

Writing Spaces

Assignments & Activities Archive

Shaping Multilingual Identity: Translanguaging Practices Through Digital Storytelling Workshop

Alexandra Krasova

This activity is a selection from the *Writing Spaces* Assignment and Activity Archive, an open access companion resource to the Writing Spaces open textbook series.

To access additional selections, visit: <http://writingspaces.org/aaa>.

Assignment and activity selections © 2024 by the respective authors. Unless otherwise stated, these works are licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) and are subject to the Writing Spaces Terms of Use. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>, email info@creativecommons.org, or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA. To view the Writing Spaces Terms of Use, visit <http://writingspaces.org/terms-of-use>.

All rights reserved. For permission to reprint, please contact the author(s) of the individual articles, who are the respective copyright owners.

Shaping Multilingual Identity: Translanguaging Practices Through Digital Storytelling Workshop

Alexandra Krasova

Overview

This workshop was initially designed for undergraduate multilingual students participating in my dissertation study. My participants had some background experience in creating digital stories for social media, such as TikTok or Instagram. However, digital storytelling with integrated translanguaging practices for academic purposes was a new and unique experience for them. Educators sometimes have limited resources, and while searching for the digital storytelling workshop for multilingual writers, I encountered a lack of information on this topic as well as methodological and pedagogical challenges. To provide my participants with an understanding of how to create digital stories and help educators integrate this workshop in their curriculum, I designed an online digital storytelling workshop. Anchoring Wu and Chen, who offered an extended definition of digital storytelling, describing it as a story that “usually contains some mixture of digital images, text, recorded narration, and/or music” (2), I defined a digital story as a short 1-2-minute video, containing various digital multimodal components or modes, namely, visual (images, pictures), audio (voice over, music), linguistic (text), spatial, and gestural, which students use to communicate their message and convey meaning. As a result of a combination of digital storytelling and translanguaging practices, students will develop their identities and shape their personalities.

Time Commitment

60-90 minutes

Materials

Examples of your personal photos, pictures, or any images; access to Zoom and PowerPoint.

Activity Process

- Create a folder with your personal photos, pictures, or any images that you can use as examples.
- Before you start your workshop, tell students about your experiences with languages and digital stories. Tell them where you come from, what languages you speak, what you are passionate about. This will provide them with a sense of community and create a friendly atmosphere. Tell the participants about digital storytelling, which is the “mixture of digital graphics, text, recorded audio narration, video and music to present information on a specific topic (Robin 4), translanguaging, which is the use of a unitary linguistic repertoire to convey meaning (Vogel & Garcia), and multimodality, which is the use of different modes to create meaning (Rowell & Walsh). You can give some explanations during the workshop, but it might be helpful to clarify in the beginning.
- Next, let students ask questions or share their concerns about the workshop.
- Once everyone is settled, share your screen, open PowerPoint or Google Slides and create a blank page.
- Click on insert → import from this computer. Choose a folder where you saved your pictures prior to the workshop

and choose one image (see fig. 1).

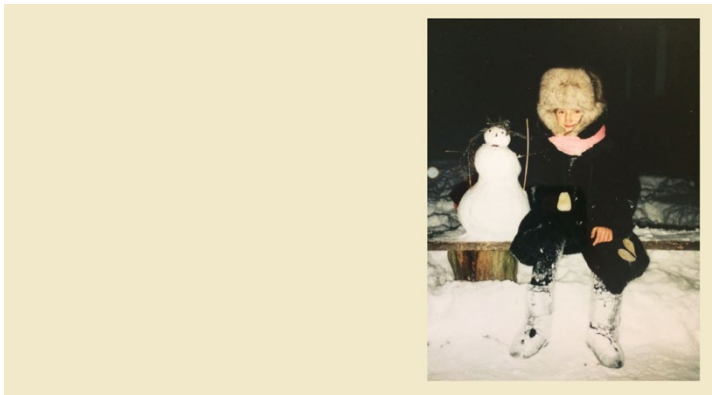


Fig. 1. The author as a young child sitting in snow with a snowman. Photo by the author.

- Repeat this step with another photo/image so that students can remember the steps better (see fig. 2).



Fig. 2. On the left: the author as a young child hugging a big toy. On the right: the author as a young child sitting in snow with a snowman. Photo by the author.

- Give students a couple of minutes to insert their own images

in their stories. Provide some space for questions.

- The next step is inserting text. To do that click on insert → text. Please remember to share your screen with the participants. Once the box for text appears, explain to students that they can write as their thoughts flow, using various languages they know or have been exposed to (see fig. 3). Tell them if the word in another language comes first, they can write it in that language. In case this workshop is taught in a monolingual classroom, remind students of some dialects they might speak or words they know in other languages, even some animal language sounds which can be connected to their story.



Fig. 3. On the left: the author as a young child hugging a big toy. On the right: the author as a young child sitting in snow with a snowman. Photo by the author.

- Repeat this step again by clicking on insert → text so that students can remember this step better (see fig. 4).



Fig. 4. On the left: the author as a young child hugging a big toy. On the right: the author as a young child sitting in snow with a snowman. Photo by the author.

- Then let students write their sentences, leaving time to ask questions.
- After that you can demonstrate that various symbols can be inserted in their digital stories. Click on insert → form. Depending on the type of story you are creating, choose the appropriate symbol or form that you wish to insert in your story (see fig. 5).



Fig. 5. On the left: the author as a young child hugging a big toy. On the right: the author as a young child sitting in snow with a snowman. Photo by the author.

- Provide students with some time to insert different forms as well.
- Feel free to create as many example slides as you want, repeating the steps described above (see fig. 6).



Fig. 6. On the left: the author as a young child reading a book with a doll. On the right: the author as a young child sitting in the classroom. Photo by the author.

- After finalizing the design, demonstrate how to add some background music or voice over in their stories if they wish to do that. Click on insert → audio to show them how to add a background music and on insert → record audio if they want to add a voice over to their story. Please remind students of copyright policy (Seadle) to avoid any issues, especially while working with international students whose understanding of violations might vary depending on the country.
- Give students enough time to practice and ask questions

about this step or the ones described above.

- When the story is ready, students would need to save it as a video. To do that click on file → save as → video file. Choose MP4 or .mov video format.
- Ask students if they were able to do that and provide the information where to submit their stories once they finish them.
- Finally, offer a quick Q&A to make sure everyone understands what they are doing.

Learning Outcomes

Students engaging in this activity will:

- Gain an understanding of multimodal composition and its influence on their multilingual identity
- Think critically about their identities and diverse linguistic repertoires
- Shape their multilingual identities with the help of translanguaging practices
- Develop their personalities through digital storytelling
- Engage in creative process that will reflect their multilingualism

Learning Accommodations

- Students may choose among different topics of their interests to tell their stories.
- Students may create digital stories using translanguaging practices in various language and composition classrooms to

shape their identities.

- Students can engage in creating digital stories using their own drawings to increase creativity and critical thinking.
- Material can be presented in multiple formats to include in-person instruction and asynchronous, digital delivery.

Works Cited

- Rowse, Jeniffer, and Maureen Walsh. "Rethinking Literacy Education in New Times: Multimodality, Multiliteracies, & New Literacies." *Brock Education Journal*, vol. 21, no. 1, Dec. 2011, <https://doi.org/10.26522/brocked.v21i1.236>
- Seadle, Michael. "Copyright in the Networked World: New Rules for Images", *Library Hi Tech*, vol. 20, no. 2, June 2002, pp. 241-44, <https://doi.org/10.1108/07378830210734025>
- Vogel, Sara, and Ofelia Garcia. "Translanguaging." *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, Dec. 2017, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.181>
- Wu, Jing, and Der-Thanq Victor Chen. "A Systematic Review of Educational Digital Storytelling." *Computers & Education*, vol. 147, Apr. 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2019.103786>

Further Reading

- Linville, Heather A., and Polina Vinogradova. *Digital Storytelling as Translanguaging*. 2024, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003295730>