

A HISTORY, MANY CHAPTERS: INNOVATION IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRANSMEDIA STORYTELLING IN A DISTANCE LEARNING COURSE OF BRAZILIAN SIGN LANGUAGE

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Abstract

This article reports the experience of drafting and implementation of an online course of Brazilian Sign Language to enable staff of the Federation of Industry of State of Espirito Santo (Findes), and relates this experience to processing of the forms of communication and Education from the perspective of cyberculture and transmedia storytelling, which means the transmission of content by various means, innovatively and without repetition. The interaction of participants and the experience of new experience for them is the strong point this new trend in the content and a good story are more important than the media to disseminate them. In the course, the competition that begins virtual ended in meetings where the players-students facing in teams. The experience with caboodle pilot of course has shown that the process of learning Brazilian Sign Language was easier and fun with this scenario driver and the possibility of extending the metaphor with the use of different media.

Key-words: distance education; transmedia storytelling; Brazilian Sign Language; cyberculture; interaction.

1 - Introduction

We live in times of convergence, that the possibilities communicational if expanded in a way that is unprecedented. In contemporaneity, there is more a receiver passive awaiting to receive contents, both as informational, educational informed by traditional media or by professor. Also the concept of hypertext exceeded its limits in the taking to the hypermedia, communicational process that follows constant change, based on assumptions of interactivity, participation and of the multiplicity of connections. Text, sound and image are accessed and produced way interactive, in a new economy informational in which the value of individuals with the "old media", such as TV, is changing. In addition, there is a cultural convergence. The popularization of cameras and cell phones allows the user produce their own content in picture and video, turning increasingly how we believe, we have learned, we engage with each other and with ourselves. This new way to relate with the content affects all sectors of the economy and society, generating a new global order of thought and consumption and new business opportunities and production. Is the age of cyberculture, "the extension of the new communication networks for the social and cultural life", as Pierre Lévy (1999, 12), of practices and ways of thinking that grow in cyberspace.

According Lévy (1999, page 157), the contemporary relationship with knowledge is also fully modified, because increasingly technology and information are intrinsically linked. The professional nowadays must understand that, in its work, will deal to learn, transmit ideas and repass knowledge, long before they are absorbed will already obsolete. Technologies are increasingly intellectual and trigger mechanisms are complex and diverse as perception, reasoning and memory.

The flow that we now live is informative, the notion of territory is no longer suppressed and subverted yes, contingent on economic flows. (Lévy, 1994, page 23). Accessed the information differently and, through it, we think. The embracing of information is great, and as you can not know everything we know a little and share a network, the dynamics of collective intelligence announced by Levy (1994).

The Internet has allowed the dissemination of knowledge and a new relationship with knowledge. The social networks of sharing are increasing

dramatically, and e-learning becomes a catalyst of these changes, offering students a new style of teaching, as claimed by Lévy (1999, page 158) stating that the distance education promotes at the same time personalized learning conference and networking.

From these considerations, this article will present an innovative experience lived by the Center for Distance Education of SENAI-ES to design a basic course in Brazilian Sign Language. Present the main features of the course, its methodology and its affinity for cyberculture and the concept of transmedia narrative, a term that means a new relationship with the content the user, who accesses for multimedia and has an innovative and interactive relationship with him.

2 - The virtual environment and transmedia narrative

In line with the values of Senai and Sistema Findes, and facing a domestic demand for qualified professionals to serve the deaf audience you want to do courses in Senai, in Sesi and IEL, the Center for Distance Education has developed an educational solution for facilitate communication between officials and listeners deaf or hearing impaired, ensuring their access to the System entities and the labor market.

Realizing that the target audience of the course would consist of people from different age groups, which have in common only the interest in learning sign language, the team created a metaphor relating the use of Brazilian Sign Language to play the game called paintball, making the course attractive and dynamic.

The scenario of the virtual learning environment is playful and is designed for the student is encouraged to participate and therefore not feel discouraged by having to acquire a large repertoire of words in Brazilian Sign Language, or more than 600 words.

So in the course, students become "players" virtual aiming to learn the official language of the deaf Brazilians become active participants and responsible for their success and your team during the competition. This should follow the rules of the game, which requires silence and concentration. Instead of gestures, as in paintball, the participants use Brazilian Sign Language for communication between team members during the classes.



Figure 1. Online environment - virtual battlefield

According to the metaphor of the course the participant of the competition must conquer the opponent's territory in virtual competition. To do this, you face challenges and perform tasks that are only performed well with the practice and understanding of the contents of the classes, called missions. At each stage completed in the virtual environment, the student wins a flag of a competitor. In the classroom, time in which the competition will take place in fact, the performance of both the student and the team will be assessed through activities proposed by the teacher, who is deaf, accompanied by an interpreter.

Classroom activities, the team that wins the job will receive royal banners that will be added to the virtual environment. At the end of the course, the team that can more flag is the winner. During these tasks, the teacher will assess each student to see if it has reached the goal of the mission.



Figure 2. Extension of the virtual battlefield: meeting attendance

In the virtual learning environment are available course content, which includes guidelines on how to signal, and videos with the signals represented by the deaf teacher. In addition to supplementary texts on culture and deaf identity, characteristics and types of deafness, theories of education for people with hearing loss, among others. These readings help students understand the world of the deaf.

During the course, students go through four types of evaluation: online, in classroom, diagnostic and summative. The diagnostic evaluation is done early in the course. The goal is to ascertain the degree of knowledge about Brazilian Sign Language.

The online assessment is performed at virtual learning environment, where the end of each mission, with the aim of verifying whether the students learned the important signals to develop the skills required for that piece of content.

The assessment is the face time that students will demonstrate whether they possess the skills required to signal and interpret the signals. This is accomplished through practical activities in which will be assessed by the teacher and by themselves, in self-assessment. This moment will occur on two occasions: at the end of the third mission, by videoconference, and at the end of

the sixth mission, which is the final evaluation to be performed in units of the system Findes student's home.

That's when we realized the integration between online content and presence activity. They are two different narrative possibilities, but are a continuation of the other, as some provisions based on term transmedia narrative, discussed by Jenkins (2008). Who has not studied in the virtual learning environment will not know as surely respond to the exercises proposed by the deaf teacher in the classroom. However, the student is not excluded that moment, if only once you have accessed the virtual environment and come into contact with the metaphor proposed in the course he could become speaker of his team in the competition face. Each call in the virtual environment to prepare to face the competition is an incentive for students to engage in studies and have the responsibility to lead his team to victory in the classroom. Thus, as reported by Geoffrey Long in an interview with Marcus Tavares (2009),

each chapter should serve as a "rabbit hole" for the audience to discover the history, as did the character come to Alice in Wonderland. The trick is to make the audience feel that there is a massive fictional world to be explored through a narrative that unfolds through all the chapters (...).

So sharpening the student's fantasy that he proposes to devote himself to studying the Brazilian Sign Language in the virtual environment to become winner in the next chapter of the course is class attendance.

At the end of the course, summative evaluation is applied for estimating the evolutionary process of student learning. The objective is to verify the performance, effectiveness of strategies for self-study, the assimilation of knowledge and, finally, if the skills were developed. This return is important because it helps to demonstrate success and identify problems related to what was learned.

So, paying attention to narrative structure, as Roesler (2007), the discourse constructed in the virtual environment by the production team took care to keep the student in anticipation of something else. Along with peers, participants become partners of a team that, like paintball, is united to win flags to each other by signs of Brazilian Sign Language.

Students interact, are not liabilities. In the virtual environment, the sent messages for monitoring and during the classroom they are asked all the time being responsible for their learning, contributing to his team in the competition face is the winner.

(...) Based on the interpretation marked out by the concept of dialogue, a distance learning course would be anchored in the production and supply of teaching materials designed and arranged to cause the generation of meaning, besides providing opportunities to exercise interpretive and imaginative to enable teachers and students not to be guided more by the traditional roles of transmitters and receivers of information but to share the production processes of meaning. (SARTORI, ROESLER, 2005, page 63, apud ROESLER, 2007).

Roesler (2007) says that the relationship between communication and education, analyzed from the perspective of cyberculture, favors the exchange, co-authors, the interaction between individuals and interactivity. This relationship between people is also established by the intensity and speed of information in the network that allow constant updating of hypertext. The students' actions constitute "navigate, manipulate and provide information on various virtual spaces, using individual or collective actions, representing diverse interrelationships distance."

Through simulations, large databases of images and electronic conferences, as highlighted by Levy (1999, page 164), the imaginative capacity is extended, moving away from abstract theory. So Human memory gain an ally in the setting information.

Lévy (1999, page 167) also makes a projection that in the coming decades, the computer will be essential for memory, thinking and communication. And any institution that acts on education must take this into account.

Therefore, as a warning Roesler (2007), virtual environments for learning should focus on the features of interaction with the students so that, through them, the process of teaching and learning occurs most effectively. What the author calls a "virtual being together" is a form of sociality in communicative dialogues possible by the network.

3 - Closing Remarks

The challenge of conducting a distance course on Brazilian Sign Language was put and had to make this experience remarkable for students. The biggest concern of the development team was the fact that students should learn many words in a relatively short time (about two months). The task could become dull and avoidance great if students were not involved in a story in which they have an important function.

Making a virtual environment a place of competition, whereby each team member has a responsibility to get more flags than the opposing team has enabled students to take on the roles of stakeholders in the process of knowledge. As Fantauzzi (2009), "hypermedia environments allow students to feel unique, responsible for their choices (...) cooperating spontaneously from common interests to a group (...)".

Through discourse in the virtual environment, it was possible to prepare the student for physical competition. In the context of transmedia narrative, two meetings have become a new text, as distinct from the virtual learning environment. Those who can not interact in the virtual environment can both deepen their knowledge of Brazilian Sign Language through another medium, physical contact and competition.

The concept of transmedia narrative is still something new. Its implications and possible uses in education, entertainment and the world of work still to be determined, the path is still being traced, as highlighted by Jenkins (2008, page. 136). However, we can see many opportunities especially for narrative distance courses, because "the more different directions to follow, the more communities can sustain and the more different experiences can provide, the better."

And this dialogic narrative feature is already contained in building e-learning products. Just that developers pay attention to the enormous possibilities offered by cyberspace era.

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