

The Value of Digital Storytelling as an L2 Narrative Practice

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Abstract The purpose of this study was to investigate the value of introducing digital storytelling (DST) into second language (L2) narrative practice, by examining the characteristics of L2 learners' narrative when multimodality is added. To this end, the present study examined pairs of personal narrative scripts produced by 50 undergraduate L2 learners in DST, along with their self-created videos for DST presentation, as well as their narrative scripts developed in traditional (exclusively linguistic) modes. The participants' narrative scripts and videos were analyzed based on the 'good story' framework, which consists of important dimensions to consider in the narrative genre. The findings demonstrate that L2 students' narratives become better stories when they are practiced in DST, particularly in terms of expressing one's feeling, showing awareness of the audience, and adding more details to the story. Also, the availability of multiple modes of expression was found to expand their narrative topics and elicit their stories and visions more powerfully. The authors conclude that an understanding of the unique features of DST enables teachers to use this new approach for enhancing L2 narrative skills in their learners.

Keywords Digital storytelling · Good story · L2 learners · Multimodality · Narrative

Introduction

Digital storytelling (DST), a multimodal approach to narrative practice (Lambert 2013), has recently garnered attention and has been used in second language (L2) classrooms. Ohler (2005/2006) argues that DST represents an evolution of narrative practice in which multimedia tools, such as images, audio files, and videos are incorporated into texts. As a result, students are expected to develop media literacy and critical thinking through DST. According to the available literature related to DST, this multimodal approach to narrative practice allows L2 learners to present their knowledge and create meaning in more powerful and natural ways than through an exclusively linguistic approach (Hafner 2013; Nelson et al. 2008; Powell 2005). Hafner (2014) further noted that adapting multimodality "would cater to the needs of second or foreign language learners, who are increasingly involved in the consumption and production of multimodal texts such as web pages" (p. 660).

Previous studies have predominantly paid attention to L2 learners' meaning-making in DST and suggested that this meaning-making process, through visual or verbal synergy, is beneficial (Jewitt 2006; Royce 2002), and significantly affects an author's voice and intention (Nelson 2006). Some studies have thus acclaimed DST as a learner-oriented and valuable instrument in L2 classrooms (e.g., Castañeda 2013; Hafner and Miller 2011).

Few of those studies, however, have been fully dedicated to investigating the characteristics of L2 learners' narratives, including text scripts composed for DST. Indeed, previous DST studies have largely relied on a small-scale case-study approach, focusing on the benefits and pitfalls of using DST predominantly from affective and sociocultural perspectives (e.g., Castañeda 2013; Thang

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et al. 2014). That said, the detailed analysis of L2 learners' narrative artifacts in the DST mode should be conducted in order to understand its nature and characteristics. It should be noted that the intention of our study is to observe and analyze the effects of introducing digital artifacts to the traditional L2 narrative practice, by considering the traditional narrative scripts as the baseline data. The reported observations and analysis in our study would serve to make L2 instructors aware of the effects of introducing DST, and the use of such digital artifacts into the L2 narrative practice. To this end, we extensively reviewed pairs of personal narrative scripts produced by 50 undergraduate L2 learners in two different modes: traditional storytelling and digital storytelling. We additionally analyzed the products of digital storytelling (i.e., participants' self-created movies in DST mode) in order to examine how L2 learners could develop and present their stories when multimodality was available. DST, a newly emerging L2 narrative approach, can be appropriately used in L2 teaching only if teaching practitioners understand its nature and characteristics.

Background

Elements of Personal Narratives

Narratives or stories offer a way of sharing human experience and cultural identity (Bruner 1990; Wajnryb 2003). Particularly, a personal narrative told in a first-person voice represents "a [storyteller's] recount of a real past experience" (McCabe et al. 2008, p. 194). Proficiency in the personal narrative form has been suggested as an important indicator of a child's social and academic success (McCabe et al. 2008), and also as a valuable skill for L2 learners (Cortazzi and Jin 2007; Holmes and Marra 2011). Cortazzi and Jin (2007) argue that telling personal stories in the L2 enhances L2 learners' linguistic and metacognitive development, and also "gives credibility to the voice of their experiences" (p. 646).

For successful integration of learners' personal stories into L2 classrooms to occur, extensive practice guided by a good story framework is required (Jones 2001). In this regard, essential characteristics have been discussed as necessary conventions for good storytellers to practice. First, 'the point of story,' sometimes called the remarkable or tellable topic (Labov and Waletzky 1967; van Dijk 1976), is an essential element of a good story. It advises, informs, or warns the audience about ways of the world (Hall 2002). Second, 'authentic voice' brings the power of the story to narratives (Spandel 2008; Sperling and Appleman 2011). Authentic voice may be described as an author's own thoughts or attitude—"true self" (Elbow 2007, p. 168), or ideological consciousness (Bakhtin 1981)

that represent his or her characters. Authentic voice is also used to assert a narrator's position and to appeal to the audience's shared knowledge (Woodbridge 2017). Third, 'feeling' in personal narratives is concerned with a direct or indirect description of the author's emotional reaction to the selected topic, not necessarily evaluative (Woodbridge 2017). To express emotions, sensory verbs such as feel, worry, and wish are sometimes used (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004). Finally, 'audience awareness' is also recognized as a key element of good narrative writing, pointing to interaction between the narrator and audience. Audience awareness could emerge in narrative through internal dialogues (Humphrey et al. 2014), vivid or expository details (Woodbridge 2017), and a clear structure (Loveland et al. 1990). These constitute elements of a good story, that in turn are adapted together as an analytical framework of personal narratives in this study (good story framework, henceforth; see Fig. 1).

Digital Storytelling in Second Language Teaching

According to Frazel (2010), the making of DST pieces involves "a process that blends media to enrich and enhance the written or spoken word", and allows one to "combine, in any number of ways, images, audio, and video to tell a story" (p. 9). DST has penetrated many people's lives today, as a majority of their online activities may fall within the range of DST categories (e.g., presenting a podcast, writing SNS posts) (Alexander 2011). DST has also garnered the attention of researchers and teachers in the field of L2 teaching, as its multimodality serves as a useful scaffolding for L2 learners with a limited linguistic repertoire (Hafner 2014), enabling them to convey their messages and ideas more effectively.

DST, as a meaning representation tool, has largely been introduced to L2 learners in a positive way. Studies have pointed out that this multimodal approach offers a greater number of options by which to convey meaning than its traditional counterpart (Jewitt 2006; Hull and Nelson

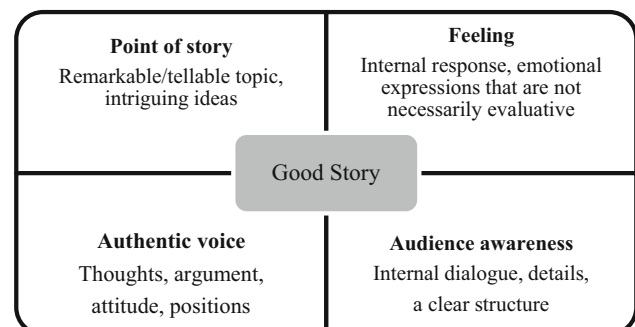


Fig. 1 Elements of a good story: personal narrative

2005). In particular, the multimodal approach equips L2 learners who have a limited proficiency with nonlinguistic modes for sharing knowledge and expressing self-meaning (Miller 1998). Thus, DST has been acclaimed as enabling L2 learners to represent meaning more easily, or more appropriately, beyond their current target language level.

Not only does DST offer more choices, it also allows generation of new meaning (Jewitt 2006; Kress 2003). Hull and Katz (2006) argued that DST allows learners to create a personal narrative, “providing space for material and symbolic images and thereby additional layers of meaning” (p. 59). Integrating semiotic resources represents intended meaning, and also yields the third meaning colored with individual, cultural and social values and subjectivities. As an example, Shin and Cimako (2008) attended to this new meaning making process in their college ESL writing class, and found that students effectively selected nonlinguistic modes to present cultural and national identities and to reveal ‘emotional connections’ with their topics.

Ohler (2013) supports the use of DST in teaching L2 writing in particular, suggesting that engaging in DST offers learners opportunities to acquire and use a range of learning strategies “as they write [a script for their story] and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a wide variety of purposes” (p. 59). Ohler further emphasizes that writing a script for a story deserves more attention, with the genre of this writing generally being a personal narrative (Lambert 2013). Garrard (2011) also reviewed scripts of L2 digital stories. She asked 22 Irish students in a 6th grade class to create a digital story about their school experience, and their scripts were quantitatively assessed in terms of the five DST criteria of ‘story grammar’: purpose of story, point of view, main event, pacing of narrative, and use of grammar/language. She found that students understood the grammar of DST well and created good stories, performing best in terms of the point of view. Although Garrard (2011) extensively reviewed quality of DST with large-scale data, the outcome was not found with qualitative language analysis or in comparison with their non-DST writing.

Therefore, in the present study, L2 learners’ narrative scripts in DST, an integral element of DST (Ohler 2005/2006), are examined along with their narrative scripts in traditional mode together, which would show us the effects of adding digital artifacts to L2 learners’ narrative. We address the following as a guiding research question in the present study: “What are the characteristics of L2 learners’ narrative practice in digital storytelling mode, in terms of the good story framework?”

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study were 50 Korean university freshmen (33 female, 17 male students, aged between 19 and 21), whose major was English education. Their English proficiency varied from ‘intermediate low’ to ‘intermediate high’, according to their official scores on the “English” subsection of the Korean College Scholastic Ability Test. Among the members of this sample, ten students reported having more than 1 year of study experience in English-speaking countries. The participants were registered in a course titled ‘Computers and English Education’ which mainly offers computer skills instruction in a lab.

Materials

The major data for this study came from the 50 participants’ storytelling in two modes: in-class, traditional storytelling and digital storytelling. The in-class storytelling (IST) was scripted by each participant for the purpose of a 3-min speech called ‘Storytelling I,’ in class at the beginning of the semester. The participants were not given any instruction on how to develop personal narratives for this task, but they were asked to introduce themselves (e.g., childhood, school, personality, or future dream) to their classmates. The script was posted on the individual student’s blog before the presentation, and the students gave the speech in class based on this script. The digital storytelling (DST) was submitted along with a self-created movie on their blogs during the 12 week of the semester. The student movie included multimedia elements such as images, photos, videos, dynamic effects, background music, and their narration speech. As in the case of ‘Storytelling I,’ the participants were asked to convey their own story to their classmates for Storytelling II. The participants were allowed to maintain a similar topic to the one they had written in Storytelling I, or to write about a new topic. It should be further noted, that the participants were given a wide range of activities and instruction related to the use of technology in English teaching between these two narrative tasks, but none of them were related to composition or involved instruction in composition.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. First, the good story framework was employed to qualitatively analyze the participants’ scripts in terms of ‘Point of story,’ ‘Authentic voice,’ ‘Feeling,’ and ‘Audience awareness.’ First, when a participant

introduced a new tellable topic (van Dijk 1976) or event, its occurrence was coded in the ‘Point of story’ category. The selected topics were then examined and logged in terms of its content. On the other hand, the author’s thoughts, arguments, or personal positions were coded in the ‘Authentic voice’ category (e.g., “This saying has given me big help since I was in middle school”). Some emotional expressions such as “I feel happy when I listen to this” or “I hate all kinds of insects. Oohoo! They are just horrible” were coded in the ‘Feeling’ category. Internal dialogues (Humphrey et al. 2014, e.g., “This time you are lucky, because you can hear my song”), expository details, and discourse markers for clear organization and understanding were coded as ‘Audience awareness’ category. After the coding, coded logs were repeatedly reviewed and compared between DST and IST data. The number of some elements (i.e., authentic voice, feeling, and awareness of audience) in IST and DST were also counted, averaged, and statistically compared using a series of paired sample *t*-tests.

An analysis of digital products (i.e., participants’ self-created movies for Storytelling II) was also carried out, in order to examine how L2 learners created new meaning in DST, by repeatedly reviewing the scenes of the movies along with the scripts written for their DST. The coded DST text data, based on the good story framework, mentioned above, were repeatedly reviewed together with the images and other multimedia effects integrated into their DST. For example, when the part that includes ‘good story’ elements such as “I miss my high school life [coded as feeling]”, the corresponding scene in the movie was carefully analyzed with images and effects in terms of ‘visual and verbal synergy’ (Jewitt 2006). The data triangulation was carried out by revisiting the IST script of the same participant in order to determine if any third meaning (Hull and Nelson 2005; Jewitt 2006) was newly generated in DST while narrating the same topic.

Finally, two types of scripts were also analyzed with a corpus analysis program (Concordance 3.1.) to compare the word choices between the IST and DST scripts, and to enhance trustworthiness in the findings from the qualitative analysis based on the good story framework. The corpus analysis was conducted based on the categorization of metadiscourse (Crismore et al. 1993; Hyland 2005) and close analysis of the participants’ scripts.

Results

The present section will begin with a quantitative description of general characteristics of narratives in two different modes in terms of length and occurrence of elements. Overall, most of the participants wrote a shorter

script when producing digital stories. Average word count of the DST scripts was significantly less than that of the IST scripts (mean = 399.3 for IST, mean = 325.7 for DST, $t(49) = 2.81$, $p = 0.007$), although length of the scripts varied remarkably among students (from 233 to 1035 words in IST and from 92 to 672 words in DST).

In terms of a good story framework, there was no significant difference between the two modes in authentic voice, while DST produced higher scores for feeling and audience awareness than IST (see Table 1).

Point of Story

Although the same instructions were given for performing the two narrative tasks, and the topic of the tasks remained identical (telling about oneself), the DST project had a unique effect on the students’ choices for their narrative topics. While the participants addressed the topics in some categories such as *hometown*, *personality*, *childhood*, *learning English*, *future vision* in both modes in a rather similar manner, the range of specific topics selected for their narrative in other categories (e.g., types of previous experience, one’s favorite things) was immensely extended in DST (see Table 2), because of the availability of multimedia options in expressing their stories. For example, subjects that cannot be well described in an exclusively linguistic mode, such as fashion styles or a favorite singer’s voice, emerged in DST.

In the data analysis, we found that all DST subjects and contents were closely related to the availability of multimedia elements (i.e., image, sound, or movie). For example, student #7 (S7) introduced her favorite artist by integrating his painting (see Fig. 2 for the relevant image) into her story as follows:

- “As you can see, there is a pipe, but underneath the pipe there is a saying that ‘this is not a pipe.’ Isn’t it interesting? This is the painting which is my favorite.” (S7)

DST thus appears to give L2 learners opportunities to try hitherto unexplored topics in their narrative, and deliver a story in ways that they have not touched upon before.

Authentic Voice

Table 1 shows there was no significant difference between the two modes in authentic voice in terms of frequency ($t(49) = -0.31$, $p = 0.76$). However, when the participants’ narratives were given close attention, it was found that the participants shared their current vision of their future more concretely and passionately in DST, as can be seen in the below excerpts of S29’s narrative in IST and DST. When the relevant scene in S29’s self-created movie was

Table 1 Statistical comparison of total frequency of authentic voice, feelings, and audience awareness

Category	Frequency in in-class storytelling		Frequency in digital storytelling		<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Authentic voice	9.11	5.38	8.77	5.21	- 0.31	49	0.761
Feelings	2.64	2.24	4.06	3.02	2.97	49	0.005**
Audience awareness	0.20	0.45	1.30	2.00	3.99	49	0.001**

** $p < 0.01$

Table 2 A range of topics addressed in IST and DST

Category	Topics in IST	Topics in DST
Experience	Physical growth, part-time work experience, life at the dormitory, overseas trip	Joy of current life, life in Army, drinking experience, living in other countries, life at the dormitory, graduation day, overseas trip
School	High school	Middle school, high school, university, university friends, middle school friends, high school friends, classmates
Family	Family members	Family members, family members' appearance, sister's fashion, differences between oneself and brother
Hobby	Cooking, playing musical instruments, learning a sign language	Listening to music, playing musical instruments, kendo (sport), body-building, basketball, learning a sign language
Favorites	Food	Food, American dramas, movies, movie stars, singers' voice, books, colors, church activities, fashion
Others	Goal of this year	Future travel plan



Fig. 2 The image integrated in S7's DST (© René Magrit/ADAGP, Paris-SACK, Seoul, 2017)

examined, it was found that the following portion of the script was accompanied by exciting up-tempo rock music, and a breathtaking vista of mountains, which appear to symbolize her vision. Thus, the simultaneous use of music and image in this scene reinforced the verbal description of her vision, which helped to embellish her story further, with stronger determination to achieve her goal being revealed.

- [S29 IST] "I applied to English Education because I'm positive to English and I'm having fun in studying

English and I have an interest in teaching. Also, I think I will study English more enthusiastically as English is the best equipment to communicate with various, many people from all over the world."

- [S29 DST] "I applied to the department of English education because I am positive in English and I am having fun in studying English and also teaching. I think I will study English more enthusiastically as English is the best equipment to communicate with various many people all over the world. My motto is 'Young man, make your name worth something.' When I read this quote, I felt like I should try it every moment to train myself to achieve more things I wished."

A similar pattern of authentic voice expressing the idea regarding one's vision was found in S3's narrative regarding her future goal to be an announcer. In DST mode, S3's voice regarding her vision sounded more concrete and passionate as she idolized her role model (Kim Ju-ha), and the introduction to her role model was supplemented by the addition of the images of this figure in her storytelling.

- [S3 IST] "Actually, English teacher is not my dream. I want to be an announcer who delivers the news at 9 o'clock. I've dreamed it for about 12 or 13 years. That is, I wanted it since when I was 7 or 8. Because of

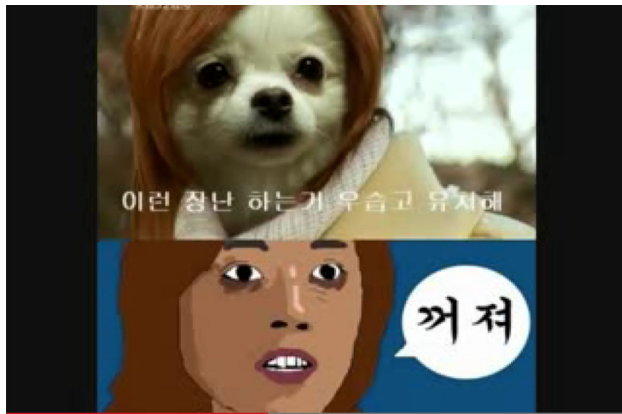


Fig. 3 The image integrated in S16's DST

courage, I wanted to be the person who is in TV. Actually, I was amazed at the announcer's courage."

- [S3 DST] "My ultimate goal is to be an announcer. My role model is Ju-ha Kim. She is a gorgeous, wonderful and really smart woman, I think. I want to be 'the next Kim Ju-ha.' I know it is not easy to make it. Because, to make it, I have to study hard and practice practical skills like presentation or delivering a speech. But I think it's okay, I can endure and even I will enjoy them. Because I just really want to be an announcer."

In addition, some participants' voices were found to be stronger in DST. As the below excerpts illustrate, while S7's description of her vision is largely based on her current plans in IST, it is presented with a more emphatic tone in DST:

- [S7 IST] "To become an English teacher, I want to attend a U.S. University on an exchange scholarship, and experience many things. In this department, I want to study problems and solutions in Public English Education, how to educate English effectively. Also, I want to reinforce my common sense, read lots of books

Table 3 Comparison of emotional words between in-class storytelling and digital storytelling

Word	In-class storytelling		Digital storytelling	
	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>
Emotional				
Love(d)	0.24	47	0.47	77
Hard	0.18	35	0.35	57
Happy	0.12	23	0.22	35
Enjoy(ed)	0.13	26	0.16	26

% and *n*, respectively, refer to the average percentage of appearances of a word (in proportion to the total words) and the frequency of its occurrence in the participants' scripts

to become an intellectual teacher. I'm very look forward to how fabulous my future."

- [S7 DST] "I am in agony about what I need for an English teacher. The thing what I know is to love students and to be loved by the students. In the future, I will have a hard road ahead of me. But I don't care because I believe me. I am happy because I am near to be an English teacher more and more. I am a freshman of the department of English Education in CAU. Above all things, I am happy because I have a dream."

To summarize, the 'authentic voices' emerging in DST among the participants were found to be qualitatively different from those in IST, with the former eliciting their visions more concretely and powerfully.

Feeling

As can be observed in Table 1, 'feelings' were found significantly more often in DST. Evidence from qualitative analysis corroborates this finding. Multimedia options, particularly images in DST, have effectively triggered writers' emotions as the following examples from their scripts illustrate.

- (showing cafeteria food) "These are real lunch of my high school. I love them because they are really delicious." (S7)
- (showing photos of a friend) "She had great personality. We hung out together a lot. I love her so much." (S24)
- (showing a photo of an insect) "I hate all kinds of insects. Oohoo! They are just horrible." (S31)

Another characteristic of participants' narrative in DST related to 'feeling' was concerned with their uses of humor, serving several pragmatic purposes during their presentation. Humor in their narrative was primarily manifested through uses of odd-looking pictures (e.g., a dog-faced man). For example, as illustrated in Fig. 3, S16 included funny images in the middle of her DST. In Fig. 3, subtitles in Korean could be roughly translated into "You're so immature and foolish to play this kind of trick" (top image), and "Get lost!" (bottom image).

Functions of the aforementioned images embedded in DST narratives ranged from gathering the audience's attention, arousing laughter, to addressing one's embarrassment after sharing his or her personal story or secrets. Close examination of participants' narratives revealed that such uses of humor were absent in IST, presumably due to the lack of images therein.

Finally, emotional expressions (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004), included in the list of 150 top frequency words in the corpus of participants' scripts, were selected. These

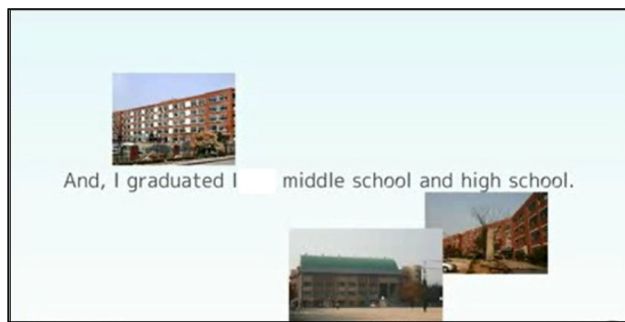


Fig. 4 The image of school integrated in S7’s DST

emotional expressions included ‘love (ranked 32nd in DST, and 79th in IST),’ ‘hard (ranked 41st in DST, and 91st in IST),’ ‘happy (ranked 74th in DST, and 127th in IST),’ and ‘enjoy(ed) (ranked 105th in DST, and out of the list in IST).’ As can be observed in Table 3, DST was loaded with more feelings in general, as participants used these words more frequently in DST (see Table 3).

Audience Awareness

Participants were more conscious of their audience in the DST mode (see Table 1). They demonstrated audience awareness 6.5 times more in DST scripts than in IST scripts. They also made qualitatively more active interaction with their audience in DST, by directly addressing the audience—a sign of internal dialogue. The following extracts from S11 illustrate this point clearly:

[S11’s awareness of audience quoted from her IST]

- “...To briefly talk about my type.”
- “... Lastly, I will briefly talk about my dream.”

[S11’s awareness of audience quoted from her DST]

- “...If you want to go on a trip this summer vacation, let’s go together.”

Table 4 Comparison of transitional words between in-class storytelling and digital storytelling

Word	In-class storytelling		Digital storytelling	
	%	n	%	n
Transitional				
First	0.20	40	0.21	34
Second	0.06	11	0.09	15
Next	0.03	6	0.09	15
Now	0.28	56	0.44	71
Finally	0.03	5	0.11	18

% and n, respectively, refer to the average percentage of appearances of a word (in proportion to the total words) and the frequency of its occurrence in the participants’ scripts

- “...These are pictures of the children that I teach during Sunday school. Aren’t they adorable?”
- “Did you have fun? I wish you could enjoy this.”

It can be observed from these extracts, that S11 attempted to communicate with her audience more actively in DST, using the personal pronoun “you” or asking a question (e.g., Aren’t they adorable?), intended to elicit an agreement from her classmates. Results of the corpus analysis of word usage aligned with this finding, as pronouns such as ‘you’ and ‘we,’ the sign of internal dialogues, were used more frequently in DST (you and we, respectively, occurred 120 and 51 times in DST, and 91 and 33 times in IST).

In terms of vivid or expository details, another characteristic of audience awareness in the narrative genre, qualitative analysis revealed that DST evoked richer details related to the same topic. This pattern resulted from use of multimodality in DST. Images they used evoked their memory more vividly than words alone. We found several examples when comparing the two scripts, as shown below:

- [S7’IST]: “I went to P elementary school and I middle school and high school.”
- [S7’DST]: “I went to P elementary school. And I graduated I middle school and high school. The building with green roof is my favorite building ever because there is a dining room. Every day I ate dinner and I’ve never had such a delicious dinner in my whole school year.”
- [S28 IST] “My mother is a science teacher in high school.”
- [S28 DST] (showing mother zoom-in image) “My mother is a high school teacher. And she is very cool and funny. But she can be very strict sometimes. I depend on her very much. She can be my guide, best friend, or teacher.”

Even when addressing a similar topic, images (the authors’ own photo in this case) or other media (e.g., music) stimulated authors’ thoughts and memories more effectively than words, enabling them to enhance stories. These kinds of enriched details in the script, along with images, could create a new meaning for authors and their audience. For example, in the case of S7, showing pictures of her school (see Fig. 4) enabled her to add more details to her story, such as the taste of the school cafeteria food and the exterior of the building.

Finally, results of the corpus analysis of transitional words revealed that sequencers for timing and signposting, such as next, now, and finally, were used more frequently in DST (see Table 4), pointing to the sign of a clear structure (Loveland et al. 1990).

Discussion and Conclusion

This study addressed the gap in literature on DST, by examining its potential as an instructional approach to L2 narrative practice. To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first of its kind to take a substantial step towards evaluating how and for what purpose, DST can be used to this end. Analyses of participants' narrative scripts in DST, along with those in traditional mode and digital artifacts (i.e., their self-created movies), suggest that DST could improve L2 learners' narrative in some ways.

Findings here demonstrate that multiple modes of expression allowed L2 learners to generate visual/verbal synergy (Royce 2002). Writers mentioned topics that are less likely to be addressed in traditional narrative mode, including multisensory topics (e.g., fashion styles, favorite singer's voices). This constitutes an example of synthesized meanings in DST. The experience of writing scripts in the DST mode provides L2 learners opportunities to develop a script on hitherto unexplored topics. In addition, our findings reveal that L2 learners' narrative become better stories in terms of audience awareness when practiced in DST: DST narrative scripts demonstrated learners were more conscious about their audience in DST through uses of internal dialogues (Humphrey et al. 2014) and of sequencers for timing and signposting, pointing to the sign of a clear structure (Loveland et al. 1990). They also developed their topics with fuller details in DST—another piece of evidence for audience awareness (Woodbridge 2017).

Participants' narrative in DST also involved richer feelings (Nelson 2006), with multimedia options effectively eliciting their emotions. This finding was also confirmed with the corpus analysis, through which the participants retrieved more lexical items concerned with one's 'feeling' (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004). Conversely, although there was no significant difference between the two modes in frequency of the authentic voice, the participants described their current vision of their future more concretely and passionately in DST, again thanks to availability of multimedia embedded in their narrative.

Concerns about using DST have also been revealed in our findings in terms of teaching L2 narrative. Most of all, the participants generally wrote a shorter script when producing DST, because they could replace some lengthy descriptions with images, music, or short video clips. While this is a typical characteristic of DST, it is also possible that these multimedia options could serve as sources of avoidance strategy for some learners, which may not work in other contexts, such as academic writing and the official test of English proficiency.

Two limitations of this study are worth mentioning. First, in this study, the participants were asked to develop their narrative in IST mode first, and then in DST mode. Results may be different if the sequence of these two modes had been reversed. Thus, we cannot exclude the possibility that participants' narratives in the two modes were interdependent, although no instruction about narrative or composition was given between these two implementations, as mentioned in the methodology. Second, the sampling of this study comprised English Education majors, presumably with relatively higher proficiency level in English than average learners. Future research should investigate this issue with learners of different proficiency levels and majors.

In conclusion, findings of this study suggest DST practice could be beneficial in L2 classrooms, and it offers advantages that a traditional (exclusively linguistic) narrative approach does not. Findings of this study will be valuable in facilitating decisions of L2 teachers to add DST to their curriculum, by providing evidence-based information on characteristics of this narrative genre. Future research, focused on conducting longitudinal studies on effects of DST instructional approach on L2 learners' narrative practice, is crucial to gaining a better understanding of the value of this approach.

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