Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Communications Sciences Department

Communication Sciences Master Program

SPANISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND DIGITAL STORYTELLING: AN INTERCULTURAL APPROACH

Dina Rosa Herrera Fernandez

Master's thesis

Ankara, 2019

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KABUL VE ONAY

Dina Rosa Herrera Fernandez tarafından hazırlanan " Yabancı Dil Eğitimi Olarak İspanyolca Eğitimi ve Dijital Hikâye Anlatımı: Kültürlerarası Bir Yaklaşım" [Spanish As a Foreign Language and Digital Storytelling: In Intercultural Approach] " başlıklı bu çalışma, 30 Kasım 2018 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından tez olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Bu çalışmadaki bütün bilgi ve belgeleri akademik kurallar çerçevesinde elde ettiğimi, görsel, işitsel ve yazılı tüm bilgi ve sonuçları bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduğumu, kullandığım verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapmadığımı, yararlandığım kaynaklara bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunduğumu, tezimin kaynak gösterilen durumlar dışında özgün olduğunu, Tez Danışmanının **Doç. Dr. Burcu ŞİMŞEK** danışmanlığında tarafımdan üretildiğini ve Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Yazım Yönergesine göre yazıldığını beyan ederim.

Dina Rosa HERRERA FERNANDEZ

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ABSTRACT

Herrera Fernandez, Dina Rosa. Spanish as a Foreign Language Teaching and Digital Storytelling: An Intercultural Approach. Master's thesis. Ankara, 2019.

Learning a foreign language is a story full of intercultural encounters. Through Digital Storytelling, the purpose of this work was to understand cultural identities in a Spanish as a foreign language class with Turkish students from the English Interpreting and Translation Department of Hacettepe University, in Ankara, Turkey.

This work created the "Different Wor(l)ds" workshop and described its different stages. The experience's strengths, weaknesses and the five digital stories produced on that day were outlined. Also, the participants' interactions and level of interculturality with field notes and an in-depth interview were analyzed. Students with a higher level of intercultural competence showed a higher understanding and use of Spanish during the workshop and in their digital stories.

Key Words

Digital storytelling, Spanish, Foreign Language, Intercultural Communication, New Media.

ÖZET

Herrera Fernandez, Dina Rosa. Yabancı Dil ve Dijital Hikaye Anlatımı için Ispanyolca: Kültürler Arası bir Yaklaşım. Yüksek Lisans Tezi. Ankara, 2019.

Yabancı dil öğrenmek, kültürlerarası etkileşime açılan yeni bir pencere demektir. Dijital Hikaye Anlatıcılığı yoluyla bu çalışmanın amacı, Hacettepe Üniversitesi İngilizce Mütercim-Tercümanlık Bölümü (Ankara, Türkiye) öğrencilerinden oluşan bir yabancı dil sınıfına İspanyolca'daki kültürel kimlikleri anlamaktı.

Bu çalışma kapsamında, "Different Wor(l)ds" (Farklı Dünyalar, Farklı Kelimeler) dijital hikâye anlatımı atölyesi yürütüldü ve atölye aşamaları kültürlerarası etkileşimler bağlamında incelendi. Deneyimlerin güçlü ve zayıf yönleriyle birlikte o gün beş dijital hikâye atölye katılımcıları tarafından üretildi. Katılımcıların etkileşimleri, farklı kültürlerle karşılaşmalarına dair dijital hikâyeleri ve katılımcılarla derinlemesine görüşmelerden elde edilen veriler analiz edildi. Kültürlerarası yetenekleri yüksek olan öğrenciler atölyede ve dijital hikayelerinde İspanyolca'yı daha iyi anlamış ve kullanmışlardır. Bu çalışma ile İspanyol öğreniminde, dijital hikâye anlatımı atölyelerinin kültürel karşılaşmalara dair deneyimlerin paylaşılmasına olanak sağladığı ve dil öğrenen öğrencilerin sınıf dışı bir çalışmada atölye içi etkileşimlerinde İspanyolcayı rahatlıkla kullanabildikleri görülmüştür. Ancak, dijital hikâyelerini çoğunluk kendilerini rahat hissettikleri dilde üretmişlerdir.

Anahtar Sözcükler

Dıjıtal Hikaye, Ispanyolca, Yabancı Dil, Kültürlerarası Iletişim, Yeni Medya.

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INTRODUCTION

With technological advances, people can look into different topics easily and reach others faster than before. Nowadays, it is possible to know about other cultures and far places by one click. Because of this, it is important to develop the competency that allows a proper comprehension of the other from an intercultural perspective.

Particularly, from a communication standpoint, in Foreign Languages acquisition processes, the Intercultural Communicative Competence has a paramount role. According to Godwin-Jones (2013) “Culture has long been seen as a fundamental component of language learning” (p. 1) since teaching a foreign language is not only about provide grammatical and linguistic knowledge, but also a space for students to understand the context where it is spoken natively.

Godwin-Jones (2013) goes on by saying that “Bringing students to see the functional and socio-cultural components of language is both crucial for effective communication and fundamental to effective language learning in the future” (p. 9).

Considering the stated above, a need to create a space where students can enrich their cultural knowledge while enhancing their communicational skills while learning a foreign language rose up. This, added to the author’s own personal endeavors helped to the first steps in the formulation of this work and research questions.

The conception of this thesis proposal comes up from my own experience in Turkey. As a foreigner myself, living abroad and teaching Spanish as a foreign language, this matter comes personal to me. While being an international student in the country, I started teaching Spanish as an extra income to cover my expenses. On the process, I noticed that most of the students in the class were curious about my story rather than a grammar lesson. “How is your

country?" "Is the food similar?" "Is it hot or cold like here?" Not only they wanted to listen to what I had to say but they also wanted to tell me, a foreigner immersed in their culture, their stories.

Considering this, as a way to enhance the students' Intercultural Communication Competence based on exchanging stories between them and me about our cultures using Spanish as the common language, this proposal came up.

While discussing how these stories would be shared, the idea of using Digital Storytelling popped up. Videos in particular contain some aspects that can contribute to learning a second language and cultural knowledge, some of them are mentioned by Godwin-Jones (2013): "video subtitling, close captioning, or transcribing" (p. 8).

However, despite the many positive aspects of Digital Storytelling in Spanish as a Foreign Language teaching, few studies have been dedicated to the topic. Even though new media and technology are part of the Spanish teaching community agenda, its use is not particularly popular as in other foreign languages curriculums like English as a Foreign Language for instance. Because of this, it is important to point out the benefits of incorporating Digital Storytelling as an innovative experience among both students and teachers while teaching Spanish. Additionally, this research will help to fellow Spanish teachers to develop similar workshops where students can earn other important skills as interpersonal skills, intercultural communication competence and digital literacy.

Based on this, the question that this work looks forward to answer is: How Turkish students in a Spanish as a foreign language class understand cultural identities through Digital Storytelling? How is the experience of creating digital stories in a Spanish language classroom? How can Turkish students use their acquired Spanish language skills to create something out of it?

This research will relate to the analysis of participants' thoughts before, during and after the Digital Storytelling workshop in addition to the analysis of the content of their digital stories.

In order to achieve these purposes, this thesis will be based in the Intercultural Communication theory and Intercultural Communication Competence related work, combining it with the Digital Storytelling guidelines by the Story Center of Berkeley, California.

In chapter one, a literature review about the central topics of this research will be carried out. The chapter will introduce the concept of Digital Storytelling, the story circle and the seven steps conducted by the Center of Digital Storytelling to successfully complete a Digital Storytelling workshop experience. A review of other Digital Storytelling experiences in foreign language teaching will be done and different approaches will be compared on the way. Because of the latter, experiences from America, Europe and Asia will be discussed, pointing out their strongest points and purposes. Subsequently, this work will study the distinctive features in Digital Storytelling in Turkey, with several examples of workshops done in the country in the last few years through institutions like the Digital Story Hub of Hacettepe University, to conclude in the particular development of Digital Storytelling in the mentioned country, but from an intercultural point of view.

Later on the chapter, topics around Spanish as a Foreign Language will be explained such as the importance of the language worldwide, current situation and relevance of Spanish among learners and the state of its instruction in and out of the Spanish speaking world. About the latter, this research will follow the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) and its Communicative Language Competence approach for language instruction.

The literature review will continue with an analysis of Spanish as a Foreign Language and New Media, describing how the matter has been approached so far by the academic and teaching community around the world.

Once this subheading is examined, the intercultural communication aspect of this work will be taken into consideration. Also, the author's personal account of

“I’m a Spanish teacher in Turkey” experience will be explained for further understanding of the purpose of this research.

In chapter two, the research methodology will be explained. The main aspects of the Digital Storytelling workshop needed to complete this research will be acknowledged such the language chosen for the workshop, place and participants, Turkish students from the Spanish as a Foreign Language Intermediate group from the School of Foreign Language at Hacettepe University. Also, the different workshop stages such as the story circle, scriptwriting, voice recording, photo selection, video editing, final screening and closure will be widely displayed.

In chapter three, the data analysis will be done. Hence, the fieldwork notes will be interpreted and additionally, the post-workshop interview questions will be explained in details and further discussions with the participants will be appointed. In this chapter, all the process of creating a digital story using the students Spanish language skills and how the will be upload on the internet will be written down.

In chapter four, the findings resulting out of this experience will be acquainted. A discussion between expected and final results will be done and the most relevant observations will be put into retrospective.

Finally, in chapter five, the respective conclusions will be done and any other possible options for further research will be explained, leaving a proposal for future research related to new media and foreign language teaching in connection to Digital Storytelling.

CHAPTER 1

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. DIGITAL STORYTELLING

1.1.1. Digital Storytelling Concept

Digital storytelling, with the use of images, sound and other tools, comes as an inexpensive and creative way to present an activity to a class. For Joe Lambert (2013), from the Story Center in Berkley, California, a digital story is defined as being self-revelatory, first person voiced, being about a lived experience, be composed of photos with a soundtrack, between 2 and 3 minutes with an intention (pp. 37-38).

Hartley and McWilliam (2009) present Digital Storytelling as “a workshop-based practice in which people are taught to use digital media to create short audio-video stories, usually about their own lives” (p. 3).

What makes Digital Storytelling special is the emotional aspect it brings within. According to Lambert (2012) one of its main components is the Personal or First Person Voice style: “The stories are personal reflections on a subject. They are known for conveying emotion in that the subject has deep meaning for the author” (p.37).

The intimacy level of the stories compiled a variety of topics such as a story about someone or something important to us, a particular life-changing event, stories of personal accomplishments and self-realization, love, dreams or coming of age (Lambert, 2012, pp. 19-22). Each of these topics relate to the teller’s experience and tells about his or her personal journey in life and come to life with photographs, music, recordings and voice overs.

1.1.2. Seven Steps of Digital Storytelling

The Story Center proposes 7 steps to create a digital story, the first three refer to one's personal story, expressing feelings and showing a special moment to others in a story. The next four steps relate to the digital story production itself using images, voice records, music, even animation and consequent screening along with the other participants.

1.1.2.1. Owning your insights

Each story must feel unique and express the teller's thoughts in one's own special way. This comes after a self-reflection of what is his or her story about and what does it represent to the teller. How these events changed the teller and why is meaningful to him or her. The tone for the story must be personal, as told to a friend or a close one (Lambert, 2012, pp. 54 – 55).

1.1.2.2. Owning your emotions

The teller must express and embrace his or her emotions in a way that the audience gets interested into listening and connecting with him/her as it should be relatable and believable for others. A Digital Storytelling workshop comes as a safe place where the teller can express and confront emotions with honesty and without limitations (Lambert, 2012, pp. 58 – 59).

1.1.2.3. Finding the moment

It is key to find the right moment when the story brings a real meaning for the teller. From there, what happens before and after that particular time, builds up the scenes and information the audience will get from the story and make them understand the teller's point of view (Lambert, 2012, p. 60).

1.1.2.4. Seeing your story

This step of a Digital Storytelling workshop looks forward to find the right images to portrait the intended emotions. The teller should ask him/herself what images comes to mind while thinking about a scenes in the story and what is the meaning behind that choice. Once this stage is done, the teller should define how will use those images or if they need to be recreated. The images do not necessarily need to show a literal meaning, but can represent metaphors on the teller's thoughts. Angles, colors and style play in the uniqueness of the story's images (Lambert, 2012, pp. 61, 63).

1.1.2.5. Hearing your story

Apart from visuals, a digital story has a voice. Sound is what makes the story more personal and emotional, since the teller is expressing his feelings through his/her voice. This, accompanied by music, sound effects and ambient sound settle the ambient of a heartfelt journey. However, the amount of layers of sound and complexity of the image-sound editing intends what the teller wants to show to the audience (Lambert, 2012, pp. 63-64).

1.1.2.6. Assembling your story

This step refers to the story's editing. Here, the teller must decide if the story express his/her intention properly and if it will connect with the audience properly. Should the story take a different direction? Is the story giving too much or any information? The composition between sound, images and timing provides a more relatable feeling to the story and engages the audience (Lambert, 2012, pp. 65-67).

1.1.2.7. Sharing your story

Finally, at this stage the teller should consider once more how one wants his/her story to be perceived by the audience. Considering the channels where it will be shared and who will see it can change the final direction of a story (Lambert, 2012, pp. 68-69).

1.1.3. Digital Storytelling and education

So far, a concept of what Digital Storytelling is has been provided. For this research purposes, it is important to point out its relevance in education. Lowenthal (2009) in his chapter “Digital Storytelling in Education: An Emerging Institutional Technology?” in “Story Circle: Digital Storytelling around the World”, cite some of the benefits of Digital Storytelling in educational contexts as “Increase student engagement, Give access to a global audience, Amplify students’ voice, Leverage multiple literacies and Student emotion”.

First, it is explained that Digital Storytelling comes close to the students’ new ways of communicating with a multimedia language and gives them the chance of sharing their stories with the world since they are posted online. Digital Storytelling can give a voice to the unheard students or those with disabilities or difficulties while enhancing their multiliteracies, open up to their emotions and letting them experience a different way to express themselves (p. 252 – 254).

Robin (2008) also adds that students benefit from Digital Storytelling as they, while producing their digital stories, are instructed in “Digital literacy, Global literacy, Technology literacy, Visual literacy and Information literacy” or the “21st Century Skills” (p. 224).

Consequently, Digital Storytelling comes out as a powerful way to enhance students’ different abilities at the same time it gives them a voice in the classroom. Next, the uses of Digital Storytelling in different educational contexts will be explained.

1.1.4. Digital Storytelling and foreign language teaching

In foreign language teaching innovation is a requirement among instructors, who look forward to create more dynamic learning environments for students and therefore better spaces for language assimilation.

So that, digital storytelling has been embraced by educators who see on it a creative way to invite students to plan, produce and present their own work with their classmates and put into a practical use what they have been learning so far.

Indeed, the ways of how digital storytelling can be introduced in a foreign language classroom are diverse and vary according to the students' needs and specific learning purposes.

To give a wider view in the recent ways that Digital Storytelling has been used to teach foreign languages, here are some educational experiences around the globe and the perception of this method.

Previous work related to this topic of research, shows that Digital Storytelling has been used in foreign language teaching, multiculturalism and multi-literacy studies.

In the dissertation by Vinogradova (2011), one of the central questions was: "How do ESL students negotiate their identities in the process of digital story production and in their digital stories?" (p.6).

Vinogradova did the fieldwork in the fall of 2008 with university students in the East Coast of the United States, divided in two groups from two different courses taken in the University of Maryland, in Baltimore, United States of America. The students were from different parts of the world, such as Cameroon, China, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Korea, Germany, Mali, Qatar, Switzerland, and Vietnam. The main idea was to let the participants express their culture and beliefs through Digital Storytelling. As expressed by the author, "In this multicultural context, digital stories become a multimodal medium for self-expression and identity negotiation" (Vinogradova, 2011, p. 65).

The production period for the digital stories took around three weeks for one of the groups and ten days of individual work for the other. Both groups wrote journals of their own experience and how their final piece was created. After watching some examples of what a digital story is and the story circle was made, the students were introduced to the software editor and given the guidelines for their stories, including usage of images, writing a text, creating a storyboard, editing and final presentation. Also, they were given the freedom of using their native language. Among the participants, some of the most popular topics used on the stories are family, living abroad, personal transformation, their culture and interests.

As a conclusion, Vinogradova refers that through Digital Storytelling the participants were able to share stories about their personal journey in a new country and prospects in a multicultural group, working as an exciting way to understand and respect other identities.

In most cases, Digital Storytelling has been used as part of a sequence of activities, where basically the Digital Storytelling workshop is introduced as a "project" that is made throughout a certain period of time during the academic calendar. This can be seen in both schools and university groups, where the final digital story represents the ending of a learning process and the pupils are able to see by themselves how far have they come through their stories.

Following this idea, the work conducted by Torres, Ponce and Pastor, (2012) in the University of Valencia described how Digital Storytelling was used as a part of a didactic sequence, defined by them as a "group of activities designed and organized by a teacher in order to reach a learning objective" (p. 3).

In this particular project, Digital Storytelling was oriented to improve the students' linguistic skills, particularly greeting and leave-takings, while applying it to daily routines in an English as a Foreign Language classroom, being a Digital Storytelling workshop the final task of the already mentioned sequence. The participants were first year undergraduate students enrolled in the course "English as a Foreign Language for Primary Education Teachers." During the

sequence, the students were introduced to Nacho (a Spanish guy) and Sarah's (an English girl) journey through a series of digital stories as a way to explain the class content and what was expected from them and a better idea of how the final digital story should be.

Along the process, the participants shared their work and corrected each other's mistakes, creating a collective learning environment. At the end of the workshop series, the students improved their initial mistakes regarding greetings and leave-takings but still had some errors regarding past tenses and prepositions. On their self-reflection, learners highlight the satisfaction of improving their speaking and writing plus getting to know better their classmates and work together.

Iın this sense, it can be said that digital storytelling works as a mirror for the students as they can see their mistakes and achievements. Also, thinking that their work would be seen by others, they made extra efforts to present a quality work.

Following this line of work for Digital Storytelling, in the same higher education institution, a workshop was conducted by Soler (2014) with one group of third year undergraduate students of the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) department. This group was composed of 21 students between 18 and 35 years old with an English proficiency level between B2- and B2+ according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) were studying to become primary school teachers in English. The Digital Storytelling workshop was held in their course 'Lengua Inglesa I' and the aim was to "foster both writing and speaking skills in English" (p. 79).

In this case, the students were introduced to the software used for putting the digital stories together in a previous session and then they learned about Joe Lambert and the Story Center's 7 steps of digital storytelling. For this specific workshop, participants elaborated seven stories: 4 were based on personal narratives or personal journeys –the latter being the preferred topic for overseas

students; 1 original and love story invented by them; 1 story adapted from a children's tale and 1 story that narrates a historical event.

In this case study, the use of audiovisual material in the classroom made the activity innovative and more attractive to students. They felt motivated to be part of it and were interested in applying once they were on the working field.

In both cases, the whole workshop was structured with already picked topics and themes with the aim of enhance specific skills among the participants.

In the study conducted by F.X. Risang Baskara (2015) in the department of English Letters at the Universitas Sanata Dharma in Indonesia, the author gives an insight of how the students in the English Language and Letters Department feel about taking a compulsory course like Speaking IV, where the aim is "developing the strategies and skills necessary for effective oral presentations" (p. 149). Baskara narrates that students do not seem to be excited about the course and their performance is on the average level. This research is intended to see the effects of using Digital Storytelling as part of the course. Again, this is a purely educational approach of what digital storytelling is, combining its technological advantages. Another interesting point is that, the author also is interested to see how the students react to the project, which is an important component this current thesis is looking for and will be taken into account during its workshop stage.

The interesting fact here is that the digital stories are created during a four week period through the *Pecha Kucha* presentation style where 20 slides durating 20 seconds, are presented and students must share their stories. As a learning component, it makes the students work to synthesize their ideas and give clear and exact information. However, the purpose of the thesis work here presented is to make each digital story personal and unique for each participant, so give a kind of a "sample" would not quite work for the aim of this project. Instead, the traditional work with editing software with images and sounds will be used.

So far, the approaches below referred to Digital Storytelling as a tool that comes along with technology. Now, what if Digital Storytelling is used with a

pedagogical purpose as well as an emotional aspect? In Castañeda's (2013) work with high school students in their Spanish class, and the aim of this workshop was to enhance their Spanish language skills. However, since most of the participants were seniors, graduating from high school, a personal and collective topic, was used as a starting point.

From 12 participants, 10 were native English speakers and 2 were Spanish heritage speakers. The other ten participants' Spanish level could be considered between novice-low and intermediate-low, according to Castañeda. The workshop lasted 5 days and the results were more than satisfying. The students who were concerned at first about their Spanish grammar and technological knowledge, were motivated to produce a good story and overcome their difficulties, as shown in the previous researches exposed above. Participants showed an improvement regarding pronunciation and use of Spanish in a communicative way.

Following this approach, language learning can be also enhanced in a cross cultural exchange process with digital storytelling. In the ongoing work by Pegrum, Oakley, Lim, Xiong and Yan (2014) three participating schools in Western Australia, one each in Bunbury, Geraldton and Perth and three Chinese institutions in Guilin and Shanghai were part of an intercultural experience through Digital Storytelling. Students in Western Australia were around 13-14 years old and the Chinese ones, between 14-15 years old.

In this case, the idea was to exchange digital stories among the two groups through a digital platform, where students could leave comments on each other's work. Students were supposed to "describe their daily lives, their schools, or their cities or towns, as a way of introducing themselves to students in the other country" (p. 192). The students in Western Australia worked in Mandarin; the ones in Guilin and Shanghai worked in English. So far, the authors explained that "in general, Australian teachers and students were more motivated to focus on language improvement, while Chinese teachers were more concerned with opening up students' perspectives on other cultures, and

students were focused on learning about daily life in Australia" (Pegrum, Oakley, Lim, Xiong and Yan, 2014, p. 193).

Even though the project has faced some issues regarding timing and planning, it suggests an interesting idea to use digital storytelling to create an intercultural context and enhance the participants' language skills in a cooperative way while exchanging digital stories, since both can correct the other's mistakes regarding foreign language use and at the same time gaining insight about other cultures in a multimedia platform that shortens physical distances.

Nevertheless, other positive aspects about Digital Storytelling in education can be acquainted. According to Gregori-Signes (2008), Educational Digital Storytelling also gives students the possibility of expressing their own thoughts and ideas in the classroom, stepping out from the academic curriculum speech. Furthermore, Digital Storytelling enhances other important skills not only for language learning, but for personal grow as "research and writing skills, organization skills, technology skills, presentation skills, interpersonal skills, or problem-solving skills, which, in turn, develop digital literacy, global literacy, technology literacy, visual literacy, or information literacy" (Gregori-Signes, 2008, p.45).

Nishioka, H. (2016), explains some educational uses of Digital Storytelling as a collaborative project among Japanese learners with Korean students in a college in Busan, South Korea. Here, pupils with different proficiency levels delivered a Digital Story about a second hand market in Busan by helping each other to find the right words and vocabulary in Japanese and developing their interpersonal skills while creating their digital piece.

Subsequently, the previously mentioned uses get closer to what is intended in this research. Digital Storytelling can be more than a tool, but a space where culture, emotions and ideas come alive through images and sounds. Of course, in the end, all of these groups showed improvement in the language studied, being the speaking skill the most practiced according to the participants themselves.

Even though approaches, purposes and the student groups were different from each other, all reflect a sense of teamwork through the story circle, sharing of emotions and improvement regarding this matter and perception of the subject studied. In all these cases, digital storytelling worked as a useful tool to help in the process of a foreign language learning.

In summary, Digital Storytelling can work in different scenarios to build up a strong base for students' language and cultural skills.

1.1.5. Telling stories in Turkey

According to Şimşek, Usluel, Sarıca & Tekeli (2018), one of the main purposes for Digital Storytelling use in Turkey has been education alongside the strong vein in Communication Studies through the works of Digital Storytelling Hub at Hacettepe University. In Education DST is mostly used in subjects such as "physics, open university, computer and instructional technologies, history, pre-school, second/foreign language, mother tongue/Turkish, fine arts" (p.160). Hence, Digital Storytelling is viewed as an educational tool with technological advantages within an impact in students. The studies summarizes teachers and students' opinions, the effects of Digital Storytelling on participants, challenges and problems during the implementation process and other potential roles.

Based on this, a few projects based on Digital Storytelling have been done in Turkey. One of them, especially relevant for this research, was held in the University of Sakarya, in the region with the same name in Turkey as part of an English as a Foreign Language course with students with an intermediate English level (B1) and almost no experience in digital storytelling.

The digital stories were part of a 5-week didactic sequence through the course and they were posted in a blog at Blogger created for this purpose. Each student was supposed to create one story and through the process the steps of how to make a digital story were explained.

In this work, Timuçin and Irgin (2015), stated that digital storytelling did help their pupils to engage their previous knowledge into practice while doing their stories. Also, made them to work as a team and encouraged them to make as little mistakes as possible since they were aware that the final product would be shared in a social media platform.

The authors express that the workshop period lead the students to apply the “brainstorming and free writing” (p. 299) technique, which allowed them to “think on ideas which they could write about, develop fictional characters, determine the viewpoints, develop a theme, create conflict, setup a climax, and lastly deliver a resolution for the problem” (p. 299). However, this work takes digital storytelling as a skills enhancement tool, missing other potential uses.

Following this pattern, in the study conducted by Yılmaz, Üstündağ, Güneş, & Çalışkan (2017), Digital Storytelling is used as a tool to enhance student’s reading and writing skills. For this, already existent passages from Turkish language books were transformed into digital stories, giving positive results and feedback from the participants.

Also, from the Turkish experience, Digital Storytelling can also improve students’ Visual Memory Capacity (VMC) and Writing Skills (WSs). Sarıca and Usluel (2016) explained that even though there is no a statistically significant difference, DST contributes to enhance the mentioned skills compared to other educational strategies. In their conducted study, the effects of DST in the improvement of the mentioned skills was analyzed in a group of 59 s grade primary school students from the “Journey of Myself” education program of the Educational Volunteers Foundation of Turkey (TEGV).

The students were divided in two groups: “the experimental group” (29 people) and the “control group” (30 people). With a series of topics given, the first group used DST to create a digital story and the second group a poster in Turkish over a period of 13 weeks as part of an extracurricular 90 minute activity during school hours, one time per week.

In the experimental group, technological tools as tablets, audio and video editing programs were used, while the control group worked with paper, pencils and other craft materials. The first group expressed joy in the use of such technological tools compared to paper or pencils.

As a result, it was shown that DST contributes on the development of visual memory and also, about their writing skills, helps to the “ability to express themselves, it may also contribute to their performance and the transmission of their knowledge in the learning processes” (Sarıca & Usluel, 2016, p. 307).

In the study conducted by Karakoyun and Kuzu (2016), involving teachers and students as participants. Firstly, pre-service teachers of Computer Education and Instructional Technology from Anadolu University in Eskisehir were trained in Digital Storytelling, created stories on their own and then put it into practice with forty-seven 6th grade students from Eskisehir Cagdas Private Primary School as the study’s second stage. The workshop implementation was done online through a webpage used for the project’s introduction, implementation and presentation.

The workshop implementation was done online through a webpage used for the project’s introduction, implementation and presentation.

In general, the students and teachers found the making process satisfactory and useful in learning processes, however teachers found students’ lack of motivation, poor understanding of the video software and the long implementation time as possible barriers for a more effective and enjoyable process. All teachers agreed that Digital Storytelling can be useful in teaching social sciences, languages and technology development and also improves students’ social skills and other interpersonal skills.

Following this line of research, Kocaman-Karoglu (2015) asserts that Digital Storytelling also helps in children’s understanding of narrative. In her study, 149 six-year-old students from 3 different kindergartens in Ankara participated in project, and they were divided in 2 groups: the experimental group (79 students) and the control group (70 students). Both groups learned a story, but the

experimental did it with help of Digital Storytelling and the control group with traditional storytelling. Then, the participants were asked to draw something about the mentioned story. From this point of view, Digital Storytelling is purely an instrument, since the children did not create the stories on their own. However, one of the findings showed that the experimental group was more successful than the control group.

In the educational context in Turkey, it can be confirmed that Digital Storytelling is viewed as a tool rather than an experience. However, there is a hidden potential in these studies, since after the technological and technical reviews, improvements in social skills and personal growth are briefly mentioned, which is a path that can be studied deeper in the country.

1.1.5.1. Hacettepe University Digital Storytelling Workshop Unit

Turkey has joined the Digital Storytelling movement through the PhD research of Simsek with the title 'Using Digital Storytelling As a Change Agent for Women's Participation in the Turkish Public Sphere' the first one of its kind to be done in Turkey. Around the same time, the Hacettepe University Digital Storytelling Workshop Unit and their website www.dijitalhikayeler.org were created with the help of some of the faculty members who also work as facilitators according to their area of expertise. Since 2009, the unit has participated in international conferences, published articles in journals and produced digital stories about different topics such as migration, culture and foreigners' experiences in cooperation with NGOs and international institutions.

One of the lines of work of the Hacettepe University Digital Storytelling Workshop Unit is culture. In many of their projects, the workshops are oriented to show the participants' stories and life experiences in different environments and situations.

One of them is the Erasmus student mobility series with Turkish and international students from Hacettepe University. The first workshop of this kind,

held in 2011[1], narrates students and academicians' stories after spending an exchange semester abroad with the Erasmus Exchange program from the European Union. Another two digital storytelling in 2013[2] and 2014[3] were done.

Zeybek Kabakcı and Şimşek (2015), explained that the project looked forward to examine the narratives of Erasmus students about their journey in Turkey as the Erasmus experience, aside from provide an education exchange, also provides an opportunity for intercultural encounters (p. 154).

In the project, the participants express their personal experiences of arriving to a new country with situations related to the language, weather, food, communication, new friends, new people and, in general, new adventures and confrontations.

Most of them asserted that there were many unexpected situations and fears and confrontations what made them appreciate life more and live to the fullest during and after their Erasmus exchange. Also, some of them mentioned how living abroad and far from family made them stronger and allowed them to experiment freedom for the very first time. In general, participants expressed how Erasmus changed their lives and how this was reflected in them after coming back to Turkey.

Additionally, their own views of themselves as Turks changed abroad. In the stories, there are reflections on how others, and even themselves, see Turkish people and some prejudices around them. This exchange program helped them to understand certain behaviors and also to get rid of stereotypes, showing a break of cultural barriers and an increase in intercultural competence.

Furthermore, through these digital stories it can be seen in the participants a better understanding of the other after the Erasmus experience. Through the

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[1] For more details: http://www.digitalstoryhub.org/filter/hacettepe/Hacettepe-de-den-Erasmus-Dijital-Hikayeleri

[2] For more details: http://www.digitalstoryhub.org/filter/hacettepe/Erasmus-Maceram-2013

[3] For more details: http://www.digitalstoryhub.org/filter/hacettepe/Erasmus-Maceram-2014

narrative, a significant personal growth and change in their perception of life and the country where they spend part of their academic life can be perceived.

Picture 1. Ceren's story "Ich warte immer."

For instance, in Ceren's story, "Ich warte immer,"[4] we get a glance of her days abroad, far from her homeland, Turkey. While doing Erasmus in Tubingen, in Germany, she faced some cultural shocks, being "the messiest room ever" the first one, as she had the need to clean it "as a Turkish girl does." Keeping the shoes out of the house, extra courtesy to guests, translating idioms from Turkish to German and some cultural misunderstandings as "Ich warte immer" [*Come back anytime*] were part of the adventures she faced during her Erasmus time as she was adapting to a new culture and learning that even though we are in the same place and see the same things, the way we think and live can be completely different.

On the other side, Sündüs' story, "Fark Ettim"[5] [*I realized*], taught us that it is normal to feel scared at first, but those fears eventually transform into confidence and fierceness, as she learned what freedom was during her stay in

[4] Link for "Ich warte immer" on https://vimeo.com/92492750

[5] Link for "Fark Ettim" on https://vimeo.com/91497371

Spain. She tells us how a different country welcomed her and the more she got into their culture, the more she could enjoy her experience as an exchange student.

Picture 2. Sündüs' story "Fark ettim."

Continuing in this line of work, additionally international students were part of the project with the “ERASMUS IP Project Snapshot Digital Storytelling Workshop” in 2013. Here, students from Turkey, Belgium, Slovenia, Germany and the Netherlands created 39 digital stories, as part of the "Erasmus IP Project: Discovering the Secrets of Ankara" project under the coordination of the School of Foreign Language of Hacettepe University.

In this project, Turkish and international students gather together to tell the secrets of Ankara, Turkey’s capital, using English as the narration language. Here, several Turkish values and symbols are explained from the tellers’ point of view, giving an intimate view of what Ankara and Turkey means to them. Objects used in daily life like a vacuum cleaner, a statue, a painting, a coffee pot, among others, transformed into a story’s conductive thread and are given a

new meaning by those who are not familiar with a particular culture, the Turkish one in this case.

Also, from a foreigner's point of view, the international students who were part of the project expressed their journey from feeling shy and out of context in the Turkish culture to find, little by little, a common ground between their culture and a new one, conducting to a rich learning experience and openness to new people and lifestyles.

In summary, DST provided a great recall experience to the participants, since they could put their thoughts and reflections into a story using their own anecdotes, photographs and voices and also sharing with others who lived the same journey.

1.2. SPANISH: A WORLD LANGUAGE

According to the report 'Español, una lengua viva' from the Instituto Cervantes, in 2017 there were more than 477 million Spanish native speakers and 572 million potential users worldwide (p. 6). Also, Spanish is the second language with the most native speakers after Chinese.

More than 21 million people study Spanish as a foreign language in the world, and it is the most studied foreign language in the United States and considered "the most important language in the future" in the United Kingdom (p. 14). About the use of Spanish and the internet, the report goes on by saying this language is the third most used the World Wide Web by number of users after English and Chinese and the second most used on Facebook and Twitter (p. 33). Hence, Spanish shows a fast grow and is becoming an influential language worldwide, which is worth to study in details.

1.2.1. Foreign language instruction - The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

Spanish as a foreign language instruction follows the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages guidelines to create the adequate curriculum and directions that adapts to the current demands on the Spanish teaching market.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) provides information about instruction, ways of evaluation and levels of proficiency so that there is a standardization of language teaching around Europe and increasingly, around the world. Also, the CEFRL presents the stages and subjects a language learners should follow in order to have the expected knowledge and communication skills to being able to have a good command of it. In addition to this, and equally important, the CEFRL also covers the cultural aspects where languages are set.

Continue on its intercultural approach, it is a central objective for the CEFRL to enhance the learners' sense of identity and enrich his personality through his learning experience, providing a process of understanding a new language and culture.

1.2.1.1. Communicative language competence

As mentioned above, modern language learning is composed of different components that are based on the Communicative Language Competence: linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic.

As mentioned by the CEFRL, each component delivers specific competences. The linguistic competences include "lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills and other dimensions of language as system" and are affected by the students own quality of knowledge and cognitive organization of vocabulary and expressions. The Sociolinguistic competences refer to "the sociocultural conditions of language use" (p. 13). Here, social conventions such as

mannerism, ways of interaction, rituals are involved. Finally, the Pragmatic competences “are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources” (p. 13) and stress the discourse, text types and forms.

1.2.2. Spanish as a foreign language instruction – Plan Curricular

To keep in track its instruction and statistics, the Instituto Cervantes is in charge of regulating the Spanish as a foreign language teaching around the world. Based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages established by the Council of Europe, the institute has created a curriculum plan to teach the language in their centers located in 60 countries in Europe, America, Asia and Africa.

In the Plan Curricular del Instituto Cervantes (PCIC) the institute presents the required materials that can help other educational institutions and teachers in the Spanish teaching process, all according to the student level, capacity and purpose.

The Spanish as a Foreign Language teaching (Español como Lengua Extranjera - ELE in Spanish), is done from a Communicative Approach, where the student must be capable of communicate ideas, feelings and opinions.

According to the Plan Curricular, a Spanish language learner must develop three main dimensions as a *social agent,* as the student must be able to know the elements of the language and get along on typical social interactions where the use of Spanish is needed. As an *intercultural speaker,* the learner can identify different aspects associated to Spanish and build bridges between his and Hispanic culture. And lastly, the Plan goes on by mentioned a third dimension which is the student as an *independent user,* which means the learner is able to continue by his or her own with his Spanish learning process and going beyond the presented.

Based on this, Spanish language instructors are in need of new guidelines and methods. The new ELE teacher in this approach must be focused on the

students and his/her functions are, among others, to check the students' needs, create situations where communication is needed, plan activities, make the correspondent didactic material and coordinate activities, participate in the class and make a bond with the participants. Here, the teacher is not anymore in front of the board writing sentences, but is an active agent that seeks to enforce the learners' abilities.

In the ELE classroom the foreign language, Spanish, is used to develop activities and give explanations and clarifications, while keeping the first language (L1) for special cases. The grammatical instruction is inductive, although some short explanations are given when needed.

For the activity planning, Delgadillo (2013), says it is important to make materials such as vocabulary, expression and situation cards, word games, tabletop games, true or false and fill in the blank exercises, questionnaires, oral and written exams. Also, the Cervantes Institute suggests role play and projects are a good option and the course book is still a good support but not the main pillar in the class instruction. For evaluation, the whole learning process is considered and the aim is to identify what can be modified, according to the student's needs.

1.2.3. A new perspective in an intercultural context

The Plan Curricular proposes that Spanish language teaching should enhance the components on the intercultural competence, so that it gets closer to the plurilingual and pluricultural competences proposed by the CEFRL.

From this perspective then learning a foreign language is a process that covers a wide range of items such as context, age, purpose, special needs and so on. The teacher has a supporting role in the process, which reflects the level of assimilation the students might get from what they are learning. In Tejada, Del Pino, Tatar and Sayáns (2012) research, it is studied how teachers of Spanish as a foreign language in a Temporary Classroom of Linguistic Adaptation (TCLA) program teach the language to international students with minimal or no

knowledge about Spanish. Therefore, the concept of inclusion is introduced: while learning a foreign language students should “eliminate the barriers” (p. 286) that might interfere in their learning process, which makes their integration process easier.

In this sense, the teachers’ participation plays an important role on how the students assimilate this new language and the cultural aspects that comes with it.

In this study, 81 of Spanish as a foreign language teachers from Almeria, Spain participated. Through qualitative questionnaires, different aspects that defines teaching approaches were asked, leading to differentiating two major groups regarding teach: “Innovative SFL Teachers” and the “Traditional SFL Teachers.” The first group “demonstrated high inclusive beliefs scores, high teacher's perception of student outcomes in TCLA program scores and low burnout scores” (Tejada, Del Pino, Tatar and Sayáns, 2012, p. 294). On the other hand, the other group showed opposite results.

According to this, results also showed that Traditional SFL Teachers see themselves as a “teacher of Spanish” while innovative teachers as a “support teacher” (p. 294). It is also important to point out that innovative teachers were younger and has less working years’ experience than traditional teachers, showing that there is a change in the way Spanish is taught and perceived by instructors.

This leads to a more focused Communicative Approach teaching in Spanish as foreign language programs that also takes advantages of new media and technology to fulfill its principles.

1.2.4. Teaching Spanish in the 21st century

Foreign language teaching looks forward to finding the best ways and methods to teach the language and engage students in their own learning processes. Teachers and institutions are in constant trial of tools that can be introduced to traditional instruction and innovative learning environments.

Spanish as a foreign language teaching is not an exception. For instance, Rachels and Rockinson-Szapkiw (2018) asserts that the uses of free language teaching applications contributes to students' assimilation of the target language.

Therefore, their purpose of the study is "to determine the effectiveness of a mobile gamification application for Spanish instruction in comparison to face-to-face foreign language instruction" (Rachels and Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2018, p. 73). For this, the application used was Duolingo® and the participants were third and fourth grade students from a private school in South Florida, of which half of them was the "treatment group" and the other the "control group." The treatment group used Duolingo® during their classes and the control group were part of a traditional class, both following the same study program in a 40-minute Spanish class for 12 weeks.

The study concludes that "gamification apps may be able to provide scaffolding for foreign language learning similar to traditional classroom instruction" (Rachels and Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2018, p. 84). Since there were no significant differences between both groups, it was demonstrated that games and applications also work well in the Spanish language classroom.

On the other hand, Spanish teaching can also go further by implementing elements from other methodologies as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). Following this idea, Cabrera, Jara and Elejalde (2015) in their study created a technological application in a blended-learning methodology with the purpose of enhancing the students' communicative skills in a Spanish as a foreign language class.

For this, the “Tradiciones Chilenas” application was developed and targeted to international students that were part of the course of Spanish as a foreign language - B1 level (according to the Common European Framework for Reference for Languages) with partner universities of the Universidad de Concepción in Chile.

The application was used as a support of the face-to-face class since students used the platform to do mini assignments that prepared them to the final course assignment, following a communicative approach. Also, “Tradiciones Chilenas” used the application as an introduction to Chilean culture and manners with the lectures, conversation and resources used, enhancing their linguistic and intercultural skills throughout the project. Once finished, it was concluded that students improved their communication skills and found the experience positive. Additionally, after testing the results, it was found that the participants’ reading, listening and writing skills were the most benefited out of the program.

According to this, new media, in the form of applications and games, has been also used as a way of engagement for new generations of students for a better understanding of certain points that had been traditionally taught through textbooks. For instance, in Castañeda and Cho’s work (2016), new media resources were used to investigate how students “improve their learning of verb inflections in Spanish, using a game-like application in a classroom” (p. 1197).

The study was conducted at a US university with eighty students of basic-intermediate level between fall 2012 and spring 2014. On this research “Conjugation Nation” was used, which is a “mobile game-like application designed to help students learn verb conjugations in various languages, including Spanish, French, and Italian” (p. 1198).

The students were instructed in the general concepts and ideas about conjugation rules during the class, then organized in groups and later they were given iPhones to use the mentioned application and complete the lesson goal according to their level. This enhanced participants’ team work, as they had to

discuss the answer without using textbooks or any other kind of help. The results of their work was later on sent to the instructor by email.

The results concluded that “Conjugation Nation” encouraged learning processes, as it was shown an improvement in the “accuracy of their verb conjugations” (Castañeda & Cho, 2016, p. 1199). Also, it was seen that students felt motivated to practice the verbs in the application thanks to the competition and social interactions with their peers, plus the on real-time feedback from the application. Hence, the students were more confident while using the learnt verbs. However, some participants showed disapproval in how some new and unknown verbs appeared from time to time in the application, making them confused.

This process became a meaningful way of learning for the students, as it was an interactive and entertaining method, far from the traditional textbook reading associated with grammar instruction in foreign languages, which comes across as a beneficial aspect in teaching.

Enkin and Mejías-Bikandi (2017), go further by studying the effectiveness of a fully online learning program with advance Spanish language students in an university in the United States of America. The research was developed with a face-to-face and a fully online Spanish course. Both groups take the same course with the same teacher during the same semester, and each participant’s improvement is tracked with pretests, post-test and quizzes during the study period.

The study concludes that both, face-to-face and online, methodologies are efficient and both groups showed a similar level of improvement from the beginning until the end of the course. From the teachers’ perspective, some suggestions were done regarding the online course and students’ engagement. It was noted that students used the forums just to ask questions directly to the teacher with a poor interaction between members. Enkin and Mejías-Bikandi suggest that a more “user friendly, visually pleasant, and inviting as possible”

(2017, p. 197) course page can lead to a better student engagement and create a “sense of community online” (2017, p. 197).

As a conclusion, Spanish as a foreign language instruction has welcomed technology and new media as an alternative way to go through the educational curriculum from application and games to fully online courses. Additional to this, an important output is the use of new media not only as a tool to reach the students, but as an experience where learners can construct their own community and learn about culture, themselves and others through team and self-work.

1.3. INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

1.3.1. Intercultural Communication Competence

In Spanish as a foreign language teaching, Intercultural Communication Competence can be a great approach to get the students closer to what Spanish is in its native uses, since learning a foreign language it is not about knowing the grammatical aspects of it but also the context where it is spoken.

One of these is the Intercultural Communication Competence. Wiseman (2002, quoted by Klopf and McCroskey, 2007) says that “intercultural communication competence involves the knowledge, motivation, and skills to interact effectively and appropriately with members of different cultures” (p. 9).

In order to achieve intercultural competence, Klopf and McCroskey (2007) mention that aspects as listening, language, indirectness, restricted codes, nonverbal behavior and intercultural relationships are important to enhance. To be able to understand other cultures and perspective, it is necessary to observe, understand and reduce all the possible barriers so that the interactions are based on similarities and not differences (pp. 266-273).

Stanley says that while teaching a foreign language there might be a risk of reducing people’s intercultural communication competence by simplifying

culture to stereotypes, so they can understand the content with a series of instructions or Dos and Don'ts, as "while 'teaching culture' aims to help learners engage with cultural others, this approach actually decreases learners' intercultural competence" (2017). This comes as people cannot be categorized only by a food festival or a particular tradition, as that does not really represent what a society is.

So Spanish teaching can work as a way to introduce Hispanic culture beyond Flamenco, Tango, tacos and some stereotypes as all Latinos love to party and so on.

So while teaching a foreign language, teachers are not only teaching their students a language, but also bonding a series of political, historical and cultural connections between both perceptions and instead on pointing on their differences, the aim is to find what makes them closer. How they feel about us and how we feel about them, putting aside their national culture or scripts we might have.

Learning a foreign language is a way to also acquire other abilities, in a social context, for example. Stanley states from her research on American students learning Spanish in a homestay in Guatemala, that reasoning such as the following demonstrate a certain level of intercultural competence thanks to being exposed to another language, culture and context:

> Knowing or having an awareness of when to make the point and to have the confrontation or the argument or the discussion and when to back down and say this is not my fight, this is not my place, this is something which set us back. […] it is this process, it is this knowing of how to do it, thinking through this and how do you make judgment call what criteria you are using (2017).

In this case, students might have assumed ideas of what Hispanic culture is, either based from personal experiences, media or even the classroom. Also, they could have ideas of how others, foreigners, perceive Turks abroad. Before using Digital Storytelling to lead them to a "home" place of intercultural competence, it is important to determine what their preconceptions are in order to teach culture in the Spanish as a foreign language classroom.

For Mejía and Agray-Vargas (2014), a way to acquire Intercultural Communication Competence is through immersion in a place where the target language is spoken. In their research, with Australian students in an two-week-immersion course in Colombia, it was found that participants aside from learning Spanish, were also interested in interacting with the culture and everyday aspects of a native speaker's life. Before travelling to Colombia, students learnt about different aspects of Hispanic culture, not only Colombia, such as food and courtesy expressions. Also, they were instructed with the "Do's and Don'ts" while in Colombia.

The participants, 5 male and 5 females, Australian students from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology with an A2 Spanish level, were aimed to spend 2 weeks taking a B1.1 level course in Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in Bogotá, Colombia. During this experience, they received between 5 and 6 lessons every day, participated in cultural activities and stayed with a host family in Bogota, Colombia. As part of their journey, they learned how to use public transportation to go from their homes to the university and hung out with local students in their free time.

After the project was completed, students showed an improvement in their Spanish skills, especially their vocabulary since they learned many local words through their everyday interactions. On the other side, students came across with the cultural differences between their own and Colombian families, as the house maid cook for them every day and even always answering the phone, since they come from a context where students are more independent and housekeeping service is not so common. At the end of their stay, participants were able to talk and express opinions about the Colombian society, political arguments and other conflicts.

Overall, both Australian and local students learned from each other beyond skills regarding foreign language. They got to know a new culture and strength up their knowledge by understanding a different way of living, so that at the end they have developed an intercultural communication competence.

However, from the learners' perspective, opinion whereas culture is important or not while learning a new language might vary. In the study conducted by Drewelow and Mitchell (2015) with Spanish language students and their thoughts on the importance of culture versus grammar and vocabulary in their learning process, 40% of participants agreed that culture was "an important aspect of language learning" to "become fluent in the language" (p. 249). On the other hand, most of them expressed being more interested in "enhancing their linguistic proficiency and communicative skills in Spanish than on honing their intercultural skills and knowledge" (p. 253). Participants also expressed that the chances of using Spanish at work were higher than having an intercultural experience in a Spanish native speaking country and also identified culture as a "set of products, behaviors, historical events, and customs tied to a country" (p. 253).

As a conclusion, Spanish as a foreign language instruction can be used to enhance students' intercultural communication competence and lead to a better comprehension of both language and culture. Hence, the importance of including interculturality in language teaching processes.

1.4. CULTURAL IDENTITIES

While developing an Intercultural Communication Competence, the concept of cultural identity comes across. According to Hortobágyi (2009), in the process of intercultural communication it is important to know how people's identity affects their way of assimilate information.

But firstly, what is "identity"? Yabo Li (2015) refers to identity as "one of the basic concepts of social studies" (p.23). The author goes on by saying that "it generally refers to the subjectivity consciousness of an individual in the social life belonging to a group different from other group. It was a philosophical category connecting with a historic, integrity and identity self-consciousness together" (p.23).

Continue on the concept of identity, this can be constructed through language as a semiotic tool through performing communicative acts of identity. (Bakhtin,

1986; Ramírez, 1995; Vygotsky, 1989, quoted by Gómez-Estern et al., 2010, p. 234).

Within this approach of identity, cultural identity is defined as “a sense of solidarity with the ideals of a given cultural group and to the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors manifested toward one’s own (and other) cultural groups as a result of this solidarity” (Schwartz et al., 2006: 5, quoted by Yih-teen Lee (2010). p. 57). Cultural identities can have an internal and an external dimension, where the first refers to their own interpretation of those believes and behaviors and the latter to the understanding of other cultures (Yabo Li, 2015, p.24).

From now on, the latter dimension will be taken into consideration. Gómez-Estern et al. (2010) explain that cultural identity is “configured and developed in the rhetorical act” (p. 236). They go on by saying that we become conscious of our cultural identities while talking to others. Considering this, a Digital Storytelling workshop works as an ideal setting where participants can express their own identities by sharing their own stories on the first stage and then continue the discussion on the story circle with the others and finally showing their own understanding process in the final digital story.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

Through a qualitative method, this research looks forward to answering the questions: How Turkish students in a Spanish as a foreign language class understand cultural identities through Digital Storytelling? How is the experience of creating digital stories in a Spanish language classroom? How can Turkish students use their acquired Spanish language skills to create something out of it?

The main source of data for this research is a Digital Storytelling workshop. Participants created digital stories about their different intercultural encounters as Turkish speakers and learners of Spanish as a foreign languages in Ankara, Turkey.

The workshop was designed as an extracurricular activity in a Spanish as a Foreign Language curriculum during the spring semester 2017/2018 in the foreign language institute of a university located in Ankara, Turkey.

During the workshop development data was collected through field notes, as the activity itself was the main source of information. Additionally, the story circle section of the workshop was recorded and transcribed later on.

A photographic register of the event was done, covering all the workshop's stages and participants' interactions throughout the day.

Before starting the activity, participants signed a written consent where they gave permission of usage of their digital stories and verbal permission for being recorded and photographed and future use of their mentioned audios and images.

2.1. THE PARTICIPANTS

Students of the course “Spanish as a Foreign Language” from the School of Foreign Languages of Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey, were invited to be the participants of this study.

From a group of nine students, five accepted to take part in the workshop since it was not a compulsory activity. According to this, the participants who agreed to participate in the workshop would receive five extra points in their course’s final examination.

The group consisted of two male and three female students between 21 and 22 years old, from the English Interpreting and Translation Department of Hacettepe University, located in Ankara, Turkey. Three of them were recently graduated on the summer term this research was hold while one was double majoring in English and French Translation and Interpreting and the fifth one was on her third year of English Translation and Interpreting.

The participants were from different parts of Turkey such as Ankara, Mersin, Tekirdag and Bursa.

Aside from English and Spanish, the participants have been in contact with or learned other foreign languages such as Catalan, Latin, German, Russian and Italian.

The “Spanish as a Foreign Language” course that the participants were enrolled on was an elective course at Hacettepe University. Particularly, this class was opened exclusively for English Interpreting and Translation students, as they have to complete credits in a second foreign language besides English in order to graduate. According to this, on their first year they could choose to take either Spanish or Italian, hence most of the participants have been learning Spanish for around 4 years at least.

In this case, some of the participants have been following the course since level 1 (A1) and others have join in the winter term. Because of this, not all of the

students were in the same level of fluency even though they were part of the same class.

The level of this course was intermediate, B1/B2 according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL). According to the (CEFRL) a B1 user:

> can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment, 2001, p. 23).

On the other side, a B2 level user:

> can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and Independent disadvantages of various options" (The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment, 2001, p. 23).

According to this, the participants were, in theory, able to follow a workshop conducted in Spanish without having major communication problems.

2.2. THE WORKSHOP: “DIFFERENT WOR(L)DS”

Picture 3. Different Wor(l)ds workshop cover.

The experience, named by the participants “Different Wor(l)ds” delivered five digital stories about culture and learning Spanish. The title made reference to a play on words on how different cultures can be based on their linguistic variants, since most of the participants felt identified with the thought.

2.2.1. Preparation

In order to prepare for the workshop, in a previous meeting, participants were introduced to the concept of Digital Storytelling and the editing programs to be used. After the first meeting, a group in the texting application *Whatsapp* was made to arrange details regarding dates, time and place for event. Since it was the end of the semester, and most of the students were in their senior year, there were some schedule conflicts as exams, graduation paperwork and personal appointments that should have been taking into consideration. Subsequently, it was agreed that the workshop would be done on May 19th, 2018, in the Digital Storytelling Unit at Hacettepe University.

The students were asked to look up about Digital Storytelling and some explanation videos were sent via email. Also, it was advised that they should

check up Windows Moviemaker, the editing software to be used, and also to think about what they would think the workshop was going to be about before arriving.

The place chosen to facilitate the workshop was the Digital Storytelling Unit of the Hacettepe University is in the Faculty of Communication in Beytepe Campus. The workshop was facilitated under the supervision of the co-facilitators Research Assistant Dr. Gökçe Zeybek Kabakcı and Associate Professor Dr. Burcu Şimşek, both part of the HU Digital Storytelling Workshop Unit.

Each participant was provided with a laptop for his or her use during the workshop day and were instructed on how to organize the project files to facilitate further compilation of the final digital stories.

2.2.2. The story circle

Picture 4. Ice breaker: “3 cosas que me gustan, 3 cosas que no me gustan” (3 things I like, 3 things I don’t like).

As the first step in a Digital Storytelling workshop, the day started with the story circle. After an ice breaker activity “3 cosas que me gustan, 3 cosas que no me gustan” [*3 things I like, 3 things I don’t like*] I, as the main facilitator [D.H.] went on I’ve been through in my first days while adapting to a new place and culture. Language, manners, traditions and cultural differences between me and Turkish people were the introduction of the following story:

> *When I first came to turkey, I had no idea of where I was. I barely knew “Merhaba.” That was all. So I was kind of lost most of the time. One day, I asked in a café “Do you have orange juice?” (portakal suyu var mi?). The man didn’t say anything. He just made a gesture, like this. “What is that?” I thought, like I thought he was really rude when I was just asking a simple question. Then when I continue my Turkish classes and talking to people here, I found out that this is a way to say “no” in turkey. It was interesting because at home in Colombia this gesture means nothing basically. It is a random thing. To my surprise when I went to Italy a year after of living in turkey, I asked in a restaurant if they took credit cards and guess what? The man at the counter did the same gesture! So I learned this was not just a “Turkish thing” but also from Mediterranean countries and that Italy and Turkey are not so different. And I have to say, after some time, when someone asked me something and I didn’t know, I started doing the same! Life does things in funny ways, don’t you think? [D.H.]*

The story circle lasted around forty minutes and both the facilitator and participants told their stories but also contribute to a group discussion as the session was going on and topics such as language, cultural differences and similarities, body language, cultural identities, going abroad, speaking in a different language and confidence were mentioned.

First, linguistic differences among regions in Turkey was discussed. After the first story, Murat mentioned that what happened to me, how meaning or meaningless something can be in different places, happens also in Turkey. He

stated that even though he has not been abroad, he has experienced the same situation in other regions of Turkey:

> *There is an interesting word from the region I come from, Tekirdağ, "kaçıl" which actually means "watch out" but it is something you can use only there, nobody else would understand it.*

Also, Gülce had a similar story about the same topic with her relatives from North Cyprus:

> *My father is from Northern Cyprus and they speak Turkish, but a different kind of Turkish. I was born here so I don't see them often, only on summer, so I am not very familiar with the language. And we were having dinner and my granddad said "could you bring a "piron" for me?" and I was like "what is a piron?" I was asking my dad and he said "just bring him a fork (çatal)." They have some different words for other things and they (my family) don't know that I don't know. And think they are my relatives, not some strangers!*

When Melis told her story about the "Heyye", which means "Yes" in the Mediterranean region, she was supported by Elbi as she added "Yes! I have a friend from Mersin and she says this all the time".

Then, her peers pointed out that Melis actually don't use that word, to which she replied: "I don't say it because I think it's kind of rude, I don't know, it sounds rude. But many people use it in Mersin".

Later on, another mentioned topic was the cultural differences between Turks and other nations. Elbi shared the following story:

> *I've been in many European cities I can say, one time I was in Köln and I was with a tour and they went before me so I was alone. I went to a guy and said "may I use your phone because I ran out of battery and I need to call my tour friends?" and he said "I'm sorry but there is*

> *a touristic place there, you can go there and they can help you and they have to" but he could say "yeah of course, if you are lost you can use my phone." For example, if it happens in Turkey people would do that because we think more… like, more emotional way but in Europe in more pragmatic way. So I thought it was different from us. Because if there is touristic information you should go there, it's the logical thing to do.*

Participants concluded that cultural differences or similarities go beyond ways of thinking and also can be seen in small things such as gestures and body language. So that, Elbi shared a story about a time her and an Italian friend discussed certain gestures they both were used to do and others not:

> *Also, I have an Italian friend who came here with VFS and we became great friends that I visited her in Italy again. And she said to me that for example she has been in Norway and the Scandinavian countries, and also in Europe, and they don't do this (kissing two times in the cheek) but you do it (as well as in Italy) and I said "of course because we are Mediterranean.*

During the story circle, participants took the discussion towards Turks abroad. They talked about how they could identify a fellow Turk without actually talking, but just looking at their actions and behavior. Gülce mentioned that while she was in England, she only heard a horn once, and it was for her and her Turkish friends because they were crossing the street checking the wrong direction. Elbi agreed with her as the same situation happened to her in Barcelona. She could tell a group crossing the street was Turkish because of the way they did it and she added "they are crossing like they do it in Istanbul".

In particular, the way Turkish people cross the street seemed to excite the participants, as Melis shared a story about this too:

> *My cousin lives in Germany. When she and her parents come here every summer, she can't cross roads without me or someone near*

> *her because she is so familiar with the traffic lights for the peasants but in turkey they don't obey them and if you obey them you could die.*

And finally, stories about feeling shy to speak in another language and confidence abroad were told. Deniz started off by saying:

> *I have been in another country only one time, about six years ago I went to Seattle (USA). But at that time I think my English wasn't so good as it is now so I was very precautious about what I was saying, like if I didn't know exactly what to say and I would choose not to talk at all and we had an English teacher with us so I would ask her what to say, to help me out.*

Here, participants related this issue to different cultures and their own. For instance, Elbi added that "Some people tend to make fun of you, so you might feel shy. For example, they say the reason why French people don't speak English is because they are embarrassed of their accent." And Gülce went on by saying that "In Turkey it's the opposite, we love foreign people to speak in Turkish. You say one word and we are like "ah you know Turkish and this is so good, where did you learn it?"

Throughout the story circle, the main facilitator related the participants' experience to her own so that there was a common ground between both sides.

2.2.3. Scriptwriting

Once the story circle was completed, the participants were invited to write down a script for their digital stories based on the anecdote they felt the most identified with, taking into consideration that they should create a text no longer than 200 words. Additionally, it was given freedom to choose their language of preference to work.

Picture 5. Participants writing their scripts.

This stage took around 30 minutes and each student read out loud their texts. After this, some feedback was done, as one of the stories, for example, sounded more as a presentation video than a personal anecdote. Some other feedback was made in order to make the stories more personal and reflecting of each person.

2.2.4. Voice recording

Picture 6. Voice recording process.

The voice recording process was done simultaneously with the photo selection. The expected length of audio recording was around 1 or 2 minutes and each voice over was done one by one in the recording booth at the Digital Storytelling Unit with the assistance of the main facilitator. To complete this task, Audacity, free, open source software for audio recording and editing, was used.

2.2.5. Photo selection

Students were limited to use only a maximum of five images on their story, which could be photographs, drawings or downloaded images with public domain copyright. However, it was encouraged to use material from their personal archives or social media pages.

Picture 7. One of the participants taking a photo of his "Lucky Olyester Branch."

2.2.6. Video editing

Students were asked to write a story no longer than 200 words, thinking about maximum 5 images. It was told that the total length of the digital story should be around 1 or 2 minutes long. For editing, Windows Moviemaker was used.

Picture 8. "Lucky Oleaster Branch" projection.

2.2.7. Screening

Once the stories were completed, the group gathered for the in-group screening. One by one the stories were played proceeding with a small introduction of each story by the main facilitator and a post-screening comment by the storyteller.

Picture 9. The main facilitator reading the poem "Viajar" by Gabriel García Márquez.

After the screening, a special celebration was done for the day's closure. The main facilitator read a poem in Spanish by Gabriel García Márquez called "Viajar" and gave each participant a postcard with touristic cities and attractions from Colombia with a message on the back. The workshop ended up with a small reflection about life, travelling and discovering new cultures through the journey of learning a new language. Each person in the room said a few words and left a message on the memory book at the Digital Storytelling Unit (See Appendix 2) and the Different Wor(l)ds workshop was concluded.

Picture 10. Final group photograph after the workshop.

Picture 11. Post-workshop group selfie with the facilitators and participants.

2.3. AFTER THE WORKSHOP

2.3.1. Post – workshop interviews

After the workshop, a group interview was conducted with the participants about the experience they were part of. Four of the five participants came to the meeting; the fifth one did a phone interview since she was not in the city by the time the interview took place.

The in-depth interview questions were divided into four sections that covered different aspects of the workshop and the participants' relation with the Spanish language: "before the workshop", "working in the workshop", "learning Spanish" and "knowing a new culture." Later on, a transcription of the interviews was done.

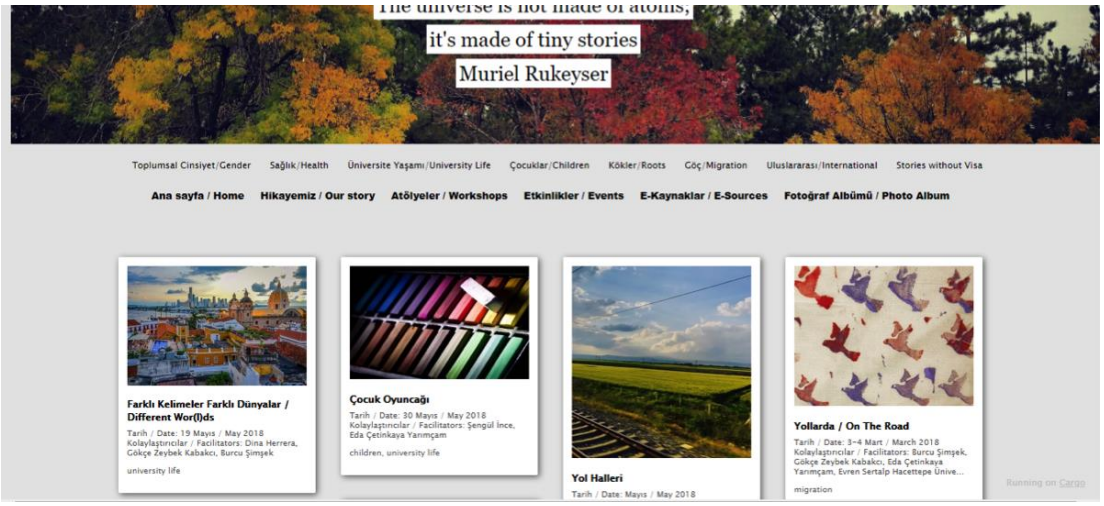
First part of the interview begins with questions related to the participants' self-descriptions and the stories they produced during the digital storytelling

workshop; the second part referred to their involvement in a digital storytelling workshop, pointing out the strengths and difficulties they came across during the activity; on the third part, Spanish learning processes and perceptions about the language were discussed and finally, on the last section of the questionnaire, questions were related to culture and before and after the workshop regarding Spanish language and Hispanic culture.

2.3.2. Sharing the stories online

Finally, as the last stage of the process, Turkish subtitles were added to the digital stories in a post-workshop session and uploaded on the online platform *Vimeo* to be streamed on www.digitalstoryhub.org.

Once this step was completed, the stories were shared on the Hacettepe University Digital Storytelling Workshop Unit website, under the category of "University Life," giving them free access on the web. The digital stories can be viewed on http://www.digitalstoryhub.org/Farkli-Kelimeler-Farkli-Dunyalar-Different-Wor-l-ds.



Picture 12. Different Wor(l)ds workshop stories on the Hacettepe University Digital Storytelling Unit website.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE WORKSHOP?

The “Different Wor(l)ds” workshop became an experience where it could be studied in regards to how Spanish language learners interpret culture and how they could create something out of it. In additional, how participants practiced their language skills and their general knowledge about Hispanic culture can be discussed.

3.1. OUR DIGITAL STORIES

In this workshop, five digital stories were created. Only one story was told in Spanish and the other four in English. One story talked about missing Turkish tea while in Barcelona; one story referred to an object: an Oleaster tree branch as a representation of a friend’s hometown in Turkey. Two stories referred to the topic of language differences between regions, in this case the Black Sea region and the rest of Turkey and Mersin and their own way to say “yes” or “heyye.” And finally, one story talked about “spotting a Turk abroad.”

3.1.1. "Como el te turco, no hay nada"

The first story, "Como el te turco, no hay nada,” [*There is nothing like Turkish tea]* Elbi talked about the feeling of missing Turkish tea while being in a family trip in Barcelona, Spain.

> *Cuando fui a España, era la primera vez que estaba fuera de Turquía. De verdad no me sentí como extraña, todo estaba bien hasta que sentí que algo estaba ausente.*
>
> *¡Era él te turco! ¡Claro! Mi amor, mi cariño. Eras tu quien estaba ausente. ¡Mi te turco! Cuando desayunábamos en el hotel, cuando hacíamos pausa de nuestros paseos alrededor de las ciudades, ¡siempre te busqué!*

Nunca había estado tan lejos de ti antes. ¿Pero no es siempre así? ¿No te falta lo ausente en tu vida siempre? Me faltabas demasiado. Yo te soñé en todos los lugares en los que había estado.

Después ¡algo maravilloso pasó! ¡Vi un restaurante turco en Barcelona! Todos los turcos entramos. Algunos pidieron kebab, algunos pidieron döner, algunos ayran. ¡Yo solo te quería! Yo me le acerque al dueño del restaurante con mucha emoción. Mi corazón estaba latiendo muy rápido.

Le pregunté:

'¿Hay te?'

El dueño: 'Si, claro tenemos'

¡Si había te! ¡Me pensé que ninguna noticia podría ser más alegre ni maravillosa!" [Elbi, 21]

English translation:

When I went to Spain, it was the first time I was out of Turkey. I really did not feel like a stranger, everything was going well until I felt something was missing.

It was the Turkish tea! Of course! My love, my dear. It was you who was absent. My Turkish tea! When we were having breakfast in the hotel, when we were taking breaks from our walks around the city, I was always looking for you!

I hadn't been so far from you before. But isn't it like that before? Isn't there always something missing? I was missing you so much. I dreamed about in every place I went to.

Later, something amazing happened! I saw a Turkish restaurant in Barcelona! All the Turks went inside. Some of them ordered kebab, other ordered döner, some ayran. I only wanted you! I went to the

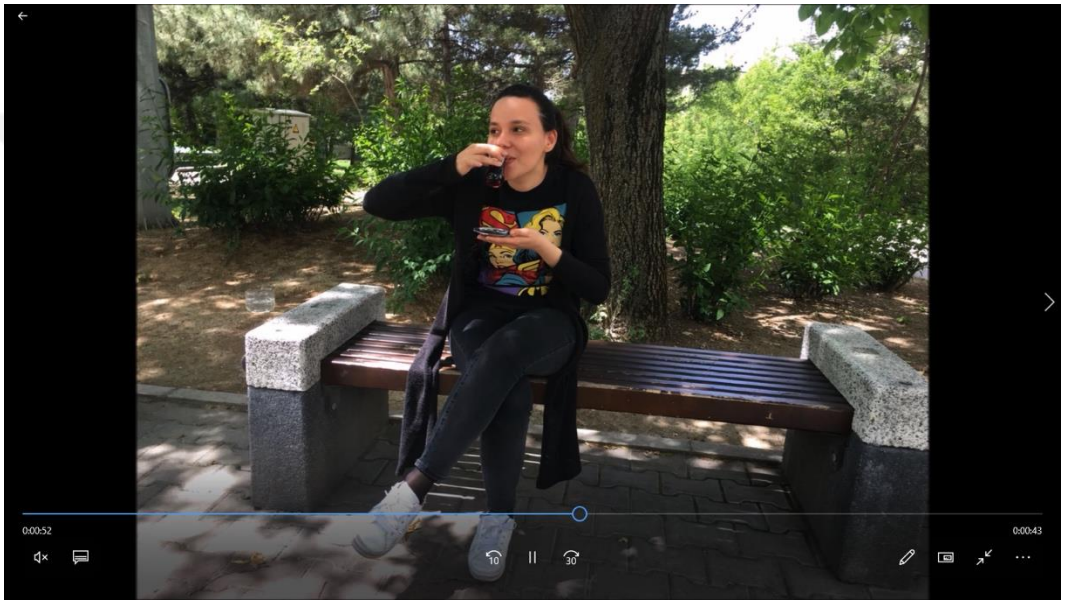
restaurant's owner, with great excitement. My heart was beating so fast.

I asked him:

Do you have tea?

The owner: "yes, of course we have"

There was tea! I didn't think any news could be better and happier!



Picture 13. "Como el te turco, no hay nada" (There's nothing like Turkish tea).

3.1.2. "The Heyye"

In "The Heyye," Melis talked about the expression "Heyye," which is a way to say "yes" in the Mediterranean region of Turkey. The greeting, unknown for most of Turkish people outside of the southern coast, has been the reason of some misunderstandings for the storyteller, hence the special meaning this word had for her. On her story, she explained her own struggles while living in Ankara.

I am from Mersin from southern part of Turkey. As in many other city, we also have different colloquial words. One of them is "heyye" which

we use instead of a word simple as “yes”. People from Mersin use it in their daily conversations very often and so they can easily understand this word.

But my friends were complaining that no one else understand them in their first year of university. People were asking them “Don’t you think?” and they would answer “heyye ya” but people couldn’t really understand them.

I don’t use it much and I thought that “heyye” can be understood from the context very easily. That’s why; it was surprising to hear that my friends were struggling with this.

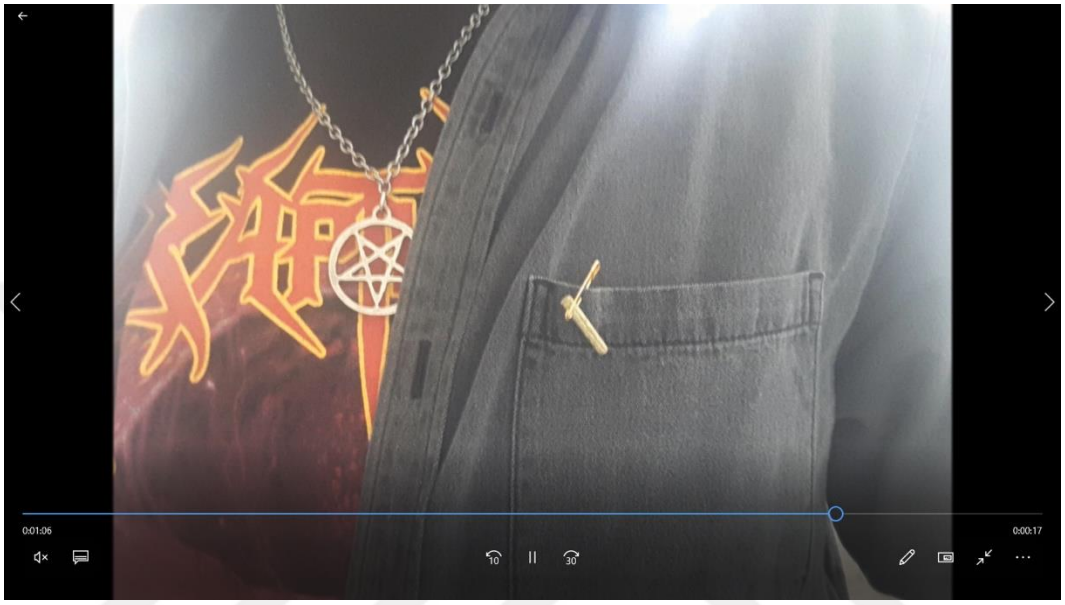
Until one day I used “heyye” without noticing in a conversation with a friend from Ankara. Funny it is that he couldn’t understand my answer. He was like “So? What are talking about?” And I explained that this is how we say “yes” in Mersin.

Yes we are in the same country but even our way of saying “yes” can be different. But as I said before I don’t use it much so it’s not a problem for me.” [Melis, 21.]

Picture 14. "The Heyye."

3.1.3. “Lucky Oleaster Branch”

In this story, an Oleaster tree branch represented the friendship between Deniz, the teller, and a friend. How this object reminded him of a dear one and how he keeps it with him as a memory.



Picture 15. "Lucky Oleaster Branch."

Last year, I met someone from a part of Turkey that I didn’t know anyone from. In a daily chat, she mentioned a ‘lucky branch’.

I had never heard of such a thing. I knew of lucky beads but lucky branches were totally new to me. She explained that it was these very small fragments of the branches of the oleaster tree.

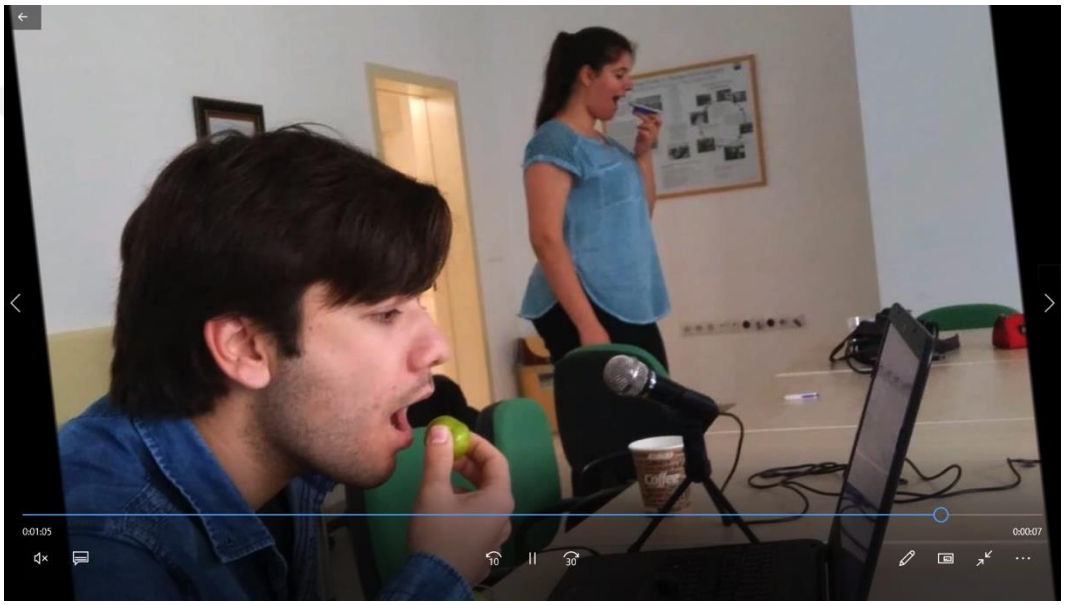
I didn’t think much of it; I just thought it was some cultural thing. But the next time we met, she brought me a branch, with a safety pin to attach to my clothes or whatnot.

Now I carry it with me all the time, I attach it to my shirt or I put it in my wallet or something. This is actually the second one she made me because I lost the first one. But I believe that losing it means that the branch did its job, protected me from a bad event, and then went away. So losing it is not really a bad thing, it means it works.

I love carrying it around because it reminds me of my friend and where she comes from. And I believe it brings me good luck wherever I go. [Deniz,22.]

3.1.4. "United with Divergence"

The fourth story by Murat, "United with Divergence," showed the teller's perspective between his region and other places in turkey, especially with the name of certain fruits and expressions.



Picture 16. "United with Divergence."

I have never been to another country, yet. But Turkey is like a country within countries.

You have many people from very different ethnic backgrounds.

Though it is known by many people that Turkey is a unitary state with one official language,

it actually comes from an imperial culture harboring many differences even contradictions in it.

So, I would like to talk about how you can notice this, if you are not here just for a quick visit to Istanbul.

For example, I am from the Thrace region located in northwestern region of Turkey.

And some words are not used with the same meaning in other regions or just not used at all.

In Thrace, we call seed "çiğit"; however, it is known as "çekirdek" in other parts of Turkish.

And people from İzmir call it something that is totally different "çiğdem".

And it is my story, telling you that Turkey is really the combination of the different cultures and different people.

But it should not make you nervous at all because Turks are known for their hospitality. [Murat, 21]

3.1.5. "What the Heck is Fiction?"

The last story told Gülce's encounter with another fellow Ankara local in London, England. What grabbed the teller's attention was the way the Turkish person in the bookstore was talking that is using a typical Ankara slang and accent.

Picture 17. "What the Heck is Fiction?"

When I was fourteen, I went to England for a language school. I thought it would be a nice chance to improve my English. And it was. I had to speak English when I was in school and it was really helping me. But when I was outside, walking down the street or shopping or eating, I realized something else.

WE, TURKISH PEOPLE, WE'RE EVERYWHERE!

I would constantly hear whispers in Turkish and some of the people would come up to me for a chat.

But one day, I heard something other than a whisper…

I was in a bookshop, looking through books, living my best life. Everyone was silent, it was like paradise…

And then I heard it…

A voice echoing through the shelves…

Shouting "FICTION NEYDI LA?!!!"

Yep, another Turkish person, a boy of my age, was shouting, and I repeat, SHOUTING, in a bookshop in Turkish. Asking "What the heck is fiction?" in Ankara accent. Did I mention he was shouting?

Well, he may be from my hometown but I can assure you I don't know him.

THANK GOD!" [Gülce,22]

3.2. STORIES AND TOPICS

Digital story topics	
Language	2
Food	1
Meaningful objects	1
Living abroad	1
Hispanic culture	0

In the story circle, a variety of topics were mentioned by the participants, which led to their own final story. From there, subjects were chosen and organized in 4 main categories: food, language, meaningful objects and living abroad. Each story had a clear narrative subject, but at the same time adding other elements throughout.

Language was the most mentioned topic, being the main one in two of the digital stories. It referred to the speaking differences among different regions of Turkey and distinct words that only locals could understand. Expressions as “hi,” slangs as “La” and local names for certain foods were mentioned.

Food, in this case, Turkish tea, was mentioned in one story and referred to the need of having the traditional Turkish drink while being abroad. The tea represented something the teller could not live without and the constant need of having a taste of it marked a cultural characteristic of Turkish people.

A meaningful object, a piece that represents a special memory, was the main topic of one of the digital stories. It explained the bond between the teller and a friend, how it reminded him of her and learning about something new about the friend’s city of origin.

Living abroad, came across as the encounter with the teller's own culture while being out of Turkey. While listening to someone speaking her own language and accent and the discomfort of hearing it, despite being far from her homeland.

However, Spanish and Hispanic cultures were not mentioned as it was expected. Even though one of the stories occurred in a Spanish speaking country (Spain) the main idea of it did not referred to Spain in particular.

The reason of choosing these topics varied. The participants expressed that most of them haven't had enough experience abroad or with Spanish as a language, as only one has been in a Spanish speaking country (Spain), one lived abroad (England) and a third one had a short stay in the United States. The participants focused on what they have experienced as Turks. One of the participants said feeling "restricted" as he has never been abroad, so he thought that explaining something about Turkey would be interesting for the story circle facilitator and other foreigners as well as knowing about some language and cultural differences between regions.

Referring about her story of living abroad, Gülce said:

> I talked about that memory about me in London because I thought it was funny and it would be good to make a video about it and tell other people and say how we are as Turks are being aware in other countries.

For others, the motive of choosing that specific topic came as a recurrent theme in their daily lives, as Melis referred: "I choose that moment in particular, because it was something that I came up with very often so that's why I talked about that".

However, some tellers changed their anecdotes topics after the story circle was finished. Since the activity was explained to them beforehand, most of the participants said to had an idea of what their story would be before coming. However, some of them decided to take another route once the story circle started. About it, Melis said: "At first, I wanted to talk about Turkish coffee, but

then I changed my mind in the workshop after we talked about all the language stuff."

After this, the story circle went into language differences between different regions of Turkey, accents and dialect variations. Other stories also focused on "a Turk abroad" with memories related to cultural differences, food, encounters with other Turks and fear among a new culture.

The stories left on the group different reactions as some stories, especially those related to accents, were found "funny" and "amusing" by the participants and in general all liked each other's work and found it pleasant to do. In particular, Gülce's story about listening to a fellow Ankara local at a bookstore in London grabbed the group's attention and gave them lots of laughs.

3.3. ENGLISH, TURKISH OR SPANISH?

Language interaction during the workshop[6]						
Participant's name	**Age**	**State of education**	**Language used in interactions**	**Language used in the story circle**	**Language used for the digital story**	**Language used in in-depth interview**
Deniz	22	Double majoring	EN – TR	EN –SP	EN	EN
Melis	21	Graduated	EN – TR	EN – SP	EN	EN
Gülce	22	Graduated	EN – TR	EN – SP	EN	EN
Murat	21	Graduated	EN – TR	EN – SP	EN	EN
Elbi	21	3rd Year student	SP	SP – EN	SP	SP

[6] Abbreviations: EN – English, SP – Spanish, TR – Turkish.

Throughout the day, participants spoke in three different languages: English, Turkish and Spanish. Since the beginning, they were given the option to choose the language they would like to work during the whole process. From this, four main moments of language interactions are worth mentioning:

- Language used in interactions between participants and facilitators.
- Language used in the story circle.
- Language used for the digital story.
- Language used in the in-depth interview.

In each part, some situations were preconceived so that students were in need of using Spanish and get an insight of their current level. Aside from that, students had the freedom of expressing themselves in the language they felt the most comfortable with.

3.3.1. Language interaction: so which language was used the most?

Language interactions		**Types of interactions**
Main facilitator - Participants	EN - SP	Giving instructions Answering questions Casual talks
Co - facilitator - Participants	TR - EN	Giving instructions Answering questions
Participant - Participant	TR - TR	Casual talks Asking and answering questions Giving advice

From the beginning to the end of the session, facilitators and participants interacted with each other by having a talk, giving explanations, helping each or asking questions.

For these interactions, participants used three different languages: English, Turkish and Spanish. Participants changed their language based on which was most effective to facilitate communication between both them and their facilitators.

Before getting into the story circle, it was discussed with the five participants in which language they wanted to work during the session: Turkish, English or Spanish. Out of the five, four agreed to work in English and one in Spanish. So, the main facilitator, a native Spanish speaker, communicated in English or Spanish according to each one's preferences and the participants replied back in that language. On the other side, the co-facilitator, a Turkish native speaker, switched between Turkish and English during the day.

Hence, the main facilitator used Spanish to give general instructions to the group and then proceed to explain them in English. If questions aroused, they were answered according to the language they were asked. In the same way, the co-facilitator did the same with Turkish and English.

Between the group members they used mostly Turkish to ask questions and give each other advice.

3.3.1.1. Main facilitator – Participants

In this interaction, the main facilitator used primarily English to give general instructions as explaining the next part of the workshop and the necessary steps to complete each task. Spanish was used then to refer in particular to the participant who chose to work in this language, translating form English to Spanish.

During the workshop, small talk and casual conversations came along and they were done mostly in English, but some basic statements such as approvals or disapprovals (bien, muy bien, super) were done in Spanish to encourage the other four participants to speak more in Spanish and make them feel more comfortable to use the language.

3.3.1.2. Co - facilitator – Participants

During the workshop, the co- facilitator, a Turkish native speaker, spoke mostly in English while giving instructions as agreed in the beginning. For further explanations that required a more detailed interpretation, such as feedback on the scripts, how to organize the files, technical problems or one-on-one questions, Turkish was used to speed up the process and have no place for misunderstandings during the session.

3.3.1.3. Participant – Participant

In a more informal and intimate level, the participant – participant interactions referred to the students' own comments and conversations while working on their stories, and not necessarily related to the workshop's theme. As they were free to talk and interact during the session, it was natural for them to talk to each other in their native tongue. Also, participants gave each other advice in Turkish about editing, photograph selection and technical/software issues.

The main uses of each language varied during the workshop. English was used when questions were asked out loud and referring to the workshop's main purpose. Turkish was used for personal interactions and detailed instructions and Spanish was used for general terms and clarifications.

3.3.2. Speaking in the story circle

The story circle started with an ice-breaker in Spanish: “3 cosas que me gustan, 3 cosas que no me gustan.” It was done in Spanish in order to test out the participants’ level of fluency in the language, at least at a basic level, and get to know them. Each person said their name and three things they like and three things they do not like. At this point, students used very basic vocabulary to answer to the ice-breaker question and relied on English or Turkish to find missing words. Despite of this, one participant showed a higher level of Spanish knowledge by making long, structured sentences while the other four named each thing as a list.

Secondly, the story circle continued in English. The main facilitator started off with her own story, followed by the participants. On this part, most of the conversation was held in English, with one student expressing herself in Spanish, except for a few moments where she added comments in English.

3.3.3. “I like Spanish more” vs. “English is more universal”

Even though the participants had some level of proficiency in Spanish, from the 5 students, 4 decided to work in English on their final digital story. The only student who worked in Spanish, expressed that given the chance to spend time with a native Spanish speaker, it was an opportunity to practice the language as Elbi said: “I decided to work in Spanish because you (the facilitator) are Colombian and I like Spanish more. So, when I had the chance, I wanted to take advantage of it.”

For the rest of the group, the reasons of choosing English as the narration language varied. Firstly, they expressed they had more proficiency in English than in Spanish. One student commented that as others would watch the stories once they were online, it would be better for them to listen to her English than her Spanish, as it was clearer and easier to understand. In addition, the

students expressed English would be more appropriate for the videos in the future as “(English) it’s more universal.”

Another important factor is their academic background. All of the participants were Translation and Interpreting in English students, and were used to make proper use of Turkish and English, so they felt that speaking in a not-so-good level Spanish could come as an “embarrassment” for them since they are related to a work field that ask for a high standard of the language use.

On the other hand, the participant, Elbi, who prefered Spanish expressed that producing a story on this language made her feel proud, so being able to tell others something about herself in Spanish was a motivation to speak more: “I feel very proud of telling my story in Spanish because I’ve introduced my culture in Spanish and that’s a success for me.”

3.3.4. Language used in the in-depth interviews

As a post-workshop session, the interview was done to check on the participants’ experience and perception of the workshop. Four of the five storytellers were present during the interview and all agreed to conduct the conversation in English. The focus group used exclusively English from beginning to end, without finding any need of using Turkish or Spanish.

3.3.5. A digital storytelling workshop and language practice

Referring to speaking skills, even though the “Different Wor(l)ds” workshop aimed to put into practice participants’ Spanish, the most used language during the day was English. However, workshop members agreed that it worked as a good practice because, according to them, they don’t use their English as much as they should since they speak in Turkish in classes and in general in daily life. Also, they expressed since they had to make a recording, they paid more attention to their articulation and pronunciation of words.

Participants also expressed that, even though most of them produced their digital stories in English, they felt that they practiced their Spanish speaking and listening skills throughout the day, as Gülce said: “even if we say one word, it’s good. And you (main facilitator) talked to us in Spanish and it helped to our listening skills.”

The idea of doing the workshop and the theme of the former worked as a stimulator to check some vocabulary as a preparation for the day, as Deniz said:

> I prepared the speech in Spanish as well. I did it in English that day, but I looked up a bunch of words, because I didn’t know the words […] it was good because we know the grammar and what “pluscuamperfecto” is but I don’t know what is “elbow”.

For one of the participants, listening to a native Spanish speaker talking, was an opportunity to learn a new accent and about Colombia. About it, Elbi expressed: “I’ve learned more things about the Colombian culture and I also had the opportunity of listening to your accent and it helped me to learn and improve my Spanish […] listening and speaking were the skills I practiced the most.”

3.4. STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS DURING THE WORKSHOP

Participants showed to have a high level of digital literacy while working on the workshop. However, in the post – workshop interviews, they expressed to feel some limitations related to software use and knowledge of writing.

In particular, the use of the editing software, Windows Moviemaker, became “tricky” to the participants. Even though all of them knew about Windows Moviemaker, some could not manage well certain details, as image and audio synchronization and adding titles and ending cuts: “for me the hardest thing was to use Moviemaker because I don’t have a good relationship with technology. For me it was the hardest,” Melis added.

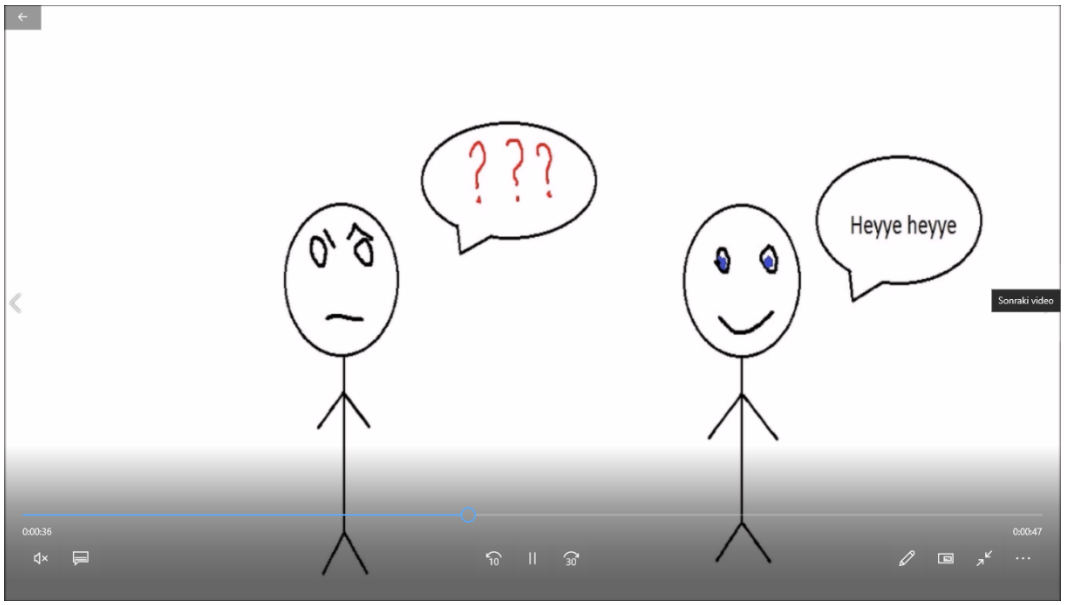
This difficulty was excused as it was their first time using it, as Deniz explained:

> I never used Moviemaker before and you (main facilitator) told us to look at it beforehand but I didn't (laughs) I was busy with exams and stuff. It's not a hard software but I always want to make sure I do the right the thing as I am doing at home, so it wasn't hard but it was the hardest thing it happened that day because it was new.

However, this situation was overcome easily as the participants understood how to use it once they were instructed by either a facilitator or a co-worker. It is important to note that participants were invited to incorporate music or any other audio to their pieces, but none expressed desire to do so.

Regarding other limitations during the workshop, participants expressed that finding the right pictures for the stories was the task that took most of their time while producing their digital stories. Regarding this, Murat said: "I think about the limitations. I mean, we had to use certain amount of pictures and certain pictures, which are not copyrighted. That was the hardest part."

Participants made use of their photos on social media accounts, took their own pictures with their phones during the session or did digital drawings in Paint in their laptops to fulfill the images they were looking for.



Picture 18. A drawing made in Paint for a digital story.

The group agreed that the copyright restriction somehow limited their creativity as they could not choose the exact picture they wanted for the story. For one of the participants, she did not have any picture of the place where her story took place, so finding one on the internet was not an easy task:

> Finding the photos was the hardest for me because after the copyright issues, I was trying to find the exact bookshop and the road (I talked about in my story) and I managed it but the quality was not that good and it challenged me. Actually it took two hours of the workshop. (Gülce)

Overall the participants found the different tasks not hard to complete and there were not major struggles that could be considered as an impediment to fulfill the digital story.

Particularly, the voice recording was found as a “pleasant” and “fun” task to do. Participants affirmed they didn’t feel like they were reading but talking to someone thanks to the earlier script preparation and being only with the facilitator in the recording cabin. Also writing was appointed as an enjoyable thing to do, to similar reasons to the recording as they expressed: I think we already did the script and we just read it. But of course in a way actually it felt more like talking than reading” (Murat), “since I was doing the text like I was telling it to someone I just read it and it sounded like I was telling a story so that was easy for me. I did it for three times though…” (Melis); “writing the script. It was because we first talked about the story and it changed in our minds, so I just kind of write the small text and it was easy” (Gülce) and “I also think it was the recording because it’s just, I was actually talking to you. I also consider myself a good speaker. It was fun, it wasn’t that hard” (Deniz).

In general, the participants found the working environment pleasant, which lead them to work comfortably and smoothly.

On the other hand, the workshop did not only help to enhance the participants’ language skills, but also to acquire extra knowledge as how to use the video editing software, as mentioned by Deniz“I learned how to use Moviemaker”, the importance of copyright, as Gülce mentioned: “[…] How to search for pictures

for copyright. I didn't know how to use Google that way" and "I usually didn't care about the copyright (laughs)" as expressed by Murat.

3.5. A DIGITAL STORYTELLING WORKSHOP AND TEAM WORK: CREATING BOUNDS

As the participants were friends and knew each other for around four years, interactions between them were natural and the atmosphere was calm from the beginning.

For instance, during the ice-breaker "3 cosas que me gustan, 3 cosas que no me gustan," participants took the chance to make jokes about friends or common things they have at university such as:

> *Deniz: I like… I like Murat! I don't like…]*
>
> *Murat: Berkan, Berkan!*
>
> *Dina: who is Berkan?*
>
> *Deniz: a friend…*
>
> *Gülce: friend?*
>
> *Deniz: friend, friend, but… but he is the worst of my friends! He is like a reversed Murat. [Laughs]*

Again, when it was Melis's turn to say something she did not like, she did not know what to say and again the Berkan joke came up.

Through the whole process, a high level of cooperation between the team members was observed. Murat had knowledge in Photoshop, which was of great help for some of his friends, while one got the idea of making drawings in Paint, which was followed by others too.

Some students were more familiar with Windows Moviemaker, and in general had a high digital literacy level, so they were able to finish before the others.

Therefore, they started helping other friends that seemed confused about technical aspects with the software, such as timing and adding/removing scenes or photographs. This dynamic made the process faster and the stages were completed in a shorter period of time.

In the post-workshop interview, the group affirmed that working in this activity together was meaningful since it was their last non-academic meeting they had as friends.

3.5.1. I didn't know that!

The group also learned new things about themselves and their peers. Even though they have been friends for a long time, the activity helped to discover certain aspects of their personalities, as Deniz's branch, for instance: "I didn't know Deniz has a branch carrying around him everywhere" Melis pointed.

During the story circle, while lighting the match, Elbi expressed she was scared. I, as the facilitator, was thinking she was scared of talking in front of others, when I tried to say something to calm her down, the other participants say along with her "she is scared of fire!"

Also, it came as a surprised Elbi's passion about Hispanic culture: "I wasn't aware she was so into everything Hispanic, Latino" Deniz said.

Picture 19. One of the postcards given by the facilitator in one of the participants' home.

In general, the participants found the experience positive and showed gratitude of being part of it and were pleased with their colleagues and their own stories. The process was done in a positive and supportive environment with mutual collaboration among them.

3.6. GETTING THE LANGUAGE THROUGH CULTURE

Participants agreed on the idea that knowing about Latin and Spanish culture leads to a better understanding of the language.

Among the factors mentioned, following Hispanics on social media, having Spanish speaking friends and hang out with them creates a special interest in all Latino or Spanish media. So to have access to it, learning Spanish is a key point.

From this interview, Elbi, the student with a higher level of Spanish, was at the same time the one with the largest amount of international friends, general culture knowledge about Latin countries and the only one who has been in a

Spanish-speaking country (Spain) as she explained: “I am more interested in the Spanish and Latin culture than in the English or American”. The other participants agreed on her thought with Deniz saying that “it’s because she has been in Hispanic countries before and she is actually interacting with Spanish speakers […] she has to prove to herself, she has confidence*”* and Gülce expressing that *“*I think her ability comes from that she loves everything from Spain or the Spanish culture. She watches the Spanish culture, she reads, she has a lot of friends (who speaks Spanish). But everything we see in Turkey is English or Turkish.”

Being introduced to a new culture during their Spanish class, allowed the students to have a new space of comparison between their own beliefs and the other’s. When asked about the cultural differences they come across between Turks and Hispanics, participants claimed that warmth, home oriented traditions and a less “direct” speech to others are similar values shared by both groups. Also, hospitality was marked as a common behavior not only for Latinos but in general for those in the Mediterranean coast.

And for the language, students found Spanish and Turkish to have many similar words, especially those that come from French since Turkish language has acquired vocabulary from this romance language. Also, some grammatical structures are “easier” to relate from Spanish to Turkish such as “verbos reflexivos” (reflexive verbs).

Taking all the reflections into consideration all through the workshop, participants affirmed language is a way to get to know a different culture. Since they are translation students, foreign languages are part of their work field and daily life as well as their approach. Gülce explained: “We are translators, of course we believe that! I think we do. I think learning languages is the most beautiful thing you can do in your life because with one language you can speak with a country of people.”

Other comments were: “*there is a sentence, “*the limits of my language is the limit of my world” (Melis), “I could learn as many languages as I can and I would

be happy. I don't need to do anything more" (Gülce) and "language is one of the most important elements of a culture" (Elbi).

3.6.1. "I used to watch telenovelas when I was little"

These five participants have been part of the same class last year, however each one has a different story of how they started learning Spanish.

In the particular case of this group, as English Translation and Interpreting students, aside of English, they should complete a second foreign language course credits in their academic program. Because of this, the Faculty of Literature at Hacettepe University required them to choose between Spanish or Italian. Participants expressed the different ways they got involved with Spanish, and most of them asserted that because of the Hispanic culture portrayed in TV shows and social media they developed an interest in the language to understand better what they were consuming:

> I was going to choose Italian, I came for Italian class but I signed for Spanish. […] I like Spanish more than Italian. When I was little I really watched "Muñeca Brava" but in Turkish and then I found the series on YouTube when I was in high school and then I decided I liked Spanish. And that's why I bought a book and studied by myself but it didn't help me really. Even though I didn't understand Argentinian accent, I decided to study in the university (Gülce).

The presence of Latino characters over the media also influenced the participants' decision of know more about the language:

> Actually my first contact with Spanish was in wrestling. I mean, there was a guy named Alberto del Rio and he was constantly calling people "perro" so then I wonder "what is the meaning of that?" He was also cool because he was always playing the mean guy of the wrestling and I like that. (Murat).

Music also was mentioned as an important factor:

> I started learning when I was 14 years old because I was always listening to Spanish songs, also movies, the culture and the Latin language always fascinated me so I decided to learn and I went to a course in Bursa. Also because it's the second most famous language in the world (Gülce).

Last, participants acknowledge the importance of Spanish in the world and how was more “practical” and beneficial for them in the long term to learn it: “I thought Spanish is more common so I thought there would be a larger market for me so” (Deniz).

Discovering a language through their culture, getting to know more formal aspects of the former leads to an overall better understanding in general of what that language and culture represent. The participants indicated that their exposure to Spanish language media both kindled and enhanced their interest in Spanish culture:

> I realized I’m getting better at that (understand Spanish) because I started following Spanish people on Instagram or I started reading stories in Spanish and I realized as time goes on I don’t need dictionary or anything like that when I do it periodically. When I took a break for a month or two months I forget but if I do it every day or once a week I realized I remember the words I read and my grammar is getting more… I’m not thinking so much and it comes more naturally like in English and actually I saw a dream in Spanish like 2 or 3 days ago but I don’t remember it. It was good. (Gülce).

Interactions with other Spanish speakers was pointed as a good way to understand Hispanic culture and practice the language: “in social media I used to talk with my friends in Spanish and they taught me many things from Chile, Colombia and so on” (Elbi).

Participants' interest in learning about Hispanic culture - and even their own native language - grew after studying Spanish in depth. Participants expressed to have learned new things since then as two of the students expressed with comments such as: “I didn’t know, I knew Spanish was common but I didn’t know it was that common. In the first courses we learned about you know which countries speak Spanish and they were a lot and I was surprised” (Melis) and “I thought Brazil speaks Spanish and it was really a disappointment when I found out they don’t” (Gülce).

Participants also expressed that they started giving more importance to Spanish as a cultural matter because of their current teacher's approach. They agreed that even though sometimes they felt they were "not learning anything" or their learning units were "unorganized," it was meaningful for them to get to know more about Spanish and Catalan culture from him. They also found the information "valuable" since they could understand Spanish people better.

3.7. LEARNING SPANISH, THOUGHTS OF A JOURNEY

Even though participants have been learning Spanish almost for four years, they do not feel confident enough to express themselves in front of others.

Taking this into consideration, the students expressed that, in theory, they have finished level B2 of Spanish as a foreign language and can be considered as upper-intermediate learners, however they did not feel in this way since they had little to no contact with native Spanish speakers or have not been in a Spanish speaking country, so that they have not got the chance to practice their skills in real life situations as the following comment explained:

> We need a lot of practice. That's why. With practice we get to talk and to talk we need practice, so […] the problem with Spanish is we don't know many words and even we know the grammar it doesn't naturally comes when we speak (Gülce).

Also, Spanish made some of the participants feel shy while talking, as Melis explained: "I don't feel very comfortable talking in Spanish actually. It's very hard. I don't even feel that comfortable in English and Spanish is way beyond my mind."

This uncovers the "weak" bond that participants have with Spanish. Most of them felt very comfortable talking in English and consume a lot of media in this language, however this did not happen with Spanish, with exception of few. So, for them, one of the reasons of this is the poor access to intercultural experiences and lack of practice of Spanish, making them feel distance from both the language and Hispanic culture.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Turkish students in a Spanish as foreign language class were able to understand cultural identities in depth after being part of a Digital Storytelling workshop as they were exposed to the use of the language and made a self-reflection of themselves as part of a multicultural world.

Participants affirmed to understand better some aspects of others and their culture after experiencing the story circle. In particular, the story circle worked as a window of new knowledge of interculturality since they could listen to their peers' perspectives about a common point during the discussion and even contemplate new views on it.

Participants concluded that there is a connection between learning a language and being exposed to its respective culture. That connection could be done through different channels such as media, friendships / networking and travelling. Students with more exposure to other cultures showed better understanding of cultural identities before, during and after the workshop. Members with less, however, showed a broader reflection in post-workshop interviews about the same topic.

4.1. DIGITAL STORYTELLING IN A SPANISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

Overall, the experience of doing a workshop in a Spanish language classroom was not as expected.

First, creating digital stories in a Spanish language classroom compiled a variety of benefits for the participants. Students in the workshop were able to use the language and practiced their speaking, listening and writing skills throughout the day and interact with a native speaker facilitator.

As a result of following each of the workshop steps, participants had the chance to speak in Spanish in the story circle and during the voice recording,

while creating a text during the script writing and, in general, listening to themselves and others during the day.

Also, participants got to know more about Hispanic culture because of the facilitator's insights and each participants own remarks. However, even though the chance of practice and using Spanish during the day was given, it was not embraced by the majority of the participants, leaving only one person working entirely in this language the whole day, as referred in the "English, Turkish Or Spanish?" section.

Post-workshop interviews showed that most of participants did not feel comfortable expressing themselves in Spanish. So, the less comfortable a student felt in a particular language, the less the language was used during the session. Results indicated that the members aside from their native language (Turkish) felt more confidence in using their first foreign language (English) and very behind of both comes, their second foreign language (Spanish).

This difference could be noted by the level of fluency and behavior while using any of the two foreign languages. While using Spanish, students were able to articulate structured and cohesive sentences and expressed deep ideas about the workshop's theme. However, while speaking in Spanish, participants' thoughts were simpler and less articulated, with a basic subject – verb – object grammatical structure.

So, even though the whole experience of using Spanish in the workshop was rewarding, it did not reach the expectations of using an Upper – Intermediate level of Spanish by these language students. However, this should be focused as a positive outcome since the participants were able to express themselves in their own way, which is one of Digital Storytelling main goals. As Fitts and Gross (2010) in their Digital Storytelling project with cultural identities demonstrated: "the project allowed students to use various modes of communication to express their ideas and identities" (p. 10).

Last, Digital Storytelling did help the students to express themselves about the workshop topic more freely given the many tools it offers. Participants wrote

their scripts with their own personal touch in the narrative, created digital drawings and gave a unique direction to their voice recordings. Ruppert, Adcock and Crave (2017) support this by adding that: “student became more connected to their words” as “[…] digital storytelling allows for and pushes our students to dig deeper into content and reflection” (p. 35).

4.2. LEARNING SPANISH AND CREATING SOMETHING OUT OF IT

As mentioned earlier, even though the workshop looked forward to seeing how participants would create something out of their acquired Spanish language skills, only one of them did so. In particular, the only person who worked in Spanish during the day, happened to be the most proficient one in the language out of participants.

In this case, the participant not only used her skills to create a digital story but also to interact and communicate with the main facilitator in an exchange of thoughts and cultures in Spanish.

The participant was able to express herself in the language and show her knowledge about Hispanic culture. From television shows, music and media personalities, the student was able to create a connection between her, as a young Turkish woman, and Latin and Spanish culture: Relating to different aspects of both as the way of talking, mannerism and traditions, the participant conclude that even though both cultures are different, they shared common grounds and each has something interesting to show.

So , the participant’s level of fluency in Spanish language was reflected in her level of general knowledge about Latin America and Spain, especially on this person’s high interest in the culture and curiosity of learning more.

As a conclusion, a Spanish language student with a high understanding of cultural identities was able to create a more creative and personal digital story using the target language skills as a way of representation of it.

4.3. UNEXPECTED RESULTS

The workshop created digital stories with a script, sound, images and voice recording, each with a personal undertone. However, out of the final five stories, one did not quite fit the latter requirement, as the narrative was more formal and less intimate.

This unexpected result was considered as a side-outcome that can be supported through the participant's profile. As this particular person is a content creator on YouTube, his channel falls on the comedy – informative category on the video sharing platform, so that the student was leaning to produce a digital story similar to his YouTube videos.

This comes out as unexpected and even contradictable to what Digital Storytelling looks forward to since in the story circle all the stories told had a more personal touch, but during the script writing stage that particular story took a different path. However, the story does provide personal insights and opinions of the teller.

4.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

An interesting approach could be exercised with students with a proficient Spanish level (B2 – C1) to see in which languages they interact during the workshop and if it leads to different results.

In this particular case, as the participants were English Translation and Interpreting students, as is explained on details in the Participants section of this research, their English level was significantly better than their Spanish. A less homogeneous group, composed of people with different professional backgrounds would bring different results in the same type of workshop and study.

Participants affirmed that they have had interest in Spanish through different channels such as music, television, among others, so a digital storytelling

workshop about media and culture with Spanish language students would provide more insights on this finding that the current research did not approach for instance.

Exploring the concept of intercultural communication competence through Digital Storytelling in a didactic series would be an interesting approach since this research did not provide to its participants direct knowledge about the subject.

4.5. CONTRIBUTIONS

This research found that Digital Storytelling does help students to understand cultural identities while practicing their language skills in a foreign language classroom. This findings concern to educational institutions that instruct from a Communication Competence approach, not only in foreign language teaching, but other academic subjects as well.

Digital Storytelling provided a setting for Spanish language students to explore their intercultural communication competence using topics related to their lives as university undergraduates.

In an educational context, a Digital Storytelling workshop can be used as a cultural exchange experience where a person can reflect about oneself and others' ideas, perceptions and ways of living. Particularly, people who is exposed to foreign languages and different cultures, has a higher level of intercultural communication competence.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to understand how Turkish students in a Spanish as a foreign language class understand cultural identities through Digital Storytelling, how the experience of creating digital stories in a Spanish language classroom is and how can Turkish students use their acquired Spanish language skills to create something out of it. Based on this, concepts such as Digital Storytelling, Intercultural Communication, Spanish teaching and new media were reviewed on chapter one.

First, Digital Storytelling combines a series of elements that allows its participants to create stories composed of their own personal voice over and images, but most importantly, their own thoughts and ideas in their own experiences. On foreign language teaching, Digital Storytelling provides an experience that adjust well to the current trends on language instruction as it brings new technologies to the traditional classroom system. Aside from having a supporting role in the class, with a different perspective it also works as an intercultural experience among learners.

The importance of providing an intercultural experience to language learners goes accordingly to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL) that states language students must have an integral training in their Linguistic, Sociolinguistic and Pragmatic components as well as their intercultural and multicultural competences in order to acquire a broader understanding of the technical and cultural components of a language.

In Spanish as a foreign language teaching, the curriculum by the Cervantes Institute, the Plan Curricular contemplates an intercultural profile of the Spanish language learner as someone who is able to interact in typical social situations where Spanish is needed, build bridges between his or her and Hispanic culture and continue his or her own learning journey in the long term based.

In additional, language students also want to learn about who is teaching them. From my own perspective, as a communications master's student and Spanish language instructor, I came across with more questions about the length of my name than anything else. Students feel attracted to me as the foreigner who is bringing her language and culture to the classroom. This curiosity is easily transferred to a Digital Storytelling workshop, where the language teacher is transformed into a facilitator and leads the group, the students, through the story circle, with her first-person narrative.

Therefore, working with Spanish as a foreign language students and Digital Storytelling results as a convenient way of mixing the practical and intercultural side of learning Spanish. The workshop results as an interesting activity, different from the regular classroom dynamics.

Consequently, students who are more familiar with the language's culture deliver deeper interactions and more fluency while putting into practice their skills. Also, they seem to have a higher intercultural competence level respecting their peers with a lower level according to the CEFRL, which can be seen through personal and group interactions.

Particularly, learners of Spanish as a foreign language of upper intermediate level are able to create digital stories with a clear narrative and a high comprehension of oneself and the other in the mentioned language, creating a personal story that represents a language learning journey and a high intercultural competence.

Digital storytelling workshops in language learning environments, particularly Spanish, is a beneficial experience for both participants (students) and facilitators (teachers) since a great variety of aspects of language learning can be addressed from one session.

And how can this transition from theory to practice take place? In chapter two, I gave the details about the Digital Storytelling workshop, "Different Wor(l)ds", that I was facilitated with five participants of the Spanish intermediate level of the School of Foreign Language of Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey. In

this case, the group was composed of English Interpreting and Translation students of the same university, so that they knew each other for around 3-4 years and Spanish was their second foreign language after English.

Following the seven steps to create a digital story, participants were part of a story circle where they could discuss their thoughts about culture and share some of their life stories. Later on, the workshop moved on to the digital stages of the workshop such as script writing, voice recording, photo and images selection, editing, and concluded with the other important discursive stage that is the final in-group screening.

In chapter three, this workshop process, as the main data resource, was analyzed. It was found that participants with a better knowledge of foreign languages have a high level of intercultural communication competence. Particularly about Spanish language and Hispanic culture, participants with good command of the language showed more comprehension of the language as part of a cultural identity since they were more into it through social media, television, music or acquaintances.

Other significant findings relate to the language interaction during the day. Out of five, one student with a better command of Spanish used the language to communicate with the main facilitator and produced her final story while the rest preferred to rely on English.

According to this, the experience of creating a workshop with Spanish language learners suggests that the implementation of this experience as part of a didactic sequence and an integral component of a teaching curriculum results more convenient and beneficial on the long term, especially if it is done among upper intermediate – advanced level learners.

This use of Digital Storytelling in learning environments opens a new chapter in Turkey about Spanish as a foreign language instruction in relation to developing understandings about intercultural settings. For educational institutions, it is a new approach that can be explored further into other subjects with groups of different ages and backgrounds, hence the importance of this work and future

research from this starting point. Through this research it can be seen that there are alternatives ways to explore Digital Storytelling in Turkey that go beyond the current perspective of a technological tool as perceived widely in the educational contexts, but an intercultural experience.

Finally, this work not only represents an intercultural experience but also my journey of learning about myself and others while being a foreign young woman in the other side of the world. Even though we are people with similar capacities and abilities, our own experiences, particularly learning languages, make us unique and set our mind into understanding the other's culture and have a broader perspective of the world. These days we might find everything by one click, but we can only find ourselves through our own stories.

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Program: Communication Sciences
Status: ☒ MA ☐ Ph.D. ☐ Combined MA/ Ph.D.

ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL

Approved

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Burcu Şimşek

(Title, Name Surname, Signature)

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MASTER'S THESIS ORIGINALITY REPORT

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Student No: n15127773

Department: Communication Sciences

Program: Communication Sciences

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED.

Doç. Dr. Burcu Şimşek

APPENDIX 3

Post-workshop interview questions

Part 1 – before de workshop

1. Tell me a bit about yourself. Can you introduce yourself?

2. What did you tell in your story? Why?

3. Did you have any other possible stories in mind before the workshop?

4. Did your thoughts about this topic changed after producing your story?

Part 2 – working in the workshop

1. Why did you decide to produce your story in English / Spanish?

2. How did you feel about producing your story in English / Spanish?

3. What was the hardest thing to do while producing your digital story?

4. What was the easiest thing to do while producing your digital story?

5. Which stage of the workshop you liked the best?

6. Do you feel this workshop helped you to practice your Spanish language skills?

7. What do you feel you learned after being part of this workshop?

8. Did you learn anything from me or your friends during the workshop?

9. Which skills did you use the most during the workshop?

Part 3 – learning Spanish

1. When did you start learning Spanish?

2. Why did you decide to learn Spanish?

3. What do you like the most about learning Spanish?

4. Do you feel learning Spanish has helped you to know more about Hispanic culture?

Part 4 – knowing a new culture

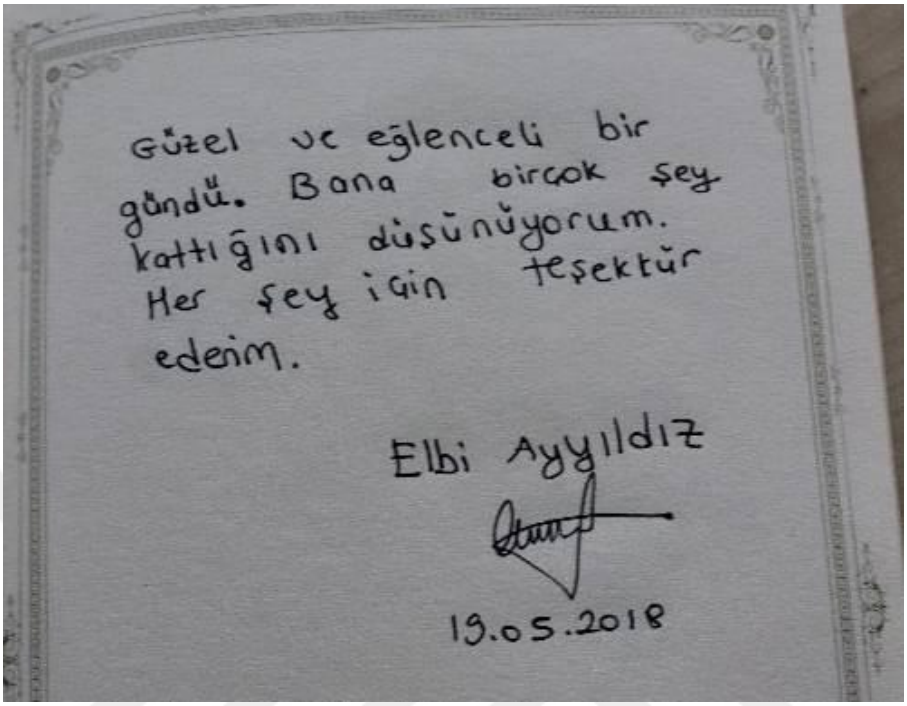
1. Is Turkish language similar or different to Spanish? Why?

2. Do you find any similarities or differences between two cultures? What are they?

3. Do you think you learn about culture when you learn a foreign language?

APPENDIX 4

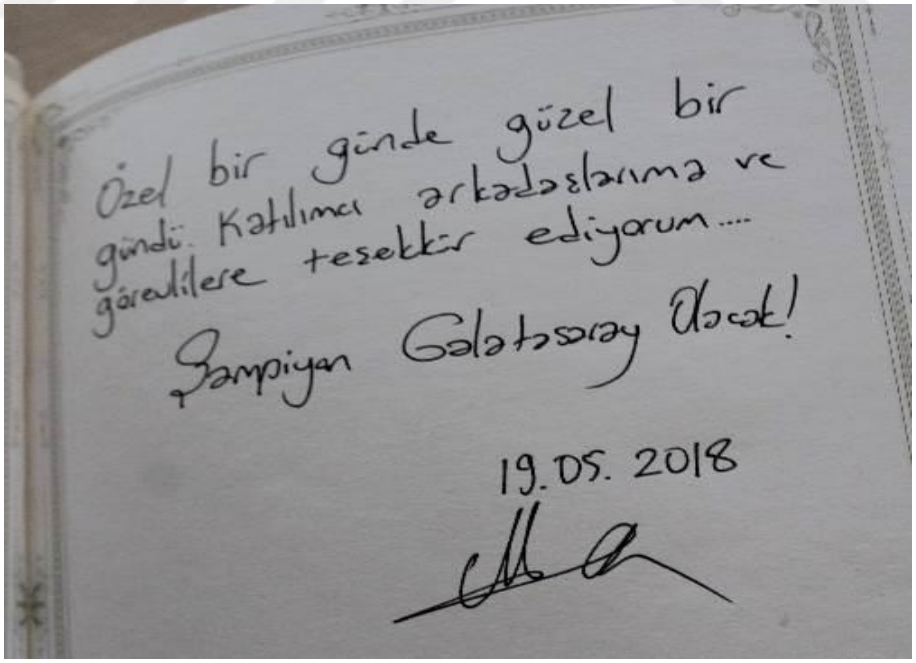
Post workshop comments and messages


Güzel ve eğlenceli bir gündü. Bana birçok şey kattığını düşünüyorum. Her şey için teşekkür ederim.

Elbi Ayyıldız

19.05.2018

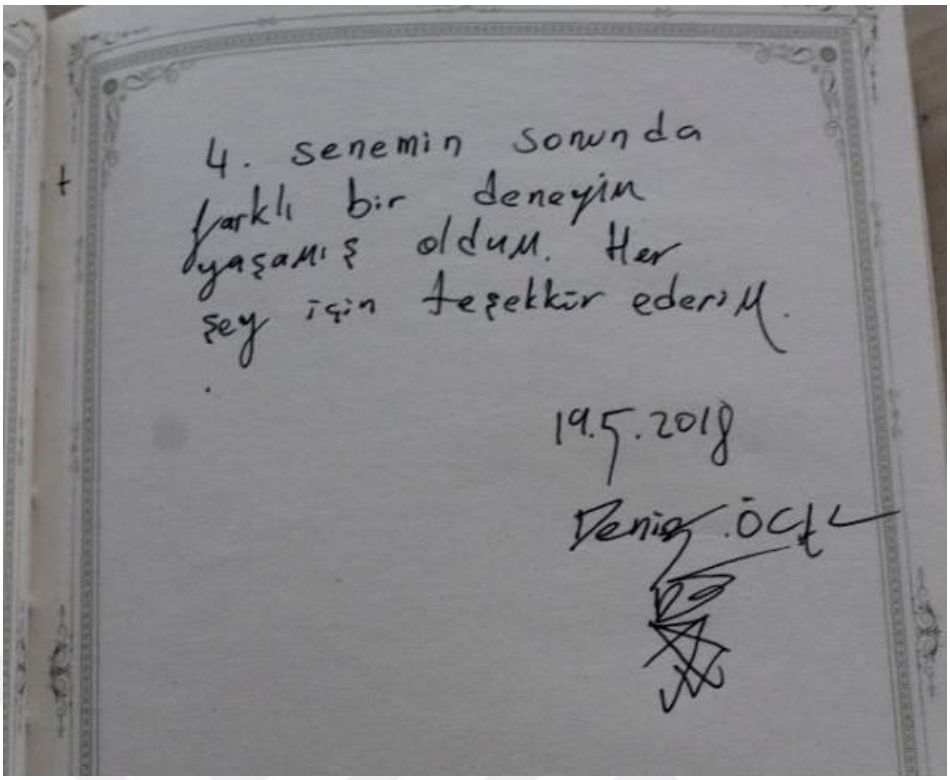
Picture 20. Student's farewell message.


Özel bir günde güzel bir gündü. Katılımcı arkadaşlarıma ve görevlilere teşekkür ediyorum....

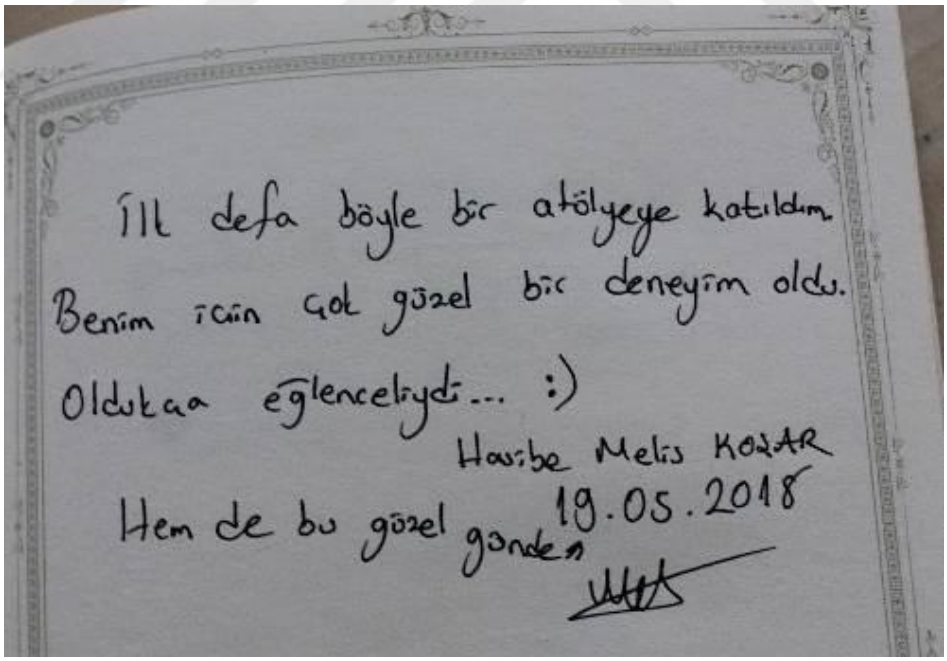
Şampiyon Galatasaray Olacak!

19.05.2018

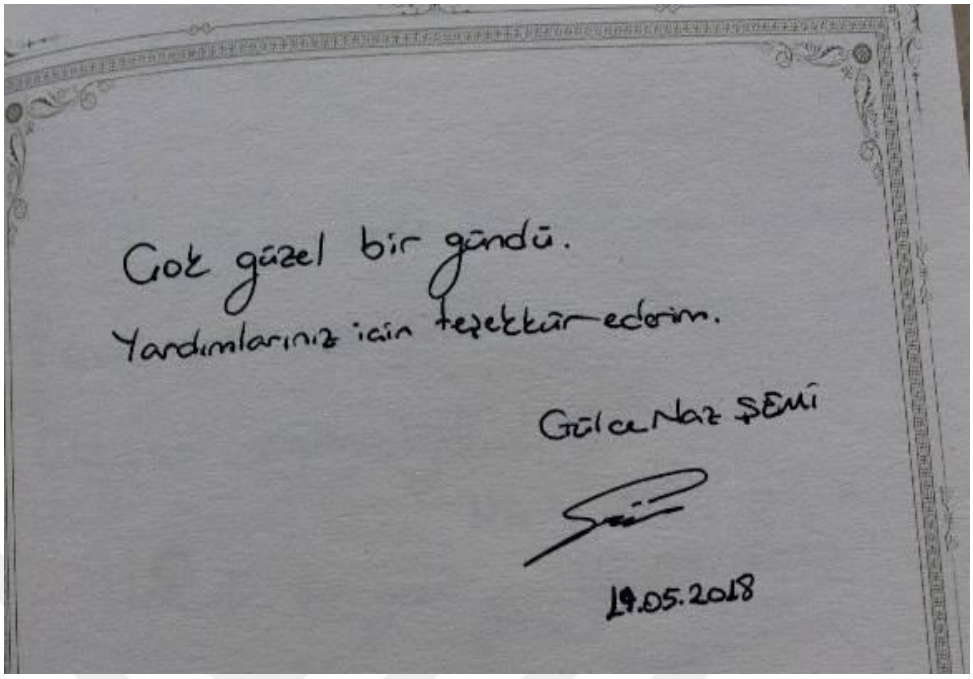
Picture 21. Student's farewell message.



Picture 22. Student's farewell message.



Picture 23. Student's farewell message.



Picture 24. Student's farewell message.

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