

DIGITAL STORYTELLING: EFFECTIVENESS ON STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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ABSTRACT

Digital storytelling is a short digital media production that allows ones to share their life story. It has gained popularity in higher education since the late 1990s in the US due to a great extent that media production techniques, hardware and software are becoming much more accessible and affordable. The purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of digital storytelling as a reflection technique in the study abroad setting. In this paper, we introduced the process, result and evaluation of the application of digital storytelling on a course taught abroad. In summer 2015, a group of Texas A&M University undergraduate students went to Germany to learn about sustainable communities. Students were required to submit their individual digital storytelling videos in which they must reflect on their five-week learning and evaluated their perceived benefits of different learning and assessment tools near the end of the program. The results show that digital storytelling was rated the most effective one among four other assessment tools in terms of their perceived effectiveness in reflecting the abroad experience. In summary, digital storytelling is a promising tool for reflecting study abroad experiences and is a suitable assessment tool in a study abroad setting, particularly for programs that are based on experiential learning strategies. We also found that current college students seem very capable of learning digital storytelling in a meaningful way and within a short period. We provided recommendations to landscape architecture educators on how and when to use digital storytelling to facilitate deep learning in landscape architecture courses.

Keywords

Digital storytelling, reflection, study abroad, assessment, global education, experiential learning