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Disrupting leaps of experience: digital storyworlds, transformative poiesis/praxis and narrative agency

Abstract:

Entering the digital storyworld of *Deakinopolis* (a narrative-based world of interrelated settings, characters and situations) is about imaginatively entering an alternative fictional storyworld that largely presents as factual, an experience that mirrors tertiary learners' realities. Malouf talks of experience of story as '… being taken out of ourselves into the skin of another; having adventures there that are both our own and not our own ... Release … into a dimension where reality is not limited' (2008: 19).

The digital storyworld of *Deakinopolis* contains alternative or imagined realities, where learners project their own experience in making this world coherent through their engagement with potentially unsettling perspectives. To encourage agency in active learner exploration, the storyworld is suspended out of time and sequence so that participants can imagine themselves through lapsed borders into that seemingly peripheral world. The learners activate their immersive engagement in this digital storyworld through praxical experience of unsettling perspectives, with potential for disrupting singular perspectives into transformative immersion of imagination as poiesis.

Biographical note:

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Keywords:

Digital storyworld – Pedagogy – Experiential learning – Professional writing – Imagination – Poiesis/praxis – Bruner

Introduction

The digital storyworld as developed and described throughout this paper is a digital model created to engage higher education learners imaginatively in professional writing-based situations. The learners' writing skills or tasks initiated through the digital storyworld situations may include writing communications such as evaluative reports or speeches, or selecting and justifying a shortlist of candidates. Providing a work-oriented imaginative context through that digital world encourages adaptability to writing for different purposes, and greater access to imagining varied audiences. Figure 1 below is a graphical representation of the mini-worlds which are networked together to form the overarching digital storyworld of *Deakinopolis*.

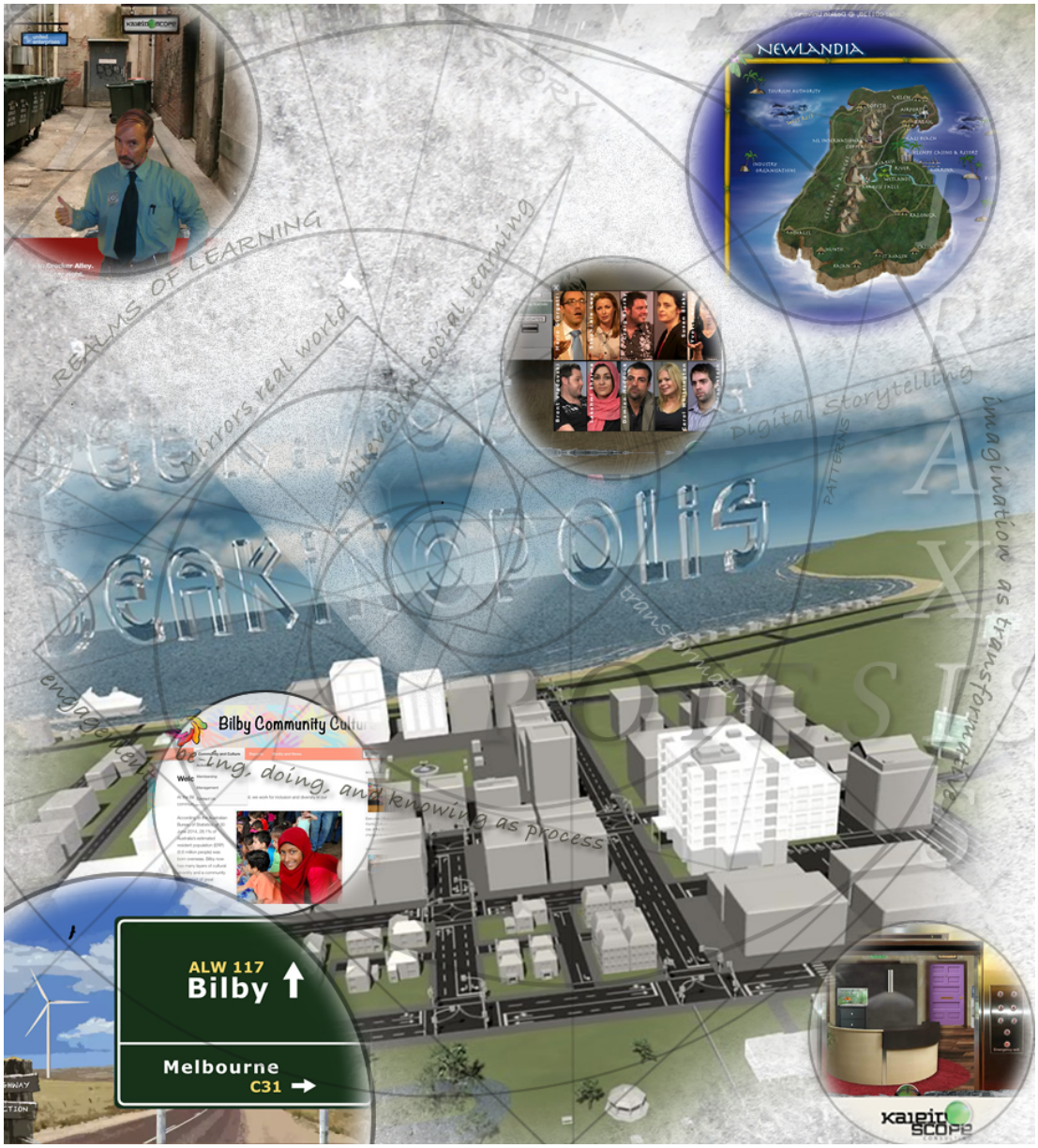

Figure 1 *Deakinopolis* and its interrelated mini-worlds – enter Deakinopolis through https://www.deakin.edu.au/apps/dlf/deakinopolis/deakinopolis.html

All the individual mini-worlds, such as the country town Bilby, the Pacific island Newlandia or the city organisations Kaleidoscope Consulting and United Enterprises provide their own key characters and setting-based situations or plots across local sites, organisations, and entities. The point of view perspective is provided by the learners as they 'enter' the specific digital world and engage with those characters, settings and plots to write their tasks from a particular perspective. The mini-worlds are interconnected, interdisciplinary and participatory, providing a capacity to transfer learner skills across different purposes and audiences.

I have developed the model organically from an initial paper-based scenario with situational role plays, into a complex series of interconnected digital worlds within which characters live and interact with their settings. Learners may start as 'interns' with Kaleidoscope Consulting, to report on a range of social advocacy issues such as climate change, and refugee resettlement. They go on to 'visit' the digital country town of Bilby, in decline after several boom years, but now the site of a resettlement program for 20 Sudanese families sponsored by local Material Designs business, and the multinational TrustWind selling the concept of wind farms. The participant learners are provided with a range of complex situations and personalities revealed as a parallel process to real work situations, as they explore the media narratives of radio interviews, newspaper reports, and local organisational leaders attempting to deal with disruption and change in their virtual setting. The learners synthesise this information into the professional writing tasks required with a greater empathy for differing points of view.

The digital storyworld model is focused on higher education learners as emerging writers, interested in professional writing in communications and social advocacy. *Deakinopolis* provides a networked digital scenario as a way to position those emergent writers within a virtual/real environment where they are able to take risk and leaps across story and media fragments. My particular interest, as both a writer and educator, is to move and motivate participants into recreating for themselves imaginatively realised points of view which both belong to that digital world and are transferable, even transformative, within the realities of societal disruptions and change in their own world.

The emergent learning outputs from the digital storyworld of *Deakinopolis* are extended in this paper across three key areas. The first area focuses on a structure, portal and platform of digital worlds to immerse tertiary learners. The platforms are the digital spaces or places where elements of story sit, in a form of stasis awaiting that activation. The platforms contain the settings, characters, dialogues and situations without any given sequencing or temporality. They exist as repositories of story.

The second area focuses on experiential learning and the immersive capacities of scenarios and role plays. These lead towards a discussion of Dewey's emphasis on experience and Bruner's concept of narrative as meaning-making.

The third aspect is a closer focus on narrative as meaning-making within the digital storyworld model. The digital entry portal of *Deakinopolis* and its mini-storyworlds encourage a storytelling where there is no specific ending or conclusion. These storyworlds reflect the capacity of plot, character and environment to develop learners' narrative capacities in exploring differing perspectives and points of view within

workplace-oriented contexts. Thus, the third key area to emerge is the focus on engagement in learning by encouraging imaginative and transformative engagement in the digital storyworlds – praxis and poiesis.

Defining the digital storyworld

When I moved from print-based to an online environment, I saw this as a natural progression. It is not simply because these are twenty-first century learners who are digitally literate, although that is a part of the story. The role-plays and scenarios, the narratives are all embedded in a virtual world, or series of interlinked worlds, which are creatively imagined to become immersive, but not 'real'. The world of *Deakinopolis* could be seen as rather chaotic and non-sequential, and requires a conscious – or maybe semi-conscious – leap from the real into a parallel digital world. The graphics and texts are intended to represent reality, but not to become a three-dimensional space. The Pacific island of Newlandia has an initial visual of a map as navigation, encouraging exploration of the local newspapers, the radio and television webpages and outputs, and interviews with the leaders of the Newlandia business and environment councils, all with their own photos and websites. There is the Centralia Range where copper is mined, a co-op organisation of garment producers and poverty in the southern fishing villages. But there is no narrative that directs participants to each part of that story. The participant learner's task is to discover how to represent the issues which they discover are consuming debate in Newlandia – the development of a third world economy totally dependent on tourism versus pride in local culture and traditions – through developing professional writing as social advocacy. The approach is to learn by engagement with the multiplicity of local issues.

The scholar Professor Michael Wilson (2014) talks of storytelling in the digital age as being a mess:

> … using 'mess' in storytelling here to primarily describe a range of multiplicities (multiplicities of forms, of media, of perspectives, of truths, of meanings, of texts, of relationships) and also storytelling's temporary nature, whereby stories resist definition and documentation. (124)

Wilson, through his research into oral narrative traditions interlinked with the reach of contemporary technologies, queries the term digital revolution but does indicate the scope of Web 2.0 to take a narrative turn of its own in exploring digital stories. Story interactions may have been face-to-face or real-time, but they are now also a part of the story 'mess' that involves blogs, twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other social media platforms and forums of Web 2.0, the 'Narrative Superhighway' (Ibid.: 133). Web 2.0 is defined by Gauntlett (2014: 162) as 'online services which harness the power of the network, bringing users together and creating value from their collaborative or social interactions.' This has led to a collaboration between the teller and the listener, the producer and consumer, the performer and audience, around the co-production of meaning (Wilson 2014: 130). The experience is two-way, as reader responses become part of the story's adaptations. All co-producers become simultaneously tellers and listeners (Ibid: 134).

This form of digital story as a productive 'mess' is central to the storyworld model. Wilson describes digital storytelling as 'any narrative that is created and distributed by some form of digital technology' (Ibid. 132) along with forms of user-generated content. McEwen et al. describe it as a process of 'personal curation of archive and memory, resulting in a "bricolage" that offers a glimpse into the life of the individual and, often, their local community' (2013: 10). Nunez-Janes (2016: 236) pursues digital story as an anthropologist educator: 'the combination of images, sound, and eliciting of memories draws us into common spaces for humanity'. Digital storytelling, in the digital storyworld model, is an externalised narrative method of compiling the mess of story to enable leaps between the materials – it is brought to life through personal curation by participants of a socially connective story. The personal curation of the story leads to a consideration of digital narration. The scope of this paper does not cover extensive debates on digital storytelling and narrative research, but the personal curation aspect suggests consideration of the specific narrative process of the digital storyworld through Ryan's (2005) concept of transmedia narratology.

Ryan (2005: 4) talks of a 'medium-free concept of representation'. This includes three features of narrative as a 'cognitive template' (Ibid.). Firstly, there is the 'construction of the mental image of a world populated with individuated agents (characters) and objects (spatial dimension)' (Ibid.), together with static descriptions of a place. Secondly, this world needs to have not always predictable changes caused by events which may be 'accidents (happenings) or deliberate actions by intelligent agents (temporal dimension)' (Ibid.), a demand for action and changes of state. Thirdly, the physical events are related not only by causality, but also associated with 'mental states and events (goals, plans, emotions). This network of connections gives events coherence, motivation, closure, and intelligibility and turns them into a plot (logical, mental and formal dimension)' (Ibid.). The *Deakinopolis* model applies this cognitive template as an internal storyworld interwoven with external learner/narrators. The interior events, characters, and places or environments of the digital storyworld are separated from, and activated by, the narrative of happenings and changing perspectives.

The portal is the threshold, or place of entry into the digital storyworld. Portal has a dual meaning here. There is the imaginative leap, with the learner crossing a 'threshold' into a digital environment to make meaning of story components the learner will imaginatively activate. There is also the physical leap into a potentially chaotic and non-sequential series of story elements represented by text, visual images, video interviews, podcasts, photographic essays, and other media. These are based within the *Deakinopolis* platform. The digital storyworld model's focus is on a portal which can lead to a potentially complex story continuum for learners to review at different levels of engagement and immersion. The digital mini-worlds – as constructed through photos, audio-visual commentaries, and websites – are a model for learning in the form of a three-dimensional world, even though they appear visually as two-dimensional, that is, a website with links to characters, places and situations. The key characters may be local leaders – such as Gwen Fallenby in Bilby hoping to employ Sudanese women in her Material Designs business – or organisational stakeholders at TrustWind talking to farmers about how to economically reenergise the town. They are clearly positioned

in Bilby as being at philosophical odds, but also having a shared vision of contributing to the town's future; it is within the complex story of their relationships that the three-dimensional aspect becomes clear to the learner participants.

Deakinopolis and its integrated mini-worlds has been constructed as two-dimensional on a simple platform using easily accessible software (Dreamweaver™ and WordPress™, for example). The platform integrates texts and incorporates photos, audio and video positioned to develop the stories. The sense of verisimilitude to reality has come from the placement of these photos, audio and video, but also from the texture of the graphics which replicate real world workplaces or scenes/settings in each of the individual scenario worlds within the overall digital storyworld platform. One such example is Kaleidoscope Consulting, which serves as a major entry to the world of work in *Deakinopolis*. From what is represented as a consultancy's reception area (a receptionist waiting, photos of the CEO and financial officer, a table with annual reports on it), participants are directed to the 'elevator' taking them up to work office levels, or to the meeting room, where the full applications and curriculum vitae, group interviews and individual to camera presentations of 10 candidates for a job are compiled in a digital 'filing cabinet'. Each of these graphics have verisimilitude as elevators and filing cabinets so that they are three dimensional in an imaginative conception although constructed in a two-dimensional environment.

The simplicity of the platform enables multiple users, and the worlds are capable of relatively simple expansion and renovation. This is a different form of interactivity, it has a mass scale, instant accessibility and ease of engagement. The learner is positioned in a fluid state between the digital and the real, and takes leaps into and out of the world, as required. The technology of the digital world provides an interactivity in the learning, but from situation and story, rather than playing with the environment itself. Therefore, the worlds created are persistent, they live past the cohorts of learners. In fact, they remain static until the next cohort reactivates the story. The story process is a reiterative cycle of present continuous.

My work in website-based digital worlds, with visuals that populate the world and believable characters leading the action in a realistic world setting, has plot as the catalyst for interactivity. Learners' motivations are engaged because they enter into the story, not just the world, and they have some agency within the story emerging from the world. The digital world platform is a controlled environment where they can take risks, experiment and reflect as a vital part of the process; reflection occurs through activities separate to the virtual worlds that mirror real world tasks. The learners don't really disappear into the digital world, they drop in and test ideas within it, then exit and reflect on responses to situations via their storytelling of the issues and debates they observed in researching their tasks.

Storytelling – scenarios, role-plays and personal experience

My experience in scenarios as learning and immersive experiences has shaped my movement into digital storyworlds. The digital storyworld value is in the complexity of echoing or mirroring real life situations. Pappas (2014) describes scenarios in his industry-based environment as being characterised by realism, learner-centric tasks,

applied learning strategies and interactivity. Scenario-based learning works through approximating a real-life or situational experience, which will involve an emotional engagement or response, indicated by interactivity with the tasks and the context for those tasks. Learners can be more motivated by the realistic settings and situations as they get engaged and perceive relevance for their own life experience. The contextual setting and its information, says Pappas (2014), can be recalled not just in the learners' working memory, but also in their long-term memory. The immersive experience in using scenarios challenges learners through the uncertainty of possibilities rather than certainties.

Role-playing is the process of acting out a character or person to take on another perspective. The emphasis in role-plays is on solving problems or resolving conflicts which are similar to real life pressures, at a more individual or small group level. This element of play enables a slight distancing from the reality of actual problems, and can encourage more consideration of possibilities. The balance between the problems and their relationship to real life provide strong motivators, but within an arena of play or risk-minimisation. The purpose of role-playing activities is to change the learners' perspectives, to persuade learners to alter their mental perceptions and to see material in a new light. Learning-oriented role-playing is usually focused on specific real-world skills, such as self-awareness, problem-solving, initiative and teamwork, and communication. To understand themselves, learners also need to understand the perspectives of people around them, and they will more readily absorb and retain the knowledge they built or constructed themselves.

Both role-plays and scenarios provide the basis of play for the *Deakinopolis* digital worlds, as participants experience situations and engage with issues and characters. However, role-plays and scenarios also provide a framework for my interest in learning through experience. My experiential learning approach has been developed and focused by the works and writings of the pragmatic educational philosopher and theorist John Dewey, and the definition of narrative as meaning-making expressed by the cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner. The digital world scenario has illustrated what I believe is a working definition of Dewey's theory of experience, more particularly, experiential learning as 'a development within, by, and for experience' (1938: 28). Dewey's permanent frame of reference is 'the organic connection between education and personal experience' (Ibid.: 25). As the philosopher and Dewey scholar Waks summarises it, '[y]oung people are already live creatures; they bring their habits – their readiness to act – into settings containing subject matters, which for Dewey were things to be acted upon' (2015: 10). This organic connection is central to engaging learners in the digital storyworld – no matter what their previous experiences of learning, the storyworld's aim is to develop strong linkages between the surroundings or setting, the situation and their own life experiences, and to encourage them to act. Dewey believes 'every experience is a moving force' (1938: 38) which can help the learner's growth into a greater maturity and insight. In the case of the digital world, the surroundings are physical, social and digital, and the learners are invited to enter into the storyworlds as parallel to their own experiences, organic in an experiential learning sense.

Waks describes interaction and continuity as being key criteria for experience as learning:

> …for the experience to be interactive, the individual young people must engage, must find in the setting materials that call on their habits, that call them into action, that enable them to project ends and pursue them. For the experience to provide continuity, it must build upon their already formed powers and capacities and provide present opportunities for continuous, future growth as they pursue challenging ends over time… (2015: 11)

The criteria of interaction and continuity are, for Dewey, 'the longitudinal and lateral aspects of experience' (1938: 44). The interaction Dewey refers to is about both objective and internal experiences. The interplay between the internal experience of the learner – what is felt emotionally and subjectively – and objective external conditions such as the resources, results in a situation of learning (Ibid.: 42). Within different situations, continuity carries over some elements from one to the next. What has been learned in one situation 'becomes an instrument of understanding and dealing effectively with the situations which follow' (Ibid.: 44). This continuity in situation means that 'every experience should do something to prepare a person for later experiences of a deeper and more expansive quality' (Ibid.: 47), which Dewey believes to be the complete meaning of growth and the reconstruction of experience.

By encouraging possibilities, growth in learning may become broader, and experiences more outward-looking. Higgins states that Dewey shares with Gadamar 'a conception of human experience as running in circles, both vicious and productive. Experience may spiral outward in breadth or become routinized [sic] and pinched' (2010: 303). Constructing the digital storyworlds around possibilities entails encouraging an outward spiral through methods of uncertainty and disruption. Like Dewey, I am also confident 'of the potentialities of education when it is treated as intelligently directed development of the possibilities inherent in ordinary experience' (1938: 89). This is experience brought to the situation by the learner, and the experiential possibilities are encouraged by open-ended access to the storyworld and imaginative engagement with story. Although the digital storyworld is my own experiential learning in developing disruptive story methodologies, my focus is on transferring my own experience to emerging learner writers who are moving towards work situations of uncertainty and disruption.

Utilising narrative as a mode of thought in the digital world leads to the central purpose of considering other points of view and stories. The subtleties of narrative extend a capacity to think about life. 'We learn an enormous amount not only about the world but about ourselves by discourse with others' (Bruner 1996: 93). Bruner posits two modes of thought, the paradigmatic and the narrative, 'each providing distinctive ways of ordering experience, of constructing reality' (1986: 11). To illustrate these, he describes a good story (narrative) and well-formed argument (paradigmatic) as 'different natural kinds' (Ibid.). My focus here is on the narrative mode of thought, which Bruner considers as two landscapes. One is of action, where there are agents, intentions and situations; the other is of consciousness, where those involved either know, think and feel or do not do so (Ibid.: 14).

Story is the motivator both of the development and participation within the digital scenario, and learners make stories which incorporate engaging ongoing drama and

believable histories of the past of the storyworlds. This storymaking is aligned with Bruner's (Ibid.: 11) narrative mode of thought as the ordering of experience or constructing of a reality through the human intention and action and their consequences, both of the characters within the storyworld and the learners in the story making. Bruner talks of fabula as the 'basic story stuff' (Ibid.: 19), a story which involves both action and the subjectivity of the protagonists. This is the dual landscape view mentioned above: a narrative mode which acknowledges the actions and consciousnesses of protagonists, the characters within my storyworld. The social advocacy or communications writing that are the plots for the story allow the learner to enter into the life and mind of those characters, developing potential for empathy, both with the characters' motivations, and with the social purposes of the communications.

The storyworlds themselves are constructs or platforms which contain the setting, the characters and their dialogues as a basis for the story that learners will engage with to help them 'construct a reality' (Ibid.: 11). I have separated the components of digital story from the creation of narrative story to more clearly delineate the narrative process of ordering experience for learners. Bruner discusses character, setting and action as inseparable within narrative thought: 'It is only with difficulty that we can conceive of each of them in isolation' (Ibid.: 39). Through the isolation of the elements of character and setting within the digital storyworld, the learner can perceive the value of the plot, or *sjuzet*, as activating the 'story stuff' or fabula of characters' actions and subjectivity. The individualised sequencing of the learner can lead to those transformations of meaning that arise with exploring differing perspectives and empathies.

Bruner's sense of narratives is of having capacity to 'locate the experience in time and place' (Ibid.: 13). I have separated this process also, so that the storyworld sits outside of time and chronology; there is a deliberate lack of contemporary events or passage of time for the towns. The digital world has been shaped around character and situational relationships: it is the learner who enlarges the world's possibilities through their agency in the narrative. 'Acquired knowledge is most useful to a learner, moreover, when it is "discovered" through the learner's own cognitive efforts', says Bruner (1996: xii). By taking their own agency in the story, learners may understand the value of an experiential narrative process in developing transformative differing perspectives.

Bruner takes agency further than taking action, viewing it as 'taking more control of your own mental activity' (Ibid.: 87). He positions agency with reflection, collaboration, and culture, as an investigation of the human condition, an outcome of narrative modes of thought in human studies. 'To achieve such toughmindedness in the human studies demands somewhat different skills, different sensibility, and more courage, for consideration of the human condition arouses contrary passions' (Ibid.). My interest is in how learning through possibilities may encourage these sensibilities and engagement through subjectivities of participant and protagonists of the experiential narrative. Reflection is a vital component of providing a form of sense for the individual learner. Collaboration, as described by Bruner is 'sharing the resources of the mix of human beings involved in teaching and learning' (Ibid.), being able to interrelate the learning between the tutor, the students, the resources and the external experiences. The sense of culture is central to Bruner as 'the way of life and thought that we construct, negotiate, institutionalise, and finally (after it's all settled) end up

calling "reality" to comfort ourselves' (Ibid.). The storyworld model constructs a 'reality' using elements of agency, reflection, collaboration and culture as the process to make sense of that reality.

One of the purposes of the storyworld context is to play with point of view, to enable empathy with other perspectives and viewpoints. The purpose of this is to understand the actions and subjectivities of protagonists, but also to understand the learner's self or identity as a reflection on these. This leads to consideration of Bruner's narrative tenet (Ibid.: 39), described as developing a personal world, where the learner may feel they belong. Bruner believes there are two basic purposes of developing the self-descriptive stories of everyday experience which explore that personal world. The stories of myth, histories, retelling of culture, frame and nourish an identity, while finding a place in the world is 'an act of imagination' (Ibid.: 41) which takes the self into the world of possibilities. Echoing Dewey's sense of education's potentialities in experience, Bruner talks of education as risky, fuelling 'the sense of possibility' (Ibid.: 42). My application of narrative mode is centred on moving the self-descriptive story into an empathy with other points of view and perspectives, making meaning of these as uncertain narrative components separate to the digital worlds.

Storyworld narrative – praxis, poiesis, agency

The last element of digital world engagement is that of narrative in the storyworld. Story within the digital world has the capacity to engage the imagination and transfer the learner's focus into differing points of view. The interpretative power of story is finding out what something is about, in order to understand. Bruner talks of truth not as verifiability, but as verisimilitude or 'truth likeness', which is 'a compound of coherence and pragmatic utility, neither of which can be rigidly specified' (1996: 90). One of the elements of the digital storyworld's meaning-making was to develop both a believable scenario and an imaginative engagement in the story.

To be transformative in developing connections from seemingly unrelated sequences in the digital storyworlds requires an imaginative leap. This is in part the leaps that learners have been making between the real and the digital worlds, a form of play in the digital space. These leaps are, as the arts educator and philosopher Maxine Greene notes, 'about openings, about possibilities, about moving in quest and in pursuit' (1995: 15).

Like Greene, I am interested in extending the imaginative capacities of the learners to 'work for the ability to look at things as if they could be otherwise' (Ibid.: 19). Where learner writers may feel threatened by a contemporary incoherence resulting from disruption and uncertainty, the storytelling of the storyworld can enlarge and transform their sense of self and identity into consideration of other points of view. As Greene states, '[o]ne of the reasons I have come to concentrate on imagination as a means through which we can assemble a coherent world is that imagination is what, above all, makes empathy possible' (Ibid.: 3).

Storyworld narrative opens up imaginative possibilities, to what Greene describes as permitting us 'to give credence to alternative realities' (Ibid.) and describes

transformative teaching as recognising the imagination as a way of knowing (Ibid.). She also talks of engaging with subject matter, or situations within the digital storyworld 'that involve a sense of agency, of achieving dimensions of that subject matter as meaningful, not uncovering some hidden meaning others have predefined' (Greene 2001: 193).

Story in the digital storyworld model works with variations on reality. Greene calls these variations alternative realities, however 'imagined reality' is the term for the writer Marion Abildskov (2003: 26). She describes a fictionalising process that leaps into others' minds and hovers briefly, before 'landing back on the firm ground of reality' (Ibid.: 29). I suggest this is a similar fiction/fact process for the scenarios and role-plays that have grown out of educational applications of creative storytelling to digital environments.

Disruption, uncertainty and interruption are a part of the storyworld model of narrative. Managing these as potentially transformative experiences is made possible through the agency of the learner/narrator. Bruner believes skilled agency in studying the human condition will 'achieve not unanimity, but more consciousness. And more consciousness always implies more diversity' (1996: 97). David Olson felt Bruner settled for 'a variety of ways of knowing, for entertaining possibilities, and for judging the value of knowledge on the basis that it opened up new views rather than that it settled old questions' (2007: 134).

There is an uncertainty, as well as knowledge acquisition, in opening up new possibilities and diverse ways of knowing. Part of the destabilising effect of the non-sequential presentation of the digital storyworld is the uncertainty for the learner of knowing where to start the investigation. This is a deliberate part of the model, as a disruptive function of encouraging the learner's agency to move through the uncertainty and explore the possibilities. Being in charge of the narrative's point of view, the learner has engaged in a praxical exercise to integrate perspectives into the plot structure given, within the storyworld context. The further aim of the model is to transform this into learning through the uncertainty, embracing new views. Bruner's effective surprise 'takes one beyond common ways of experiencing the world' (1979: 22). Engaging the learner's imagination through the storyworld is central to the model.

The design educators Potur and Kayihan (2011: 119) have suggested three types of knowledge aligned with the human activities of theoria (thinking), poiesis (making) and praxis (doing): 'theoretical knowledge whose purpose is reality, practical knowledge whose purpose is action and poietic knowledge whose purpose is creation'. The idea of a transformative narrative is one that enables reality, creation and action as a fluid, multidimensional approach to story as experience for the learner.

Pont's response to what she calls the Aristotelian binary of praxis and poiesis 'involves the threshold between description and action/creation, and attempts to perform the complicitness of this oscillation via the praxis of describing' (2011: para 4). I would like to slightly redefine this threshold in terms of the digital storyworld. The 'reality' of the digital storyworld model is centred in experience, the theoretical knowledge developed through my practice-led approach as a writer and educator. By reflecting on the interrelationship of experience and my acquired knowledge through that experience,

I have based the model on storytelling as both a theoretical and experiential method to engage learners. The model of a digital storyworld as agency for learners to engage encourages the cognitive processes of both 'knowing-that' and 'knowing-how'. Poiesis is the process of knowing-that (creating and understanding a world), praxis is the knowing-how (knowing or acting in that world).

The flow between poiesis and praxis is fluid for both myself and the learners. My poietical process started from a position of creating a digital storyworld model enabling transformative approaches to social advocacy and socio-cultural disruptive changes. This was based on my own work and education experiences, and scenarios as a storytelling model. Whitehead sees poiesis as 'the opening of a world for humankind's being and action' (2003: para 8). I translated that concept of a world metaphorically, into a digital 'world' based on story. The metaphorical world represented a microcosm of experiences, which would be poietically making something that didn't exist before, a creative action that transforms, a threshold or unveiling when something becomes another.

According to Whitehead (2003), the interrelationship of the work, the developer or artist and the response of others – in this case the learner/narrator – to it provides the full experience of poiesis. The learner is coming from a praxical approach in engaging with the digital storyworld model. By bringing the 'story' to enactment, the learner is experiencing the practice. Praxis is about practical knowledge that will result in action, such as my digital storyworld approach to narrative perspective changing in terms of the emerging writer or social advocate. This is a knowledge that emerges from experiencing the narrative process, and from working with uncertainty. As an operational practice this practical knowledge may be transposable to other situations and experiences. Poiesis for the learner emerging with praxis discovers the knowing how to create the world. There is a form of new knowledge in the act of transformation, as understanding means the learner grows to know that world.

The learner, through the agency of transformative narrative, will understand the world of writing and social advocacy, as well as the disruptive and surprising purposes of the *Deakinopolis* worlds. This understanding will include human interactions, and it incorporates the way participants might perceive others through development of differing perspectives. The storyworld is recognisable for having close or parallel to real experiences, a form of peripheral vision which unsettles perspectives. This present, continuous world then enables learners to experience developing that world further through narrative, and this has the capacity to become the poiesis of the disruptive and unsettled parallel world.

Conclusion

As they take on agency, the participants in the digital storyworld are making the narrative experiential and immersive. Adapting point of view into an unsettled and changing perspective is a part of taking participants 'beyond common ways of viewing the world' (Bruner 1979: 22). This digital storyworld is also an interstitial space, a play space where learners can take risks which collapse borders. The digital story space is a multilayered reflection of a real-world experience. Where it differs is in its stasis.

Where direct reality is chronological, and plot or events belong with a particular time and sequence, the digital storyworld is peripheral to this reality, disrupting the real experience. Participants who immerse themselves in this narrative storyworld are, as Malouf says, released into a dimension where reality is not limited (2008: 19), and through both praxis and poiesis develop a transformative narrative 'knowing' of their own worlds.

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