

# Chapter 12

## Students' Perceptions of Using Story Maps in Geography Teaching and Learning

Vitor Ribeiro  
*University of Minho, Portugal*

### ABSTRACT

*Geography is the science of space. Students must understand geographic patterns, relationships, and context over the Earth to acquire a spatial perspective and geographical knowledge and skills. Geotechnologies play an important role in reaching those geographic contents and promote spatial thinking. Mapping tools have an unprecedented growth due to the internet development. Teachers can use the potential of geographic information systems (GIS), 2D interactive maps, and 3D virtual globes to teach geography and promote interdisciplinarity. This chapter envisages students' perceptions on using web mapping tools in the process of teaching and learning. Results were obtained by a survey implemented to 30 students of initial teachers training class. Students had to implement a story map during the semester for practical assessment. Students revealed that they had never used story maps before, despite their potential for teaching and learning process and recent developments.*

### INTRODUCTION

Spatial thinking is related with the mobilization of reasoning about spatial representations. It represents one of the core skills for the geographically learning

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-3073-9.ch012

to achieve competent citizens to answer current and future challenges of a world in constant transformation. The stimulation of spatial thinking and the development of geographic skills, are essential in determining sustainable solutions to environmental, social, and economic challenges, involves a rich and meaningful Geographical Education (GE). Indeed, digitalization challenges are increasing very fast in education contexts. Internet is still shaping society by changing everyday life. Technology developments are contributing to many education reforms, mainly in relation to the use of web-based maps in Geography teaching and learning. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) on the web has been growing very fast in last years, becoming a more powerful technology to Geography teaching and learning and to promote interdisciplinary. Leading with Spatial representation Web Based interactive maps is in line with “Digital Natives” requirements by learning with Virtual Globes, Interactive maps, Applications, Crowdsourcing, Volunteer GIS Mapping or Remote Sensing. The use of online interactive map has become ubiquitous. Internet and mobile devices developments requires the regularly use of mapping services. Nowadays to analyse, develop, and communicate geographic information is possible by non-cartographic specialists. Everyone is producing geocoded information and share geographic information in several ways, social media, blogs, internet pages or story maps. If society is involved with this way of communicating geographic information, one can ask why schools are very faraway of integrating Geographic Information Technologies as a fundamental tool to teach and learn. Effectively, interdisciplinarity can be efficiently promoted, spatial thinking is enhanced, and geographic skills are developed. Teachers can use Story Maps to enhance students geocabilities by exploring and analysing spatial data via digital storytelling to their students. Since it is a very accessible tools and can combine the potential of 2d and 3d mapping and multimedia data, particularly by include image, video, and audio. It is designed to be used in multiple dispositive.

This chapter has the objective of understand students' perception about

- precedent knowledge on using Story map applications;
- the usability of story map;
- difficulty in developing the application;
- the potential of Story maps in the process of teaching and learning;
- future use in their classes;

It is also a contribution to fill the lack of empirical research on using Story Maps in classes.

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