



LSLP Micro-Paper 92: Instagram as #Digitalstorytelling

Jackeline Valencia Londoño

Instructor at Institución Universitaria Pascual Bravo | LSLP Advanced Researcher

jacke2023@hotmail.com | <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3285-7124>

Defining the Term

Instagram is a [social networking](#) app that enables its users to share posts, add filters and special effects to photographs, explore hashtags, discover friends' and celebrities' lives and interests, and even interact through likes and comments. Nevertheless, this application is a powerful tool beyond enjoyment and may serve #digitalstorytelling in language teaching settings. While [storytelling](#) is an innate cultural practice for transmitting oral and written messages and learning about oneself, others, and the world, #digitalstorytelling emerges from combining technology to deliver such stories in a [multimodal](#) format that integrates text, images, recorded narration, music, and even videos to reinforce communication.

Although almost any platform may lend itself to #digitalstorytelling, Instagram remains a more appropriate medium due to its existing features. Real-life visual content, captions, Stories, and Reels, to name a few, make narrative production easier and more familiar. Language learners can rely on all these features and attributes to build and improve their language skills. They can use visual aids, effects, music, sound, voice, and emojis are used for textual creation. Additionally, developing and distributing #digitalstorytelling allows students to create and review the final product before sharing with others.

Instagram also allows students to transition from consuming tales to making narratives by keeping a [journal](#) on their profiles. Every person has a story to tell, and #digitalstorytelling on Instagram encourages students to represent and raise their voices and points of view on classroom issues. They represent their unique experiences and backgrounds, which reflect their perspectives, culture, and place in society while providing a platform that validates their life experiences [outside of traditional](#) educational environments. Learners' viewpoints provide a starting point for looking into other perspectives to [identify power dynamics](#) in everyday forms of communication. Writing posts fosters [critical literacy](#) moments, which enhances learners' sense of agency by enabling them to [act and create positive social change](#) via their stories. Instagram #digitalstorytelling is not reserved solely for the author and the teacher but rather for a community of peers who may learn from one another's concerns and diversity, with language as the conduit for sharing.

Connecting it to LSLP

For LSLP research, Instagram as a #digitalstorytelling platform is significant because it represents a chance to move beyond the traditional literacy ideas of coding and decoding written symbols, understanding language rules, and composing texts to master the target language. For instance, this tool is a departure point for learners to use language to separate themselves from imaginary characters and bring their lives outside of the classroom to write to reflect on who they are and what they live.

We can also see the connections between #digitalstorytelling and some of our ideas such as [affinity spaces](#), culturally [relevant](#) and [sustaining](#) literacies, and even our research on [gaming](#). Keeping in mind that our students bring their funds of knowledge into their language experiences, #digitalstorytelling is a way for them to raise their voices and learn from others to advocate for a better society.

Expanding Second Language Research

Language courses promote the importance of stories; nevertheless, when students write, their narratives only receive a score that determines whether they pass or fail. While language is the outcome of all our life experiences, language educators must recognize spaces where learners may enjoy [making language usage a meaningful experience](#) that makes them feel valued and cherished.

Instagram, as a #digitalstorytelling platform, empowers learners to enhance language skills, learn about the world, and enjoy the process of creating stories, as well as offering a door for learners to reflect on their own reality.

References

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