

Tools, Pedagogical Models, and Best Practices for Digital Storytelling



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INTRODUCTION

Sharing photos and short videos with others has become increasingly popular among youth. Using social media services, users share events and moments from their daily lives. Östman (2015) defined this phenomenon as *life-publishing*. Examples of life-publishing include the growing use of Snapchat and Periscope social media services among youth. According to Piwek and Joinson (2016), Snapchat users mainly share “selfies,” and they mostly use the service at home. Although sharing videos is a common activity among youth, schools are not using digital videos for learning. There is a need to study the pedagogical models that could be used in designing classroom activities involving the use of digital videos.

In this chapter, digital video storytelling refers to learning activities that involve the creation and use of digital video. According to Ladeira, Marsden, and Green (2011, p. 431), “digital storytelling typically seeks to preserve and disseminate real-life, non-fiction stories.” In a learning context, digital storytelling involves the creation and distribution of content that is used in the learning process as well as the interaction between the users of the content. Digital storytelling that includes user-generated content has been used in preserving personal experiences (Ladeira, Marsden & Green, 2011), mobile collaborative live video production, such as in an event in which a Video Jockey (VJ) mixes the video feed using

the audience (Engström, Esbjörnsson & Juhlin, 2008), and in collaborative learning (Niemi, Harju, Vivitsou, Viitanen, Multisilta & Kuokkanen, 2014; Niemi & Multisilta, 2015; Tuomi & Multisilta, 2010; Wolf & Rummeler, 2011). In this chapter, digital video storytelling will be discussed in the context of learning.

Digital video storytelling can be seen as an approach to learning twenty-first century skills. Taking advantage of the creative potential of modern communication technologies, students can work together, explore their ideas, and become creators, producers, and active learning participants. Twenty-first century skills have become a key topic on the agendas of education systems worldwide. Educators are required to seek new forms of teaching and learning for the future. The challenge is determining how to motivate students to learn and become engaged in learning. Digital video storytelling can assist in motivating students by bringing technologies they use in their free time into the school environment.

In this chapter, pedagogical models, examples, best practices, and outcomes that illustrate how students become engaged and motivated when using digital storytelling in knowledge creation in cross-cultural settings will be presented. The results are based on the empirical data and findings from several international pilots.

A review of existing tools and practices for digital video storytelling will be presented. The results show that students can become highly

engaged in learning through digital storytelling. The research data indicate that engagement in digital video storytelling is a combination of a joy of learning (fun) and a commitment to hard work.

BACKGROUND

The use of videos on the Internet has been expanding rapidly in the last few years. Although the most popular web video content is related to music videos and entertainment, web videos can have several educational uses. Khan Academy (www.khanacademy.com) is an example of a web video service that has a large collection of educational videos. According to Talbert (2012, para. 7), “Khan Academy is a collection of video lectures that give demonstrations of mechanical processes.” Considerable debate has taken place regarding the pedagogical model used at Khan Academy (Prensky, 2011; Talbert, 2012; Thompson, 2011). The main criticism is that Khan Academy is not supporting a constructivist learning model in which learners actively create knowledge using activities that support knowledge construction.

The creation of video stories by the learners themselves is considered a more effective way of using video in learning. According to Correia et al. (2005, p. 1), “the ability to have constant access through mobile devices allows a new way of doing cinematographic narratives that can enhance the participants’ experience in a significant way.”

Video stories can be interactive (Ladeira, Marsden and Green, 2011) or generated in real time with scripting (Vaucelle & Davenport, 2004). Storytelling platforms can also support automatic story creation (Multisilta & Mäenpää, 2008; Zsombori, et al., 2011). Multisilta et al. created a mobile social media service for community created videos (Multisilta & Mäenpää, 2008). MoViE, the *Mobile Video Experience Platform*, is a research platform for studying how people create video stories and how they share and learn with mobile social media. MoViE has been used both in primary and secondary schools (Tuomi &

Multisilta, 2010) as well as in higher education (Kiili, Multisilta, Suominen & Ketamo, 2010).

Digital stories have also been used to preserve, reflect on, and share the life experiences of people who do not have access to personal computers and who are living in rural areas in South Africa (Bidwell, Reitmaier, Marsden & Hansen, 2011). Digital story creation may also be able to provide a means of exploring self-identity through the sharing and group construction of digital video stories (Vaucelle & Davenport, 2004).

LEARNING USING DIGITAL VIDEO STORYTELLING

Pedagogical Models

In this subchapter, two pedagogical models for using digital videos and storytelling will be presented. The aim of the pedagogical models is to provide teachers with a sound basis for applying digital video storytelling tools in their own classrooms. The global sharing pedagogy and video inquiry learning models are both based on theoretical work that has been evaluated in empirical research projects.

As a pedagogical method, digital storytelling builds on learner-centered approaches that can improve students’ learning in several ways (Kearney, 2009; Yang, 2012). According to Niemi et al. (2014), learning with digital storytelling is seen as a socially and culturally related process that takes place in the interaction between a learner and material tools, psychological tools, or other human beings (Vygotsky, 1978). In this sense, it builds on the constructivist learning model. Learners play a central role in exploring and building knowledge by using tools available in the digital learning environment. Students also interact with psychological tools when using language, brainstorming, or creating stories. Learning with others can take place when creating video stories with peers and watching stories that other students have made. When planning and making

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