

Student experiences of digital story telling in professional identity formation

A Danish – South African project

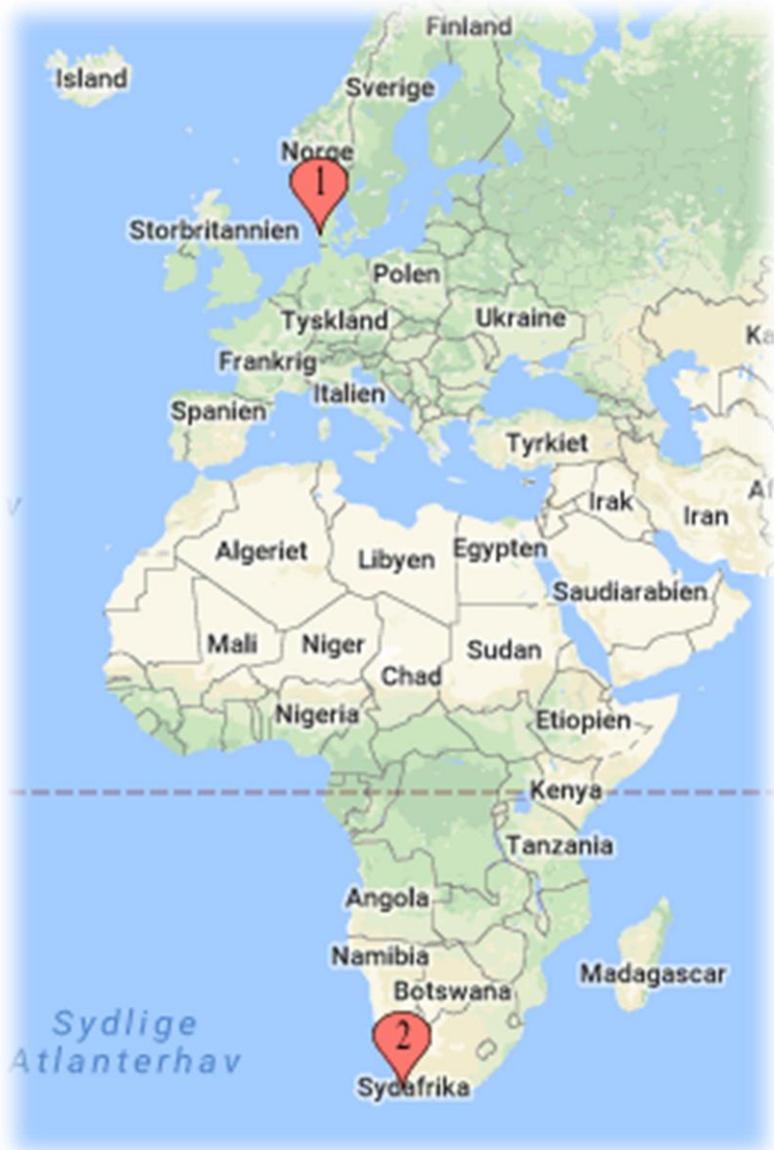
WFOT May 2018

Amshuda Sondag¹, Kathrine Skovdal Hansen², Kim Lee² and Helen Buchanan¹

¹ Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, Division of Occupational Therapy, University of Cape Town

² Faculty of Health, Department of Occupational Therapy, University College South Denmark

Who are we?



- University College of Southern Denmark (UCSYD), Esbjerg
- University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town

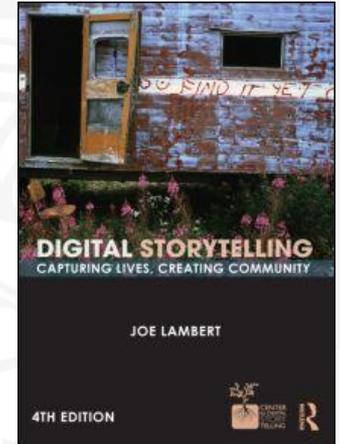


Background to the project

- Inspired by a presentation at COTEC-ENOTHE Congress, 2016 by Cecilie Krüger and Lisbeth Skarpaas from HIOA Oslo
- South African and Danish context
- Being piloted at University of Cape Town
- Mandatory part of Danish OT curriculum
- Consideration of fundamental contextual differences

What is digital story telling?

- Short movie recorded and produced by the narrator
- A way to work with students' creative skills
- Used to elaborate personal and academic development of skills
- Engagement in learning, enhances levels of reflection and results in deeper understanding of course material (Ivala, Gachago, Condy & Chigona, 2013)
- Embedded in the curriculum rather than an add-on (Ivala et al, 2013; Sandars et al, 2008)



Aim of the project

To describe how students:

- conceptualize what it means to **be** an OT
- conceptualize what it means to **act** as an OT
- describe their emerging philosophy of OT



Theoretical approach

- Identity as constructed in a dynamic process in relation with others (Jenkins, 2004)
- Identity shaped by the action the subject makes as a part of the professional role (Mattingly, 1998)
- Identity as part of a negotiation with meaningful others (Mackey, 2007)





Methodology

- Qualitative descriptive study
- Drawing on traits of phenomenology
- Sampling – 6 students, purposive using maximum variation
- Data collection methods:
 - Weekly student reflective logs
 - Student digital stories
 - Follow-up narrative interviews

Brief outline of educational process

1. Preparation before the start of practice learning

- Introductory sessions and identification of learning needs
- Training by E-learning expert on how to create a digital story

2. During practice learning

- Identify critical incidents
- Collect digital images, music, picture etc.
- Draw on their learners logs

3. Process of creating the digital story

- Process outlined by Ivala et al (2013)

Progress to date...

UCSYD

- 2 semesters involving a total of 62 students has been through digital story telling
- Digital story telling is placed at the 2 semester. The first year of the education and with a follow up at the second and third year of the education
- Participation in the digital story telling is a integrated part of the education curriculum and compulsory for all the students. It is a prerequisite for the semester exam

UCT

- Introduced the project
- It is being piloted in 2018 and therefore not part of the curriculum
- Students currently at practice learning collecting data



Preliminary findings from UCSYD

- Phenomenological analysis was used on interviews with 6 students
- Emplotment was identified
- The theoretical term “subjunctivising reality” was used to identify the aspects of the plot that covers the unknown future struggle of becoming an OT

Theme: A way to handle uncertainty

- Students had an unclear idea about what OT's actually do in practice
- OT practice is so diverse - the students gained insight and clarity into their future work areas

“For me it was important to see what an occupational therapist really does. You can still be unsure if that's what it's you want to become, and you know it's one's future...”

“We are only in 2 semesters and I have found that an occupational therapist does much more than I thought so it's good to see something in practice...”

“I was very in doubt about what to choose and actually looking for a physiotherapist, but I am very pleased that I became an occupational therapist...”

Theme: A way to mirror practice

- Many students are concerned about entering a professional relation with a client and act as an OT
- The practice learning is a way to practice that

“When you are educated (OT), you are an expert in the field, for me it was also a matter of proving to be in that role. You learn something at school, but it cannot stand alone, but you get the opportunity to try and practice what you have learned at school” (translated from Danish to English)

Theme: A way to become professional

- The students felt uncertain about their role as an OT and need role models in practice.

” You need some kind of model and it's important to me to see what an occupational therapist is and that's something other than you [name of lecturer 1] and [name of lecturer 2] - you're not really occupational therapists”

” You have to practice all the time, and I come from a completely different industry and therefore it requires more. This is my second education so this time it's supposed to be the right one, and you'd like to do it well, but you don't know what it implies”



Challenges and Opportunities



Challenges

- Getting student buy in
- Fear of technology
- Student workload
- Time commitment for educators and students

Opportunities

- Sharing perspectives across two different countries
- Using technology as an alternate medium for reflection
- Understanding more about identity development



Forum to share digital stories
between students from UCT and
UCSYD

Thank You!



Helen Buchanan: helen.buchanan@uct.ac.za

Amshuda Sonday : a.sonday@uct.ac.za

Kathrine Skovdal Hansen: ksha@ucsyd.dk

Kim Lee: klba@ucsyd.dk