Storytelling: An Ancient Human Technology and Critical-Creative Pedagogy for Transformative Learning

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ABSTRACT

In the era of e-learning, student-centered approaches and constructivists learning environments are critical success factors. The inherent interactivity of the Internet and the emotional engagement of story can lead to transformative learning experiences in media rich environments. This paper focuses on Web-Based Transmedia Storytelling Edutainment as critical-creative pedagogy in higher e-education.

Keywords: Constructivist Learning Environments, Critical-Creative Pedagogy, Dialogue, Digital Storytelling, E-learning, Emotional Engagement, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Student-Centered Learning, Transmedia Storytelling Edutainment, Visual Communication

INTRODUCTION

In the end, knowledge has to be about creativity, innovation and imagination. It is time to imagine an education system that nurtures creativity rather than hinders it, and which, encourages a different way of seeing things. This paper acknowledges the limitations of knowledge and the opportunities for transformational practices through narrative practice.

PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED: STORYTELLING AND EDUCATION

In the middle, the journey embarks because like some creative and imaginative stories there is no clear beginning, middle or end. That being said, Freire’s revolutionary analysis of teaching literacy to the oppressed, rural poor in Latin America is discussed in his book...
Pedagogy of the Oppressed (first published in Portuguese in 1968 and in English in 1970). His pedagogical work was rooted in pedagogy that revolves around revolutionary theory, which was essentially helping peasants to develop a consciousness; however, his ideas are not dependent on a revolutionary context, and therefore, discussed here. It is important to take a look at Freire’s influential pedagogy, because he offers insight into collaborative and reflective practice, which are central to the online learning environments of today, and more importantly, his concepts offer a general critique of the educational system.

Freire believed that student and teacher should work together to solve problems, and that teachers do not have absolute knowledge or superiority over the peasant student. Freire opposes what he labels ‘banking education’ which he says suits the oppressor. The teacher’s role in this situation is to ‘fill’ the students with knowledge because the teacher ‘knows’, that is, he has absolute knowledge. Under the banking concept students are excluded from inquiring and participating in gaining first-hand knowledge. Today, banking education is still prominent in traditional forms of teaching around the world, and it is favored in the West. In banking education students receive secondary knowledge and learn nothing on their own. This prescribed version of the world supports the rituals of society and in this context education is a product that gets packaged and delivered rather than encourage a form of inquiry. Banking education is viewed as authoritarian, or one directional dialogue, and today dialogue is multidirectional, which is antagonistic to the traditional model. In the banking scenario, the excellent students tend to repeat the narrative that has been told to them by the teacher who is the subject matter expert or authority figure. The educational methodology in a banking education is a system that ensures compliance and social conformism, which can repress critical thinking.

On the other hand, Freire contended that ‘problem-posing’ education fosters a relationship with the teacher and the student whereby the teacher-student recognizes that the instructor is not a sole, or absolute authority on the subject matter. In this collaborative relationship, students can make contributions to the subject. In problem-posing education, both the student and the teacher seek truth, and this is exactly the type of education that resonates with me. Freire recognizes truth, and the truth of the matter is that a teacher does not always know and the student does not always not know. Freire argued that those who are truly committed to liberation should reject the banking concept all together, adopting a learner centered approach. Moreover, Freire argued ‘whereas banking education anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality. The former attempts to maintain the submersion of consciousness; the latter strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality’ (Freire, 1996, p. 68).

Furthermore, Freire (1996) stated: ‘problem-posing education bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation’ (p. 71). This can also describe some of the new learning environments of present day. In problem-posing education, student and teacher are jointly responsible for their growth. This is a process where education is consistently remade in the praxis, which is contextualized as thought as being authentic when it is generated by action upon the world. In aligning with this idea of praxis, digital storytelling is a distinctive action with its own meaning making language.

**DIGITAL STORYTELLING**

A digital story is a narrative created by combining voice, music, sounds, text, graphics and moving images, much like the videos people are already accustomed to. Digital stories are usually a few minutes long and deal with a particular theme or personal story, and they can be both instructional and informational. Raines (9 August 2010) quotes Sharad who
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