



Digital Storytelling in ESP: Towards a New Literacy in Hybrid Language Learning

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the use of virtual storytelling as a way to enhance students' language skills in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) –specifically Business English–, and to develop new literacies they could potentially apply in their future careers. To this end, in the theoretical framework, we review the literature related to the competencies and skills students need nowadays, the evolution of the use of storytelling in the physical classroom to its digital format for online settings, and its application in the ESP classroom. Then we analyze the results obtained from a survey in which respondents provided information on their perceptions after completing a digital storytelling activity. This data allow us to answer the research questions of our study. In the conclusion, we reflect on the importance of conducting this kind of study as a way to adapt training to the competencies and skills that students need to develop in the 21st century.

Keywords: digital storytelling; English for specific purposes; hybrid learning; Business English; 21st century skills.

El *storytelling* digital en el aula de inglés para fines específicos: ¿una nueva alfabetización en la formación híbrida en lenguas?

RESUMEN

Este estudio tiene como objetivo explorar el uso del *storytelling* digital como una forma de mejorar las habilidades lingüísticas de los estudiantes en inglés con fines específicos (ESP), particularmente en el caso del inglés del ámbito de los negocios, y desarrollar nuevas alfabetizaciones que podrían aplicarse en su futuro profesional. Para ello, en el marco teórico revisaremos la literatura relacionada con las competencias y habilidades que los estudiantes necesitan en la actualidad, la evolución del uso del *storytelling* en el aula física hasta su formato digital en entornos de enseñanza online, y su aplicación en el aula de ESP. Posteriormente, analizaremos los resultados obtenidos de una encuesta en la que los participantes aportaron información sobre sus percepciones tras completar una actividad de *storytelling* digital. Estos datos nos permitirán responder a las preguntas de investigación de nuestro estudio. En las conclusiones reflexionaremos sobre la importancia de realizar este tipo de estudios como forma de adecuar la formación a las competencias y habilidades que los estudiantes necesitan desarrollar en el siglo XXI.

Palabras clave: *storytelling* digital; inglés para fines específicos; formación híbrida; inglés financiero; habilidades del siglo XXI.



1. Introduction

Telling stories is an ancestral way of recounting events of any kind: historical, personal, and even professional. It is a technique that has been employed to entertain children, and adults for decades, but the general preconception of the use of storytelling is that it is normally employed in informal settings or in children's classrooms or environments. However, its use goes beyond the traditional thinking and has taken advantage of new technologies to jump to the classroom of higher-level education of a surprisingly wide variety of disciplines: medical education (Hensel & Rasco, 1992; Vali, 2007; Williams-Brown et al., 2002), nursing (Davidhizar & Lonser, 2003), language learning (Nguyen et al., 2014), economics (McCloskey, 1990), arts (Bull & Kajder, 2005), and even science education (Rowcliffe, 2004).

In this paper, we describe a virtual storytelling experience conducted in a specialized Translation classroom (Financial Translation) at the University of Alcalá (Spain) to enhance students' oral skills. Due to the unprecedented situation caused by the covid-19 pandemic, all classes had to be adapted to an online scenario from March 2020 until the end of the academic year in July (UAH, 2020a). For the academic year starting in September 2020, a hybrid modality was imposed (UAH, 2020b), and thus half of the classes were physically taught, whereas for the rest of them, the online platform BlackBoard Collaborate was used (Campus Online UAH, 2020).

This study aims to explore the use of digital storytelling (DST) as a way to enhance students' language skills in English for Specific Purposes (ESP), specifically in the case of Business English, but also to develop new literacies that could be potentially applied in their future professional career. Therefore, these were the two Research Questions (RQs) that we aimed to answer:

RQ1: Do students perceive storytelling as a way to help them enhance their language skills in Business English?

RQ2: Do students perceive virtual storytelling as a way to develop new literacies that they could apply in their professional life?

In the following theoretical framework below we describe some of the main digital literacies and competencies that students are required to develop to successfully face the new challenges that they are exposed to in our current society. We also review some of the main studies that explore the evolution from traditional storytelling to the digital format used in online teaching settings and how it has been specifically applied in ESP classes, as well as the multimodality that is inherent to it. After this literature review section, we explain the methodology and academic context of our study, and we analyze the results obtained from the survey, which allows us to provide an answer to the two RQs of our study. In the conclusion, we reflect on the importance of this kind of research to further explore the possibilities that DST has to enhance new digital literacies for students in the foreign language classroom.

2. Theoretical framework

Before defining and describing the main characteristics of both traditional storytelling and DST, we find it necessary to number the competencies that students of this century need to develop in order to face the challenges of the present and future society. We will continue with a description of the evolution of storytelling, its application in the ESP class, and the multimodality feature that characterizes it.

2.1 Students' Digital Literacies and Competencies required in the 21st Century

Under the umbrella of holistic education, the Ministry of Education of Singapore (2021) identified a list of competencies that they find essential to prepare students to achieve success in the fast-changing world we live in. Among other core values and social-emotional competencies, the main three groups of competencies necessary for the globalized world that the Ministry of Singapore highlights are the following: (1) civic literacy, global awareness, and cross-cultural skills, (2) critical and inventive thinking, and (3) communication, collaboration, and information skills. These three groups define the citizen of the future as a confident person, a concerned citizen, an active contributor, and a self-directed learner.

Stauffer (2020), based on the National Education Association (2012), on the other hand, focuses on a list of twelve 21st century skills framed within the Internet era. These skills are divided into three main groups: (1) learning skills, (2) literacy skills, and (3) life skills. The first group, the most significant one for many (Bellanca & Brandt, 2010; Greenstein, 2012; Rotherham & Willingham, 2009; Seitova, 2020), focuses on the mental skills that are necessary for students to develop in order to face the challenges of the modern professional world. The second group of skills allows students to select information, discern between fact or opinion, and detect fake news. Finally, the third group helps students not only in their professional environment but also in their personal everyday life through the transmission of intangible elements of use in both settings.

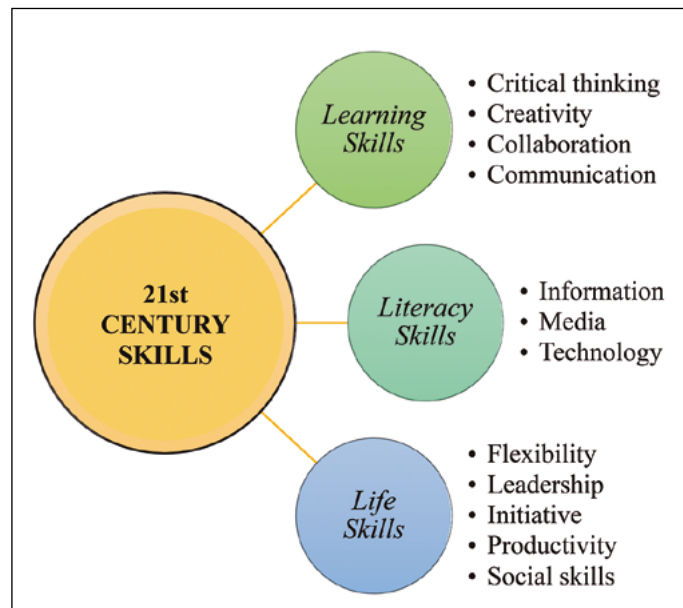


Figure 1. 21st Century Skills

As teachers of this century, we need to be aware of the importance of such skills, not only for transmitting them to our students but also because "instructors have a major job in changing training condition. They ought to have the option to assess instructional materials and pick the most fitting instrument for learners" (Seitova, 2020, p. 11). Thus, the development by teachers of innovative techniques and activities seems of vital importance to thrive in the modern professional and personal world.

2.2 From Storytelling to Digital Storytelling: Definition, Evolution and Main Features

Storytelling has been, through the 20th century, linked mainly to children (Greene, 1996). However, in 1973 the interest for this way of telling stories jumped from children to adults and, since then, several associations have been founded in America (the National Storytelling Association, NSA; the National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling, NAPPS), and in the rest of the world (the Federation for European Storytelling, the Storytelling Association in Singapore) to preserve the art of telling stories to children, young adults and adults, regardless of their age.

When defined, the term storytelling is “the vivid description of ideas, beliefs, personal experiences, and life-lessons through stories or narratives that evoke powerful emotions and insights” (Serrat, 2008, p. 1). The appearance of new technologies and new media has made changes in many genres and has resulted also in new ones. One of those altered genres has been that of storytelling, with the inclusion of video, photographs, voice-over, and audio (Lambert, 2009). Although there are various definitions of the term “digital storytelling” (DST), most of them revolve around the idea of “combining the art of telling stories with a variety of digital multimedia, such as images, audio, and video” (Robin, 2006, p. 1). In this line, Suwardy et al. (2013, p. 3) define digital storytelling as “an amalgamation of education and entertainment with an element of adventure”.

It may seem that DST is a fairly new concept. However, it dates back to the '90s when Lambert founded the Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS). Nowadays, it is frequent the use of DST as a teaching and learning tool, as it “not only draws students' attention but also inspires students with low levels of excitement and motivation” (Gürsoy, 2020, p. 104). We could affirm that “the benefits of DST significantly outweighed disadvantages” (de Jager et al. 2017, p. 2571), which include the development of the sense of community, the improvement of creativity and concentration, the increasing use of imagination, and the blossoming of critical thinking skills, among others (Woodhouse, 2008). One last significant benefit of the use of DST is, as indicated by Reinders (2011) that it builds the bridge between the classroom and what happens outside its four walls, as most of the work learners have to engage in to complete the activity does not take place during class hours. We find this advantage very much linked to the new set of literacies that need to be included in every curriculum, as classrooms should not be isolated from the real world and teachers need to make use of innovative methodologies like DST to bridge the gap between the teaching practice and the competencies needed to succeed in learners', also citizens', personal and professional lives.

Nonetheless, as all teaching techniques, disadvantages are part of every story and include their time-consuming preparation, the need to guide students throughout the different stages of DST, and that they may not suit the needs of every participant.

Traditional stories have always followed a common structure, starting with an introduction, the plot of the story, and an ending, as well as a series of shared elements as the hero and the villain. DST also presents a series of elements. These go from the point of view of the author to the pace of the story, including a dramatic question, emotional content, the use of voice, the power of a soundtrack, and the economy employed not to overload the story and recurred to the exact content, neither too little nor too much (Lambert, 2009).

Storytelling and DST have still nowadays a lot to offer not only to children but also young adults and adults (Greene, 1996). Furthermore, it is and has been used in many different scenarios, being the classroom of all levels of education one of the most

prolific, from early childhood (Cremin et al., 2017), to primary students (Yamaç & Ulusoy, 2017), secondary learners (Kotluk & Kocakaya, 2017), and higher-level education (Shelton et al., 2016). It is now a turn for teachers to adapt their stories to the digital era and take advantage of DST to educate learners on the 21st-century skills, as this is a more than beneficial technique and an effective instructional tool (Signes, 2010).

DST acquires a new perspective in today's world, with the change of classrooms' scenario from face-to-face settings to virtual ones. Back in 2014, Niemi et al. already detected three of the main concerns when dealing with DST on virtual scenarios: (1) whether schools had space to use virtual learning environments, (2) the lack of skills on the part of teachers to use them, (3) as well as on the part of students. In the interviews carried out by the authors, teachers admitted “their need for technological skills to use new tools and applications, as well as their need for new pedagogical skills in how to organize work” (Niemi et al. 2014, p. 667). Moreover, the correct use by students was also a concern for teachers. A lot has happened since 2014, and uncontrolled events have forwarded the implementation of virtual learning scenarios at all levels of education, which makes DST evolve into its new chapter in e-learning, as it has been demonstrated that schools have space to use virtual learning environments and both teachers and students have been forced to learn and apply new technological skills and tools.

2.3 English for Specific Purposes (ESP): Business English

It is well known that English is the language of finance and business (Takino, 2020). Students around the globe enroll in ESP courses that focus on its teaching and learning to mainly study lexicon, terminology, and structures frequently found in these settings. The learners of these courses have a reason for learning and, as Rao (2019, p. 4) points out, business English is a new branch of ESP which is a type of English Language Teaching “emerging as a response to a growing awareness of certain types of learners with specialized needs which are not fulfilled in General English courses”.

Indeed, Business English is one branch of ESP that has been the focus of much research, and, because of the content, it is not considered a loving and easy subject, quite the opposite, as it is frequently defined as dull and boring (Miley, 2009). Technical subjects like this one result, in many cases, in demotivated learners. Thus, the use of innovative tools and strategies, like digital storytelling, are necessary to enhance the teaching and learning process, as it makes “seemingly stand-alone technical topics more meaningful and easier to learn” (Suwardy et al., 2013, p. 3).

In this sense, DST has been known to have positive results among students of the language classroom to improve oral production (Razmi et al., 2014), their motivation towards the language and the subject (Kevser Hava, 2019), writing skills (Sarica & Usluel, 2016), and creative thinking (Ya Ting et al., 2020), among others. Thus, English for specific purpose (ESP) courses have also taken advantage of this methodology, and research has demonstrated its benefits in technical English courses for aerospace engineers (Sevilla-Pavón et al., 2012), in advertising (Lestari & Nirmala, 2020), in financial accounting (Suwardy et al., 2013), and in the tourism classroom field (Alcantud-Díaz et al., 2014).

2.4 Multimodality: a feature of digital storytelling and language teaching

As previously mentioned, digital storytelling includes several semiotic resources such as moving images, text, and gestures, among others, which have not received much attention in the

field of ESP (Laadem & Mallahi, 2019). This is considered a phenomenon of communication named “multimodality”, that is, “an inter-disciplinary approach that understands communication and representation to be more than about language” (Bezemer, 2012). The ultimate goal of language teachers is, as pointed by Beltrán-Planqués and Querol-Julián (2018, p. 2), “to increase language learners’ communicative competence to prepare them for authentic interaction using an additional language”. Thus, when introducing the use of DST in the ESP classroom, we not only focus on the monomodal use of correct language so that students can communicate in a foreign language, but also on a multimodal perspective that goes beyond language and includes other semiotic resources such as gestures, facial expressions or gaze. To this multimodal approach, we should add the use of new technologies, which has resulted in “an accelerating shift towards multimodal representations of knowledge and content” (Plastina, 2013, p. 373).

The study and inclusion of multimodal aspects on the teaching/learning of Languages for Specific Purposes allow learners “to construct and interact with specific contexts of language use” (Plastina, 2013, p. 376), be aware of their importance when communicating and creating appropriate contexts in a foreign language and, more importantly, to facilitate language learning (Widiatmoko & Tri Endarto, 2018).

The use, in this paper, of DST in hybrid contexts puts the emphasis on making content, as well as on authoring multimodal texts, as students are the ones creating digital media, and moves away from traditional text-based ESP courses, which generally focus on vocabulary and grammar exercises (Laadem & Mallahi, 2019). The recording of such videos, as well as their assessment on the part of students (self-assessment and peer-feedback) and teachers, gives the former the power of actively controlling, designing, and transforming meaning (Bull & Anstey, 2010). As a consequence, the approach on the ESP classroom shifts from the product to the process, and it is not so much about learning, in this case, terminology of finance and business, but about developing “the use of integrated language skills, in relation to the other semiotic systems of communication” (Plastina, 2013, p. 380).

One of the most important challenges ESP courses face is the learning of vocabulary, as this is frequently and quickly forgotten. Moreover, it is considered that “learning vocabulary requires much attention, effort and practice” (Laadem & Mallahi, 2019, p. 35), but when teachers bring the multimodal perspective to the process of vocabulary learning, results demonstrate that this turns into a beneficial and key element that results in better retention of terms (Cárcamo et al., 2016; Dalton & Grisham, 2011; Zarei & Keysan, 2015).

3. Methodology

We decided to base the methodology of this study on an exploratory survey research design using a questionnaire to collect the necessary data for our research. In this sense, this method is exploratory since it aims to describe students’ perceptions in an issue that has not been deeply examined to date to shed some light and initiate further research in this respect. Moreover, the research was cross-sectional since the data for the study was collected once, and a mixed-method approach was used with quantitative (numerical) as well as qualitative (students’ answers) data.

The instrument used was a survey adapted from an existing one (Niemi et al. 2014) on DST. New items were included based on the main issues related to the focus of our study and that were detected after the extensive research process conducted for the literature review section. It was subsequently validated and anon-

ymously distributed through a Google Form link to students from the Financial Translation class at the University of Alcalá. The use of the survey is justified since it is an instrument that allows the collection of a considerable volume of data in an easy and quick way (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2019), and it generally does not require a lot of time on the part of the participants, which is believed to be of importance to encourage them to participate and respond in the most reliable and precise possible way (Vélez García & Sánchez Fuentes, in press). Results were analyzed in a descriptive way since this is considered a preliminary research study to set the basis for further research on this topic in the future. Qualitative answers were analyzed using the framework of content units, grouped by analytical categories previously applied by Roskosa and Rupniece (2016), and are thus shown in different tables. All the students of the class participated in the survey (25 in total).

3.1 Academic context

This study was conducted in a Financial Translation course of the fourth year of the Modern Languages and Translation Degree at the University of Alcalá. This is an optional course with three teaching hours per week. According to the syllabus (UAH, 2020c), the aim of the course is to “introduce students to financial translation from a theoretical, terminological and textual approach. Students will learn the main characteristics of financial language and texts and will understand the different translation stages and processes, as well as learn to identify and manage sources of information”. Due to the pandemic situation, one of the course hours was taught online. This class was focused on the development of Business English oral skills, whereas the two hours that were held in the physical classroom were devoted to the acquisition of specialized translation skills in the field of Finance. The reason why importance was given to oral skills in the online class was because the degree has a very strong language component in the first two years, but in the third and fourth year, more emphasis is placed on translation skills. However, many graduates do not develop a career in translation and end up working as administrative staff in a business environment since many international companies require the versatile and flexible profile that the training in this degree provides them with. In this sense, it is important for them to also develop specialized oral language skills that will allow them to successfully perform tasks in a multicultural business environment. Thus, we considered that the application of the digital storytelling technique could allow them to develop new literacies while enhancing their oral skills in Business English.

3.2 Activity

To conduct the activity, we followed a three-phase methodology. First of all, students were explained in an introductory lesson what storytelling was, how it was used and were shown some examples of it. They were given some guidance on the steps that they could follow to complete the activity, although they were free to do it as they deemed appropriate. They were divided into six different groups (five of them with four members and one with five). In a second phase, they were given the key terms that they were required to use in their story (Table 1). These key terms were available for all the groups so that they could also get some previous preparation before watching their classmates’ story. Each topic was in accordance with the text that they would translate in the following class so as to allow them to become familiar with the topic on which the text was based. For example, for the first topic on how to set up a company, the text that

they translated in class was a certificate of incorporation, which is required when a company is registered in a company to start their business activity.

Table 1. *Key Terms for the Digital Stories*

Topic	Keywords
How to set up a company and types of companies. Differences in Spain, UK and USA	Corporation Firm Company Shareholder Company assets Company liabilities Incorporation Certificate of incorporation Registered office Corporation Law Shares Stock Types of companies
Financial news in English	At least 10 different terms related to current financial affairs
Financial statements	Internal control Accounting IFRS Auditor Consolidated financial statements Board of Directors Accounting standards Balance sheet Income statement Cash flow statements
Forensic accounting reports	Economic crime Fraud Forensic accountant Forensic audit Financial statements Compliance Financial forensics GAAP Money laundering
Stock markets	Bear market Bull market Trader Broker Dow Jones Hedge fund IBEX 35 NASDAQ Stock Exchange NYSE (New York Stock Exchange) CNMV SEC Volatility IPO ETF ADR
Banking sector	Private bank Public bank Assets Risk Q1FY21 Risk matrix Liquidity Deposit Deposit rate Capital Margin Disbursements

4. Results

In this section, we analyze the data obtained from the survey in order to answer the RQs stated in the introduction. We will relate them to the previous studies that were included in the literature review section so as to see how this in accordance with or differs from what has been published up to date in the field and reflect on how we can further continue with this line of research.

First of all, when students were asked if they perceived virtual storytelling as an easier way to learn financial terminology, 60% answered affirmatively, and 40% were not sure about it (Figure 2).

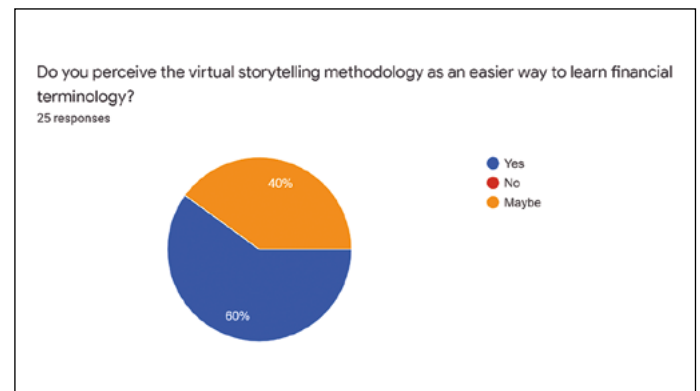


Figure 2. *Students' Perceptions on Storytelling to Learn Financial Terminology*

Some of the qualitative information that students added to support this information is gathered in the following table (Table 2). We have grouped the students' most frequent responses, in this case, in five categories so as to determine the general opinion and give an overview of their answers.

Table 2. *Students' Comments on Their Perceptions on Storytelling to Learn Financial Terminology*

Category	Number of answers
More fun which makes it easier to assimilate the meaning of the terms compared to reading a book or having a more theoretical class.	18 answers
Visual content helps to learn a lot.	15 answers
Previous research on the key terms plus watching the video after helped understand the topic a lot better.	2 answers
It is easier to understand the terms because they are used in a context that we can relate to.	10 answers
Sometimes I focused more on the technical aspects and this made me only remember the key terms, but not really understand how to use them in an adequate context.	8 answers

In this regard, most of the students (88%) perceived virtual storytelling as a good way to get acquainted with the topic of the texts that they translated in class.

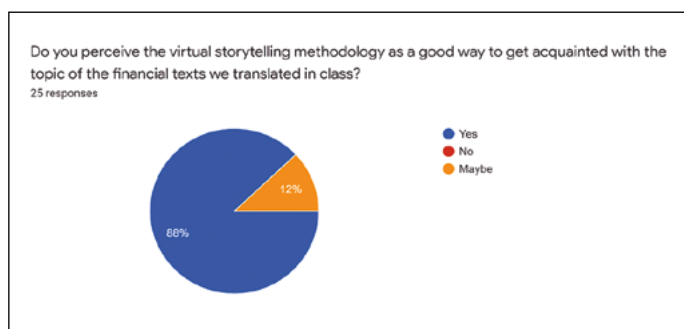


Figure 3. Students' Perceptions on Storytelling as a Way to Get Acquainted with the Topic of the Financial Texts That They Translated in Class

The qualitative answers obtained to justify their option for this question can be found in Table 3 and have been grouped into four categories:

Table 3. Students' Comments on Their Perceptions on Storytelling as a Way to Get Acquainted with the Topic of the Financial Texts That They Translated in Class

Category	Number of answers
It is useful but not enough.	5
It is a very creative and fun way to get acquainted with the topics.	20
It's the best way to do it. First, we watch a story talking about the text we are going to translate. This makes us be aware of the content we are working with before translating.	15
Even though it is not easy to remember and use all the key terms, the stories introduce us into new financial situations and problems related to this field that we were not aware of before.	8

When asked if they would like to do this activity again in the future, 56% answers affirmatively, 8% negatively, and 36% were not sure about it. In their qualitative answers, students argued that it was a time-consuming activity but that it was definitely worth it (18 answers), and one of the main problems seemed to be related to not feeling comfortable with group work (5 answers) and having many more assignments in the final year of the degree (4 answers).

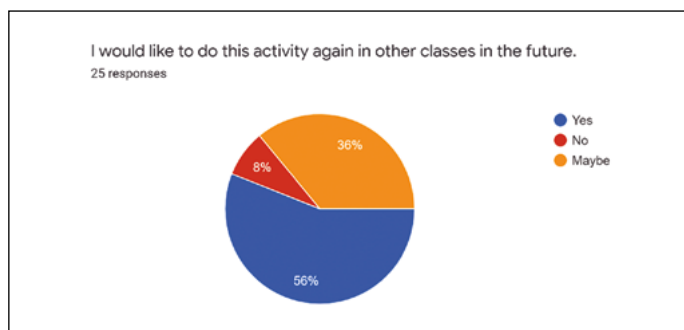


Figure 4. Students' perceptions based on whether or not they would like to do the activity again in other classes

This data allows us to answer RQ1 of our study that was related to the perception that students had about this activity as a way to help them enhance their language skills in Business English. Based on these results, we can conclude that the activity was a different process of learning for them since it was motivating and helped them acquire knowledge in a creative and fun way and go beyond what is taught in the classroom, which is in line with what was stated by Gürsoy (2020), Reinders (2011), Kevser Hava (2019) and Ya Ting et al. (2020).

As for the second question regarding students' perceptions on the usefulness of storytelling as a way to develop new literacies, results show that all of them integrated technology as part of their workflow and for communication purposes using different tools for this end (WhatsApp, Zoom, FaceTime or Google Drive, for example). Some of the online tools they employed for creating their virtual story and recording it were Adobe Illustrator, iMovie, Windows Movie Maker, Video Pad or Aegisub (this last one to add subtitles). It must be said that regarding the technological aspects, students worked on their own and solved all problems by themselves since they only asked the lecturer when they were having trouble including the key terms and linking the ideas related to them.

When asked in what way they perceived DST as useful for their professional life, these were the seven categories analyzed according to students' answers (Table 4):

Table 4. Students' Comments on Their Perceptions on Storytelling as Being Useful for Their Professional Life

Category	Number of answers
Useful because you learn how to use digital tools independently.	6 answers
Useful because you improve your working skills in groups.	5 answers
Useful to enhance communicative skills in Business English.	9 answers
Useful to have experience in a different learning methodology.	2 answers
Useful to develop stories using creativity.	5 answers
Useful to develop research skills.	2 answers
Useful to step out of your comfort zone.	4 answers

As an example of the qualitative data obtained from this question, these were some of the students' answers in this regard:

Storytelling is all about becoming a good communicator and using your creativeness and your abilities, from writing to video editing skills, in order to 'teach'. Learning about the financial world was much easier thanks to this approach, and it was something we will never forget".

"The storytelling activities were different from what we are used to doing in class and funny to do and to watch, I enjoyed all videos, even our own!"

"It also helps people that don't know each other to work together and learn about each other.

In this regard, when asked to rate on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (always) the following statements, these were students' answers:

Table 5. Students' perceptions on different statements about DST

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
We discussed multiple viewpoints or perspectives while working on our story.			8%	40%	52%
We connected our story to problems or issues in the real world.		4%	16%	28%	52%
We used materials and information from outside the class in our story.			32%	12%	56%
We decided as a group how to complete the project.	4%		12%	20%	64%
This activity helped me share and develop ideas together with my teammates.		1	3	10	11

These results show that regarding students' perceptions on the usefulness of storytelling as a way to develop new literacies, which is in line with the key competencies identified by the Ministry of Education of Singapore (2021) and also with the list of the 21st-century skills indicated by Stauffer (2020) regarding students' abilities to select information and apply skills in a professional environment. Moreover, the activity helped students unite concepts from the classroom to what is happening in the world and have them engaged in a completely different activity to learn in a different way (Reinders, 2011; Woodhouse, 2008). It must also be added that students developed communicative skills in Business English in a meaningful and easier-to-learn way compared to traditional approaches (Rao, 2019; Suwardy et al., 2013), and to this end the role of multimodality with the inclusion of video, images, text, and real gestures using different technological tools and in various contexts was of great help (Beltrán-Planqués & Querol-Julián, 2018; Bezemer, 2012; Plastina, 2013).

5. Conclusion

Regarding the first question on students' perceptions of DGS as a way to develop their language skills, we can indeed conclude that they perceived the activity as a different process of learning for them, and they described it as being motivating and helping them acquire knowledge in a creative and fun way and go beyond what is taught in the classroom. As for the second question regarding students' perceptions on the usefulness of storytelling as a way to develop new literacies, results show that they considered that they acquired different skills (technological, interpersonal and communicative) that could be useful for their future professional careers.

We believe that due to the rapid evolution of society caused by the advent of new technologies and new needs derived from them, we have a role as teachers of students in higher education to include new techniques in our class that help them develop skills that are going to be useful for them to thrive in the modern professional and personal world in which we live in nowadays. To this end, this study has proven that DST can be very beneficial and that it is an activity that helps our students learn in a way they enjoy and that they find meaningful. Nonetheless, despite the importance that we believe that conducting studies of this type has to continue making progress in the field of ESP, we are aware of the limitations of this research. Therefore, it is necessary

to continue expanding the scope of our analysis to include more DST activities at other levels and to compare and contrast students' perceptions and learning results to improve the usefulness of this technique.

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