

Chapter 9

Digital Storytelling and Creativity through E-Learning

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ABSTRACT

Technological developments have brought innovation, transformation, and change into a number of environments. Education settings constitute the basis of these environments. Among the technological developments in educational environments are technology applications that allow individuals to express themselves better, to recognize their own potential, and to develop themselves. The digital storytelling approach, one of such applications, provides students with several opportunities that enable them to use technology as active participant designers in the process of putting forward their creativity and that allow them to create their own original and creative languages. The digital storytelling approach reveals students' creativity as well as provides a multifaceted environment to help students acquire various skills and efficacies such as technology use efficacy, sophisticated literacy skills, multi-cultural viewpoints, critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, and capability of putting different perspectives into practice. In such a multifaceted environment, students inevitably demonstrate their creativity. Effective integration of creative digital storytelling applications into e-learning environments will result in an interactive process since, within the framework of e-learning, digital storytelling helps students to develop a creative, multi-cultural, project-based viewpoint that allows access to rich sources and that has a universal interaction. This chapter discusses how digital storytelling can be connected with creativity, based on e-learning system. The discussion of the chapter serves to determine the reflections of the digital storytelling approach on creativity and to associate digital storytelling with the e-learning-based application process. This chapter focuses on the aim throughout the narrative literature review.

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INTRODUCTION

Technological opportunities have brought innovations and developments into a number of environments. Recent technological developments have made it necessary to use technology-supported media effectively in instructional processes when students are active users of technology. In this respect, it is important to involve students effectively in education systems formed for technology use in educational environments. Today, digital storytelling is considered to be one of the approaches which allow students to use technology actively especially in educational environments and which contribute to effective use of technology (Gils, 2005).

Digital storytelling is the presentation of an original story with a multifaceted and creative approach accompanied by such enriched components as illustrations and audio and video features (Robin, 2008). According to another definition, digital storytelling is based on the presentation of such multimedia tools as visual images, audios and videos via a story in order to give in-depth information about a certain subject and to share feelings and thoughts (Gils, 2005; Meadows, 2003). Today, digital storytelling requires gathering current multimedia opportunities in an informative, entertaining and instructional manner. Though there are a number of definitions of digital storytelling, in fact, digital storytelling covers a wide concept area from personal storytelling to interactive storytelling applications and from web-based storytelling approaches to digital short movies.

Digital storytelling allows students to collect, organize and reflect information for learning and to establish communication. Thus, digital storytelling influences students' cognitive development positively and integrates technology effectively into the learning environment (Gils, 2005; Jonassen, 2003). Digital storytelling is basically a process that makes it possible for a student to use technology as a designer. In this

process, students can interpret their thoughts in line with their experiences and thereby form their own language (Barret, 2006; Tendero, 2006). The digital storytelling system in which students take part as designers constitutes an entertaining learning environment and provides students with an opportunity to form a visual language (Kindborg, 2001).

In digital storytelling approach, though the purpose seems to put forward a product, the process is much more important. The students' approach to the digital storytelling process, their experiences, gains, efficacies and their ways of expressing themselves are the factors that constitute the quality of the process (Lambert, 2006). Therefore, it is important how to structure the storytelling process, which environments to relate this process to, what sort of a platform to conduct the process in and how to gather the participants. In addition, it is also important relate this process to a multifaceted and interactive technology-based learning environment considering the current technological opportunities.

BACKGROUND

The digital storytelling approach can be used in a number of instructional processes and fields thanks to its multifaceted features. Digital storytelling provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate different, original and creative approaches to restructuring a story with the help of multimedia facilities (visual images, audios, videos, music and so on).

In addition, the digital storytelling approach leads to the use of a student-centered and/or project-based learning strategy in the educational environment, allows students to participate actively in the learning process, and helps create an effective learning environment (Sharda, 2007; Barret, 2006). Digital storytelling provides students with the opportunities to explore, create,

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