling process.

As strength of the practice, digital storytelling is seen in this practice as a motivational tool. Finally, this practice also boosts learning regarding identity building and social skills, which are also essential for second language acquisition. The most relevant strength of this practice is its topic, since sharing intercultural study abroad experiences can be a powerful tool to open new minds through this topic.

As a conclusion, findings showed a positive final perception concerning a significant learning in relation to linguistic-communicative, both in oral and written expression, as well as social and biographical and identity sense-making aspects.

Source: <https://revistaseug.ugr.es/index.php/portalin/article/view/21397/23049>

Presentation of best practice 2: **Storytelling Robots!**



The "Storytelling Robots" project was implemented at the Cal-lípolis School in Catalunya, Northeast of Spain. This project seeks to integrate educational robotics, audiovisual creation, service learning and collaborative work in the kindergarten and primary school classrooms. Located in La Pineda, a diverse neighbourhood of Vilaseca, Tarragona, this school faces the challenge of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) to a student body with varied backgrounds and mother tongues. Educational technologies become an essential resource for this purpose.

To motivate students to use English as a vehicular language in class, they focus on two key points: robotics and programming, as well as the



creation of stories. In addition, the opportunity was taken to collaborate with the City Council of Vila-seca and a group of elderly people in the neighbourhood, teaching them to use educational technologies to create stories and animated videos, while learning English and educational technologies.

The development process of this experience follows several steps: collaborative decision making, prototype design, testing and improvement of the project, and finally, presentation and evaluation of the project. The importance of maximising students' creative time with technology is emphasised and the project is evaluated using criteria of creative thinking and use of foreign language.

The "Storytelling Robots" project received positive feedback from students and teachers, highlighting the collaboration between students, the opportunity to create a game on their own, and the effective use of English as a means of communication in the classroom. In addition, it is highlighted that the use of educational robotics, educational technology and augmented reality facilitates more flexible, active and playful methodologies, promoting the communicative and inclusive approach necessary for the acquisition of a foreign language and the development of intercultural attitudes and values.

In short, "Storytelling Robots" is an innovative project that combines educational robotics, audio-visual creation, service learning and collaborative work to foster the learning of English and other content in a meaningful and motivating way, while promoting inclusion and the development of intercultural skills.

Through collaboration with the Vila-seca City Council, Escola Callipolis implemented the service-learning program, allowing a group of seniors to participate in the project. This provided an opportunity for senior members to engage in intergenerational activities, learning new skills and connecting with the school community.

The Cal-Lipolis School, is defined as a "complex" public school in this area, therefore, it adopts an inclusive approach that recognizes the linguistic and cultural diversity of its students. In this context, educational technologies emerge as a powerful tool to facilitate language learning and the integration of digital skills into the school curriculum. The use of robotics and programming not only captures students' interest, but also allows them to

develop cognitive and creative skills while exploring science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) concepts.

The Storytelling Robots project exemplifies how effectively integrating technology into the classroom can transform the learning experience, promoting collaboration, creativity and mastery of key skills. By providing students with the opportunity to be active creators of digital content, it fosters a constructivist approach to learning that empowers students to be the protagonists of their own educational process. In addition, connecting with the community through service-learning enriches the curriculum by providing practical and meaningful experiences that transcend the walls of the classroom.

This practice represents an innovative model of education that combines technology, service-learning and an inclusive approach to promote meaningful learning and the holistic development of students. By integrating educational robotics, audiovisual creation and collaborative work, this project offers a transformative vision of education that prepares students to face the challenges of the 21st century and contribute positively to an increasingly globalised and digitised society.

Source: https://intef.es/experiencias_edu/storytelling-robots/

Presentation of best practice 3: Digital Storytelling in the English classroom at the University of Valencia (Spain)

The case study on the use of digital storytelling at the University of Valencia provides a detailed overview of how this methodology was implemented in the English as a foreign language classroom during the second term of the 2011-2012 academic year. This initiative was carried out within the framework of the subject "English Language I", aimed at third-year students of the Faculty of Education, who were being trained to become primary education teachers majoring in English.

The main objective of this project was to explore the didactic possibilities of DST to improve students' English writing and speaking skills. The focus was





not only on language development, but also on fostering technological skills, teamwork and public presentation.

The implementation process began with a hands-on session in which students were instructed on

the use of the software needed to create digital stories, in this case, Photostory3. In addition, they were shown examples of DSTs created by other students to give them a clear idea of the final goal of the project. This initial phase was crucial to ensure that all students understood the task and were familiar with the technological tools required.

Once the students were ready, they were divided into groups of two or three and began working on their DST projects. They were tasked with crafting digital stories in English based on different themes, such as personal narratives, original love stories, adaptations of children's stories, and accounts of historical events. This thematic diversity allowed the students to express themselves creatively and explore different narrative genres.

The process of creating the digital stories involved several stages. First, students wrote the script for their story, collaborating with each other to develop interesting plots and compelling characters. Then, they selected images and music to complement their narrative, which allowed them to improve their technology skills and their ability to use multimedia resources in an educational context.

Once the script and media selection were complete, the students recorded their voices narrating the story, paying special attention to the pronunciation and intonation of English as a foreign language. This phase not only allowed them to practice their speaking skills, but also helped them improve their confidence in using the language.

Finally, the DST projects were presented in class, where students had the opportunity to share their creations with their peers and receive constructive feedback. This public presentation phase not only allowed students to demonstrate their presentation skills, but also fostered the exchange of ideas and collaboration among peers.

In addition to the creation of the DST projects, students completed a questionnaire with open-ended questions to evaluate their experience. Student responses revealed that they found the assignment rewarding and productive, and felt that they had improved their English writing and speaking skills as a result of the project.

In conclusion, the case study of the use of digital storytelling at the University of Valencia proved to be an effective tool for improving the learning of English as a foreign language by offering students a unique opportunity to develop language, technology and presentation skills in a collaborative and creative environment. In addition, the project highlighted the importance of providing students with adequate guidance and technical support to ensure the success of the initiative.

Source: Soler, B. (2014). Digital Storytelling: A Case Study of the Creation and Narration of a Story by EFL Learners. In: Digital Education Review, 26, 74-84. [Accessed: 05/04/2024] <http://greav.ub.edu/der>

Presentation of best practice 4: Create your own adventure!

Another excellent practice for using digital storytelling in the foreign language classroom is based on the creation of interactive and participatory content that engages students within the learning process.

In this good practice, authors use digital tools such as Book Creator and Wordwall to develop interactive material that promotes the "Create Your Own Adventure" creative writing technique. This practice not only allows students to develop their language skills, but also encourages creativity and active participation in the classroom.

The process begins with the presentation of the concept of digital storytelling through a podcast on technology and education by the authors of this resource. Students can listen to episodes that address theoretical and practical aspects of digital storytelling, providing them with a basic understanding of the topic and the tools necessary to create their own

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stories.



Once students have a basic understanding of digital storytelling, they are presented with the task of creating their own interactive material using tools such as Book Creator and Wordwall. These tools allow them to combine text, images, audio and video to create interactive books and personalized learning activities.

In this case, students are proposed to create a story using the "Create Your Own Adventure" technique. This technique involves giving readers several choices at each point in the story, allowing them to make decisions that affect the development of the plot. By using Book Creator and Wordwall in combination, students can create an interactive reading experience where readers can choose their own path through the story.



Once students have created their interactive material, they are encouraged to share it with their classmates and receive feedback on their work. This not only fosters collaboration

and the exchange of ideas among students, but also allows them to practise their language skills by presenting and discussing their work using the foreign language.

Finally, students are introduced to an additional tool for creating fictional chat conversations, allowing them to explore new ways of storytelling and expressing themselves in the foreign language. This practice encourages creativity and experimentation with language, while giving students the opportunity to practice their writing and communication skills in a controlled and fun environment.

In short, this practice of digital storytelling in the foreign language classroom combines the theory and practice of digital storytelling with the development of language and creative skills. By providing students with the tools and space to create their own interactive content, active participation and learning autonomy is encouraged, resulting in a more enriching and meaningful educational experience.

Source: <https://www.profe-de-espanol.de/2022/05/15/storytelling-digital/>

Presentation of best practice 5: “Horror Tales Podcast”

The open educational resource (OER) "Horror Tales", developed by the Andalusian Government (South of Spain region), offers an excellent opportunity to explore a leading practice in the use of digital storytelling for language teaching. This resource focuses on the creation of a podcast narrating scary stories as a final task, encouraging teamwork and the application of various elements of the horror genre.

In this context, students have the opportunity to develop their language skills, while also exploring classic elements of horror and learning about the specific narrative structure of this genre. While constructing their own stories, students must consider characteristics such as characters, settings, plots and conflicts, which allows them to apply previous knowledge about the use of verbs in the past simple, continuous and the expression



You are able to tell a horror story. Why don't you create a horror story podcast and eventually share it? Here is what you need to know. Don't fear this spooky challenge!



1. What you need to know

How to create your podcast? Check this out!

Video Text Image



I Got equipped. You don't need to invest a lot in your equipment to start recording podcasts

Podcast creation

"used to".

The process of creating a podcast involves several stages, from production to editing and sharing the final product. This not only promotes oral communication, but also develops technological skills and fosters collaborative work. Students have the opportunity to apply what they have previously learned, as well as to expand their knowledge of the subject matter and the elements necessary to carry out the final task.

In addition to the linguistic and communicative objectives, "Horror Tales" aims to awaken students' curiosity and creativity by working with a genre of special interest for their age group. The use of digital and technological media not only makes the learning process more engaging, but also prepares students for the digital world in which we live, where communication through podcasts and other digital media is increasingly common.

A leading practice in the use of digital storytelling in this context would be to divide the podcast creation process into several stages, each of which focuses on a specific aspect of the horror genre and the English language. For example, in the first stage, students could research and discuss classic horror elements, such as character archetypes and typical settings. In the second stage, they could work on writing their stories, applying the language skills they have acquired and receiving feedback from their peers and the teacher. In the third stage, they could record and edit their podcasts, focusing on proper pronunciation and intonation. Finally, they could share their podcasts with the rest of the class and receive feedback and suggestions for improvement.

This practice not only allows students to develop their language and communication skills, when also fostering creativity, teamwork and effective use of technology. At the same time, it provides a memorable and meaningful learning experience that students will remember long after completing the course. In short, "Horror Tales" exemplifies how digital storytelling can be a powerful tool for language learning, offering a unique combination of thematic content, language skills and technology.

Source: https://edea.juntadeandalucia.es/bancorecursos/file/83055d29-526d-4ad4-8237-bae2671a7691/2/ING_3ESO_REA_04_V02.zip/43_podcast_mode.html



Final comments

In Spain, digital storytelling has been implemented and researched in several universities, proving to be beneficial for language learning in both Spanish, as well as English, as Foreign Languages. In addition to the research in Higher Education contexts, good practices have been also identified in the use of DST in other educational contexts such as student exchanges, primary schools and secondary education, highlighting its use for the improvement of language skills, the promotion of creativity and cultural identity, as well as its usefulness for social integration and the visibility of vulnerable groups. These practices show how DST has become an effective tool for meaningful learning and creative expression in the language classroom in Spain during the past decades.



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**Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students'
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ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A3: Overview on existing good practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling for Greece

Eleni Katsarou, Panagiota Samioti & Irini Kassotaki
University of Crete, Rethymno & Heraklion, Greece



Date:

12.03.2024

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



Co-funded by
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Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

SECTION 1: The importance of digital storytelling in language teaching and learning contexts

Although international literature considers digital storytelling as an educational added value in foreign language learning, and has highlighted its importance for educational practice (e.g. Robin, 2016; Hung et al., 2012), in Greece the situation is not the same. Digital storytelling has not been used to the same extent when teaching Greek as a foreign language in the Greek educational context.

Besides, we have to consider that only recently a large number of students have come to Greek universities to study and the need to find attractive ways of teaching Greek as a foreign language to the student population has also recently arisen. Thus it is now gradually recognized in Greece that digital storytelling can make language teaching more interactive, creative, and full of opportunities for active learning and for connecting teaching with learners' personal lives.

But there are still not many educational materials based on digital storytelling for foreign language teaching, nor many related teaching practices. Here are the most interesting ones we found and more relevant with the Project "E-Stories".

SECTION 2: Presentation of examples for existing practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling in Greece

More specifically, here we present five interesting existing teaching practices implemented in Greece. Digital Storytelling Language Massive Open Online Course (DST LMOOC) introduces innovative language teaching methods for higher education, Let's Speak Greek focuses on adult Greek proficiency, while Storybird, Micreate Digital Storytelling Application, and Fokides (2016) explore digital narratives' role in aiding immigrant students' adaptation and integration while enhancing their creativity.

Presentation of best practice 1: Digital Storytelling MOOC for foreign language learning with a focus on L2 Speaking and Writing

This practice has been included in this form, even though it hasn't been implemented yet. The most important reason for including it in the best digital stories practices is that

it introduces a novel method for teaching foreign languages using a Digital Storytelling Language Massive Open Online Course (DST LMOOC), which is closely relevant to the aims of our Project. The course, designed for tertiary education, focuses on developing language skills outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Following the ADDIE instructional design model, it aims to equip students with communication skills in a foreign language. Through the course, students learn vocabulary, grammar, production strategies, and interaction activities, applying their knowledge to create digital stories. The paper provides insights into the theoretical framework, course planning, learning materials, and its integration into foreign language classrooms, which means that we can get plenty of ideas to create our materials. More specifically, the LMOOC "Digital Storytelling for Language Learning" (DST for LL), which was constructed to introduce pedagogical innovations aimed at enhancing students' speaking and writing abilities in a foreign language of their choice, is hosted at the university's platform. The course was tailored for language learners operating within the B1 - B2 proficiency levels, as outlined in the CEFR's differentiated profiles. The descriptor scales for each proficiency level serve a dual purpose: firstly, they help identify the relevant language tasks for a specific group of learners, and secondly, they determine the proficiency level required to accomplish those tasks effectively. Upon entering the LMOOC, participants assess their own language skills, particularly in speaking and writing, using the self-assessment grids provided by the CEFR for any chosen foreign language. The LMOOC "Digital Storytelling for Language Learning" (DST for LL) is designed for language learners at B1-B2 proficiency levels, according to the CEFR. It uses Greek as the primary language (L1) to introduce technical aspects and allows students to practice their chosen target language (L2) through digital story creation. The course aims to develop practical language skills and knowledge, aligning activities with CEFR descriptors. Creative writing techniques are integrated with technical knowledge, focusing on productive language skills, vocabulary, and communication styles. Various resources such as online dictionaries and tutorials support self-study.

The DST for LL MOOC is a 4-week program comprising four sequential modules. It offers structured content with clear instructions, tutorials, videos, and discussion forums

to support participants progressively. Each module includes activities and a final task for self and peer evaluation, ensuring successful completion. An overview of the activities is provided in Table 1:

Table 1. DST for LL MOOC

<i>Tutorials</i>	<i>Videos</i>	<i>Fora</i>	<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Rubrics</i>	<i>Documents</i>	<i>Online Dictionaries</i>
17	7	6	5	7	15	2

(Picture from Maravelaki, S. and Panagiotidis, P. (2022), page 3406)

Regarding the Modules, Module 1 provides an introductory overview of Digital Storytelling (DST), covering its theoretical foundations and educational benefits. Participants learn about storytelling evolution, narrative structures, and the significance of compelling narratives. They gain skills in defining storytelling and DST, understanding their educational implications, and employing narrative techniques using web 2.0 tools. Module 2 focuses on dissecting DST, discussing its elements and the process of crafting digital narratives. Participants learn about script writing, storyboard creation, and ethical considerations in digital content creation and sharing. This module also highlights the alignment between written production tasks and CEFR proficiency levels. Module 3 introduces participants to various digital storytelling applications and Web 2.0 tools, enabling them to select appropriate tools for creating digital narratives. They also learn to present themselves and their stories using the web 2.0 tool Voicethread. Oral production tasks are aligned with CEFR proficiency levels. The 4th and last module emphasizes significant aspects concerning the choice of the suitable tool for crafting a digital narrative, as well as for sharing and evaluating it. The foundational theoretical framework guiding this study is the ADDIE model, as depicted in Table 2.

Module 4 emphasizes the selection of appropriate tools for creating, sharing, and evaluating digital stories. Participants learn about the Digital Narrative Design framework and complete tasks related to preparation, production, and completion of digital narratives. Successful completion of this module enables participants to create, publish, and evaluate digital narratives, reflecting their linguistic and pragmatic knowledge.

Table 2. Digital Storytelling Guidelines for Educators Based on the ADDIE Design Model

Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Distinguish the characteristics of an educational digital story. - Analyse the audience and develop the digital story script accordingly. - Choose an interesting topic and add a personal connection
Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recognize the importance of a detailed script. - Create a detailed storyboard before work on the actual creation begins. - Organise all of the digital story materials. - Use visually interesting images that support and strengthen the story. - Be inventive in creating useful images. - Use the highest quality images available. - Address issues of copyright and fair use.
Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Record high quality audio. - Use text to add meaningful titles and credits. - Be thoughtful about the use of additional multimedia elements. - Use appropriate file names for images and other media. - Edit a copy of the file, rather than the original file. - Save files early and often—and in more than one location. - Save the final version of the digital story in multiple formats.
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop educational materials to supplement the digital story.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide useful and supportive feedback to others' scripts in the design phase and drafts in the development phase. - Involve students in evaluation throughout the entire process.

(Picture from Maravelaki, S. and Panagiotidis, P. (2022), page 3408)

Presentation of best practice 2: “Ας μιλήσουμε Ελληνικά” (“Let’s Speak Greek”)

<https://emily1kall.wixsite.com/milasellinika>

Overview: The primary aim of this online interactive learning environment is to foster the acquisition of oral communication skills and to offer an alternative approach to teaching the Greek language to foreign-language adults who wish to improve their speaking skills. Through this environment, learners are anticipated to develop the ability to speak confidently, presenting themselves accurately in terms of grammar and syntax. The educational objectives of the environment include enhancing learners' comfort level in speaking Greek and narrating stories with minimal errors, ensuring proficiency in pronunciation and minimizing syntactic and grammatical mistakes. Additionally, learners are expected to recognize errors while listening to sentences, accurately transcribe and rectify them, describe images effectively, and select the correct responses in quizzes.

Prerequisites: Learners at A1 level know some important grammar and syntax rules. These are reminded through the interactive environment to the guessers, such as articles, nouns, nouns, causatives, verbs and useful expressions. The “What we know section” gives the opportunity for their environment visitors to do a general review to fill in any gaps. In terms of managing the environment, no specialist knowledge, and skills in using a computer and navigating the web space are required. Also considering that the guides are adults, they are expected to be familiar with the basic knowledge of a PC.

Activities: The interactive environment contains activities that aim to help the learners consolidate the knowledge they have acquired and to assess themselves. A multiple-choice quiz is given in the environment with the aim of choosing the correct answer and receiving immediate feedback. There are also several videos in Greek with basic communicative dialogues and they are asked to record in the form of a commentary what they hear. They are provided with pictures for description accompanied by supporting questions. They are also given audio-recorded sentences that contain errors which they have to identify, correct and record. The final task is to create a video accompanied by personal photos and their recorded voice. This will be done through Digital Storytelling.

Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the outcome of their activities and also on the telling of their story or the presentation of a person etc. The way the students speak will be assessed (i.e. comfort and preparedness, the mistakes which they make during their speech). Pass criterion up to 3 syntactic errors and 3 grammatical errors. Their story must be over one and a half minutes long. Also, their comfort and pronunciation will play an important role.

Expected Results and duration: By the end of the process, students are expected to feel more confident and comfortable during their speech. The time of completion of the learning project is 2 hours.

Description of the online environment/Summary of the activities: The home page (see picture 1) of the environment features photos of adult students to indicate that it caters to adults, accompanied by a video titled "My Story," where the creator introduces herself and provides an overview of what visitors can expect from navigating the environment. Additionally, there's a "Teacher's Guide" button in PDF format for further assistance. The page includes hints about lifelong learning and adult education to motivate learners. Images related to language learning are included, with some terms left untranslated assuming learners' prior knowledge. The menu offers a "*What Do You Know*" section for grammar and syntax review with subsections linked for easy access. There is also the "*Exercises*" section which signifies the transition from theory to practice, starting with a quiz.

PICTURE 1: HOMEPAGE



<https://emily1kall.wixsite.com/milasellinika>

The final section is labelled as “Let’s Speak” on the main menu (PICTURE 2) and it involves learners presenting a video combining speech and images, graded based on language use, oral skills, confidence, and pronunciation, emphasizing digital storytelling. Videos can be created using Movie Maker or PowerPoint and uploaded securely.

PICTURE 2: DIGITAL STORYTELLING ACTIVITY



<https://emily1kall.wixsite.com/milasellinika/as-milisoyme>

Presentation of best practice 3: Storytelling Paintings (Storybird)

The Storybird web application (<http://www.storybird.com>) serves as a digital platform

that amalgamates the advantages of creative writing, digital storytelling, and the integration of visual arts into foreign language education. It serves as a convergence point for learners' creativity and the educational potential of information and communication technology (ICT). Additionally, it introduces an artistic element to foreign language instruction, enhancing the interdisciplinary nature of language classrooms and introducing the concept of multimodal texts. Also, it facilitates the creation of digital eBooks featuring professional illustrations chosen from a diverse array of options in the program's gallery. Users can craft digital stories or poems using these illustrations, which can then be published either publicly or privately within the program's library. While most of its services are complimentary, users are charged for downloading and printing their creations. However, Storybird does not support uploading images from personal collections, recording narration, or formatting text. The study's findings strongly suggest that employing this innovative approach to teaching narrative text production in English using Web 2.0 applications effectively motivated and engaged students, resulting in the successful completion of their narrative eBooks. Setting up a Storybird account is straightforward and efficient, requiring little involvement from the teacher. Moreover, the interface is designed to be user-friendly and ensures adequate online security for students. The artistic creations are designed to function as both a narrative tool and a source of inspiration, providing users with information about characters, settings, and storylines. Storybird allows students to start their stories with illustrations instead of a blank page, a method advocated by Mark Ury, the platform's founder, to unlock narratives from images. This approach, which focuses on visual storytelling, facilitates language practice, especially for students not yet proficient in expressing themselves solely through written language. Research supports the effectiveness of utilizing images and music for communication in language learning contexts.

Implementation: *Storytelling Paintings*

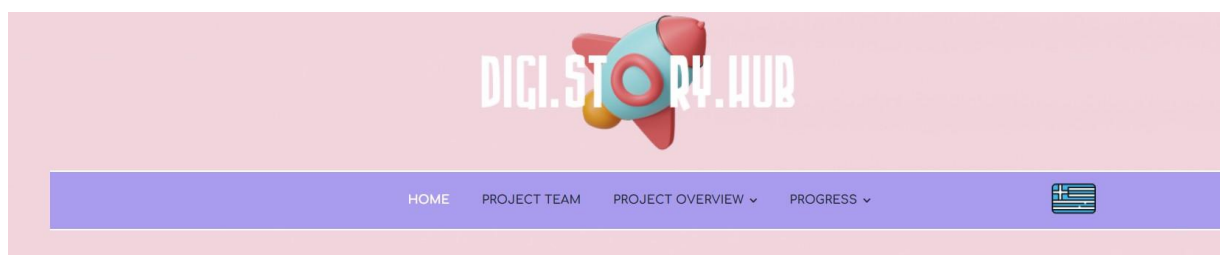
(Educational Script for Teaching Foreign Language in Greek Primary School)

The basic idea of the script is to use paintings to create a story. The main iconic material to be used is therefore the painting itself that inspired the story. It is a kind of digital story called a "single image digital story". It is based on the use of the details of the painting, using the technique of zoom and appropriate transition effects from one detail to

another. Of course, it is also possible to use other images beyond the specific painting, such as other works by the same artist.

The aims of the lesson were for the students to practice language structures such as "have you ever been to / I have been to" with place names, and to provide information about time and place using the Simple Past tense, targeted at A2 and B1 language levels. Additionally, the aims included practising the production and comprehension of informative text, describing and comparing using adjectives and comparative/superlative forms, and using collocative/adversative conjunctions. Furthermore, the objectives involved narrative comprehension and short story-telling with correct verb tenses, conjunctions, and adverbs to indicate the chronology of events. The development of vocabulary related to artistic and cultural interests, museums, exhibitions, and website features was also targeted. Lastly, the aims included fostering intercultural awareness and respect for world cultural heritage, as well as cultivating visual and digital literacy skills.

The lesson unfolds in several stages: Students begin by discussing their museum visits, practising language structures related to past experiences and using the Simple Past to describe details. They form groups, choose an online museum to explore, and share their experiences with the class. The teacher facilitates a discussion using a table to prompt students' initial impressions, followed by writing brief narratives about the table's content and sharing them. Next, students write the text of their digital narratives within specified word limits, aiming for a 2-4 minute story length, and receive feedback from peers and the teacher. Students create illustrated storyboards, adjusting details based on their written stories and receiving feedback. In the preproduction phase, students digitally process images, search for additional materials, and discuss ideas with peers and the teacher. Voice narration and synthesis of elements are carried out using appropriate software, with opportunities for peer feedback during the recording process. During the final finishing phase, students synchronize multimedia elements, add effects, titles, and credits, ensuring coherence and meaning. The reflection and distribution phase concludes the process, with students presenting and discussing their digital narratives, reflecting on their experience, and deciding on distribution options.



https://digistoryhub.web.auth.gr/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/scenario_elem_6b_temp.pdf

Presentation of best practice 4: Micreate Digital storytelling Application

Brief review

The Digital Storytelling Application is an artifact created by the Micreate project (<https://micreate-storytelling.web.app/signin>), which was funded by the European Union. The project aimed to stimulate language learning, creativity, and expression among diverse groups of migrant children, using a child-centered approach for inclusion at both an educational and policy level. The project began on January 1st, 2019 and lasted for about three years, until June 30th, 2022. It conducted case studies in various countries and yielded excellent results, developing new integration measures which the researchers utilized in their current study. The story of Noah was created by gathering several aspiring stories, aligning with the endeavors of inclusion and the goal of amplifying the voices of the most marginalized members of communities, as an argument and a factor for change.

Concept

The proposed project aims to create a space where migrant children can communicate and share their experiences after arriving in receiving societies. The project highlights that the existing social and political order does not provide enough independent space for children to speak for themselves. The goal is to gather their stories to support their needs and aspirations when it comes to integration into host societies. We believe that child-centered integration policies, programs, practices, and initiatives are crucial in

helping migrant children become active partners and participants in developing cohesive societies. This will provide them with equal opportunities and secured rights as individuals, as well as members of minority and migrant groups in various spheres such as education, labor market, housing, civil society, and more. The project also aims to make the voices of the least powerful members of communities heard as an argument and factor for change

Objectives

The goal of this project is to promote the inclusion of diverse groups of migrant children through a child-centered approach to integration on both educational and policy levels. Given the increasing ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity in European countries, we have specific objectives to address these challenges:

- To improve our understanding of children's experiences in new social environments
- To explore peer dynamics in schools with respect to the integration process
- To enhance the capacity of teachers and educational staff to manage diversity
- To develop child-centered tools that stimulate the integration of migrant children
- To design child-centered integration policy recommendations for diverse decision-makers. The objectives are presented more analytically below:

To Improve Knowledge about Children's Experiences of Life in New Social Environments

The main goal is to collect the experiences of migrant children during various stages of integration processes, such as newly arrived and long-term residents. The study will be conducted in different institutional settings, including asylum homes, hotspots, refugee camps, and schools. By conducting child-centred fieldwork, we hope to gain a better understanding of how children experience their lives in new social and cultural environments, particularly in relation to their arrival and stay in host societies. This approach will provide us with new insights into the conceptualizations of well-being and needs, as well as the dynamics of integration in relation to educational systems, peer groups, sport and leisure activities, classroom dynamics, and psychosocial support services.

To explore peer dynamics in schools with respect to the integration process

The specific objective of the project is to study how local children impact the integration of migrant children and to understand the dynamics among local and migrant children. Our goal is not just to determine the potential of local children in the integration of migrant children, but also to compare the levels of social inclusion and evaluate the success of integration by comparing migrant and local children in relation to family dynamics, cultural identity, leisure activities, relationships with peers, future aspirations, classroom dynamics, gender and religious dimensions, etc.

To enhance the capacity of teachers and educational staff to manage diversity

The objective of this project is to enhance the capacity, education, and awareness of teachers, educational staff, professionals, and other adults who regularly interact with children. The aim is to help them better understand and assess the risks associated with migrant children in host societies, and to meet their specific needs. As a result, teachers will be better equipped to develop effective solutions and best practices in managing ethnic diversity in schools. This will contribute to their mutual learning and capacity-building, and ultimately lead to the betterment of children's education and well-being.

To develop child-centered tools that stimulate the integration of migrant children

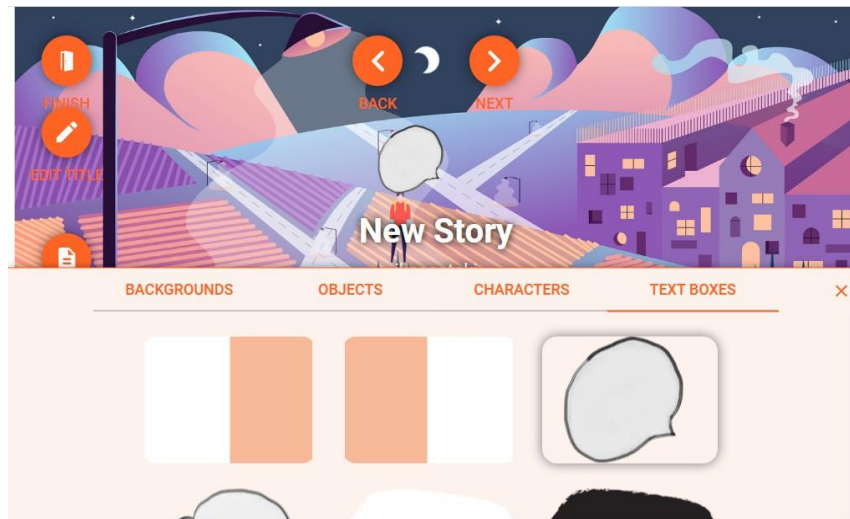
The proposed project aims to overcome integration challenges faced by migrant children in schools. To achieve this objective, Work Package 10: Integration Lab has been introduced. Its purpose is to develop new tools and effective practices for teachers to motivate migrant children's integration and raise awareness and tolerance among local children. This is crucial, especially when considering the importance of not only mapping integration challenges but also winning them. The project has taken special precautions to ensure that the results do not become an end in themselves.

To design child-centered integration policy recommendations for diverse decision-makers

Creating an integration policy that is centered around children is an important objective. Such a policy should focus on the needs of migrant children and take into account their well-being. Policy-makers have been criticized for being too selective, choosing only those components of expertise that fit their problem definitions, while researchers have been challenged for being unable to reflect critically on their own problem definitions due

to their involvement with policy. This project seeks to address these issues by exploring the child-centered approach to integration and policy (Micreate project, 2020).

The tutorial video: https://youtu.be/b_K0Pj7gh8w



editor in MiCreate app (example)

The data analysis of a research (Lamprou et al., 2023) based on the use of Micreate application (online semi-structured interviews addressed to educators (n=12) with teaching experience to CLD students) showed that educational digital tools enhance the students' learning outcomes, motivation and levels of enjoyment. Nonetheless, the education a digital tools' implementation presupposes a series of prerequisites, such as the educators' expertise, students' active involvement, participation, and the technological equipment's availability. Digital Storytelling proved to be a valuable medium that promoted learners' skills (i.e. multimodality-digital literacy, interpersonal and collaboration skills) and reinforced their belongingness and resilience. Furthermore, a potential space for co-teaching between the class teacher and the ICTs teacher emerged considering that there is teaching roles' segregation and collaboration-communication among educators).

Presentation of best practice 5:Autobiographical Digital Storytelling Brief review

Immigrant students often face challenges in adapting socially and integrating into school environments. Although digital narrations are commonly used in education, they are rarely utilized to support students in solving complex problems. The study of Fokides (2016) aims to explore the potential of digital narrations as a tool to help immigrant students overcome their adaptation difficulties. The study focuses on a female student who was experiencing significant challenges. Data was collected from the student, her teacher, and classmates before, during, and after the intervention. The study found that through the creation and presentation of an autobiographical digital narration, the student was able to externalize her thoughts and feelings, which facilitated her integration into the school environment. Additionally, the attitudes and perceptions of the other students towards their foreign classmate were positively influenced. Even though only one student participated in the study, the findings showed that DST motivated the student to document her personal experiences- as a narrative therapy- and thus discover parts of her personality that helped her to become more resilient. In addition, the externalisation of her thoughts and feelings has facilitated her feelings of belonging in the school environment and has greatly improved her self-image. Finally, the native students' previous attitudes and perceptions of their foreign classmate have been

positively influenced.

Development of the Digital Story

During a month-long phase from mid-November to mid-December 2014, a total of nine one-to-two hour sessions were held (not every day). In the first three sessions, the subject learned how to use the software for digital story development. The remaining sessions were dedicated to developing the story using the elements proposed by Brooks (2011, in Fokides 2016).

-Concept: During the interview, a central theme emerged around which the story was developed. The subject expressed her need to articulate the stress she experienced while transitioning from one country to another. The emotions of anxiety and fear of the unknown, along with the accompanying thoughts, formed the backbone of the story.

-Character: The protagonist narrated her story, with friends and relatives as key figures in her home country. No classmates were featured as active characters.

-Theme: The story sheds light on two important aspects of real life - immigration and emotions.

-The story architecture: The story's events were planned on paper (Figure 1). However, the protagonist was hesitant to write the dialogues on paper, as she feared making mistakes. Instead, she chose to write them using software. The story was divided into three parts: "Before leaving," which included seven scenes depicting her thoughts, feelings, and conversations with friends and family; "The trip," which had two scenes illustrating her first impressions of her new home; and "In Rhodes," which had two scenes portraying her experience at school. The story ended with one final scene, where she wanted to convey a message to her classmates.

-Scene construction: In this study, each scene was presented as a slide or page in the application (Figures 2-8). The researcher's role was to provide minimal technical assistance and refrain from offering any guidance on the content, characters, or scene construction. Additionally, interactions with the subject were kept formal and minimal to avoid any potential influence on the digital story's content. This approach was adopted to ensure that the study results were not influenced by any external factors.

-Writing voice: In the first part of the story, she used her favorite song from her homeland as background music, while in the other two parts she used her favorite Greek song. Whenever there was a dialogue, she recorded her own voice, slightly

altering it to differentiate between different characters. Although all exchanges and inner thoughts were written in Greek, she "voiced" them in Spanish, except for her final message to her classmates.



Figure 1: The story's architecture



Figures 2-3: 1st scene of the digital story (red circle: the character representing the subject)



Figures 4-5: 2nd scene of the digital story



Figures 6-7: 3rd scene of the digital story

Analysis of the Digital Story

By analyzing the digital story of the subject, some interesting observations can be made. She was insistent on using actual photos of her house, her room, and the countryside of her homeland as the background in all the scenes. She even took pictures of the schoolyard and the classroom which she later used in the story. Her intention was to provide a comprehensive and accurate illustration of her life, especially with regard to her birthplace.

It is noteworthy that the story presented was bilingual in nature. While the texts were in Greek, the narration was in Spanish, except for the last scene. There could be multiple reasons behind this, including difficulties in language, a willingness to learn, fear, or difficulties in communicating ideas. However, the impact of this bilingualism was evident, as the other students had the opportunity to hear the student speaking in her language, while also being able to understand what she was saying. In addition, the music that accompanied the story was also interesting. The first part of the story was accompanied by a popular song in Spanish, while the second and third parts used a popular Greek song, demonstrating the transition from one country to another. This had an impact on the students as well, as they had the chance to listen to folk music from the student's homeland. When combined with the photos, language, and music, students were able to gain a better understanding of the student's culture.

The structure of the story is noteworthy, as it is divided into three parts that are not equally distributed. More than half of the scenes are focused on the protagonist's discussions with family and friends before leaving, in which she expresses fear, anxiety, and reluctance to leave (refer to Figures 2-3). The arrival at Rhodes is portrayed in only two scenes (refer to Figures 4-5), and the first few months in a foreign country are entirely omitted. The protagonist moves directly to the problems she faces at school in the following section (refer to Figures 6-7), which only has two scenes. However, her isolation and loneliness are strongly conveyed, as she sits alone while other students play in the schoolyard, thinking, "I want to talk with someone, but I can't." The uneven distribution of scenes indicates the protagonist's strong ethnic identity. Furthermore, while the first part is full of dialogues, the third part

only contains the protagonist's thoughts, with no one interacting with her. This contrast highlights the lack of communication and interaction in her life.

The last scene of the subject's story is the most powerful. In this scene, she sends a message to her classmates (see Figure 8) that reads: "I feel frightened and worried. I'm having trouble learning your language, so I can't talk with you. Help me. I'm not different from you. You could be in my place." The message has a strongly personal tone, as she addresses each and every student individually, using the singular form of "you" in Greek (which is different from the plural form). Additionally, it's worth noting that all the children are holding hands except for her.

Final comment

To recapitulate, *DST LMOOC* offers a fresh approach to foreign language instruction, introducing an innovative method for higher education. The online interactive platform *Let's Speak Greek* focuses on improving Greek speaking abilities among adult learners, aiming to enhance confidence, accuracy, and proficiency. *Storybird* combines creative writing, digital storytelling, and visual arts to enrich language education, encouraging creativity through ICT. *Micreate Digital Storytelling Application* emphasizes language learning and creativity for migrant children, with a strong emphasis on inclusion. *Fokides* (2016) investigates the role of digital narratives in aiding immigrant students to adapt, promoting integration and positively impacting peer relationships.

These practices hold significant importance for both adults and children as they offer innovative methods to enhance language learning, foster creativity, and promote inclusion. For adults, such as foreign-language learners studying in higher education or informal education classes, these approaches provide effective tools to improve language proficiency, confidence, and accuracy. Meanwhile, for children, particularly migrant or culturally diverse groups, these practices help them overcome adaptation challenges, facilitate integration, and develop vital communication skills. Furthermore, digital storytelling tools are learner-centered because they accommodate learners' skills, capacities, experiences and interests and they seem an engaging way for students to express their emotions and thoughts. Overall, these practices contribute

to creating inclusive learning environments that cater to the diverse needs of learners across different age groups, ultimately promoting lifelong language learning and fostering a sense of belonging and empowerment within their respective communities.

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Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A3: Overview on existing good practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling for Serbia

Sanja Kovačević, Jelena Nastić Stojanović

WEBIN, Belgrade, Serbia



Date:

10.04.2024

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



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SECTION 1: The importance of digital storytelling in language teaching and learning contexts

In the context of education, digital storytelling refers to the use of digital tools, i.e. a variety of multimedia, including graphics, audio, video, and platforms to create, share, and present narratives or stories. It involves the combination of various multimedia elements (text, images, audio, video, and animations) in order to convey a message or communicate information effectively. Digital storytelling in education often entails students actively engaging in the process of crafting their own stories or narratives using digital technologies, which enhances learning experiences and facilitates the development of language, communication, creativity, critical thinking, and digital literacy skills.

In the Serbian educational context, digital storytelling is becoming increasingly prominent as more and more educators recognise its potential to enhance learning outcomes and engage students in an effective manner. One of the key benefits of digital storytelling in Serbian education is its ability to cater to diverse learning styles and preferences. With the rise of digital technologies, students are accustomed to consuming information through multimedia platforms. By incorporating digital storytelling into the curriculum, educators steadily but surely come to realise the possibilities of capitalising on students' familiarity with digital media to create engaging and interactive learning experiences.

One of the primary advantages of digital storytelling is its ability to engage students constructively, enhance students' language proficiency but also to foster creativity, critical thinking, and digital literacy skills. In Serbia, where traditional teaching methods might sometimes struggle to captivate students' attention, digital storytelling is shyly but increasingly so resorted to as a dynamic and interactive approach. Through multimedia elements such as videos, images, audio clips, and animations, students are immersed in authentic language contexts, making learning more meaningful and enjoyable.

As digital storytelling facilitates personalised and collaborative learning experiences, and enables students to express themselves creatively and authentically in the target language, whether it be Serbian or any foreign language in that regard, students have the opportunity to create their own digital stories, which allows them to express their ideas, experiences, and emotions in the target language. Through the process

of planning, scripting, and producing digital stories, students develop language proficiency as they construct narratives, select appropriate vocabulary, and practice language structures in context. This process not only develops their language skills but also encourages autonomy and self-expression. Collaborative storytelling projects also promote teamwork and communication skills, as students work together to plan, create, and present their stories. Group projects involving digital storytelling encourage students to work together, share ideas, and negotiate meaning, fostering interpersonal skills and promoting a sense of community in the classroom.

In the Serbian education system, digital storytelling offers a unique opportunity to integrate language learning with cultural understanding. Students coming from different meridians can explore Serbian culture, history, and traditions through digital stories, providing them with a deeper appreciation and insight into the language they are learning. Thus, digital storytelling offers opportunities for cross-curricular integration, allowing educators to incorporate elements of Serbian culture, history, and literature into language learning activities. Students can explore Serbian folklore, historical events, or literary works through digital storytelling projects, deepening their understanding of the language and culture.

Last but not least, digital storytelling aligns with the demands of the digital age, equipping students with essential 21st-century skills. As technology continues to shape our world, proficiency in digital literacy is increasingly important. By creating and sharing digital stories, students learn how to navigate digital tools and platforms effectively, preparing them for future academic and professional endeavours.

Although digital storytelling may not yet occupy the place it perhaps should in the domain of language teaching in Serbian education, the interest in this approach to teaching is indubitably steadily increasing. In the future, we can expect more educators to turn to digital technologies in a creative, and even artistic manner, to co-construct knowledge with students, transforming the learning and teaching process into a unique experience that enriches both the teacher and the learner.

SECTION 2: Presentation of examples for existing practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling in Serbia

When it comes to examples of good practice related to the use of digital storytelling for language teaching purposes in Serbia, one should unfortunately state that there aren't too many prominent examples, or not as many as one would wish to encounter, especially in the domain of formal education. Although the educational system has already become deeply immersed in the process of digitalisation, hybrid teaching methods, and widespread use of digital technology, the focus is still predominantly placed on using technology for presenting educational content rather than its creative production. Below are some examples of using digital technology (storytelling) for teaching purposes (language). Some of the examples are directly related to language teaching, while others represent excellent examples of progress in the right direction concerning the concept of digital storytelling and its potential use in the educational process. The provided examples can serve as inspiration and motivation for further significant steps towards imaginative and innovative use of digital technologies in the language teaching process, as well as education in general. Likewise, they can also provide ideas and possible solutions with regards to the planned E-Stories outcomes.

The presented examples cover a wide range of uses of digital technology in the educational process, from handbooks suggesting potentially creative and resourceful solutions in the domain of language teaching, over podcasts and robots/AI as assistants in foreign language teaching, through digital stories created by preservice teachers, to teaching digital storytelling and creating digital content in the form of engaging narratives primarily intended for educational purposes.

By creatively combining the presented examples or wisely merging media and content inspired by the offered instances, it's possible to take a step further in presenting potential ideas and solutions for successful language learning and teaching among the digital natives of today.

Presentation of best practice 1: A Handbook: Project Tasks and New Technologies in Teaching and Learning Languages and other Educational Content: from Theory to Practice 1

The presented example of good practice was produced as a result of another Erasmus + project called *Pan European Task-based Activities for Language Learning: PETALL*. Namely, this is a handbook containing a series of practically tested project activities designed for language learning, based on the so-called task-based approach, which are implemented with the help of modern information technologies. The handbook is intended for and it is at the disposal of all those who teach a language, and it comprises a series of thoroughly presented tasks/projects which can be replicated by language teachers in their classrooms. In addition to giving teachers the freedom to use assignments as given, modify them to suit their needs, and, most importantly, utilise them as a model for improving their own practice, the benefit of such an offer is the abundance of ideas and incentives for a more creative work and even more daring and imaginative teaching and learning solutions.

What makes this example of good practice relevant for the topic of digital storytelling in the field of language learning are the inevitable parallels and similarities which are visible in the two approaches, i.e. task-based approach to language learning (TBLL) and digital storytelling. Namely, both TBLL and digital storytelling prioritise communication as a central component of language learning. In TBLL, learners engage in meaningful tasks that require communication in the target language. Similarly, in digital storytelling, students create narratives using language to convey a message or story, emphasising communication skills. Likewise, both approaches aim to provide learners with authentic language contexts. In TBLL, tasks often simulate real-life situations where language use is necessary. Similarly, digital storytelling allows learners to create stories that reflect their own experiences or interests, providing an authentic context for language use. Furthermore, both TBLL and digital storytelling adopt a student-centred approach to learning. In TBLL, learners take an active role in completing tasks, guiding their own learning process. Similarly, in digital storytelling, students are actively involved in creating their own narratives, fostering autonomy and creativity. Also, both approaches integrate multiple language skills. In

¹ <https://www.its.edu.rs/2024/03/06/primena-robota-kao-asistenta-u-nastavi-stranog-jezika/>

TBLL, tasks typically involve the integration of reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. Digital storytelling also requires learners to utilise various language skills, such as writing the script, recording narration, selecting images or videos, and editing the final product. Furthermore, both TBLL and digital storytelling promote cultural awareness and understanding. Through tasks in TBLL, learners may explore cultural aspects embedded in the language context. Similarly, digital storytelling allows students to incorporate cultural elements into their narratives, enhancing cultural competency. Last but certainly not least, while not inherent to TBLL, digital storytelling inherently involves the use of digital technology. Both approaches leverage technology to enhance language learning experiences, whether through online resources, multimedia tools, or digital platforms. What can be observed as a binding link within this particular example of good practice that connects these two approaches is project-based learning, whereby students actively and jointly explore real-world problems and challenges, leading to deeper understanding of concepts and developing skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication. These projects are often interdisciplinary, integrating multiple subject areas, and culminate in a tangible product or presentation that demonstrates students' learning.



Figure 1. The Handbook *Project Tasks and New Technologies in Teaching and Learning Languages and other Educational Content: from Theory to Practice*

Presentation of best practice 2: Using a Podcast to Learn English:

Serbonika2

In recent years, podcasts have become an increasingly popular form of communication with increasingly wide audience. A podcast can be defined as a digital audio or video programme available for streaming or download over the internet. Typically episodic in nature, podcasts cover a wide range of topics and genres, including education, storytelling, and more. Listeners can subscribe to podcasts through various platforms and apps, which allows them to access new episodes automatically as they are released. Podcasts offer a convenient and flexible way for audiences to consume content on-demand, whether they're at home, commuting, or engaged in other activities. In that regard, the second example of best practice is none other than a podcast.

The podcast at hand is called *Serbonika* and it is dedicated to all those who wish to learn Serbian. This podcast is one of the few dedicated to foreigners who wish to start speaking Serbian, as this form of language learning still appears to be hugely underestimated in the Serbian context. However, this particular podcast seems to be professionally designed, well thought through and fun. It appears to be a good combination of digital experience and well devised content which covers various language aspects, but also goes beyond to place emphasis on communication, individual learning styles, and the cultural dimension of language learning. The *Serbonika* podcast can also serve as additional and supplementary content for language learning, and one of the options is a summer language school that comprehensively combines language learning with life experiences such as tourism and gastronomy, games and music, culture, art, and history lessons.

The presented example of good practice showcases the effectiveness of podcasts as a tool for enhancing language learning outcomes, so much so that podcasts as a form should be considered within the project scope as one of the forms to tackle in the process of designing the planned project outcomes. Namely, podcasts are evidently an engaging and accessible medium for language learners. In this instance, the *Serbonika* podcast allows learners to listen to authentic spoken Serbian in various contexts, improving their listening comprehension skills and familiarity with

² <https://serbonika.com/blog/learning-serbian-advice/serbian-language-podcast/>

the language's rhythm, intonation, and pronunciation. Since the podcast is designed for foreign learners of Serbian, it can offer insights into Serbian culture, customs, traditions, and daily life. By incorporating cultural elements into the podcast episodes, learners not only improve their language skills but also gain a deeper understanding of Serbian society and heritage. Digital storytelling is about conveying narratives or stories through digital media. In that regard, a podcast can effectively tell stories, anecdotes, or dialogues that illustrate language usage in real-life situations. By presenting language in a context, learners can better understand and retain vocabulary, grammar, and language structures. Furthermore, within the *Serbonika* podcast learners appear to have opportunities to interact through drama, theatre, and music workshops, offline and online clubs and discussions, and participatory activities such as coffee with teachers. This interactive element enhances engagement and reinforces learning, aligning with the principles of digital storytelling in language education. Consequently, the afore-mentioned activities create a sense of community among language learners. Thus, learners can connect with each other, share experiences, and support one another's language learning journey.

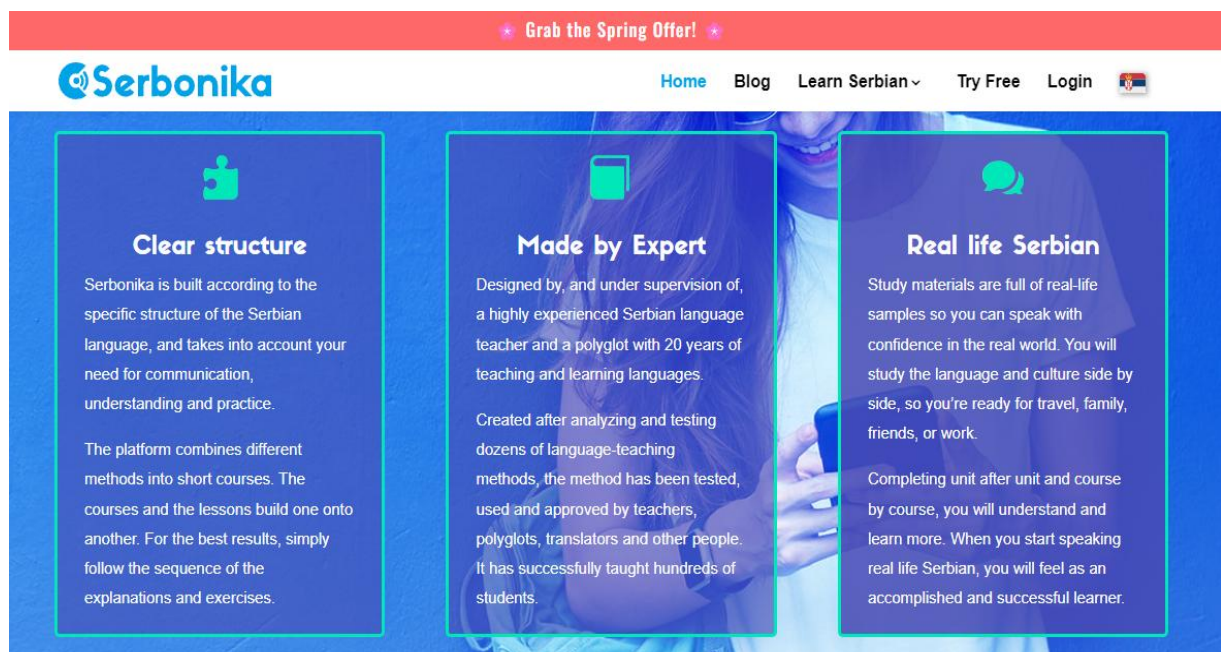


Figure 2. The Serbonika Podcast

Presentation of best practice 3: The Application of Robots as Assistants in Foreign Language Teaching³

The use of robots as assistants in foreign language teaching or language teaching in general represents an innovative and promising approach to language education. The capabilities of robots have continued to amaze us since their conception. The unstoppable progress of digital technology affects all spheres of life, and therefore education as well. In order to keep pace with the times, as well as the needs of the new generation of children whom Marc Prensky⁴ calls digital natives, schools must inevitably find a way to creatively and effectively integrate technology into the educational process. Although robots are not significantly represented as a means of teaching, especially not in Serbia, the rise of artificial intelligence in various forms and shapes prompts reflection and urges all those involved in education to imagine the everyday educational process with the new wonders of technology.

This idea and/or method is promoted by the Information Technology School in Belgrade by introducing the ever intriguing but also a somewhat intimidating question: *Will robots replace teachers in the future, or is it perhaps time to accept them as our assistants and give them a chance to help us in teaching?* In this case, one refers to a robot who serves as an assistant in foreign language teaching under the convenient name of RALL (Robot Assisted Language Learning).

And how can RALL assist one in the process of language teaching? RALL applies the communicative method in language learning and practices repetition of certain words and phrases until they become common to language learners. Furthermore, RALL has a humanoid form and appearance, which can motivate students and reduce anxiety. A form of artificial intelligence, this robot effectively communicates with the students and uses gestures and moves which create the impression of a presence of a real person.

How is this example of good practice relevant when it comes to digital storytelling in the process of language learning?

Namely, the use of a robot as a teaching assistant represents an innovative integration of technology in language education. By incorporating cutting-edge tools

³ <https://www.its.edu.rs/2024/03/06/primena-robota-kao-asistenta-u-nastavi-stranog-jezika/>

⁴ Prensky, M. (2001). Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. On the Horizon, Volume 9, Issue 6. MCB University Press, 2001

like robots/artificial intelligence, educators can create engaging and interactive learning experiences for students, enhancing their motivation and participation in language learning. Likewise, robots can engage students in interactive language practice sessions, providing them with opportunities to converse in the target language. This hands-on approach to language learning promotes fluency and confidence in speaking, as students interact with the robot in real-time conversations. Furthermore, robots can be programmed to provide personalised feedback and assistance to individual students based on their learning needs and preferences. This tailored approach to instruction ensures that each student receives the support they require to improve their language skills effectively. Robots can also be used to facilitate storytelling and role-playing activities in the language classroom. Students can interact with the robot to create and act out narratives, enhancing their language proficiency while developing their creativity and communication skills. Last but not least, robots could simulate interactions with native speakers or guide students through virtual tours of cultural landmarks, providing them with immersive language experiences.

Overall, a robot as a teaching assistant exemplifies the innovative and dynamic ways in which digital storytelling can be applied in language learning contexts allowing educators to create rich and engaging learning environments that foster language acquisition and cultural understanding.

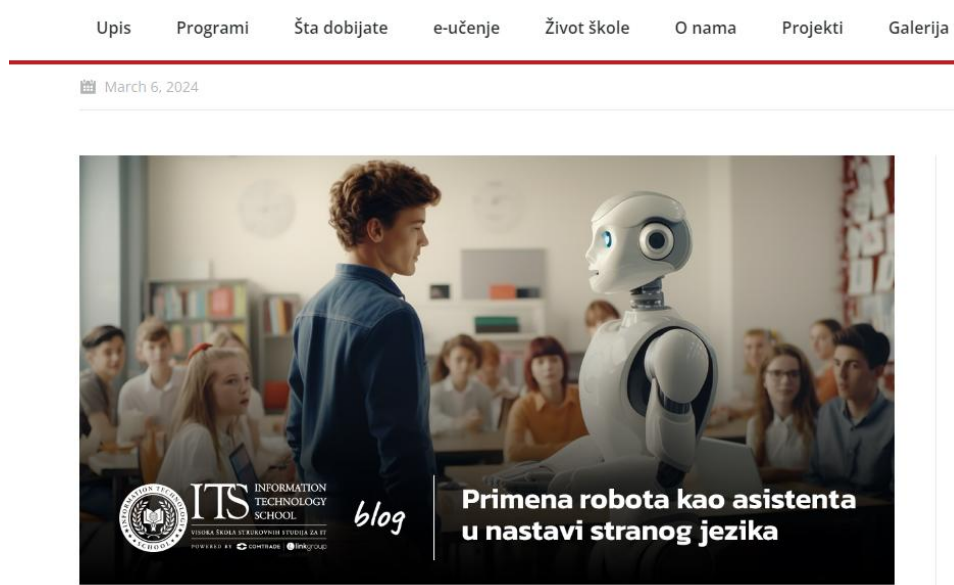


Figure 3. A Robot Assistant

Presentation of best practice 4: Digital Storytelling as a Course

Various higher education institutions in Serbia within their study programmes, recognise the importance of digital technologies in the modern world, particularly acknowledging the significance of storytelling as an engaging and creative way to present ideas, concepts and notions. The combination of these two mediums, however, results in a powerful means of content delivery, especially in the realm of education.

This particular example of good practice can be located at the Faculty of Economics, Finance and Administration (FEFA), Metropolitan University in Belgrade. Namely, within the scope of the study programme Audio-visual production one can encounter courses such as Digital Storytelling I and II. The goal of the course is to introduce contemporary forms of narrative communication, specific to new media and digital art, so that future creative producers are trained to act in the environment of their own time. Likewise, the aim of the courses is for the students to master the practical skills of using different forms of digital storytelling in new media, as well as the collective and individual ability to communicate with formats that were born or are being born every day in the "reality" of new media.

The ultimate goal is that upon completion of the course, students become producers with expressive skills in a digital environment, able to use personal experience in creating and using numerous forms and different narratives used in digital storytelling, i.e. to become independent storytellers through the use of digital media.

In what way can this example of good practice be relevant for the eStories project scope?

In order to be able to resort to digital storytelling, all those interested in using this medium for the purposes of language teaching/learning should first be provided with the opportunity to learn more about it. Even though the course is part of the Audio-visual production study programme, its content and methodology can still be highly relevant and applicable to language learning contexts. Digital storytelling techniques, such as narrative construction, multimedia integration, and creative expression, are valuable for language learners regardless of their specific field of study. The skills and competencies acquired through the Digital Storytelling course, such as digital media literacy, storytelling techniques, and multimedia production, are transferable and beneficial for language learners. These skills can enhance students' ability to

communicate effectively, express themselves creatively, and engage with language in meaningful ways. The course's interdisciplinary nature, combining elements of visual communication, storytelling, and technology, aligns well with the principles of language learning that often emphasise integration across multiple skills and domains. It highlights the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives and methodologies into language education. Likewise, the Digital Storytelling course may showcase innovative pedagogical approaches and instructional methods that can inspire language educators to integrate similar practices into their teaching. It demonstrates how digital technologies can be leveraged to create immersive and engaging learning experiences for students. Last but not least, while the course may be tailored specifically for students in the Audio-visual production programme, it can still serve as a valuable case study for adaptation in language learning contexts. Educators can explore how the principles and techniques introduced in the course can be modified and applied to language teaching and learning scenarios.

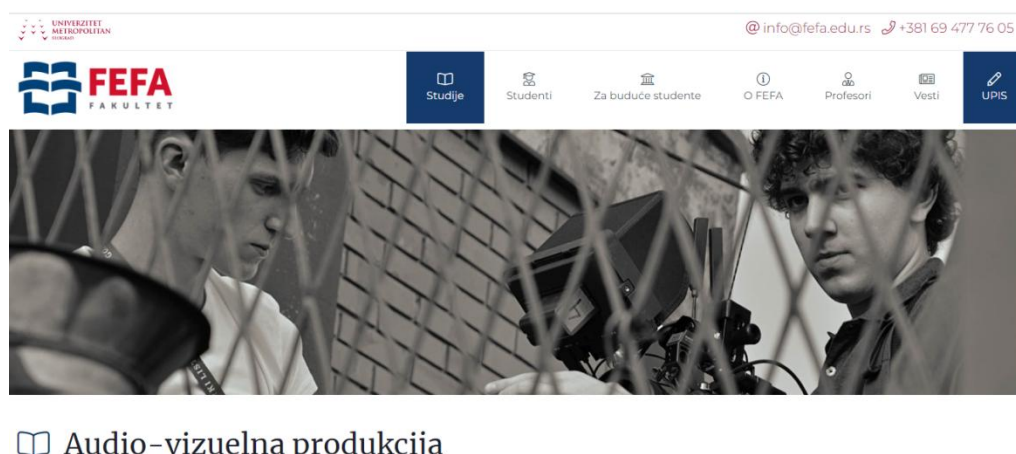


Figure 4. Digital Storytelling

Presentation of best practice 5: Faeries of Serbia – a digital story⁵

The U.S. State Department's *English Language Fellow Programme* encourages global English language proficiency as well as international diplomacy. This ten-month programme places highly skilled teachers in different parts of the world to work as full-time English language instructors for professionals and college students. This particular example of good practice presents the story of Beth Wendt, an American

⁵ https://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu/view_story.cfm?vid=477 &otherid=all&d_title=View%20All%20Digital%20Stories

who has had the experience of teaching English around the world. In 2019 she was awarded the Fellowship and came to Serbia, to the city of Kragujevac. She taught English to college students at the University of Kragujevac, predominantly preservice teachers, who had the opportunity to encounter the concept of digital storytelling in the pre-COVID era, at a time when the idea of digital storytelling was not yet receiving particular attention in Serbia. Namely, one of the projects that professor Beth Wendt had the opportunity to implement with students was called *What do you want the world to know about Serbia*, and the final outcome was the digital story called *Faeries of Serbia*. This cooperation was a perfect example of how language teachers and students can cooperate in the process of language learning, thus creating something which is to remain a lasting reminder of a shared learning experience, not only when it comes to language but also culture, customs, and traditions of one nation. The digital story was placed on the website of the University of Houston Digital Storytelling programme.

How can this example of good practice be relevant for the purposes of this particular project?

First and foremost, there are good prospects for sustainability regarding the implementation of this example of good practice in the broader context of language teaching at higher education institutions in Serbia. Namely, the digital story created during the afore-mentioned project can continue to be used as a valuable resource for language learning and cultural understanding in higher education settings. Once created, digital stories can be shared, reused, and adapted for future use by educators and students. Likewise, the collaboration between the American English teacher and preservice teachers demonstrates the effective integration of digital storytelling into language learning pedagogy. This example showcases how technology can be utilised to engage learners, promote language skills, and explore cultural topics.

The project involving the creation of a digital story about Serbian heritage fosters cross-cultural exchange and understanding, and it serves as a testament to the collaboration between educators from different cultural backgrounds, promoting mutual respect and appreciation. Last but not least, the success of this project can inspire future initiatives and collaborations in higher education settings in Serbia. It sets a precedent for innovative approaches to language teaching and learning,

encouraging educators to explore the potential of digital storytelling in their own contexts.



Figure 5. Faeries of Serbia

Final comment

This report aimed to present potential examples of good practice covering a wide range of forms and formats regarding the use of digital technology in the teaching process, within the context of either formal or non-formal education in Serbia. As previously mentioned, it is still rather challenging to come across genuine and prominent examples of digital storytelling usage in language teaching within the Serbian education system. However, here and there, one can encounter initiatives launched by enthusiastic individuals or educational institutions that have recognised the importance of digital technologies for modern and quality education. The offered examples of good practice demonstrate potential forms and approaches regarding the use of various digital media for language teaching purposes, through innovative and imaginative utilisation of interesting and useful content. These examples can also serve as a motivation and inspiration for initiatives and endeavours awaiting the consortium within the E-Stories project.



E-Stories
*Digital Storytelling in Supporting
Immigrant University Students'
Language and Technology Use Skills*



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E-Stories

Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2-A3: Overview on existing good practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling for Türkiye

Teslime GÖKGÖL

Konya Technical University, Konya, Türkiye



Date:

05.04.2024

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



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SECTION 1: The importance of digital storytelling in language teaching and learning contexts

Digital storytelling is a way of teaching/learning that excels as an influential tool in terms of education and contributes to students' improvement across four basic language skills: speaking, reading, writing, and listening (Grigsby et al., 2015; Kallinikou & Nicolaidou, 2019; Munajah et al., 2022; Nair & Yunus, 2021; Radaideh et al., 2020). Digital storytelling which integrates audio, image and text together, stimulates creativity and critical thinking also enhances motivation of learners (Kallinikou & Nicolaidou, 2019; Yuliani & Hartanto, 2021).

Furthermore, because of its nature of personalizing and enriching the learning activity, digital storytelling is so effective in language learning (Sabari & Hashim, 2023). It is a combination of traditional storytelling and modern technology that offers a free platform to students to express themselves and communicate effectively (Munajah et al., 2022; Adara et al., 2022). Also, it contributes to competencies such as creativity and problem solving. Through all these features, it increases learners' motivation (Adara et al., 2022).

The benefits of digital storytelling extend beyond language skills development. It paves the way for deeper learning, calls forth creativity and supports interdisciplinary learning experiences (Jantakoon et al., 2019; Azliza et al., 2019). It promotes collaboration, reflection, and cultural appreciation among students (Sabari & Hashim, 2023).

In short, digital storytelling revolutionizes traditional ways of language learning/teaching and makes the courses more engaging, interactive, and effective.

SECTION 2: Presentation of examples for existing practices in teaching a foreign language through digital storytelling in Türkiye

When the literature on digital storytelling is revised, it is possible to say that integration of digital storytelling into foreign language instruction is promising in terms of both teaching and learning foreign language in Türkiye. For effective language learning through digital storytelling, innovative methodologies can be employed by educators

in order to engage the attention of students and increase language acquisition. Many researches have shown that digital storytelling is significant in advancing four basic language skills (Tyrou, 2022). When digital components are added into language teaching, educators have the advantage of addressing diverse styles and preferences. Furthermore, digital storytelling fosters the cultivation of students' self-directed learning skills and facilitates personalized learning approaches (Cai, 2016). Within the domain of foreign language education, the presentation of practical instances of digital storytelling has been underscored as a strategy to enhance the educational value of language learning (Belda-Medina & Calvo-Ferrer, 2022).

Presentation of best practice 1: Using digital storytelling in foreign language speaking education/ <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/302129>

The aim of this study is using digital storytelling in foreign language education focusing on speaking skill. For this purpose, a study group consisting of 41 students who were attending the preparatory class at the Foreign Languages School of Karadeniz Technical University during the spring semester of 2014-2015 was created. During a 7-week study period, the students were provided with training on preparing digital stories, after which they created their own digital stories. As a result of the study, it was observed that the use of digital stories had a positive impact on the retention of lessons and provided an easier and more comfortable means of expression for students who did not enjoy presenting in class. Additionally, the use of digital stories in speaking class was found to be enjoyable and motivating by the students.

Apps/Software used: Photo Story



Presentation of best practice 2: On the Usability of Digital Stories in Writing Skills in Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language: A Theoretical Study-
<https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/2697674>

The aim of this study is to demonstrate the usability of digital stories in enhancing writing skills in Turkish language instruction as a foreign language. Within the scope of the study's objectives, theoretical information obtained through literature review under the headings of "Digital Story," "Digital Storytelling in Education," "Digital Story and Writing Skills in Turkish Language Instruction as a Foreign Language," and "Usage of Digital Storytelling and Sample Activities in Turkish Language Instruction as a Foreign Language" has been provided, and example activities have been structured based on the themes in the Gazi B1-B2 textbook. For this purpose, after defining the elements and steps of digital storytelling, the software is introduced, story writing education is given step by step, then sample activities are shared.

Apps/Software used: Web 2.0 software, mobile apps, software, image editing software, audio apps.



Presentation of best practice 3: Using Digital Story in Teaching Turkish as a Foreign Language-
<https://tez.yok.gov.tr/UlusalTezMerkezi/tezSorguSonucYeni.jsp>

This thesis aims to support students in constructing and enhancing background knowledge related to the text, thereby enabling them to solve a problem encountered during the reading process using digital stories in pre-reading activities in teaching Turkish as a foreign language. The research was designed and conducted as action research adopting a pragmatic paradigm. The action process of the research lasted for 14 weeks with 19 participants at the A2-B1 proficiency level, during which 8 digital stories created by the researcher were utilized. Documents, observations, interviews, audio recordings, and research journals were employed as data collection tools in the

research. Data obtained from different sources were examined and interpreted using inductive and deductive analyses. As a result of the research, it was observed that digital stories provided students with a perspective on the text and prior knowledge. It was also found that digital stories attracted students' interest and attention to the text, created a rich learning environment, and facilitated recall. The use of digital stories as material in pre-reading activities was determined to provide students with both cognitive and affective advantages for the construction of background knowledge.

Apps/Software used: Photo Story, Animoto, Movie Maker, Kahoot



Presentation of best practice 4: Transfer of Cultural Elements Through Digital Storytelling in Teaching Turkish to Foreigners-
<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/2265012>

The aim of this study is to investigate the transfer of cultural elements through digital storytelling in teaching Turkish to Foreigners. For this purpose, document analysis method is used and some texts selected from the Yunus Emre Institute Yedi İklim Turkish A2, B1 and B2 textbooks were converted into digital story texts with *Power Point*, *Storyjumper*, *Animoto*, *Canva*, *Powtoon* applications, and how to transfer culture in this way was emphasized.

Apps/Software used: Power Point, Storyjumper, Animoto, Canva, Powtoon



**Presentation of best practice 5: An Action Research for the Value Education
Provided with Digital Storytelling- <https://dergipark.org.tr/tr/download/article-file/802449>**

The aim of the study is to determine the students' deficiencies in the values education and to determine whether digital storytelling is effective for values education. The study was designed with action research. An action plan was prepared for this study and applications were made according to this prepared action plan. Tolerance, honesty, and responsibility values were investigated in the study. It is provided that students prepare digital stories about values. The sample of the study is 14 students attending 6th grade in a secondary school in Sivas. Data were collected by observation, interview, researcher notes, and a questionnaire. Content analysis was performed for the qualitative data collected before, during and after the application. According to the findings, it was revealed that the students had a positive effect on the values and behaviors due to the preparation of digital stories.

Apps/Software used: Toondo, Windows Photo Story 3



Final comment

When teachers combine traditional teaching methods and storytelling techniques, they can create a more interactive and exciting platform for students. This provides permanent learning and makes the learning a language process much more fun. Shortly, it can be said that digital storytelling in Türkiye can revolutionize teaching languages.

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APPENDIX 4- Diagnostic Writing Task

Week 1 & Week 8: Diagnostic Writing Task

Student's Name/Surname: _____

Student's

Grade: ____/32

Theme : “Telling a story”

Duration : 20-30 minutes

Explanation :

- You are required to choose one of the themes below and write a story describing
- your experiences and feelings on the day of an exam. The story should cover the period from the morning of the exam day until the end of the exam and also describe how you felt afterward, assess how the exam went, and share your thoughts about future exams.
- your summer holiday, starting from the first day. Describe where you went, who you were with, and the activities you did. Highlight memorable moments and share how you felt throughout the holiday.
- your first day at university, starting from when you woke up. Reflect on your feelings—whether nervous, excited, or both. Describe arriving on campus, meeting people, and navigating the new environment. Include key events like your first lecture or meeting a professor. Share any challenges and how you handled them. Discuss your emotions by the end of the day and conclude by reflecting on the overall experience and thoughts about your university journey ahead.

Writing Guidelines:

- Length: 180-300 words
- Language: Clearly and fluently express your emotions and experiences. Ensure you are using rich vocabulary and a variety of grammatical structures.
- Ensure your story is written in a clear and logical sequence, including an introduction, at least one development paragraph, and a conclusion.

APPENDIX 5- Story Writing Assessment Rubric

Week 1 & Week 3: Story Writing Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Excellent (4 points)	Good (3 points)	Fair (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
1. Structure and Organization	The narrative has a clear and engaging beginning, middle, and end. Transitions are smooth and enhance the story's flow.	The narrative has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Transitions are mostly smooth.	The narrative has a beginning, middle, and end, but transitions may be awkward or unclear.	The narrative lacks a clear structure. Transitions are disjointed or missing.
2. Content and Development	The narrative is rich in detail and fully develops characters, settings, and plot. The story is engaging and imaginative.	The narrative provides adequate detail and develops characters, settings, and plot. The story is interesting.	The narrative includes some detail but may lack depth in character, setting, or plot development.	The narrative is underdeveloped with minimal detail. Characters, settings, and plot are poorly developed.
3. Characterization	Characters are well-developed with clear motivations and distinct personalities. Their actions are believable and contribute to the story.	Characters are adequately developed with clear motivations. Their actions mostly contribute to the story.	Characters are somewhat developed, but motivations and actions may be unclear or inconsistent.	Characters are poorly developed with unclear motivations. Their actions are not well integrated into the story.
4. Setting and Description	The setting is vividly described and enhances the story. Descriptions are detailed and create a strong sense of place.	The setting is described well and supports the story. Descriptions are generally effective.	The setting is described but may lack detail or fail to fully support the story.	The setting is poorly described or not integrated into the story. Descriptions are minimal or ineffective.
5. Language and Style	Language is expressive and varied. Style enhances the narrative, with	Language is clear and mostly varied. Style is appropriate and	Language is somewhat clear but may be repetitive. Style may be	Language is unclear or repetitive. Style is inappropriate or hinders the

	appropriate use of figurative language and tone.	supports the narrative.	inconsistent or somewhat detract from the narrative.	narrative.
6. Vocabulary Use	Vocabulary is rich, varied, and enhances the narrative. Word choice is precise and adds to the story's mood and tone.	Vocabulary is appropriate and varied. Word choice is generally effective and supports the narrative.	Vocabulary is somewhat appropriate but may be limited or repetitive. Word choice may sometimes detract from the narrative.	Vocabulary is limited and repetitive. Word choice is often inappropriate or hinders the narrative.
7. Grammar	Usage: Accurate use of tense, subject-verb agreement, and sentence structure. Sentence Variety: Uses a variety of sentence structures effectively.	Usage: Minor errors in tense, subject-verb agreement, or sentence structure. Sentence Variety: Generally uses varied sentence structures.	Usage: Several errors in tense, subject-verb agreement, or sentence structure. Sentence Variety: Limited use of sentence structures.	Usage: Frequent errors in tense, subject-verb agreement, or sentence structure. Sentence Variety: Repetitive or incorrect use of sentence structures.
8. Mechanics	Writing is virtually free of errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.	Writing has few errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation that do not impede understanding.	Writing has several errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation that occasionally impede understanding.	Writing has frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation that significantly impede understanding.

Scoring:

Excellent (4 points): 25- 32

Good (3 points): 17 - 24

Fair (2 points): 9 - 16

Needs Improvement (1 point): 1- 8

APPENDIX 6- Self-Assessment Survey

Week 1 & Week 8: Self-Assessment Survey

Dear Students,

This form is designed to help you self-assess your current skills in the host language (where you study), story writing and telling in the host language, and technology use. Your responses will serve as a baseline for comparison after the implementation of certain educational interventions. Please mark your degree of agreement (X) against each item. Thank you for your contributions.

No	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	I am confident in my overall language skills.					
2	I find it easy to write coherent texts in my language.					
3	I am comfortable speaking in my language in various contexts.					
4	I enjoy and feel proficient in writing stories.					
5	I am confident in my ability to understand spoken language.					
6	I enjoy reading texts and find it easy to comprehend them.					
7	I can effectively communicate ideas through storytelling.					
8	I have a good understanding of the key elements of storytelling.					
9	I can easily use technology to enhance my language learning.					
10	I am skilled at using digital tools for writing and storytelling.					
11	I am proficient in conducting research using digital tools.					
12	I can create and edit digital content (e.g., text, audio, video).					
13	I can integrate and synthesize information from digital sources.					
14	I am confident in my ability to create digital stories.					
15	I believe I am effective at using digital tools for communication.					
16	I think that using digital tools improves my language skills.					
17	I feel anxious about using technology for language tasks.					
18	I struggle with using digital tools for storytelling.					
19	I am confident in my ability to share and present digital content.					
20	I can easily create and share digital stories in different formats.					



APPENDIX 7- Pre-Course Survey on Students' Experiences and Expectations

Week 1: Pre-Course Survey on Students' Experiences and Expectations

1. What experience have you had with digital storytelling so far?

2. What are your expectations of this course?

3. What specific skills or topics are you most interested in learning about in this course?

4. What are your expectations of digital storytelling using an online tool?

5. What do you see as the biggest benefit of using digital storytelling in your personal or professional life?

APPENDIX 8- Session Feedback Form

Week 2 & Week 5: Session Feedback Form

Session Title: _____

Date: _____

1. Content Delivery

a) How clear and well-organized was the session content?

- ☐ Clear and Organized
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Confusing

b) How effective was the instructor in explaining the concepts?

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Ineffective

c) Were the materials (slides, handouts, etc.) helpful in understanding the content?

- ☐ Helpful
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not Very Helpful

2. Engagement

a) How engaging was the session?

- ☐ Engaging
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Disengaging

b) Did you feel encouraged to participate in discussions or activities?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

c) How well did the session hold your attention?

- ☐ Well
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Not Very Well

3. Perceived Learning Outcomes

a) How much do you feel you learned from this session?

- ☐ A Good Amount
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ A Little

b) Were the learning objectives of the session met?

- ☐ Fully Met



- ☐ Mostly Met
- ☐ Partially Met
- ☐ Not Met at All

c) How confident do you feel in applying what you learned in this session?

- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Confident

4. General Feedback

a) What did you like most about this session?

b) What could be improved in future sessions?

c) Any additional comments or suggestions?

APPENDIX 9- Peer Feedback and Evaluation Form 1

Week 3: Peer Feedback and Evaluation Form 1

Name of Reviewer: _____

Name of Author: _____

Title of Storyboard: _____

Date: _____

a) What are the strengths of this narrative?

b) What areas could be improved in the narrative?

c) Any additional comments or suggestions for the author?

APPENDIX 10- Peer Feedback and Evaluation Form 2

Week 4: Peer Feedback and Evaluation Form 2

Name of Reviewer: _____

Name of Author: _____

Title of Storyboard: _____

Date: _____

1. Visual Representation

a) How well does the storyboard visually represent the narrative's key elements?

- ☐ Well
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Needs Improvement

b) Are the images, sketches, or scenes clear and effectively convey the story?

- ☐ Clear
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Unclear

c) Does the visual style and design enhance the storytelling?

- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Disagree

2. Structure and Coherence

a) Is the sequence of scenes logically structured and easy to follow?

- ☐ Logical
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Confusing

b) How effective are the transitions between scenes or sections in the storyboard?

- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Needs Improvement

c) Does the storyboard clearly convey the narrative's pacing and timing?

- ☐ Clear
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Unclear

3. Creativity and Conceptualization

a) How original and creative is the visual interpretation of the narrative?

- ☐ Original
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Derivative

b) How well does the storyboard use visual elements (color, composition, etc.) to enhance the story?

- ☐ Well
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Needs Improvement

4. Overall Feedback

a) What are the strengths of this storyboard?

b) What areas could be improved in the storyboard?

c) Any additional comments or suggestions for the author?

APPENDIX 11- Teacher Review & Feedback Form

Week 6: Teacher Review & Feedback Form

Student Name: _____

Story Title: _____

Date: _____

1. Visual Elements

Effectiveness of Visuals:

Do the visuals support and enhance the narrative?

- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Needs Improvement

Visual Consistency:

Are the visual styles and transitions consistent throughout the story?

- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Needs Improvement

Suggestions for Improvement: [Provide specific feedback on visual elements]

2. Audio Elements

Clarity and Quality of Audio:

Is the audio clear, with balanced levels between narration, sound effects, and background music?

- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Needs Improvement

Audio-Visual Synchronization:

Do the audio elements (narration, music, sound effects) align well with the visuals?

- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Needs Improvement

Suggestions for Improvement: [Provide specific feedback on audio elements]

3. Narrative Elements

Narrative Structure:

Is the story structure clear and engaging?

- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Needs Improvement

Connection Between Story Elements:

Do the visuals, audio, and narrative flow together seamlessly?

- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Needs Improvement

Suggestions for Improvement: [Provide specific feedback on narrative structure]

4. Overall Impressions

Overall Story Impact:

How effective is the digital story in conveying its intended message or emotion?

- ☐ Good
- ☐ Fair
- ☐ Needs Improvement

Suggestions for Final Refinements: [Provide any additional feedback or final suggestions for refining the digital story]

Additional Comments: [Any other observations or notes]

APPENDIX 12- Digital Story Evaluation Rubric

Week 7: Digital Story Evaluation Rubric

Each criterion is rated on a scale from 1 to 4, with specific descriptors provided for each level

Criteria	4 - Excellent	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Needs Improvement
1. Language Accuracy	Virtually error-free; demonstrates mastery of language conventions, including grammar, spelling, and punctuation.	Few minor errors that do not distract from the story; good command of language conventions.	Several errors that occasionally distract from the story; adequate command of language conventions.	Frequent errors that distract from the story; limited command of language conventions.
2. Creativity	Highly original and imaginative; demonstrates exceptional creativity in concept and execution.	Original and imaginative; demonstrates strong creativity in concept and execution.	Somewhat original; demonstrates moderate creativity in concept and execution.	Lacks originality; demonstrates little creativity in concept and execution.
3. Narrative Structure	Well-organized, with a clear, engaging, and coherent storyline that effectively conveys the intended message.	Organized with a clear storyline; effectively conveys the intended message, though with minor lapses.	Some organization, but the storyline may be unclear or not fully engaging; the message is somewhat vague.	Poorly organized; the storyline is confusing or disjointed, and the intended message is unclear.
4. Visual Elements	Exceptional use of visuals that enhance the narrative; visuals are high quality and well-integrated.	Good use of visuals that generally enhance the narrative; visuals are of good quality.	Adequate use of visuals; some may not fully enhance the narrative or may be of inconsistent quality.	Poor use of visuals; they do not enhance the narrative and are of low quality or poorly integrated.
5. Audio Elements	Audio is clear, well-balanced, and enhances the narrative; excellent synchronization with visuals.	The audio is mostly clear and balanced; generally enhances the narrative and is well-synchronized.	Audio may be unclear or unbalanced in places; may not always enhance the narrative or be well-synchronized.	Audio is unclear, unbalanced, and poorly synchronized with visuals; detracts from the narrative.
6. Integration of	Effective and seamless use of technology to	Good use of technology to support	Basic use of technology that supports the	Ineffective use of technology; tools and effects do not

Criteria	4 - Excellent	3 - Good	2 - Fair	1 - Needs Improvement
Technology	enhance storytelling; tools and effects are well-chosen and applied.	storytelling; tools and effects are generally well-chosen.	storytelling to some extent; tools and effects may be inconsistently applied.	enhance or detract from the storytelling.
7. Overall Impact	The story is compelling and leaves a lasting impression; all elements work together cohesively.	The story is engaging and leaves a positive impression; most elements work well together.	The story is somewhat engaging but may lack a strong impact; elements may not work cohesively.	The story is not engaging and lacks impact; elements do not work together and may be disjointed.

Total Score: ____ / 28

Comments:

[Provide any additional comments or specific feedback to guide further refinement or praise the student's work.]

APPENDIX 13- Class Feedback Sheet

Week 7: Class Feedback Sheet

Student Name	Title of the story	What I liked the most	What could be improved

APPENDIX 14- Overall Course Evaluation and Student Reflection

Overall Course Evaluation and Student Reflection

- 1. Course Satisfaction:** How satisfied are you with the overall digital storytelling course? Did the course meet your previous expectations?

- 2. Challenges:** What was the most challenging aspect of creating your digital story? Did the course help you to manage it?

- 3. Skills Development:** Which skills do you think you developed or improved during this project (e.g., technical skills, storytelling, collaboration)? How do you plan to use the skills and knowledge gained from this project in future endeavors?

- 4. Personal Growth and Insights:** In what ways has this project contributed to your personal growth? What new perspectives or insights have you gained about yourself as a storyteller?

APPENDIX 15- E-Stories Course Implementation Evaluation Report & Piloting Results



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Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students Language and Technology Use Skills

ERASMUS+ KA220-HED

Cooperation Partnerships in Higher Education

WP2: E-Stories Course Implementation Evaluation Report & Piloting Results



Date:

04.03.2025

Reference Number:

2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-000167303



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SECTION 1: Results collected from Participant Students

Introduction

The activity A2.8 which is the subject of this evaluation report was organised by the representatives of all partner universities participating in the Erasmus + project ***Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills – E-Stories***.

Activity A2.8 refers to the implementation of an eight-week course based on digital storytelling, which is suggested by the E-Stories consortium as one of the key approaches in language learning and teaching for the project's main target groups: international students and immigrant students. In the period between October 2024 and March 2025, all partner universities implemented the eight-week course designed by the consortium with their respective students coming from the aforementioned target groups. In that regard, the course was attended by the following number of students:

1. Necmettin Erbakan University (joined by students from the Selçuk University in Konya): 13
2. University of Crete: 17
3. University of Paderborn: 3
4. University of Malaga: 18.

The instrument in English was distributed and filled out **by the students** of partner universities participating in the eight-week course. The University of Malaga translated the questionnaire into Spanish and distributed the questionnaire among the course attendees. All 18 Spanish course attendees filled out the Spanish version of the same questionnaire, and two of them filled out the English version. The full report relating to the responses of the students of the University of Malaga who filled out the Spanish questionnaire has been presented within a separate report provided by the University of Malaga. This report is an evaluation report regarding the implementation of activity A2.8, which is in line with the project's quality monitoring methodology (PQA). The course content and the processes that took place during its implementation are part of individual reports of each partner university.

All respondents officially agreed to participate in the survey.

The English version of the questionnaire was filled out in the following manner:

1. Necmettin Erbakan University: 13/13
2. University of Crete: 3/17
3. University of Paderborn: 3/3
4. University of Malaga: 2/18

Findings

1. Participants' gender distribution

66,7% female

33,3% male

2. Participants' age distribution

28,6% 18-21

33,3% 22-25

33,3% 26-30

4,8% 45

3. The University respondents attended:

52,4% Necmettin Erbakan University

14,3% University of Crete

14,3% University of Paderborn

9,5% University of Malaga

9,5% Selçuk University

4. Level of studies of the course participants:

61,9% Undergraduate studies

23,8% Postgraduate studies

14,3% Graduate studies

5. Study programmes attended by the course participants: International Economy and Management (3), Tourism Guidance (2), Education (4), Medicine (2),

Psychology (2), Computer Engineering (1), Turkish traditional arts (1), Public Health (1), Health Care Management (1), Business Administration (1), Nutrition and Dietetics (1), Political Sciences (1).

One respondent did not reply.

The questionnaire comprises 6 segments:

1. Informed consent
2. Demographics
3. General experience
4. Module-specific feedback
5. Learning and language development
6. Future improvements

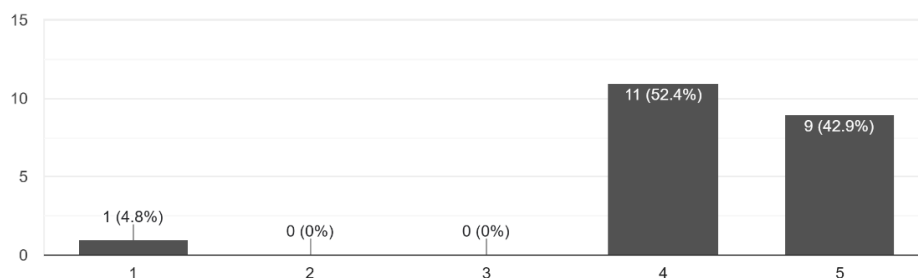
GENERAL EXPERIENCE

This segment comprises 6 questions/assertions evaluated by resorting to a **five-point Likert scale** (5 – Strongly Agree/Very Satisfied; 4 – Agree/Satisfied; 3 – Neutral; 2 – Disagree/Dissatisfied; 1 – Strongly Disagree/Not satisfied at all).

1. How would you rate your overall experience with the pilot programme (course)?

When it comes to this assertion, 42,9% (9 respondents) are very satisfied, 52,4% (11 respondents) are satisfied, and 4,8% (1 respondent) are not satisfied at all.

1. How would you rate your overall experience with the pilot programme (course)?
21 responses

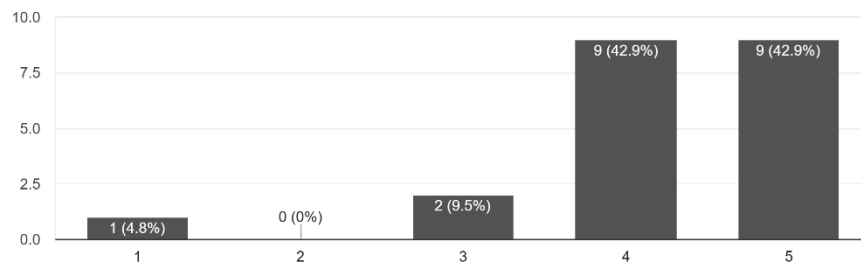


Graph 1. How would you rate your overall experience with the pilot programme (course)?

2. The course helped me improve my language skills.

When it comes to this assertion, 42,9% (9 respondents) strongly agree with it, 42,9% (9 respondents) agree with it, 9,5% (2 respondents) assume a neutral stance, while 4,8% (1 respondent) strongly disagree with this assertion.

2. The course helped me improve my language skills.
 21 responses

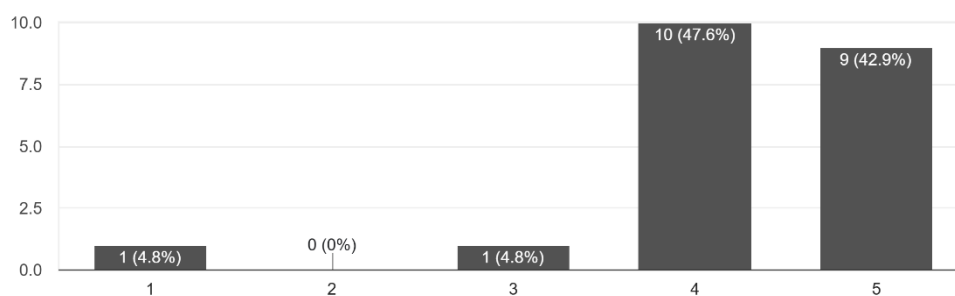


Graph 2. The course helped me improve my language skills.

3. I felt engaged and motivated throughout the course.

When it comes to this assertion, 42,9% (9 respondents) strongly agree, 47,6% (10 respondents) agree, 4,8% (1 respondent) assume a neutral stance, and 4,8% (1 respondent) strongly disagree with it.

3. I felt engaged and motivated throughout the course?
 21 responses

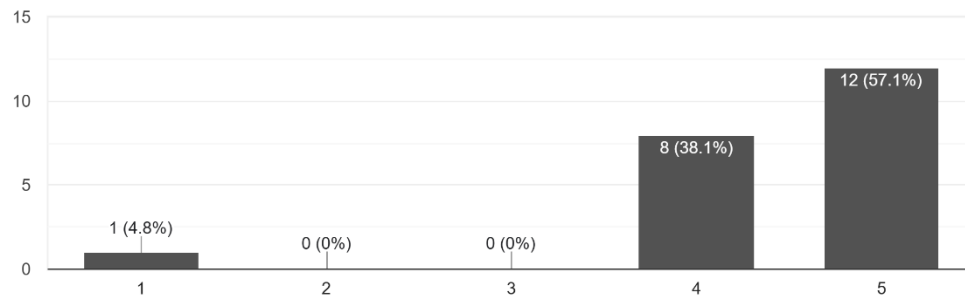


Graph 3. I felt engaged and motivated throughout the course.

4. The course was well-structured and easy to follow.

4. The course was well-structured and easy to follow.

21 responses



Graph 4. The course was well-structured and easy to follow

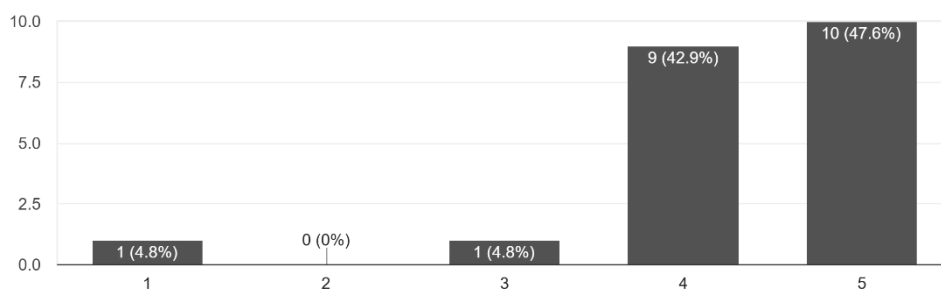
When it comes to this assertion, 57,1% (12 respondents) strongly agree with it, 38,1% (8 respondents) agree with it, and 4,8% (1 respondent) strongly disagree with it.

5. The topics covered were relevant to my learning needs.

When it comes to this assertion, 47,6% (10 respondents) strongly agree with it, 42,9% (9 respondents) agree with it, 4,8% (1 respondent) remain neutral, while 4,8% (1 respondent) strongly disagrees.

5. The topics covered were relevant to my learning needs.

21 responses

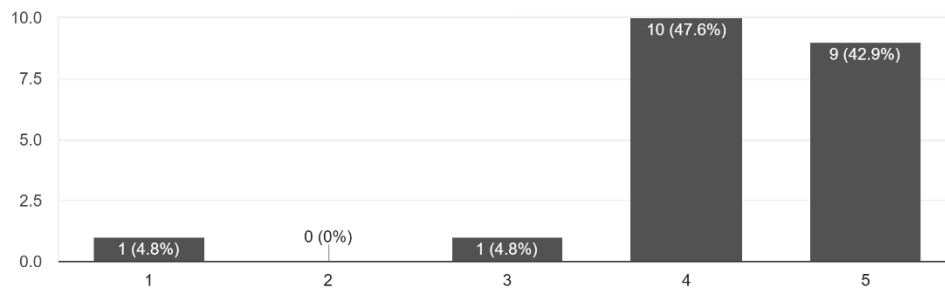


Graph 5. The topics covered were relevant to my learning needs.

6. I was able to express myself creatively through digital storytelling

When it comes to this assertion, 42,9% (9 respondents) strongly agree, 47,6% (10 respondents) agree, 4,8% (1 respondent) assume a neutral stance, and 4,8% (1 respondent) strongly disagree with it.

6. I was able to express myself creatively through digital storytelling
21 responses



Graph 6. I was able to express myself creatively through digital storytelling.

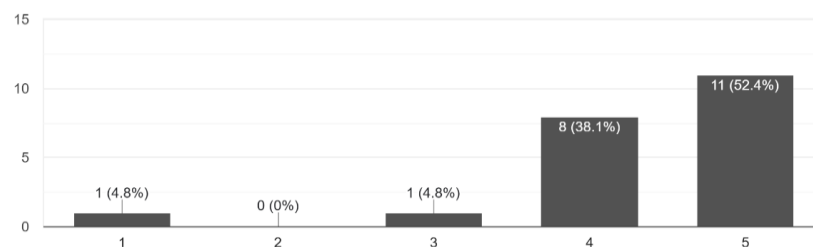
MODULE SPECIFIC FEEDBACK

This segment comprises 8 questions/assertions evaluated by resorting to a **five-point Likert scale** (5 –Very Useful; 4 – Useful; 3 – Neutral; 2 – Slightly useful; 1 – Not useful at all), and 2 open-ended questions.

7. WEEK 1: Introduction to the course (digital storytelling, elements of a story).

When it comes to this assertion, 52,4% (11 respondents) find it very useful, 38,1% find it useful, 4,8% (1 respondent) remained neutral, while 4,8% (1 respondent) find it not useful at all.

7. WEEK 1: Introduction to the course (digital storytelling, elements of a story)
21 responses

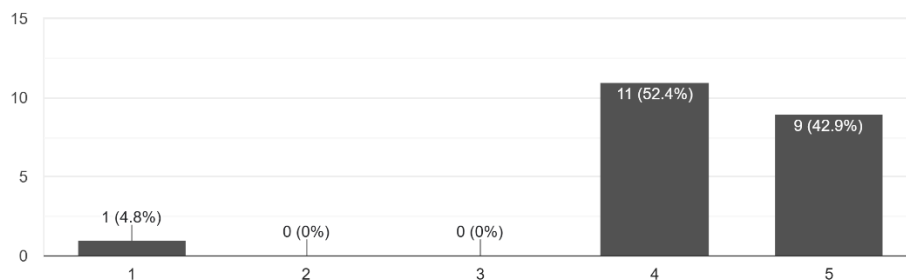


Graph 7. WEEK 1: Introduction to the course (digital storytelling, elements of a story)

8. WEEK 2: Digital Storytelling (elements of a digital story, digital storytelling tools and phases, story ideation & developing as story concept)

8. WEEK 2: Digital Storytelling (elements of a digital story, digital storytelling tools and phases, story ideation & developing a story concept)

21 responses



Graph 8. WEEK 2: Digital Storytelling (elements of a digital story, digital storytelling tools and phases, story ideation & developing as story concept)

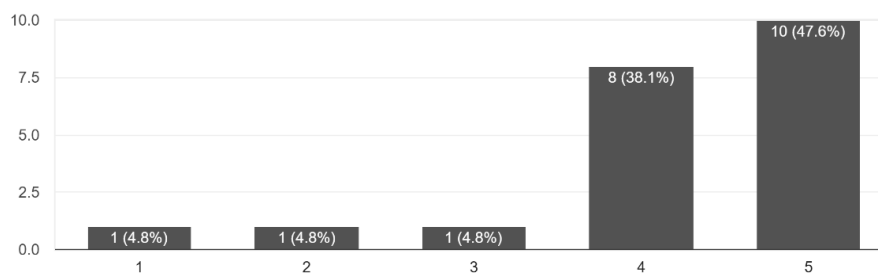
When it comes to this assertion, 42,9% (9 respondents) find it very useful, 52,4% (11 respondents) find it useful, and 4,8% (1 respondent) find it not useful at all.

9. WEEK 3: Script Writing (initial student narratives, script writing, first drafts)

When it comes to this assertion, 47,6% (10 respondents) find it very useful, 38,1% (8 respondents) find it useful, 4,8% (1 respondent) remained neutral, 4,8% (1 respondent) find it slightly useful and 4,8% (1 respondent) do not find it useful at all.

9. WEEK 3: Script Writing (initial student narratives, script writing, first drafts)

21 responses



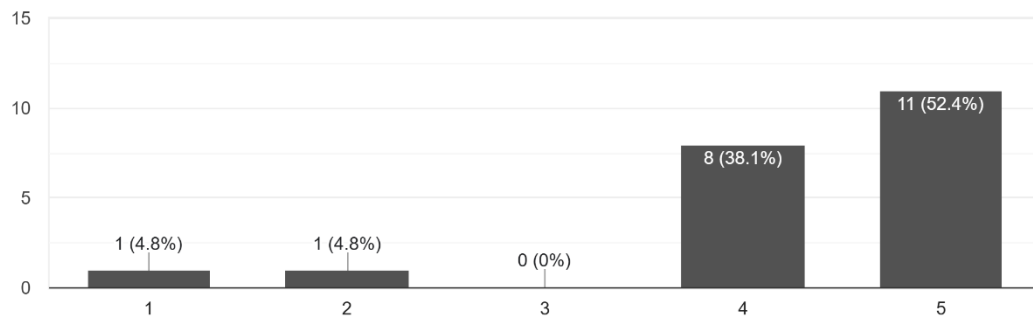
Graph 9. WEEK 3: Script Writing (initial student narratives, script writing, first drafts)

10. WEEK 4: Storyboarding (creating and refining a storyboard)

When it comes to this assertion, 52,4% (11 respondents) find it very useful, 38,1% find it useful, 4,8% (1 respondent) find it slightly useful, while 4,8% (1 respondent) do not find it useful at all

10.WEEK 4: Storyboarding (creating and refining a storyboard)

21 responses



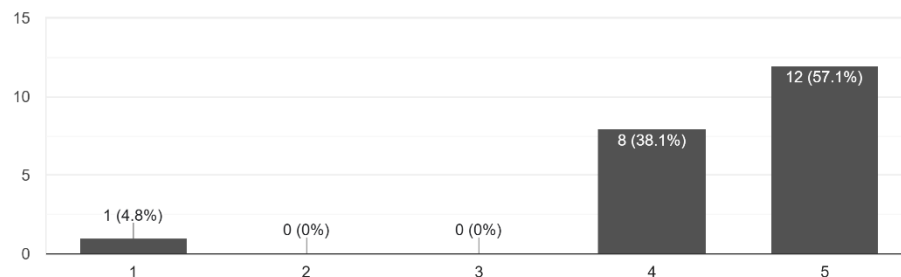
Graph 10. WEEK 4: Storyboarding (creating and refining a storyboard)

11. WEEK 5: Audio-visual Elements of Storytelling (images and videos, music and sound effects, voice recording techniques)

When it comes to this assertion, 57,1% (12 respondents) find it very useful, 38,1% (8 respondents) find it useful, while 4,8% (1 respondent) do not find it useful at all.

11. WEEK 5: Audio-visual Elements of Storytelling (images and videos, music and sound effects, voice recording techniques)

21 responses

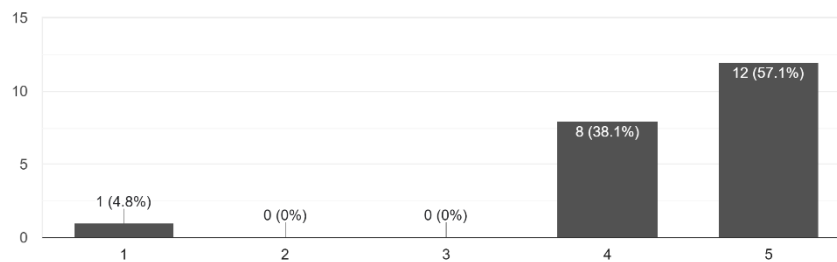


Graph 11. WEEK 5: Audio-visual Elements of Storytelling (images and videos, music and sound effects, voice recording techniques)

12. WEEK 6: Digital Story - creation (building, editing and refining a digital story)

When it comes to this assertion, 57,1% (12 respondents) find it very useful, 38,1% (8 respondents) find it useful, while 4,8% (1 respondent) do not find it useful at all.

12. WEEK 6: Digital Story - creation (building, editing and refining a digital story)
21 responses

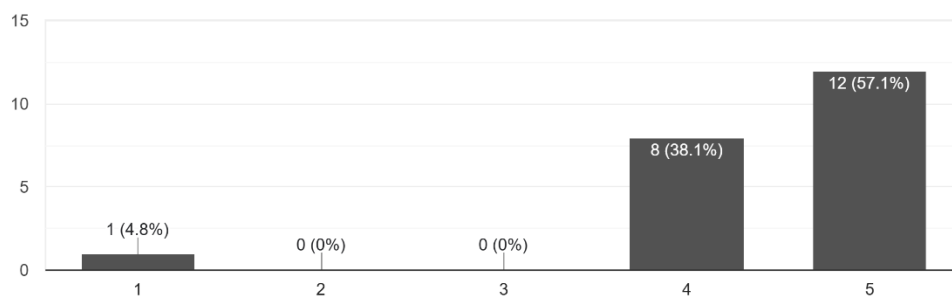


Graph 12. WEEK 6: Digital Story – creation (building, editing and refining a digital story)

13. WEEK 7: Showcasing a digital story (finalising and presenting a digital story)

When it comes to this assertion, 57,1% (12 respondents) find it very useful, 38,1% (8 respondents) find it useful, while 4,8% (1 respondent) do not find it useful at all.

13. WEEK 7: Showcasing a digital story (finalising and presenting a digital story)
21 responses



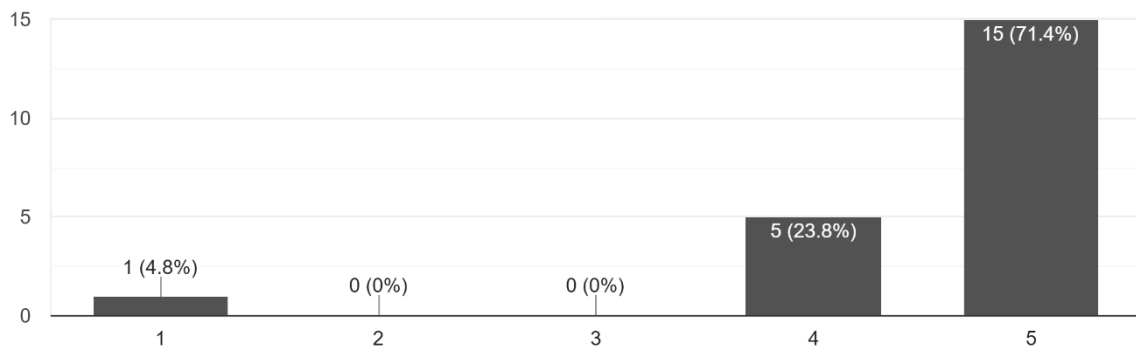
Graph 13. WEEK 7: Showcasing a digital story (finalising and presenting a digital story)

14. WEEK 8: The Final Curtain Call (course wrap-up)

When it comes to this assertion, 71,4% (15 respondents) find it very useful, 23,8% (5 respondents) find it useful, while 4,8% (1 respondent) do not find it useful at all

14. WEEK 8: The Final Curtain Call (course wrap-up)

21 responses



Graph 14. WEEK 8: The Final Curtain Call (course wrap-up)

15. When asked **Which segment of the course did you find most helpful and why?** the respondents provided the following answers:

Script Writing

Everything was okay. I liked the positive attitude of the teachers towards us. They were helpful. They explained every question we asked them, with patience.

Creating animation with Powtoon

Use of technological elements

Learning how to create a digital story

I can effectively convey the story I have written to the reader and the audience by using the animation tool.

WEEK 6: Digital Story - creation (building, editing and refining a digital story) because I learned video-editing and building my own stories.

I learned how to create a digital story and I was not confident about my voice but now I'm so confident

The discussion after writing my story.

Creating a story was the most useful thing for me

Making new friends

To use words and situations from my daily routine

I found writing and storytelling super helpful for me

Scriptwriting, as it requires interesting stories based on experiences.

Creating a storyboard

Digital Story - creation: I didn't have any previous digital skills. This session gave me the tools to create a video.

The most helpful part was Script Writing. Writing my first drafts helped me organise my ideas and learn how to express them better in Spanish with the useful help of the teacher!

Being able to interact with my tutor

My first chance to tell my migration story to others.

16. When asked ***Were there any aspects of the course that you found challenging or unclear? Please specify.*** the respondents provided the following answers:

Sometimes it was hard to include my voice in the system.

For me, coming up with an idea and turning it into an animation was challenging but in time I was able to solve that.

The PowToon tool does not meet the tools, objects, etc. in the stories we write, which is incomplete in conveying the story effectively.

Making our story digital was really challenging for me because I don't have any past experience

At first, I found it difficult to use the animation tool

Making movements in the digital story

I found making animation and controlling their movement so hard and challenging

There were sessions where we had two assignments to submit which can consume a lot of time, especially when we are writing in a language we are still learning.

Recording the voices and working on pronunciation.

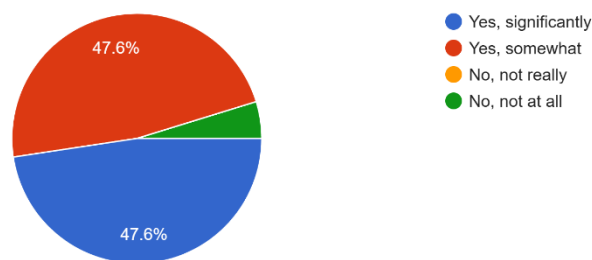
Having to complete this amount of work in 8 weeks.

LEARNING AND LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

This segment comprises 4 questions/assertions, and they have been responded to in the following manner:

17. When asked ***Do you feel that the digital storytelling format helped you improve your understanding and use of the host country's language and culture?***, 47,6% (10 respondents) replied with a **Yes, significantly**, 47,6% (10 respondents) replied with **Yes, somewhat**, while 4,8% (1 respondent) replied with **No, not at all**.

17. Do you feel that the digital storytelling format helped you improve your understanding and use of the host country's language and culture?
 21 responses

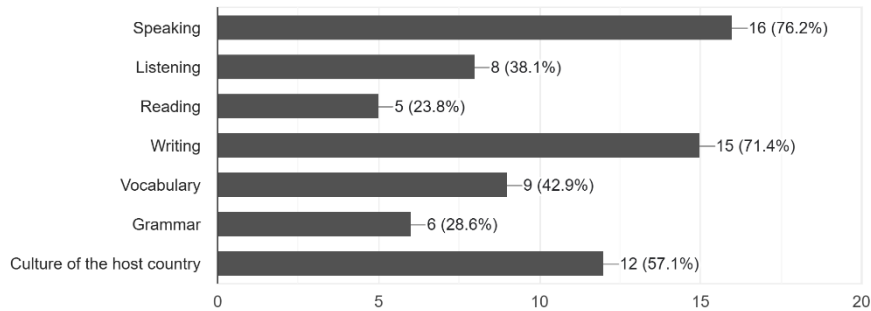


Graph 15. Do you feel that the digital storytelling format helped you improve your understanding and use of the host country's language and culture?

18. When asked ***In which areas of language (culture) learning did you notice the most improvement? (Select all that apply)***, 16 respondents opted for Speaking, 15 for Writing, 12 for Culture of the host country, 9 opted for Vocabulary, 8 opted for Listening, 6 opted for Grammar, and 5 opted for Reading.

18. In which areas of language (culture) learning did you notice the most improvement? (Select all that apply)

21 responses

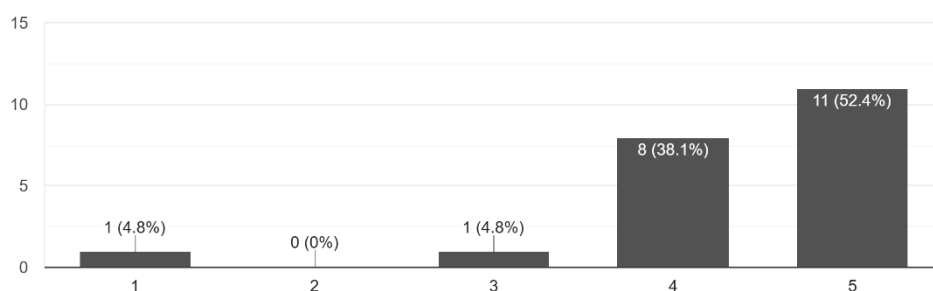


Graph 16. In which areas of language (culture) learning did you notice the most improvement? (Select all that apply)

19. When asked ***How comfortable did you feel using the digital tools and platforms introduced in the course?*** 52,4% (11 respondents) expressed that they felt very comfortable, 38,1% (8 respondents) felt comfortable, 4,8% (1 respondent) remained neutral, and 4,8% (1 respondent) did not feel comfortable at all.

19. How comfortable did you feel using the digital tools and platforms introduced in the course?

21 responses



Graph 17. How comfortable did you feel using the digital tools and platforms introduced in the course?

When asked to specify their choice, the respondents stated the following:

I attended this course to find answers to the questions of what digital storytelling is and what it is used for.

It was easy to use after learning it. I will probably use the tools for my future assignments.

I needed some time to explore these tools which can be time-consuming. However, it's a good skill to know how to use these platforms.

Powtoon was easy to use, but since it was my first time, learning a new tool was a bit challenging at the beginning.

FUTURE IMPROVEMENTS

This segment of the questionnaire comprised two open-ended questions and they were responded to in the following manner:

20. What additional topics or skills would you like to see included in a future course?

More speaking

Because of my study, I would like to talk more about tourism in different countries.

More editing tools

Space and technology

I think the course is very favourable

Making and learning more about the digital story and how to create it professionally

I think it would be more useful for a simple grammar-vocabulary class

Teaching the full use of the animation tool and sharing tutorial video lessons with students

One-on-one attention to students during class

I would like the future topics to be added: creating one's own stories, story writing skills

Learning more about making digital stories and how to make movement in the characters

Simulation of daily situations with patients and colleagues.

Learning how to create digital stories adapted to my Department

Video Editing

Maybe some political subjects

It would be helpful to learn more about storytelling techniques to make the stories more engaging.

We could discuss philosophical questions and philosophers.

21. Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience?

I really liked my instructors and my friends. I made new friends here from different countries.

it was a great experience I learned a lot of things.

The Powtoon tool does not meet the tools, objects, etc. in the stories we write, which is incomplete in conveying the story effectively.

I wish the homework was less and the discussions were more. But overall, it was a good experience.

I enjoyed the course very much. I wish we had more discussions about the short stories as it helps with the speaking skills.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Demographics

Gender & Age Distribution

The gender distribution is relatively balanced with a slight female majority (66.7% female vs. 33.3% male). The majority of respondents fall within the age range of 22-30 (66.6%).

University and Academic Background

A significant proportion (52.4%) of participants attend Necmettin Erbakan University. Additionally, the respondents are primarily undergraduate students (61.9%), with a smaller proportion engaged in postgraduate (23.8%) and graduate studies (14.3%). The diversity in academic backgrounds (including fields like International Economy, Tourism, Medicine, and Psychology) reflects a broad palette of skills and knowledge which can be interesting when it comes to the stance towards digital storytelling as a method in language learning.

General Experience

Satisfaction and Learning Impact

The feedback on the overall course experience is overwhelmingly positive, with 95.3% of respondents either very satisfied or satisfied. A similarly high satisfaction rate (85.7%) is observed in relation to the course's contribution to language skills improvement. This highlights the course's success in fostering both engagement and language acquisition.

Engagement and Structure

Most participants felt engaged and motivated (90.5%), and the course was generally perceived as well-structured (95.2%). However, a small percentage (4.8%) expressed dissatisfaction with these aspects, indicating room for further refinement.

Creativity and Expression

The course's ability to support creativity through digital storytelling was highly rated, with 90.5% agreeing they could express themselves creatively. This underscores the value of using storytelling as a pedagogical tool.

Module-Specific Feedback

The usefulness of Course Content

Across the course's eight weeks, topics were highly valued, with 50-70% of respondents consistently rating modules as "very useful." Particularly, Week 1 (Introduction), Week 5 (Audio-visual Elements), and Week 8 (Course Wrap-up) received the most positive feedback, suggesting that participants found these foundational and concluding sessions most impactful.

Challenging Aspects

Despite the overall positive feedback, some respondents found specific tasks, such as integrating voice recordings or using animation tools like Powtoon, challenging. These challenges were mainly attributed to inexperience with digital tools or the steep learning curve.

Content Preference

The most appreciated modules involved Script Writing, Digital Story Creation, and Storyboarding, while the use of animation tools (Powtoon) emerged as a notable challenge for some students, suggesting that further support or simplified tools could improve user experience.

Language and Cultural Learning

Improvement in Language Proficiency

The majority of respondents (95.2%) felt that the course had a positive impact on their language and cultural understanding, with most citing speaking, writing, and cultural knowledge as the areas of greatest improvement. This highlights the success of integrating language learning with digital storytelling.

Comfort with Digital Tools

A significant 90.5% of participants felt comfortable or very comfortable using the digital tools introduced in the course. The learning curve, especially with Powtoon, was noted by a few, but overall, digital literacy was improved.

Future Improvements

Additional Topics

Respondents suggested a wide range of topics for future courses, including more speaking practice, advanced editing tools, professional story creation, and video editing. Some expressed a desire for specific improvements in storytelling techniques to make the stories more engaging. Others recommended more focus on personal story writing and daily scenarios, such as those relevant to the medical or tourism fields.

Course Experience Feedback

While the overall course experience was positive, several respondents noted that they would appreciate more discussions and less homework. This feedback suggests that while content delivery was appreciated, opportunities for deeper interaction or informal discussions could further enhance the learning experience.

Recommendations

Enhancing Digital Tools Training

To address the challenges participants faced with digital tools, particularly Powtoon, the course could offer more in-depth tutorials or supplemental resources to help students master the software.

Exploring additional user-friendly platforms or providing alternative tools for story creation could reduce frustration, especially for students with limited digital experience.

Incorporating More Interactive Elements

The suggestion for more discussions and less homework indicates that while the course content is valuable, students might benefit from more interactive sessions. Incorporating more group work, peer feedback, or live discussions could help foster deeper engagement and learning.

Strengthening Focus on Speaking and Pronunciation

Given that speaking and writing were the most frequently mentioned areas of improvement, it may be beneficial to include more activities focused on oral skills. These could range from group discussions to video-based exercises that promote speaking in the target language.

Course Customisation and Personalisation

A more tailored approach, such as one-on-one sessions or personalised feedback on specific storytelling projects, could help students refine their skills and overcome individual challenges.

Additional focus on specific disciplines or career-oriented storytelling (e.g., tourism or medicine) could enhance the relevance of the course for different fields of study.

Expansion of Topics

Respondents showed interest in broadening the scope of content, such as more in-depth video editing, advanced storytelling techniques, and coverage of specific

cultural or political topics. Incorporating these suggestions could make the course more versatile and appealing to a wider audience.

Focus on Practical Applications

Many students expressed a desire for practical applications and the development of professional-level digital storytelling skills. Integrating industry-based projects, case studies, or collaborations with external partners could make the learning process more immersive and prepare students for real-world scenarios.

Conclusions

The eight-week course implementation appears to have successfully met its goals of improving language skills, cultural understanding, and creative expression through digital storytelling. The overwhelmingly positive feedback, coupled with a few constructive suggestions, provides a clear path forward for refining the course structure. Emphasising practical applications, improving technical support, and incorporating more interactive learning opportunities would significantly enhance the overall experience for future students.

SECTION 2: Results collected from Participant Teachers

Introduction

The activity A2.8 which is the subject of this evaluation report was organised by the representatives of all partner universities participating in the Erasmus + project ***Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students' Language and Technology Use Skills – E-Stories***.

The activity A2.8 refers to the implementation of an eight-week course based on digital storytelling, which is suggested by the E-Stories consortium as one of the key approaches in language learning and teaching for the project's main target groups: international students and immigrant students. In the period between October 2024 and March 2025 all partner universities implemented the eight-week course designed by the consortium with their respective students coming from the aforementioned target groups. This report aims to present the perceptions of the staff implementing the eight-week course. The staff was distributed in the following manner:

- 1.Necmettin Erbakan University: 2
- 2.University of Crete: 1
- 3.University of Paderborn: 3
- 4.University of Malaga: 1.

The instrument in English was distributed and filled out **by the staff** of partner universities implementing the eight-week course. This evaluation report is an evaluation report regarding the implementation of activity A2.8 from the standpoint of staff, in line with the project's quality monitoring methodology (PQA). The course content and the processes that took place during its implementation are part of individual reports of each partner university.

All respondents officially agreed to participate in the survey and all staff members engaged in the process of implementation responded to the questionnaire.

Findings

1. Participants' gender distribution

71,4% female

28,6% male

2. Participants' age distribution

42,9% 25-35

42,9% 36-45

14,3% 46-55

3. The University staff responses according to partner universities:

28,6% Necmettin Erbakan University

14,3% University of Crete

42,9% University of Paderborn

14,3% University of Malaga

4. Areas of expertise of the staff implementing the eight-week course:

Internationalisation, Digitalisation, Higher Education; Computer IT; Teaching Modern Greek as foreign language; Education; Turkish education; Second Language Acquisition

The questionnaire comprises 7 segments :

1.Informed consent

2.Demographics

3.General experience

4.Module-specific feedback

5.Teaching and student engagement

6.Suggestions for improvements

7.Final thoughts

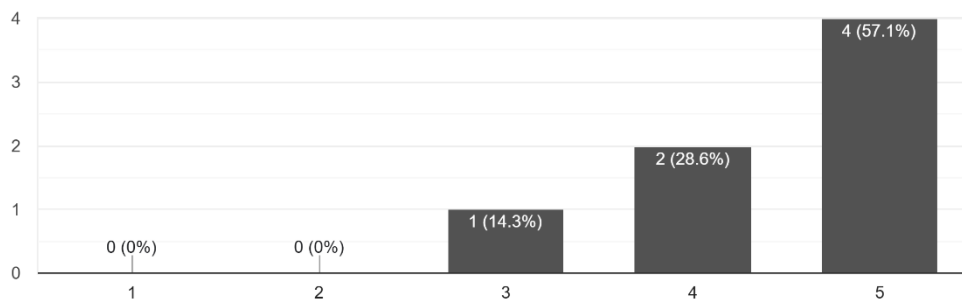
GENERAL EXPERIENCE

This segment comprises 3 questions/assertions evaluated by resorting either to a **five-point Likert scale** (5 –Excellent; 4 – Good; 3 – Neutral; 2 – Poor; 1 – Very poor), or answering a YES/NO question.

1. How would you rate your overall experience with the pilot programme (course)?

When it comes to this assertion, 57,1% (4 respondents) rated the experience as excellent, 28,6% (2 respondents) opted for good, and 14,3% (1 respondent) remained neutral.

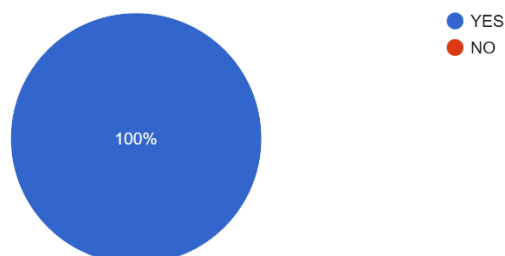
1. How would you rate the overall flow of the pilot programme (course)?
 7 responses



Graph 1. How would you rate your overall experience with the pilot programme (course)?

2. When asked **In your opinion, did the module topics progress logically from one to the next?** 100% of respondents answered in an affirmative manner.

2. In your opinion, did the module topics progress logically from one to the next?
 7 responses

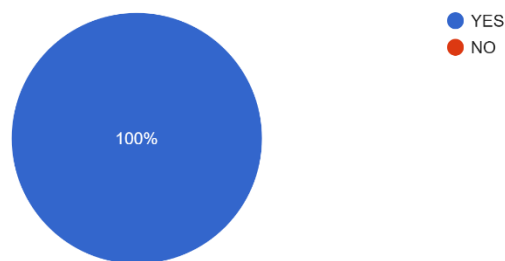


Graph 2. In your opinion, did the module topics progress logically from one to the next?

3. When asked **Were the programme objectives (helping students improve language skills through digital storytelling) clear and aligned with the content?**, 100% of respondents answered in an affirmative manner.

4. Were the programme objectives (helping students improve language skills through digital storytelling) clear and aligned with the content?

7 responses



Graph 3. Were the programme objectives (helping students improve language skills through digital storytelling) clear and aligned with the content?

MODULE SPECIFIC FEEDBACK

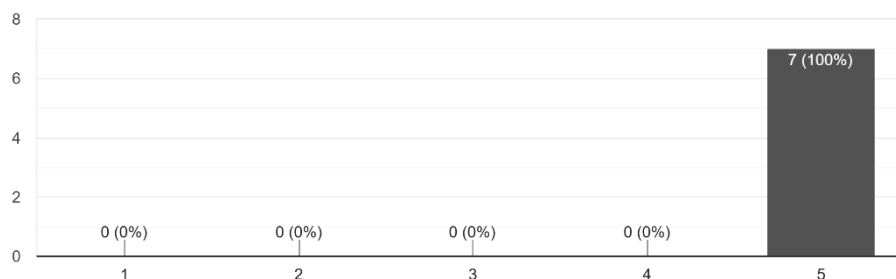
This segment comprises 8 questions/assertions evaluated by resorting to a **five-point Likert scale** (5 – Highly Effective; 4 – Effective; 3 – Neutral; 2 – Slightly effective; 1 – Not effective at all).

4. WEEK 1: Introduction to the course (digital storytelling, elements of a story).

When it comes to this assertion, 100% (11 respondents) find it highly effective.

6. WEEK 1: Introduction to the course (digital storytelling, elements of a story)

7 responses



Graph 4. WEEK 1: Introduction to the course (digital storytelling, elements of a story)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

The content was both engaging and practically applicable, making it highly effective in achieving the learning objectives.

The students gave a positive feedback

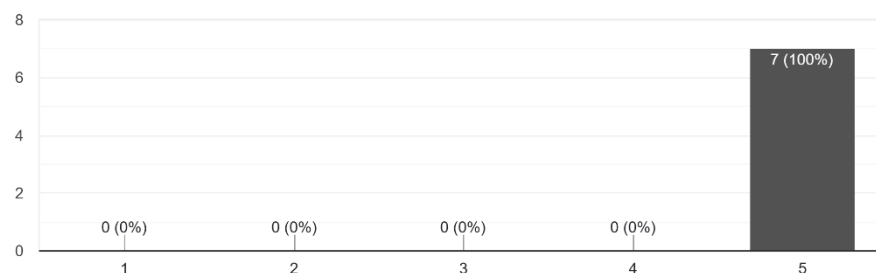
The students were interested in the course very well.

The content is essential for language learning and storytelling contexts.

5. WEEK 2: Digital Storytelling (elements of a digital story, digital storytelling tools and phases, story ideation & developing as story concept)

When it comes to this assertion, 100% of respondents find it highly effective.

7. WEEK 2: Digital Storytelling (elements of a digital story, digital storytelling tools and phases, story ideation & developing a story concept)
 7 responses



Graph 5. WEEK 2: Digital Storytelling (elements of a digital story, digital storytelling tools and phases, story ideation & developing as story concept)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

In the context of digital storytelling, the elements of a story, digital tools, and stages were thoroughly covered. The explanations, particularly on developing story ideas and concepts, supported students' creative thinking skills. The course content was highly effective in achieving learning objectives by combining theoretical knowledge with practical applications.

The students gave a positive feedback

The course seemed to be very interesting

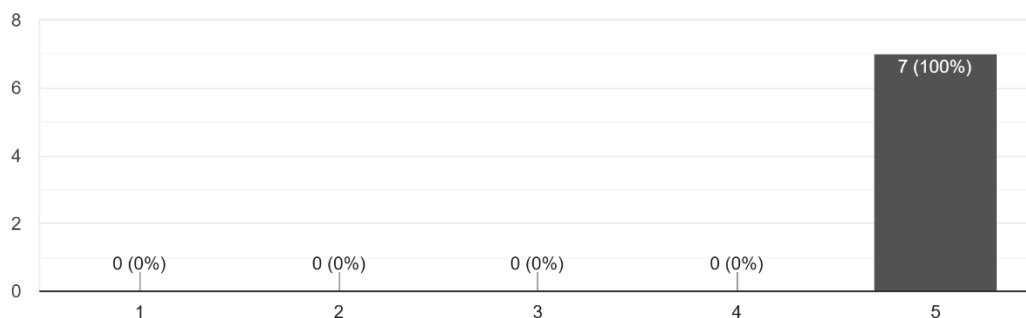
The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology.

6. WEEK 3: Script Writing (initial student narratives, script writing, first drafts)

When it comes to this assertion, 100% of respondents find it highly effective.

8. WEEK 3: Script Writing (initial student narratives, script writing, first drafts)

7 responses



Graph 6. WEEK 3: Script Writing (initial student narratives, script writing, first drafts)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

The Week 3 content provided a clear roadmap for scriptwriting and creating initial drafts. Encouraging students to develop their own narratives offered an opportunity to apply their learning, reinforcing the concepts. The explanations and examples related to scriptwriting helped transform creative ideas into structured outputs.

The students gave a positive feedback

The students liked to writing about their stories

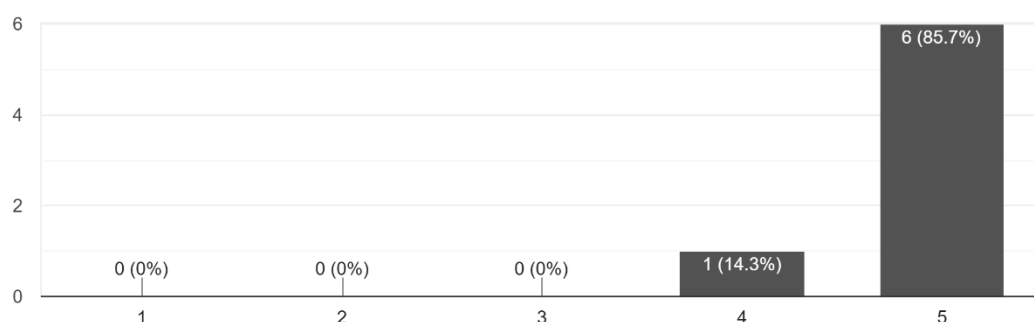
The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology.

7. WEEK 4: Storyboarding (creating and refining a storyboard)

When it comes to this assertion, 85,7% (6 respondents) find it highly effective, and 14,3% (1 respondent) find it effective.

9.WEEK 4: Storyboarding (creating and refining a storyboard)

7 responses



Graph 7. WEEK 4: Storyboarding (creating and refining a storyboard)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

In Week 4, I covered the process of creating a storyboard in detail with the students. By explaining the fundamental elements of a storyboard, I guided them in visualizing their own stories. Additionally, through refinement exercises on the created storyboards, I supported students in expressing their ideas more clearly and effectively. This process contributed to the development of both their creative and analytical thinking skills.

The students gave a positive feedback

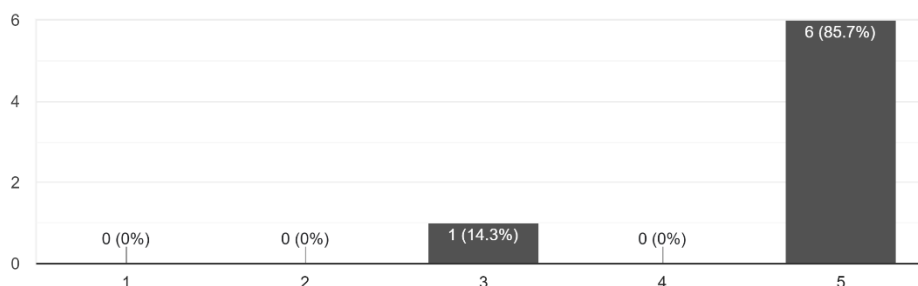
It was funny

The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology.

8. WEEK 5: Audio-visual Elements of Storytelling (images and videos, music and sound effects, voice recording techniques)

When it comes to this assertion, 85,7% (6 respondents) find it highly effective, and 14,3% (1 respondent) remained neutral.

10. WEEK 5: Audio-visual Elements of Storytelling (images and videos, music and sound effects, voice recording techniques)
 7 responses



Graph 8. WEEK 5: Audio-visual Elements of Storytelling (images and videos, music and sound effects, voice recording techniques)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

In Week 5, I emphasized the role of visual and audio elements in storytelling. The detailed explanations on selecting and utilizing images, videos, music, and sound effects helped students develop the skills to add emotion to their stories and capture the audience's

attention. The information I provided on sound recording techniques supported students in enhancing their technical skills and adopting a more professional approach during the implementation process.

The students gave a positive feedback

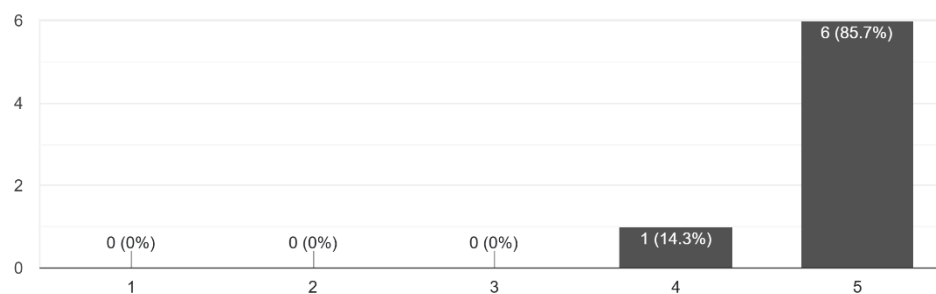
The students had some difficulties

The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology.

9. WEEK 6: Digital Story - creation (building, editing and refining a digital story)

When it comes to this assertion, 85,7% (6 respondents) find it highly effective, and 14,3% (1 respondent) find it effective.

11. WEEK 6: Digital Story - creation (building, editing and refining a digital story)
7 responses



Graph 9. WEEK 6: Digital Story – creation (building, editing and refining a digital story)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

In Week 6, I guided students through the process of creating, editing, and refining a digital story step by step. The information I provided on creating, editing, and developing digital stories allowed students to apply theoretical knowledge practically. Additionally, the revisions and improvements they made to their stories helped them solidify their creative ideas more effectively. This week greatly contributed to their understanding of how to use digital tools and techniques.

The students gave a positive feedback

They liked the digital store but they had some difficulties

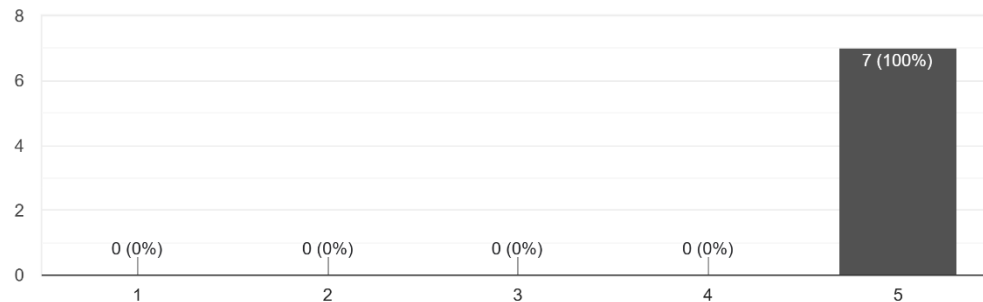
The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology.

10. WEEK 7: Showcasing a digital story (finalising and presenting a digital story)

When it comes to this assertion, 100% find it highly effective.

12. WEEK 7: Showcasing a digital story (finalising and presenting a digital story)

7 responses



Graph 10. WEEK 7: Showcasing a digital story (finalising and presenting a digital story)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

In Week 7, I taught students the processes of finalizing and presenting a digital story. Completing and refining the digital story allowed students to bring together the ideas and content they had developed in previous stages into a meaningful whole. During the presentation phase, I helped students enhance their ability to showcase their stories effectively and engage the audience. This week significantly contributed to the development of both technical skills and presentation abilities.

The students gave a positive feedback

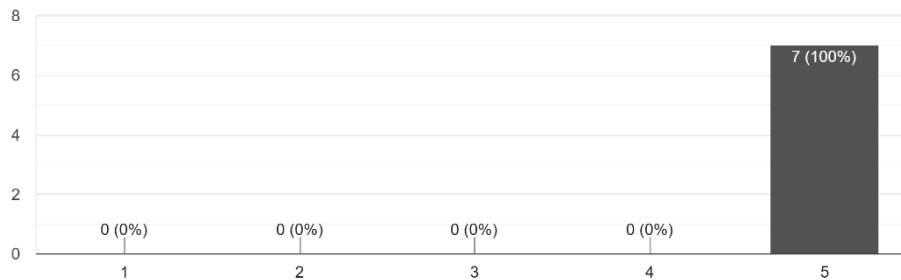
They learnt digital stories

The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology.

11. WEEK 8: The Final Curtain Call (course wrap-up)

When it comes to this assertion, 100% find it highly effective.

13. WEEK 8: The Final Curtain Call (course wrap-up)
7 responses



Graph 11. WEEK 8: The Final Curtain Call (course wrap-up)

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

In Week 8, I summarized the entire course by bringing together all the concepts covered. I assessed students' progress throughout the digital storytelling process and emphasized the importance of each stage. This week, I provided practical guidance to help students reinforce the techniques they had learned. By the end of the course, students were able to express their knowledge of storytelling and digital media tools in a concrete way. This lesson helped solidify and conclude their overall learning process.

The students gave a positive feedback

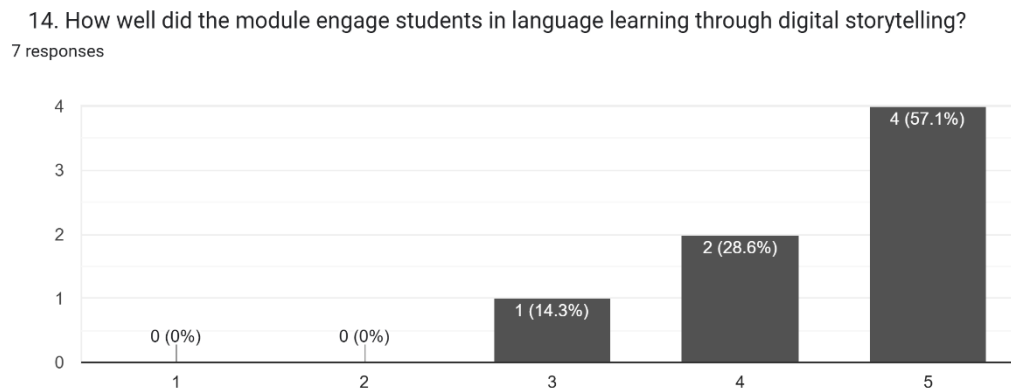
They are satisfied by watching and presenting their own digital stories

The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology

TEACHING AND STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

This segment comprises 3 questions/assertions, and they have been responded to in the following manner:

12. When asked ***How well did the module engage students in language learning through digital storytelling?***, 57,1% (4 respondents) replied with a **Very well**, 28,6% (2 respondents) replied with **Quite well**, while 14,3% (1 respondent) remained neutral.



Graph 12. How well did the module engage students in language learning through digital storytelling?

When asked to justify their choice, respondents stated the following:

In the context of digital storytelling, the elements of a story, digital tools, and stages were thoroughly covered. The explanations, particularly on developing story ideas and concepts, supported students' creative thinking skills. The course content was highly effective in achieving learning objectives by combining theoretical knowledge with practical applications.

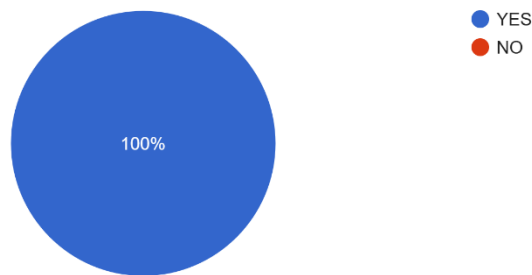
The students gave a positive feedback

The course seemed very interesting

The constructive steps are logical within the proposed methodology.

13. When asked **Did the digital storytelling format help students overcome language barriers?**, 100% of respondents replied with a YES.

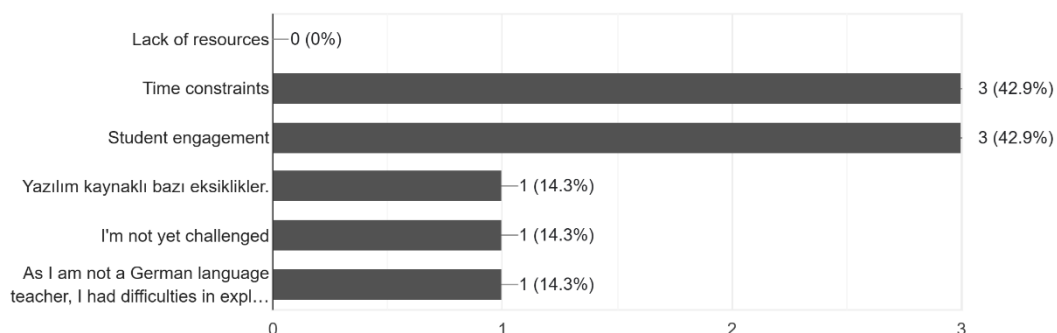
15. Did the digital storytelling format help students overcome language barriers?
7 responses



Graph 13. Did the digital storytelling format help students overcome language barriers?

14. When asked **What challenges, if any, did you encounter while delivering the module?** 42,9% (3 respondents) mentioned time constraints, 42,9% (3 respondents) mentioned student engagement, 14,3% (1 respondent) mentioned software-related shortcomings, and 14,3% (1 respondent) stated that their expertise not being language teaching imposed certain impediments in explaining grammar rules.

17. What challenges, if any, did you encounter while delivering the module?
7 responses



Graph 14. What challenges, if any, did you encounter while delivering the module?

When asked to justify their choice, the respondents stated the following:

Time was limited for students to write their stories.

Yes, I faced some challenges during the module related to Powtoon. Issues such as licensing fees, limitations on multiple users, and insufficient elements in their libraries made it

difficult to fully utilize the platform for creating digital stories. These limitations affected the efficiency of the process and required additional time and effort to work around them.

The video editing took much more time than the previously scheduled

Students find a challenge to commit themselves for a voluntary 8 weeks programme.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS

This segment of the questionnaire comprised two open-ended question and they were responded to in the following manner:

15. **Do you have suggestions for improving the flow or content of the modules?**

In response to this question, 71,4% (5 respondents) replied with a NO, and 28,6% (2 respondents) replied with a YES. When asked to further elaborate, the respondents offered the following suggestions:

More time for writing their stories in class, and speaking with others.

For example, a ready storyboard template would help students to organize better and faster their stories

16. **Were there any additional resources or support that would have improved the course delivery?**

In response to this question, 42,9% (3 respondents) replied with a NO, and 57,1% (4 respondents) replied with a YES. When asked to further elaborate, the respondents offered the following suggestions.

Yes, I recorded the lessons and provided students with the opportunity to watch them asynchronously. This was very helpful for students who could not attend the class or wanted to review the topics.

No suggestions

Implementation of the language course in a module where students receive ECTS credits for the course or can have it recognised as an additional module.

I offered a shared document for new vocabulary.

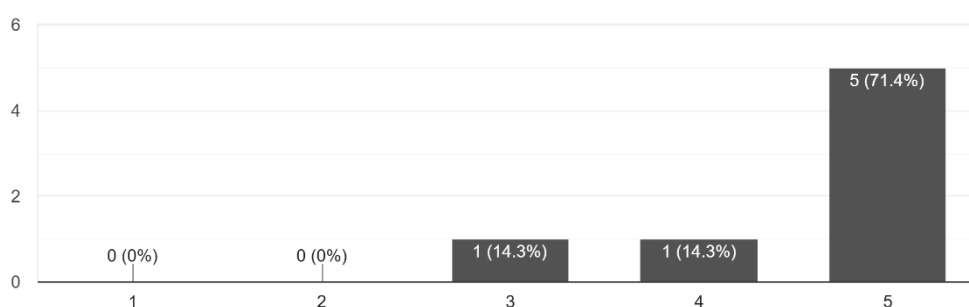
FINAL THOUGHTS

This segment of the survey offered the respondents to add some final thoughts, recommendations and conclusions in relation to the eight-week implementation process. The segment comprised two questions which have been answered as follows.

17. Overall, how satisfied are you with the pilot programme?

22. Overall, how satisfied are you with the pilot programme?

7 responses



Graph 15. Overall, how satisfied are you with the pilot programme?

In response to this question, 71,4% (5 respondents) stated that they were very satisfied, 14,3% (1 respondent) stated that they were satisfied, and 14,3% (1 respondent) remained neutral.

18. When asked if they had any additional comments or insights, respondents offered the following answers:

I think it went really well and the students were happy with the course.

Personally, I realise how important the language course is for foreign students and also how grateful they are for the opportunity to take part in the language course.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation of the pilot programme on digital storytelling for language learning yielded overwhelmingly positive feedback from participants. The structured module, spanning eight weeks, effectively engaged students by integrating storytelling elements with digital tools, fostering both creative and linguistic skills.

The overall experience was highly rated, with a majority of respondents (57.1%) deeming it excellent and 28.6% finding it good. Importantly, all participants agreed that the module topics progressed logically, and the programme objectives were clearly aligned with the course content.

Across all instructional weeks, the effectiveness of each module was consistently affirmed, with most weeks being rated as highly effective by the majority of respondents. In particular, Weeks 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8 received unanimous support as highly effective, while other weeks also garnered strong approval. The course successfully balanced theoretical knowledge with hands-on activities, enabling students to transition from conceptualising their stories to creating digital narratives.

Moreover, digital storytelling was perceived as a powerful tool for overcoming language barriers, with 100% of respondents affirming its effectiveness in this regard. The module structure and content facilitated creative expression while enhancing students' confidence in language use. However, certain challenges were noted, including time constraints (42.9%), student engagement difficulties (42.9%), software limitations (14.3%), and a lack of expertise in language teaching among some facilitators (14.3%).

Despite these minor challenges, 71.4% of respondents did not feel the need for substantial modifications to the module's flow or content. However, some suggested allocating additional time for writing and peer discussions and providing ready-made storyboard templates to aid story development. Similarly, while 42.9% felt no additional resources were necessary, others highlighted the benefits of asynchronous lesson recordings, shared vocabulary documents, and potential course recognition with ECTS credits to increase student commitment.

Recommendations

Enhance Student Engagement and Commitment

1. Integrating the digital storytelling course into an accredited module where students can earn ECTS credits or formal recognition.
2. Exploring strategies to increase student motivation, such as incorporating peer collaboration opportunities and interactive activities that reinforce engagement throughout the programme.

Improve Story Development Support

3. Providing structured storyboard templates to help students organise their ideas efficiently.
4. Allocating more in-class time for story writing and peer discussions, allowing students to refine their narratives collaboratively.

Address Technical and Time-Related Challenges

5. Evaluating alternative digital storytelling tools that offer greater accessibility and flexibility to mitigate software-related challenges (e.g., licensing fees and content limitations).
6. Adjusting the schedule to better accommodate the video editing process, ensuring students have sufficient time to complete and refine their digital stories.

Expand Learning Resources

7. Maintaining the practice of recording lessons and offering them asynchronously for students who need to revisit course material.
8. Developing additional vocabulary-building resources to support language learning in parallel with storytelling activities.

By implementing these refinements, the course can further strengthen its impact, ensuring that students benefit maximally from the digital storytelling experience while overcoming logistical and technical barriers. The overwhelmingly positive feedback affirms the programme's effectiveness, with minor adjustments poised to enhance both student engagement and the overall learning experience.

— End of Document —

This document is produced as part of the program
Erasmus+ KA220-HED – Cooperation Partnerships in Higher
Education,
within the scope of the project titled
“Digital Storytelling in Supporting Immigrant University Students’
Language and Technology Use Skills”
under Work Package 2 of
“Development of an eight-week innovative educational course
design incorporating digital storytelling, language education,
and social integration”.

With the Reference Number: 2023-1-TR01-KA220-HED-
000167303

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Co-funded by
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