Towards a Pedagogy of Seduction

What if students studied not for fear of failing, but because it was the most enthralling thing to do?

saair

Southern African Association for Institutional Research

... not a Pedagogy of Reduction

What if we can plot every variable of a student's being to predict, manage and regulate the student success rate?
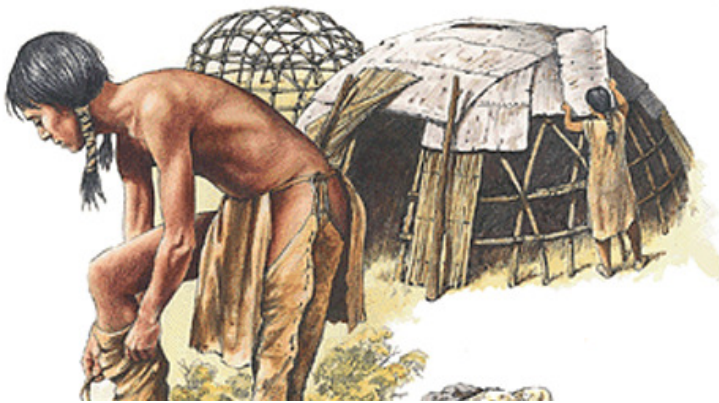
Table of contents

1. How to study the culture of Native Americans

Sociocultural Anthropological issues

- How do you remain "objective" whilst studying your own or another person/group's culture?

- What adds more value: Listing empirical observations or reflecting on rituals in which you have participated?

- If you choose to reflect on a lived experience, how do we extrapolate meaning from your subjective interpretations and analyses?

- How do we locate ourselves within a culture and engage with "the other" (outside/inside perspectives)?

- *Lila: an Inquiry into Morals*, Pirsig

"Obviously, one does not exist as a psyche – a self – outside of culture; nor does culture exist independently of its bearers… Culture would cease to exist without the individuals who make it up… Culture requires our presence as individuals. With this symbiosis, self and culture together make each other up and, in that process, make meaning."

De Munck (2000)

as quoted by Chang (2008) in her book
Autoethnography as Method

… or the "quality culture" of a learning organization

Sociocultural Anthropological issues

- How do you remain "objective" whilst studying your own or another person/group's culture?

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- If you choose to reflect on a lived experience, how do we extrapolate meaning from your subjective interpretations and analyses?

- How do we locate ourselves within a culture and engage with a culture belonging to "the other"?

- *Lila: an Inquiry into Morals*, Pirsig

In this paper I give a brief overview of learning theories from *teacher*- to *teaching*-centred and from *learner*- to *learning*-centred and propose a future in which lecturers may choose to return to the Socratic method: playing a seductive mind game across carefully-crafted epistemological landscapes in which knowledge networks can be co-created.

I use an autoethnographic approach, reflecting on my own (stubborn) learning and subversive nature in teaching (and quality assurance) and propose a new pedagogy of "seduction" – a philosophical approach that emphasizes the intrinsic motivation or passion needed for learning and student success.

2. From teacher to teaching: didactic-reproductive

- Knowledge (universal and true) is transferred to students who absorb and reproduce it

- Learning ability is measured through repeated testing

- Lends itself to quantitative analysis

- **Behaviorism:** learning through external motivation (reward or punishment), learned helplessness

- **Cognitive development:** stages of brain development (Piaget, Vygotsky)

- **Cognition and Metacognition:** Memory and "computational power"

- **Intelligence and IQ testing:** standard tests for classification of intelligence (benchmarking intelligences)

From learner to learning: facilitative-transformative

- Knowledge (always contested) is constructed by individuals within a community of practice

- Deep learning transforms you and empowers you to act

- Lends itself to qualitative analysis

- Constructivism: learning is a creative act, scaffolding on prior knowledge

- Social Cognitive Theory: Bandura's self-efficacy and observational learning (including affect)

- Transformative Learning: Learning changes your being (Mezirow)

- Communities of Practice: Knowledge is socially constructed and verified

- Connectivism: Neural networks

We should develop and design pedagogies and didactics for the digital age

Brinders (yesterday)

The science and art of education

A critical questioning of the curriculum or how to seduce the minds of 21 year olds

Why reflect on my own learning (publicly)?

3. Navel-gazing or why I chose the most narcissistic research methodology known to man...

I am clever, stubborn, creative and lazy

"[A]utoethnographers vary in their emphasis on the research process (graphy), on culture (ethno) and the self (auto)"

Ellis and Bochner (2000)

- I am located within (a) particular culture(s), in a specific residence as head, in the bureaucracy of a traditional university

- I have biases

- I have been a high school teacher, temporary lecturer, regular facilitator and designer of e-learning content

- I am enrolled as a Master's student, but question the purpose of studying

- I am one of the representatives for the QEP, interested in "student success"

MR AE Muller
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1999/02						BA (Ordinary) E			
YrMth	Code	Crd	Module	Type	PM	CM	AM	Comment	
1999/06	18414114	10	Psychology		*	*	65	PASS	
1999/11	18139178	24	Computer science		77	*	85	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	
1999/11	18414144	10	Psychology		*	*	67	PASS	
1999/11	21539178	24	Mathematics		43	*	50	PASS	
1999/11	21687178	20	Xhosa		90	*	92	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	
1999/11	39373178	20	Afrikaans and Dutch		69	*	76	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	
1999/11	52655172	5	Infor literacy , comp s		74	*	79	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	

2000/02						BA (Ordinary) N			
YrMth	Code	Crd	Module	Type	PM	CM	AM	Comment	
2000/06	18139232	6	Computer science		*	67	76	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	
2000/06	18414212	6	Psychology		*	69	80	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	
2000/06	18414222	6	Psychology		*	73	68	PASS	
2000/06	21687214	12	Xhosa		*	*	82	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	
2000/11	18139252	6	Computer science		*	73	61	PASS	
2000/11	18139274	12	Computer science		64	50	63	PASS	
2000/11	18414242	6	Psychology		*	62	64	PASS	
2000/11	18414252	6	Psychology		*	65	62	PASS	
2000/11	21687244	12	Xhosa		*	*	75	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	
2000/11	39373278	24	Afrikaans and Dutch		73	*	75	PASS WITH DISTINCTION	

4. Unpacking the self in an auto-ethnographic analysis

Attended a city school. Read a lot. Skipped kindergarten. Averaged 97% in standard 5 (grade 7), but drank litchi juice and missed an exam. The youngest violinist in the senior music school string ensemble. Played provincial chess, won several Eisteddfods and olympiads. Studied Latin, Art, Music, Physical Science, Mathematics, Computer Studies and Xhosa, only disinterested in Accounting. Studied BA with Afrikaans and Dutch, Xhosa, Psychology, Mathematics and Computer Science. Hated all my subjects. Did not finish BA Hons or MPhil (Lexicography), served in the residence student leadership structures and SRC instead, enrolled for first-year Drama modules, did the layout of the university diary, collected advertisements and organized the national serenade competition. Did a PGCE and objected against the design of the curriculum; enrolled for an MPhil (Higher Education) and gave them endless grief. Was a teacher, now using metaphors.

5. Constructed findings

- Listened-to by mentors in my professional development – encouraged to explore, reflect, play and create

- Millennial characteristics in terms of exposure to ICT: Logo programming since Sub A, Computer Studies in high school, Computer Science up to third year, blog lessons developed

- Cycle of entrepreneurship in terms of learning, applying, teaching and leading, e.g.: chess, collecting advertisements, organizing functions

- However, not willing to trade-off comfort for ambition

- Not willing to spend time merely on completing/passing modules, e.g. in PGCE: Language proficiency modules, Education Psychology, Computer Usage, and in MPhil (Higher Education): Education Technology, Learning Theories, and most of the assessments – assignments need to be intrinsically useful

- Almost all subjects are inherently alluring, from art to music, drama to science, mathematics, languages, and co-curricular activities. One needs time to cultivate an enquiring mind, to read and explore beyond the fixed curriculum

Postmodern ethnographers reject the concept of "objective truth" and remind us that writing ethnography is cultural construction, not cultural reporting. Thus ethnographic writing is "always a construction of the self as well as of the other"… Since all knowledge is socially constructed, the researcher, as the instrument of data collection and interpretation, plays a central role in creating this knowledge"

Foltz and Griffin (1996)

6. Towards a Pedagogy of Seduction

If not seduced by learning, then what?

What if students studied not for fear of failing, but because it was the most enthralling thing to do?

Perhaps it is apt on SAAIR's 21st birthday, looking back and looking forward, to imagine ourselves as 21 year olds and the extent to which we would be immersed in learning … or would our attentions be drawn elsewhere?

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watching series

following Reddit

7. Implications for institutional learning

- We can – and should probably – research ourselves (with our biases)

- Learning theories, whether we think about it or not, underpin our IR

- Make sure you enjoy what you do – we are all seduced by those with passion – also in terms of professional development/learning

- Be truly interested in students as potential learners: use shared interests as a lure, and make thinking about and sharing ideas sexy. Use the Socratic method: enticing further thinking – even research and experimentation – beyond the curriculum

- Create self-directed learning opportunities and spaces; make learning itself the outcome, not success in terms of passing or failing a test

- Veer away from one-directional curricula and pervasive employability discourses; allow for new inter-disciplinary connections to be made

- Don't create irrelevant assignments – assist students to find meaning

- Seduction can be dangerous; rather avoid one-night stands and aim for long-term relationships

CHE

Quality Enhancement Project

And perhaps if it's not sexy, we should not do it

Enhancing Academics as teachers
Enhancing Student Support and Development
Enhancing Learning Environments
Enhancing Course and Programme Enrolment
Management

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Thank you!
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