Today, with digital technology and the emergence of new (interactive) formats where users can participate in collaborative communication, they can easily read and reply publicly to a blog or comment on a book. With this in mind, students studying to become teachers were invited to a foreign language teaching seminar to compose their own multimedia narratives based on various themes. In this article, the students' digital stories will be analyzed with the goal of revealing the didactic function of multimodal learner texts with respect to multiliteracy learning. At the same time, the article will evaluate whether digital stories can be used to promote narrative and identity learning. Finally, a best practice model for a university seminar will be developed based on the results of the project.

1. Digital Storytelling (DST)

With the revolution of the Internet through the global network platform Web 2.0, which permits a global exchange of data at any time, the social and cultural activity of storytelling has changed. Internet platforms such as Animoto, Storybird, Windows Movie Maker, iMovie, voicethread (Conversations in the Cloud), Monkey Jam or Audacity (cf. Siever 2012, 16) now offer extensive 'tools' with the help of which everybody can tell and share multi-media stories, so called Digital Stories (DS). We want to define DS with Rossetier and Garcia as "short vignettes that combine the art of telling stories with multimedia objects including images, audio, and video" (2010, 37). In other words, DST products are short (or not so short) digital narratives that combine multimodal and digitized media. They are produced (and perceived) in a special narrative pattern to put all spatial and temporal data into an entertaining "cause-effect chain of events with a beginning, middle and an end that embodies a judgement about the nature of the events as well as demonstrating how it is possible to know, and hence to narrate, the events" (Branigan 1992, qtd. in Fludernik 1996, 26). We argue that, like storytelling and the art of narration, DST can have a positive influence on receptive and productive multiliteracy learning. These forms of learning include – but also go beyond – 'narrative learning.'

2. Multimodality, Multiliteracy and DST

The notion of multiple literacies is by no means beyond controversy. It has been interpreted and defined in multiple ways. In the Education for All Global Monitoring Report (UNESCO 2006, 148-152), which takes into account important evolving debates on major theoretical traditions and approaches, literacy is understood 1) as an "autonomous set of skills" (mostly reading, writing and numeracy), 2) as "applied, practised and situated" (critically applying skills to examine one's surroundings), 3) as "an active and broad-based learning process" (learners exploring, questioning and communicating to make sense of their learning experiences) and 4) as "text." In terms of text, literacy is seen as a subject matter, including questions of genre, fiction or
faction, the ideological context etc., which places the notion of literacy within contexts of much wider communicative and socio-political practices, and thus touches upon the question of power as well.

Due to the rapid digital development and the political and democratic impetus towards the legitimization of diverse (language) discourses, cultures and local knowledge, scholars like Cope and Kalantzis (2000) or Lankshear and Knobel (2006) introduced a wider concept of multiple literacies. Their concept pioneers diverse ways of "reading the world" in different contexts and in different modes. Although language (in linguistic terms) represents one of our very own modes through which communication and meaning-making is mostly conducted (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001), the new media have paved the way for new 'languages,' new modes of meaning-making and communication with new powers of expression. A multiliteracy pedagogy as developed by Cope and Kalantzis since the 1990s shall empower all learners to pursue meaning-making processes that arise in more than only one "meaning form," like image, text, speech (oral and written), object, space, body, gesture and sound, including representational processes of "reframing" (synesthesia) as well. At the same time, Cope and Kalantzis argue that our learners' purposeful choices of 'modes' are always motivated by shared "meaning functions" like reference, agency, structure, context and interest (cf. Kalantzis and Cope 2012, 171-205).

In the following, we attempt to comprehend and illustrate DST as a multimodal text and multimodal practice out of which meaning is rendered in more than only one "meaning form" and is motivated by four shared "meaning functions" (a-d) (cf. ibid.):

(a) The Subject of DS (Reference and Interest)
As already mentioned, users more or less identify their topics of interest themselves, encouraged by special events (e.g. the presidential election in the USA, new fashion trends, provocative viral videos) or persons (e.g. Trump, the idolized celebrity). In the end, everything that is on the human agenda and worth telling or sharing with others may be the subject matter of reference and interest. As language teachers, we still can provide interesting content-related opportunities to motivate learners in composing a DS. Task-based Language Learning (TBLL) and the complex-competence task approach (Hallet and Krämer, 2012) that both focus on 'natural' language learning and authentic real-world tasks have proved to be powerful concepts that mainly prefer meaning-making processes for learning (but never ignore questions of form).

(b) Me as a DS writer (Agency)
Children and young people often use DST to enact and stage themselves (self-assignment) in blogs, podcasts, one-second-films, autobiographical DS etc. It is known that the concept of identity is already inherent as a construct in our language (in multiple modes) and in narrative processes, too (Fludernik 1996, 26). "Identity is an issue because it is one with our language. It is constructed by each individual repeatedly telling another individual of itself, and continually re-writing 'itself' as such" (Keupp 2006, 68f, our translation). In this respect, DST unleashes new opportunities to orchestrate and make individual identity/-ies visible and to construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct them in interactions with others (Lambert 2009, 15-23). Identity work is also narrative work, but, at the same time, necessary relational linking that helps pupils to understand themselves in the flood of digital, cultural and linguistic experiences.
DST is not born out of nothing. No matter whether the topic is freely chosen by the agent or triggered by the teacher, contextual surroundings always add supplementary meanings to denotational meaning. Such surroundings may be all sorts of knowledge "across time and space, and through chains of causality; and comparisons which establish patterns of similarity or difference in meaning" (Kalantzis 2017). In class, the learners’ constructing processes may be scaffolded by making use of contextualizing explanatory or updated texts (online/off-line), group work discussions, supportive teacher instruction, or reflective feedback.

(d) (Multiliteracy) Learning through DST (Structure)

The last function may be the most important one in terms of learning through DST in the classroom. Apart from more knowledge-oriented affordances, DST opens up new and innovative processes of binding meanings multimodally (cf. section 2) into discrete meaning objects and events to design (narrative) comprehensibility. That means that parts of the narrative are created through multimedia linkages and montage techniques (music, sound, video, image, drawing, commentary, several storylines and reading options, etc.). At the same time, DST also requires changed reception efforts on the part of the reader/viewer/listener to reconcile evolving disparities or differences (e.g. non-linearity) in order to enjoy and understand the DS. At this point, DST apparently contributes to the development of literary competence, above all, to the dimensions of cognitive-aesthetic understanding and evaluation as well as methodological competences and creative production (Grimm, Meyer, and Volkmann 2015, 177). Without doubt, DST also reveals the need to learn more about basic linguistic means in the foreign language such as lexis, syntax, or grammar in order to make stories understandable. Teacher input, practice phases or language-awareness raising periods definitely need to accompany DST in the EFL classroom.

3. DST and Multiliteracies in English Language Teacher Training

DST has only recently become a didactic multimedia tool in schools, organizations and universities (see Heinz 2012; Rudnicki 2006). The present feasibility study was conducted in the university training of teachers of English. Embedded in a foreign language instructional seminar at Master level, entitled "Digital Storytelling and Educational Uses," empirical data was gathered from working with DS. The intention of using the DS shown here is based on the four meaning functions explained in section 2. The focus is set on the learner as the producer of DS.

1) What is the topic of the DS? What does it refer to? (reference and interest)
2) How does the writer enact himself/herself in the DS? What about his/her interactions with others? (agency)
3) How is the DS contextualized? How is it situated? (context)
4) What processes of multimodal meaning-making are visible? How are the narratives composed? (structure)
3.1 The Project

The seminar held in the summer term of 2013 was described clearly production-oriented in both the course and seminar program brochures. In this respect, the motivation of students was relatively high from the outset. Although they had to devote more time than usual to the preparation of the DS they seemed not to mind this. The course design followed a general 3-phase approach: (a) conception/production: planning and production of the DS; (b) process reflection: weekly electronic diary entries about ensuing developments, and finally (c) presentation and post-reflection/analysis: presentation of the DS in the group as well as writing a term paper as a 'catalyst' for methodological and didactic considerations. The complex production task for the DS was very open and formulated as an 'invitation' that was to link future professional skills as language teachers with core content from studying and practice, i.e. (foreign) languages, multimedia skills and/or cultural experience and competence. For triggering their own narrative processes, the students were given the following instruction: "Please, find the task you like best." Since the DS could be written both as individual or group texts, this was also meant to be, under certain circumstances (in choosing to create a group DS), an additional challenge for the students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compose your own digital story. Include text, pictures, video, audio files, original drawings etc. You may choose a format you like, for instance, a visual essay, a digital poem, a collaborative book, or a podcast. Feel free to draw upon your own experience and practice as well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choose one of the following topics related to language teaching and learning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ The world of languages for language teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Multiple literacy practices for language teachers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>➢ Cultures and cultural contacts in language teaching and learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 1. Task set for the DS

3.2 The Digital Stories

(1) Reference and Interest

Since the students' DST was guided by a complex and real-world task, the narrative spectrum in terms of content circled around people or events during their studies. The students identified (in groups) five short DS with the titles: "Going Abroad and Beyond" (A); "Spending a Year Abroad – Your Chance to Become a Cultural Expert" (B); "Our Emerald Isle Experience" (C); "Home – A Digital Story" (D); and "The Digital Stage" (E), all of which were (with one exception) created with Windows Movie Maker. Group (B) used the Prezi form. Except for Group (E), all groups chose Task 3, which in hindsight was justified by a relatively straightforward approach: Developing a chosen topic and then 'involving your full personality in the DS.' This clear choice for Task 3, moreover, reflects the great importance that teacher training students of English attach to their target culture and to intercultural learning. One student named Jesko wrote e.g.: "My choice was clear from the very beginning. Going abroad and experiencing the culture I want to teach is most important for me" (Diary entry).
In the following, mainly two thematically different DS (A and E) will be qualitatively analyzed and discussed with regard to the questions 2–4 (meaning functions). In the analyses, both the DS as well as the diary entries and project goal preparations are used as data.

| A | "Going Abroad and Beyond" (Jesko and Sascha)  
In interview style, the DS discusses two perspectives of the (mandatory) stay abroad and provides two contrasting individual stories: studies with time abroad and (so far) without. In addition, experts on the subject from the university environment are interviewed (professors, students and the teachers involved). |
|---|---|
| E | "The Digital Stage" (Jana and Max)  
The DS negotiates the possible negative aspects for young learners arising from virtual social networks such as Facebook or Twitter and proposes narrative-investigative bridges to the methods of drama pedagogy and performance-orientation in the EFL classroom as 'real ways out' of merely virtual communication. |

Fig. 2. Short synopses of DS A and E

(2) Agency
Without exception, all seminar students decided to design a group DS (group size 2–4 students). Jana (E) wrote in her diary: "Since Max and I do not feel really technically competent we decided to work together. [...] we both belong to the drama group." The fear of unsolvable technical problems should be noticeably reduced by collaborative work, feeling that identity work (as targeted) can also be done in the form of pair interaction and mutual support. Jesko and Sascha (A) identify their activity with the DS differently. They both illuminate their personal background. Jesko, on the one hand, expresses his expectations, hopes and desires, not yet having participated in any exchange program. Sascha, on the other hand, describes how his time abroad clearly changed and expanded his perspective (cf. Video-Log #1 [0:46-1:22]).

As agents of their DS, all students correspondingly identified two main factors for successful work, their digital skills and the power of collaboration and mutual reflection on identity work.

(3) Context
Since both DST teams were not professionals, they had to do a lot of contextualizing work in order to trigger meaning-making processes, but also to produce knowledge and practices to add supplementary meaning to immediate meaning or impede pre-established understandings. Thus, for example, they used various texts from secondary literature like Lenhart et al. (2008) and other sources from the course material collection or from educational policies materials (e.g. Kerncurriculum für das Fach Englisch, Lower Saxony). Furthermore, they all made use of their very own surroundings (peer groups, university context, private 'expertise' etc.) to enhance their multimodal productions.

(4) Structure (Learning)
Digital Story (A)
In terms of digital, structural and narrative learning, the two groups reflected diverse fields. Sascha and Jesko (A) already seem to be digitally native. In the electronic diary they show their aptitude for solving technical problems resulting from their
growing up with technology. Thus, they easily recognized that using a YouTube channel for collecting interviews with students, teachers and faculty members for their project creates more public attention. They rely on WhatsApp and GoogleDocs to exchange poll questions and collaborative writing processes. They use websites like jamendo.com for non-commercial music as well to quickly and straightforwardly put music to their DS. Since they both are experienced prosumers, they use Adobe Creative Suite 4 for cutting the material to save time. Also, Photoshop, for creating and editing images, is a resource already known to them and is used without reservation. As digital natives, both have already made the functions of Web 2.0 their own and sounded out useful tools for producing their DS. Many actionable media properties have become part of 'their world' and are used naturally (cf. Video-Log #4 [0:43-1:14]).

Fig. 3: DS (A): Screenshots and Storyboard

In terms of structural and narrative learning, Jesko and Sascha (A) begin and end their story with a quasi-narrative frame. Media affordances of the Windows Movie Maker and the generic multimodality of DST have made them translate the frame creatively into a visualized and stylized 'stick-figure' who travels the world (cf. fig. 3, top left and storyboard on the right). The little animated figure, a pre-produced still from paper-snippets and glued to crumpled paper, takes over the narrative function at the beginning and raises the viewer's curiosity for the video. Interest is raised addi-
tionally by the well-known airport sign 'Departures.' Furthermore, powerful and refreshing digital sound effects ('Fresh Body Shop' and 'Rainbow Stone' from jamendo.com, cf. Fig. 3, storyboard) are added to paraphrase content (text and image). At the end, the stick-figure is taken with them by both protagonists on their journey. They enter a lift and press the upwards-button (cf. Fig. 3, bottom left) and finally 'depart.' The camera zooms in on the 'upwards-button' (extreme close-up shot) and releases the two into the world of travelling. Thus, the digitally staged action of 'travelling' is constituted as a discrete and materialized object ('the stick-figure') for meaning-making. Moreover, 'immaterialities' like sound and camera-perspective are used to transport feelings and memories of the protagonists.

As the setting for their DS, the entrance gate of the university is chosen, again in symbolic function for the joint place of study. In order to interrelate both narratives to each other, Jesko and Sascha decided on an interview format that allows for the development of two narrative strands which tell Jesko's story, on the one hand, and Sascha's story, on the other. Interestingly, the usual dialogic function of an interview (in linguistic terms) has been translated to a reverse-angle shot technique and cross-cutting elements to link the different strands of action by repeatedly cutting back and forth. Having previously searched for further cinematic ways to present the stories in an exciting and entertaining way, they used various camera settings, such as extreme close-ups, panning and tilting, etc. to enhance the audience's viewing experience (see Thiel and Ranke 2013, 1). Moreover, professors, interested teachers and fellow students were questioned about their experiences of 'study abroad/internships abroad,' which, in turn, have been incorporated into their own narratives, similar to the setting of footnotes in written papers. Thus, they also see their own 'staging' as a kind of invitation for others to share their experiences and finally obtain critically-reflective stimuli for themselves. As Jesko has pointed out: "I think the project can be expanded, em, be expanded even further to get more people to share their knowledge with us and therefore to build up this unique project" (Video-Log #4 [2:22-2:36]).

Digital Story (E)
Looking closer at DS (E), Jana and Max invent similar solutions for multimodal binding processes to produce meaning. Both bind their DS "The Digital Stage" to Shakespeare's "All the World's a Stage" (As You Like It), which runs as a literary leitmotif through the entire DS. It is as much a metaphor for the virtual interactions (the Web 2.0 'digital' stage) as it mirrors the real interactions in the classroom or those in the peer group in their free time as well (the 'real' stage). Web 2.0 media affordances have provoked the two to multiply the leitmotif idea: verbally – when playfully reciting key lines from the play, visually – contrasting the 'digital' and 'real' stage scenery through dark vs. bright colors, and through editing – mostly quick cuts. Additionally, the 'stage'-narrative is authenticated through the terminology of dramatic presentation: players, (digital) stage, actors, etc. Cross-editing techniques prove to be effective to 'link' important argumentative strands within the story which are, on the one hand, those commenting on the advantages and disadvantages of social networks (e.g. the influence of effecting alterations in 'standard' language through neglecting punctuation, upper/lower case sensitivity, emoticons, the disregard of privacy, etc.) and, on the other hand, the producers' own autobiographical strands. Here, the storytellers (voiceover) explore the depths of 'find-
ing’ themselves through experience and knowledge finally ’staging’ their recognition of the personal value of theatre work and drama- and performance-oriented activities. That in turn is exactly what Jana and Max also reflect in their diary entries – Jana: ”[…] language and presentation skills improved;” ”[…] fear of presentation has decreased” or Max: ”[…] social anxieties have gone;” ”[…] self-confidence has increased.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Text (written)</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Shot Type</th>
<th>Audio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Shakespeare quote while pictures are shown</td>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Montage</td>
<td>Shakespeare quote</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Chapter teaching „digital stage“ with PowerPoint</td>
<td>The digital stage</td>
<td>Still</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Explain why „digital stage“</td>
<td>Logo as collage</td>
<td>Still</td>
<td>Social networks have become part of our lives. With 2.0 has created a digital stage, where users can interact with each other and represent themselves — construct their own online identity and act as players on this very stage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Reason why we’re concentrating on facebook</td>
<td>Screenshot facebook logo</td>
<td>Fade in</td>
<td>Of all the social networks, Facebook is the largest, with about 1.5 billion users worldwide — over a third of the world’s population.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Transition phase</td>
<td>Fb logo</td>
<td>Zoom in</td>
<td>And with good reason too.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Advantages of facebook -1</td>
<td>Fb from page (not)</td>
<td>Still</td>
<td>For example, you can国资委 many people all over the world.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Advantages of facebook -2</td>
<td>Fb status</td>
<td>Zoom out</td>
<td>And all of this within only seconds. It’s seamless, instead of travelling hours and hours, or using up your savings to call your friends in America, you only need one second to connect them.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Transition to facebook</td>
<td>Pic. Fb is my friend</td>
<td>Still</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Transition to disadvantages</td>
<td>REALLY?</td>
<td>Kicks pic out of way</td>
<td>Start of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Transition to disadvantages</td>
<td>REALLY?</td>
<td>Still</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Disadvantages of facebook -1</td>
<td>Screenshot what’s on your mind**</td>
<td>Still</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Disadvantages of facebook -2</td>
<td>Screenshot fb status</td>
<td>Zoom in</td>
<td>Besides serious privacy issues, social networks are said to have a bad influence on writing, especially that of students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Disadvantages of facebook -2</td>
<td>Screenshot fb status</td>
<td>Still, slight mum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Disadvantages of facebook -3</td>
<td>Term paper with “LOL,” “WTF,” “ROFL,” “YOLO,” &quot;&amp;&quot; ”&amp;”</td>
<td>Still</td>
<td>A survey showed that in America, students use informal writing styles and abbreviations like “LOL,” or “WTF” as well as emoticons in their school writing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Disadvantages of facebook -3</td>
<td>Augustinus, “I wish to comm.”</td>
<td>Simple translation</td>
<td>Apart from that, surveys also show that social networks actually worsen people’s social skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 4: DS (E): Storyboard
In comparison to the DST group (A), group (E) creatively adopts structural elements from the dramatic genre. At first, Jana and Max try to design a sort of climax in their DS. Searching for a multimodal solution, they bind a (printed) question mark to the image of a 'skeptical' teacher for meaning-making (cf. sequences 7 and 8 in the storyboard, Fig. 4). The decisive question for this teacher is whether school as an institution can lead students to a critical use of Facebook and Twitter. The answer "Yes, it can." pops up in printed letters immediately and introduces the DS's sudden reversal that drama pedagogy and performance-orientation in FL can work as 'real ways out' from only virtual communication. Throughout many parts of their DS, modes of image, (oral and written) speech, and editing are combined inventively, and emotionally involve the viewer/reader. Second, another device is 'borrowed' from the print genre: a sort of concluding coda. It is set at the end and assembled as a montage of short video sequences in which various members of the student theatre group answer the question of the value of theatre work (drama pedagogy) at university/in school with quasi single-word responses supported by fast cutting: "It's passion. It's fun. It's love."

Furthermore, within the DS omniscient and first-person narrator perspectives alternate with each other (zero and internal focalization) and address the issue of being (self-)critical from several perspectives. Compared to usual print narratives (or argumentative essays), Jana and Max exploit generic modes of oral or written narration and argumentation and combine them with multimedia properties provoked by Web 2.0 DST in order to constitute meaning and create emotion. Thus, they use provocative screenshots, spoken quotes from different sources, photos, statistics, emoticons and overviews as pieces of evidence in order to critically reflect the 'digital world.' The devices are mostly used for paraphrasing the designed meanings. But, occasionally, they are skillfully adopted for juxtaposing purposes as well. So, for example, music in a minor key is used to emotionally counterpoint the mainstream groundbreaking features of Web 2.0. The dark and quite gloomy start of Beethoven's symphony No. 5 is used to create this effect (cf. Fig. 4, sequence 10).

Generally one can say that both producers, although primarily socialized and educated in the Gutenberg tradition (!), are constantly searching for appropriate multimedia modes to 'translate' their acquired knowledge and learning experience with print media to multimodal text production. In order to critically juxtapose the 'healing' benefits of using drama-pedagogical elements, they have come up with innovative multimodal solutions like hard cuts, black screen, or counteracting voiceover (cf. Neu and Sembill 2013, 5).

Interim conclusion
In both DS, student producers manage to succeed in addressing their chosen topic with simultaneously entertaining and knowledge-based support; they mostly present their narratives with diverse multimedia, link them with foreign language pedagogical knowledge and personal experience, and also insert themselves into the stories. They multimodally bind meanings into discrete meaning objects and events. To do this they apply metaphors and leitmotifs (image and text-based), explicit vs. implicit images (visual metaphors and juxtapositions), the representation of several narrative strands, the change of narrative perspectives (editing and voiceover); the reduction of the
narrative framework, or a variety of camera settings. The production of storyboards (self-selected format) proved to be extremely helpful for the students as shown by the closing evaluation (cf. Neu and Sembill 2013, 8; see also Rossiter and Garcia 2010, 40 f.): "Whatever the application selected, what is critical is the careful consideration of multimedia elements to be used prior to the actual production of the digital story." The DST group (E) evaluated their final product as follows: "Web 2.0 has created a digital stage where users can interact with each other and represent themselves, construct their online-identity and act as players on this very stage" (Neu and Sembill 2013, 14). Jana and Max negotiated and exploited their foreign language teaching and practical drama educational experiences (both are members of the Drama Group) as a personal story. Both teams, after all, showed considerable competence in successfully meeting the media challenges of DST. Jesko and Sascha were empowered by their technical and digital educational background. Jana and Max were inspired and creatively guided by their literary studies and drama background. Both teams make use of 'materialities' and 'immaterialities' at the same time, i.e. "things that are physically present such as screens, clothing, bodies, objects and things that are more intangible such as memories, histories, feelings, and values" (Collier and Rowsell 2014, 17). Finally, for the students involved, the stories have become a kind of physical (through the real act of DS production) and mental (through the planning and reflection processes) ‘scaffolding’ for their personality development, which Schofield and Dierberg functionally conceptualize as "anchoring narratives" (2012, 9).

4. Digital Storytelling Following the Learning by Design Framework

As shown above, DST actively engages university students on many different levels and seems to be a powerful as well as multi-faceted learning tool. However, the learning process in the contexts described was solely initialized by the task described above and nothing else (cf. Fig. 1). In the following, therefore, a more profound learning scenario is introduced as a best practice model to promote the development of multiple literacies at university level and to initiate a lasting improvement: a scenario set within the Learning by Design Framework by Cope and Kalantzis (2015, 18). The authors suggest a four-step approach including a variety of knowledge processes: 1. Situated practice: Experiencing the known and the new, 2. Overt instruction: Conceptualizing by naming and conceptualizing by theory, 3. Critical framing: Analyzing functionally and critically, and 4. Transformed practice: Applying appropriately and creatively. The Learning by Design Framework has been proved to be an ideal scheme for task design and processing at university level as it allows university students to become actively involved, experience knowledge processes and develop multiple literacies. The table in Fig. 5 illustrates the 4-step approach enriched with learning objectives (column 2) and possible sub-tasks and questions in the last column.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immersion in experience and utilization of available designs of meaning.</td>
<td>Systematic analytic and conscious understanding of designs of meaning and design procedures.</td>
<td>Interpreting the social and cultural contexts, where students critically view their study topic in relation to its context.</td>
<td>Transfer in meaning-making practice, which puts the transformed meaning to work in other contexts or cultural sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Experiencing**

**Conceptualizing**

**Analyzing**

**Applying**

**The known:**

Task: Share your most important personal experience regarding language or culture and cultural contacts. Make your story interesting.

**The new:**

Task: Watch digital stories using http://digitalstorytelling.coe.uh.edu

By naming:

Task: Choose a digital story you find interesting. Identify the elements of digital storytelling. Give concrete examples from the story and arrange them in a table.

With theory:

Task: Draw a concept map visualizing the elements of digital storytelling using symbols as represented in the story of your choice.

Functionally:

Task: Choose a digital story that you like. Make a storyboard. Compare and contrast your storyboard with those of other groups which have chosen different digital stories.

Critically:

Analyze the DS following these guiding questions:

1. What is the topic of the DS? What does it refer to? (reference & interest)
2. How does the writer insert himself/herself in the DS? What about his/her interactions with others? (agency)
3. How is the DS contextualized? How is it situated? (context)
4. What processes of multimodal meaning-making are visible? How are the narratives composed? (structure)

Appropriately:


- Collect ideas for a possible topic of your DS and agree on one.
- Write down aspects/information which should be included in your DS. Put them on flashcards.
- Find/make pictures/animations that support your topic.
- Develop a dramatic question that you want to answer with your DS.
- Identify central points of your DS.
- Identify the narrator or central character and how s/he is should be enacted in the story.
- Create a story map. You can use the flashcard with the information and put the various aspects in a preferred order.
- Write a script. It functions as a guide for the voice-over. Use your story map as an orientation.
- Create a storyboard with a complete structure of your DS which includes visuals, themes, key phrases and your narrative. Think about which picture you want to use to support your narrative. Also, consider what you want the transitions from one to the other picture to look like.
- Do not forget a title page as well as the last page/credits including your names and sources.

Creatively:

- Record your narrative. Make sure your voice is clear and understandable.
- Create your DS. Put together the pictures and your narrative. Add background music.
- Share your DS with the class.

Fig. 5: DST in a Learning by Design Scenario, adapted from Cope and Kalantzis (2015)
In the first phase, "situated practice," students are encouraged to use their prior knowledge as a foundation for what they will then expand upon as they encounter the new "unfamiliar domains" that will appear in later phases (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 19). For example, in terms of the overall topic, students are asked to reflect upon the known "language(s), multiliteracies, and culture(s)" (cf. Fig. 5). To do so, students share their most important personal experiences regarding language or cultures and cultural contacts with a partner and turn this exchange into a personal story. In a second step, students will immerse themselves in the new medium by watching various digital stories. This will create an awareness for this new multimodal form of storytelling and can be used as a springboard for further tasks.

The second phase, "overt instruction," involves conceptualizing. The learners develop an "abstract, generalizing concept, and theoretical synthesis of these concepts" (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 19). "Conceptualizing by naming" entails drawing distinctions, identifying similarities and differences (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 19). The students are thus asked to do research on the Internet and watch as many digital stories as they like. They are then challenged to identify the elements of DST in the stories they watched and give concrete examples (fig. 6 lists basic elements of DST).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elements of digital storytelling</th>
<th>Example in the story I watched...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Purpose of the Story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Narrator's Point of View</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Dramatic Question or Questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of Content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarity of Voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacing of the Narrative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of a Meaningful Audio Soundtrack</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of the Images, Video and other Multimedia Elements</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy of the Story Detail</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Grammar and Language Use</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 6: Elements of digital storytelling, adapted from Robin (2008)

After becoming familiar with the most important features of DS and categorizing them in a table, the students are involved in conceptualizing by theory. "Active Conceptualizing with Theory requires that learners become concept- and theory-makers. It also suggests weaving between the experiential and the conceptual" (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 20). The students are therefore requested to choose one DS and draw an iconographic concept map visualizing the elements of digital storytelling. By reflecting on which symbols best reflect the elements of DS and the underlying concepts, students continue to build up their own DST theories.

The third phase, "critical framing," involves analyzing. This process entails "the examination of cause and effect, structure and function, elements and their relationship. It requires reasoning in the form of explanation and argumentation" (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 20). "Critical framing" includes 'analyzing functionally' which involves students in "examining the function of a piece of knowledge, action, object or represented meaning" (ibid.). According to the authors, learners analyze "choices made by creators in the design of their texts, and the effects of these choices in the
representation of meanings" (ibid.). A possible task here would be to choose a DS and design a storyboard and later compare and contrast it with different storyboard versions. In a next step the students are immersed in 'analyzing critically,' which involves students in a process that "interrogates human intentions and interests" (ibid.). That is to say, students analyze a DS regarding the four meaning-making dimensions 1. Reference and interest, 2. Agency, 3. Context, and 4. Structure following the guiding questions (questions cf. section 3).

After having been 'plunged' into a variety of receptive knowledge processes, students should become involved in the fourth phase, "transformed practice." This phase involves 'applying' which is a process "in which learners actively intervene in the human and natural world, learning by applying experiential, conceptual or critical knowledge" (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 21). While 'applying appropriately' learners apply new learning to real world situations and make an innovative or creative intervention (for themselves). Finally, the learners are asked to produce a DS that best reflects their most important experiences regarding the given topic language(s)/culture(s), their acquired knowledge of DST and remember the meaning-making dimensions. This phase might include, therefore, a range of the following activities such as brainstorming in which the students work in pairs and generate ideas for a possible topic and agree on a final topic and write them down; finding or making pictures/animations that support their topic; developing a dramatic question they want to answer; identifying central points/aspects for their narrative; determining the narrator or central character and deciding how s/he should be inserted into the story; creating a story map and writing a script which functions as a guide for the voice-over; developing a storyboard with the complete structure of the DS including visuals, themes, key phrases and the narrative; considering which picture to use to best support the narrative and how to edit them, and agreeing on a title page as well as a last page/credits including names and sources. Finally, the students apply their knowledge of DST by recording the narrative. They "translate their knowledge into a mix of different 'modes' of meaning" (Cope and Kalantzis 2015, 18). Using their script and storyboard, students record their narrative first. Finally, they combine pictures, narrative and music.

5. Summary

To sum up, new technologies and new communication tools are becoming increasingly important in students' lives. Thus, it is important to integrate them into EFL teacher education as well as EFL classrooms and generally into the practice of language teaching. DST, with its user-contributed content (Robin 2008, 222), is specifically useful for this purpose and can help to shape a powerful way to teach and promote multiple literacies. DST generically has the power, at least from a didactic and literacy-oriented view, to partially replace traditional essay formats and add new forms of representations to the classroom. DST not only helps to develop writing and narrative skills via the media, but also receptive and productive visual, or even film-related, skills, i.e. multiple literacies. At university level (as well as at school) DST should serve as a springboard for experiential and creative learning.
The research and learning scenario presented here, therefore, uses DST as a means to prepare students for a world where the Internet, digital media, and multiple literacies play a decisive role. After all, we strongly feel with Collier and Rowsell that "something quite nuanced, embodied, and sensory-led happens when an individual invests in contemporary design work" (2014, 25). Students are highly motivated, enjoy the innovative teaching and will become well prepared for their future as foreign language teachers in a highly digitalized world.

Works Cited


**Students' Digital Stories and Papers**


Neu, Jana, and Max Sembill. Going Abroad and Beyond. Leibniz Universität Hannover. 2013. (Ms.)

Thiel, Jesko, and Sascha Ranke. Going Abroad and Beyond. Leibniz Universität Hannover. 2013. (Ms.)

**Digital Diary Entries**

VideoVlog #1
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Exp9XBeKx-s. 9 December 2016.

VideoVlog #2
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nfp3mB_zIU. 9 December 2016.

VideoVlog #3
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPuZXwTmkW0. 9 December 2016.

VideoVlog #4