Negotiating the Possibilities Digital Humanities Offers Media and Cultural Studies for Crisis Curriculum Adjustments in the Time of COVID-19

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Abstract

In this chapter, we reflect on opportunities and limitations in Media and Cultural Studies, emerging as a result of the COVID-19 lockdown. Media and Cultural Studies (MECS) curriculum in South Africa traditionally focused on critical or vocational discourses, or in some rare cases a mix between the two (Tomaselli & Caldwell 2002; Jordaan 2004; Tomaselli 2012; Boshoff & Garman 2016). Vocational training, however, depends on contact, as students do not have access to specialised equipment outside the university space. In such extraordinary times as the COVID-19 lockdown, theoretical portions of MECS curriculum may be repurposed to migrate to online platforms like *Moodle*, with additional support from WhatsApp messaging, Loom and Zoom. Media educators are confronted with the question of how to replace contact vocational education, in this case Video Production, meaningfully (MECS709).

The chapter considers Digital Humanities (DH) as a possible gateway to advancing vocational education without compromising critical thinking. Digital humanities refer to the branch of scholarship using literary and linguistic computing, informatics (Nyhan, Terras & Vanhoutte 2013: 2), making 'creative use of digital technology to advance humanities research and teaching' (Gold 2012: ix). Tools for collaborative writing, data visualisation and text mining will be elaborated as the means of developing digital literacy. Digital literacy is understood in relation to national articulations (NEMISA,

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National e-Skills Summit and Research Colloquium 2018), where one can use technology to one's own benefit in order to engage actively and productively in the world, a 4IR world, which some argue is already upon us (Hamid 2018).

Using digital storytelling (DST), students will also be asked to respond to content using digital platforms. Benmayor argues that digital storytelling ought to be a signature pedagogy for the Humanities as through this pedagogy, 'the invisible becomes visible, creating a space for empathic listening, learning and understanding' (2012: 524). Scholars focusing on narratives (Bourdieu 2000; Ellis 2004; Mitchell *et al.* 2005; Lather 2017) demonstrate the power these stories have to reveal structuration of class, race, gender and sexual orientation. Digital humanities scholars have attempted to create digital histories where students and the general public are invited to contribute to digital archiving (Arthur 2008; 2015). In our context, the focus on digital storytelling could serve as an important intervention addressing the historical invisibility of most communities. This is one way of getting students to become confident with technology to become digital producers in their own right.

Arthur argues that digital humanities, through the field of digital history, enlivens by enjoining the plurality of the living to participate in refashioning history (ibid). The second wave of Digital humanities is said to be 'qualitative, interpretative, experiential, emotive, generative' (Presner et al; 2009), the qualities which hold the promise of realising digital literacy and educational values.

Keywords: Digital humanities, decoloniality, digital literacy and e-skilling, digital storytelling, stereotyping.

Introduction: History and Context

Media Studies colloquially refers to a range of fields related to media and communication, which may be theoretical and vocational. Media Studies, cultural studies and communication studies proliferate into an array of sub-fields, which may be considered theoretical strands of the discipline, while branches of film studies and journalism could also encompass vocational training (Tomaselli & Caldwell 2002; Jordaan 2004). Students routinely lobby for more vocational training, as this is perceived as a direct route to the marketplace (Boshoff & Garman 2016). However not all institutions offer vocational training in this discipline as it is expensive to roll out and maintain.

In order to address vocational training, the Media and Cultural Studies department developed a partnership with a service arm of the university, University Technology Enhanced Learning (UTEL)[1] in order to teach a Video Production component in 2018. Alongside this, an additional 'value add' of digital literacy was offered by Ms Franziska Pannach, an Information Technology Masters intern from the University of Göttingen. Pannach held a ten-week introductory course on Digital Humanities covering definitions of the field and tools such as collaborative working, digitalisation of analogue texts, text mining, data visualisation, and digital curation, and she introduced students to programming basics.

Boschoff and Garman (2016) note the tensions of maintaining social-justice type critical courses in the suite of Media Studies modules (journalism inflection) where students generally favour glamorous media work. In this case, students did respond very positively to the Video Production component. However, one student noted:

> The richness of this semester has been amplified by 2 extremely essential and informative programs that the university needs to recognize that is; the Video Production classes as well the Digital Humanities. As a media student who has experienced both these classes, I say there is a huge NEED for both these modules to be acknowledged as credit modules that stem throughout the semester or even a year. The amount of knowledge one has acquired from both is incredibly important and really would give UKZN students a competitive edge (Sewchurran 2018, Report on Video Production module).

The COVID-19 Crisis

Of the two strands, the more popular Video Production module was developed, emerging as a full module in 2020. However, the module depends on access to the Westville studios, which houses editing suites, film studios, and a range of professional cameras. Students under COVID-19 lockdown conditions do not have access to such sophisticated equipment and therefore it may not be

[1] UTEL refers to University Technology Enhanced Learning. UTEL is equipped with studios, cameras, editing suites and technical staff.

possible to run this module until we return to normal conditions of teaching. Should normal conditions not prevail in 2020, the key concern is substituting vocational training components of modules such as Video Production. While it may be possible to return to theoretical content delivery alone, we argue for revisiting digital literacy as a possible means of advancing vocational training and meeting some higher education objectives hitherto underemphasised.

Underemphasised Higher Education Values

Higher education values reflected here taken from the global, national, institutional and disciplinary contexts, are arguably under-emphasised in the routine delivery of curriculum. The Global University network for innovation report 7 (Vilalta, GUNi, 2019)[2] in the main focuses on how synergies between science and technology and humanities may be advanced through fostering interdisciplinary cooperation. At the national level, sustainability goals include delivery of quality education with a key focus on e-skilling (for 4IR) and peace-justice, which relates to social cohesion.[3] At an institutional level, Teaching and Learning policy principle 7 indicates, 'Teaching and learning must optimise student employability and encourage responsible citizenship by developing key appropriate graduate attributes' (UKZN, Teaching and Learning Policy, 2017 – Revised). The policy does include the idea of responsible citizenship; however, expanding notions of appropriate graduate attributes are not explored. Bozalek and Watters (2014: 1070) offer a useful construction of attributes, with an emphasis on authentic teaching environments, which 'should allow graduates to learn for an unknown future'. Additionally, learning must also be of unknown and lesser-known contexts (past and present). Decolonisation as a theoretical lens has gained prominence especially because of inclusion in the *#feesmustfall* agenda. Maldonado-Torres refers to the movement in his outline of ten theses on coloniality and decoloniality, and articulates why different modes of knowledge production are crucial to decoloniality.

> Decoloniality involves a decolonial epistemic turn whereby the damné emerges as a questioner, thinker, theorist, writer, and communicator

[2] GUNi was created by UNESCO in 1999.
[3] NRF articulation of national strategic plan and goals.

> … When the damné communicates the critical questions that are grounded on the lived experience of the open body we have the emergence of an-other speech and an-other way of thinking ... Writing is a form of reconstituting oneself and a way of countering the effects of ontological separation and metaphysical catastrophe ... The damné has to break from the solitude of its prison to be able to reach out to an Other. Speaking, writing, and the generation of questions are part of the drama of a subject that starts to regain its humanity in reaching out, without masks, to others. This is a condition of possibility for the emergence of non-decadent speaking, writing, and theorizing ... This is the basis of an-other kind of knowledge and of another archive. (Maldonado-Torres 2016: 25).

In addition, Grosfoguel (2013: 89) argues for epistemic diversity, which could produce pluriversal conceptual fields. From a disciplinary perspective, Media Studies and its dizzying array of sub-fields have a tendency to insulate content, resulting in silo-type knowledge bases for graduates who then have difficulty during post-graduation crossing disciplinary boundaries in order to advance their research ideas, which may suggest that disciplinary contexts are in danger of myopia even when disciplinary mastery is the key focus. This chapter is an attempt at envisioning a crisis-curriculum for Media Studies in the hope of reflecting the matrix of values summarised in the graphic below.

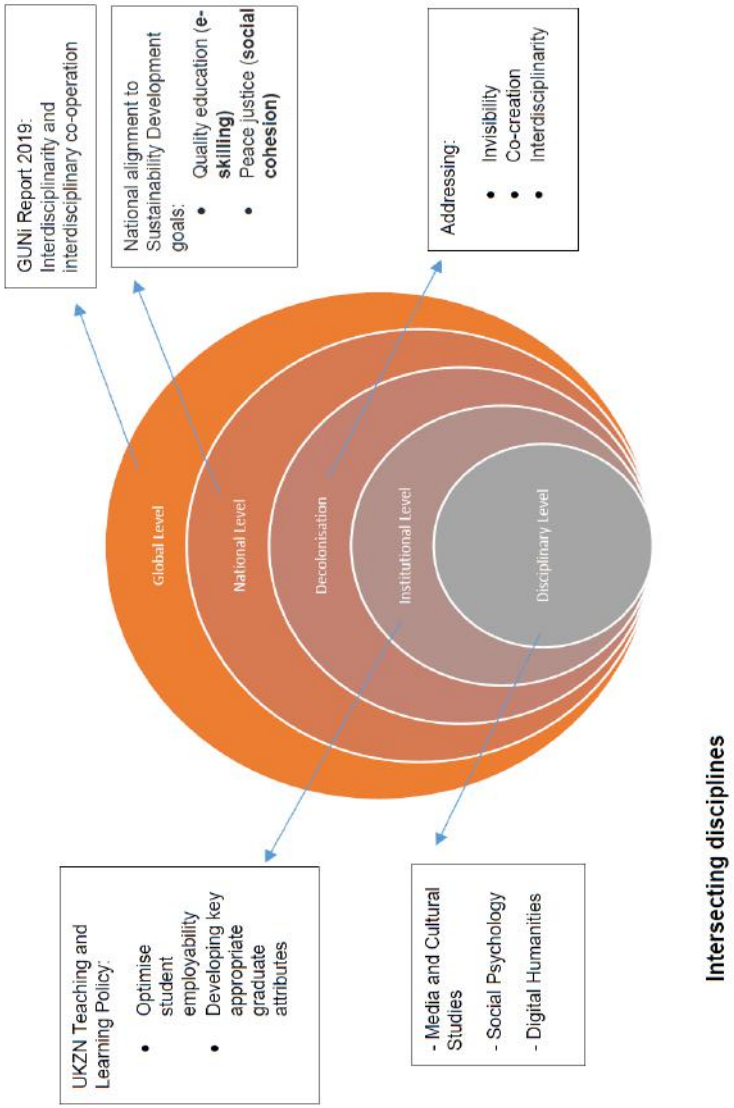
Intersecting Disciplines

In the proposed set of tasks, the intersecting disciplines or fields involved are Media and Cultural Studies, Social Psychology and Digital Humanities. Media and Cultural Studies involves the analysis of communication processes. The most basic communication model refers to Shannon and Weaver's 1948 conception (Baecker 2013):

Sender ⟶ Message ⟶ Receiver

This model grew in sophistication and the discipline of Media and Cultural Studies emerged as the study of institutions, audiences and texts (production and representation). The intersection of MECS and Psychology occurs with the concept of *stereotypes*. Stereotypes are relevant to MECS in relation to

representation, the study of which deepens in Film Studies, but is also relevant in the context of Journalism. In terms of Psychology, the concept of *stereotype* belongs in Social Psychology.



Although first used in the 1800's in a printing context, Lippmann is credited with the coinage of the term 'stereotype' in 1922, which simply referred to a picture of something on someone conjured in the mind. Katz and Braly (1935) and Kruglanski and Ajzen (1983) later applied the idea to ethnic stereotypes, concluding that these are uniformly negative. Allport, Clark and Pettigrew (1954) then critiqued the over-simplification of the concept and post-World War II, Tajfel (2000), a key contributor, introduced the idea of stereotyping as a means of justifying domination over groups of people. During the 1980s and 1990s, Fiske and Taylor (1991), and Stangor and Duan (1991) again critiqued the over-generalisation of the use of stereotyping as an analytical category. This era also saw the medicalised studies of stereotyping in relation to cognitive structures and pathways within the brain (neuroanatomy of social cognition, Quadflieg *et al.* (2009). Fiske and Neuberg (1990), McGarty *et al.* (1992), and Jost and Banaji (1994) shifted the focus from representation to self-categorisation and individuation. In fairly recent literature, Govorun and Payne (2006) looked at conditions producing stereotyping. Nelson (2009) may represent the most comprehensive reader on the concept in which Stangor (2009) indicates that in spite of the breadth of research, the easy questions around the concept were given prominence by researchers, but the hard questions were neglected. Nelson further explains the lacuna in the field:

> Perhaps the most important contributions that social psychologists have made involve the potential for improving intergroup relations. This is an important, but also very difficult topic, and one that has been cracked in large part on the theoretical and not the applied level. We have developed excellent models to work from, but know little about how to implement programs that will make a real difference (Nelson 2009: 10-11).

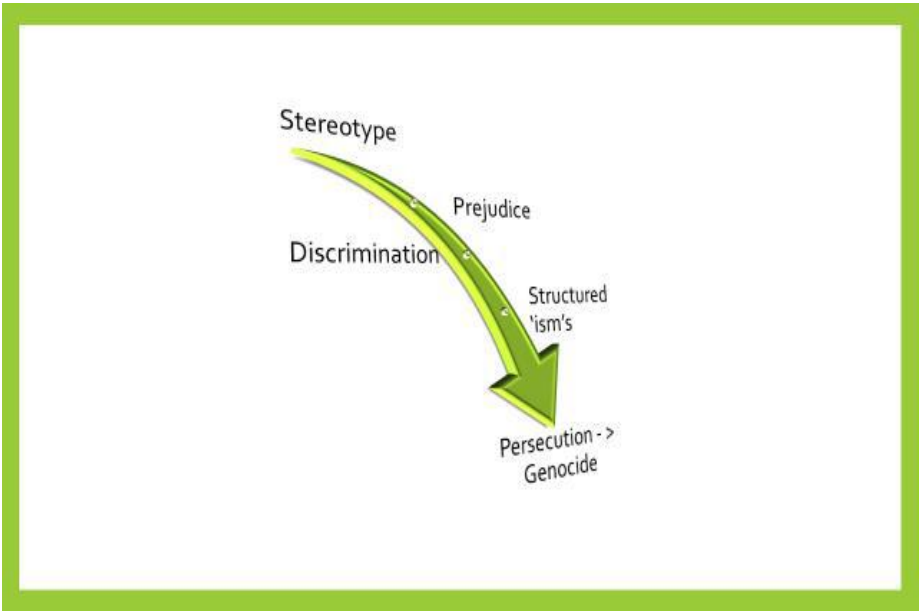
Defining Stereotypes

Some scholars argue that stereotyping is a natural process of making life easier (Hamilton & Trolier 1986; Taylor 1981; 1984). This is where 'categorisation, assimilation and the search for coherence' are functional cognitive processes (Tajfel 2000), which enable us to reduce cognitive load, namely the amount of

information we need to process in a given situation (Hamilton & Trolier 1986). Taylor (1981) went so far as referring to 'the cognitive miser' as a person with 'limited information processing capacity'. In contrast, Asch (1990) explains stereotypes as a psychological error in terms of individual and group identities, in that if one accepted individual identity, one could not ascribe 'identity' features to a group.

Given advancements in global human rights and legal reform, the question of studying stereotypes ought to be redundant. Unfortunately stereotyping remains relevant, as scholars who are more current indicate that stereotypes are the first curve of a dangerous downward spiral, which could eventually lead to persecution (Nelson 2009).

Lee revisits Tajfel's early ideas on the link between ideology and stereotyping. Lee states that, 'to a large extent, the primary cause of the ethnic and racial problems is economic or socio- political/structural' (Lee 2011: 43). Although Stangor's (2009) critique that the hard questions around stereotyping were neglected, some significant work was done in relation to how stereotypes were activated and what factors induced quick activations of stereotypes. Interestingly, most of these factors are external or structural.



It has been established that stereotypes are a means of reducing cognitive load (Allport *et al.* 1954; Fiske & Taylor 1991; Forgas, Tajfel & Forgas 1981; Van Knippenberg et al 1994). However, there are certain conditions under which an individual more readily reverts to categorising. This is when one is fatigued, distracted or ego-depleted (Govorun & Payne 2006; Bodenhausen, Macrae & Garst 1998; Kruglanski & Ajzen 1983). It could also occur more easily when one is unmotivated (Fiske & Neuberg 1990).

Stangor and Duan (1991) indicate that stereotypes will be activated quickly during tougher economic or psychological conditions. Stereotypes tend to be activated when one encounters people one is not familiar with, and whom one does not care to get to know any better (Nelson 2009: 10-11). Finally, stereotypes can be activated if they are socially sanctioned.

Understanding technology becomes extremely important, as so much of our time is claimed by cyberspace. Davenport and Beck (2001) refer to this age as 'the attention economy', where every industry is constantly trying to capture our attention. In this drive to capture eyeballs, industry creates cognitive load through 'aggressive push marketing strategies' online.

Media scholars have studied digital echo chambers. Perhaps one of the reasons these emerge, is as a result of the effects of the attention economy and users seeking to manage cognitive load. It is troubling that suicide among youngsters in KwaZulu-Natal (South Africa) has increased post the digital access (Naidoo & Schlebusch 2014). One of the key ideas motivating this chapter is the possibility of the digital space contributing to the structural conditions that create rapid activation of stereotypes because of cognitive over-load generated by everyday online activity.

It is therefore important to conceptualise other ways of using online tools, especially when the only pathway to students during COVID-19 is via digital networks. There is a range of digital humanities tools, which could be mobilised to articulate the matrix of values defined earlier. This chapter will focus on text mining, data visualisation and collaborative writing.

Defining Digital Humanities

Nyhan *et al.* defines digital humanities as the branch of scholarship using literary and linguistic computing, informatics (2013: 2), making 'creative use of digital technology to advance humanities research and teaching' (Gold 2012: ix). New technological tools allow humanities scholars the possibility to

pose new questions of increasing complexity, and to question the very technology itself (Mahony *et al.* 2014). Schnapp and Presner (in Burdick *et al.* 2012) even refer to the second wave of digital humanities, which is 'qualitative, interpretative, experiential, emotive, generative'. The interpretative and generative aspect of the second wave of digital humanities could prove useful to realising the higher education values of visibility, co-creation and interdisciplinarity; however, could this exist for students as it does for scholars? Arthur (2008: 38-39) argues that digital humanities, through the field of digital history, enlivens by enjoining the plurality of the living to participate in refashioning history. Arthur raises an important possibility for decoloniality filtering through one's digital curriculum.

The *#rhodesmustfall* and subsequent *#feesmustfall* movements illuminated the need for higher education to respond more directly to society in terms of access, transformation, and decolonisation (Abdullah 2017). Thus, knowledge production emerged as potential site for interrogation especially in the African context of digital humanities (Smit & Chetty 2014). Students remain a shifting constituency and therefore it is more difficult to access knowledge production at the level of journal articles. However, a possible point of entry may be life writing, history and the archive. Orwell recognised the archive as key to contesting ideas:

> The Party said that Oceania had never been in alliance with Eurasia. He, Winston Smith, knew that Oceania had been in alliance with Eurasia as short a time as four years ago. But where did that knowledge exist? Only in his own consciousness, which in any case must soon be annihilated. And if all other accepted the lie which the Party imposed – if all records told the same tale – then the lie passed into history and became truth. 'Who controls the past', ran the Party slogan, 'controls the future: who controls the present controls the past' (Orwell 1984).

Refashioning archives is an important point of resistance, a way for the 'damné to break from solitude' … 'to be able to reach out to an Other. Speaking, writing, and the generation of questions are part of the drama of a subject that starts to regain its humanity …' (Maldonado-Torres 2016: 25). Benmayor argues for digital story telling (DST) as a means of achieving a visibility and intimacy that would break the '*damné*'s solitude' (2012: 524). She advocates DST as a 'signature pedagogy' for the Human Sciences, as 'the invisible

becomes visible, creating a space for empathic listening, learning and understanding' (2012: 524). The use of DST as a digital humanities tool is an attempt at decoloniality, so that students may have the opportunity of becoming co-creators and peer reviewers of knowledge and knowledge pathways, as opposed to recipients of it. Alvarez highlights the tremendous potential of this kind of production,

> It focuses in particular on the challenges and opportunities that arise from aiming at encouraging students to become producers of digital objects by engaging with digital resources. The idea of the 'student' has been highlighted by Mike Neary based on Walter Benjamin's concept of the author as producer. Neary argues that we need to reinvent the relationship between teacher and student, so that the student is not simply consuming knowledge that is transmitted to them but becomes actively engaged in the production of knowledge with academic content value. Neary's proposal is that we should facilitate research or research like experiences on our undergraduates in order to transform them in productive collaborators (Alvarez 2013: 2).

Digital Humanities Tools

UNISA, the largest open-distance, higher education institution in South Africa, has been a front-runner in online pedagogies due to the nature of its open-distance offerings (Chetty 2013; Chetty 2014). UKZN has always made an array of digital tools and training available (pre-COVID-19). It is important to note these tools, as some are useful in initiating and curating interpretative and generative educational experiences. In the longer term, different platforms may be developed, and built to fit the purpose. In the normal suite of digital tools available, *Moodle* is a good learning platform, which allows for executing some of the exercises described in the next section. In addition, *Loom, Zoom, Hoot, UTEL, Audio PowerPoint, Handbrake, MS Teams,* and *Kaltura* are all available with training. Blewett is a prominent local scholar who focuses on digital pedagogies. He makes the powerful point that online tools cannot remain as simple repositories of content. Digital pedagogies involve 'curation, conversation, correction, creation and chaos' (Blewett 2014; 2016). Few will teach the same way post COVID-19. As most will be using digital platforms of some kind or the other, it may be useful to apply a digital humanities lens,

if only to interrogate the technological pathway that delivers curriculum.

Apart from UKZN, the Digital Humanities Association of Southern Africa (DHASA) and the Association of Digital Humanities (ADHO – world body) curate digital humanities tools, literature, resources, opportunities to collaborate, etc. The suite of resources are extensive and a small sample of DH type of tools are: collaborative working tools (*Etherpad, Gobby, ShareLatex, GitHub*), data visualisation tools, text mining tools (*Voyant, Catma*), digitalisation of analogue texts (*Google Ngram*), digital curation (*europeana, dp.la,* UCT dance collection, *SAMAP, CALS*, Campbell Collection, Stellenbosch – history of unchartered peoples) and programming (codecademy.com).

For this curriculum, we use *Moodle* (learning platform), *Etherpad* (collaborative working tool) and *Voyant* (text mining tool). *Moodle* will be used as a repository for all content (academic resources: texts, video lectures and audio PowerPoints). It will also be used for submission of portfolios, peer review and video feedback. All interaction on *Moodle* can be remote, and need not be live.

Etherpad will be used as a tool for peer review, co-creation, and discussion. The key reason for choosing *Etherpad* and not Google Docs is the issue of privacy and third-party ownership of personal data. Digital Humanities advances collaborative, open-source software, even if not all are free. *Etherpad* is free and there are no third-party implications.

Voyant will be used as a tool to analyse, compare and mine texts. The key reason for choosing *Voyant* is that it is the easier entry point when it comes to text mining software. There is no issue of privacy and third-party ownership of personal data and *Voyant* is free.

Operationalising the Tools

This set of exercises assumes conditions of adequate data for students. It is meant to be a fifty percent replacement of a dominantly vocational module (Video Production – MECS 709) in the event of COVID-19 extending into the latter part of 2020. The remaining fifty percent will be dedicated to a traditional research assignment. The breakdown of marks for these sets of exercises is less important; however, the activities as a whole are significant for the learning outcomes. Students will submit two digital portfolios; each includes a screen grab of a *Voyant* word cloud; a one-page text analysis; a table of characters

related to Proppian actions; a timeline graphic; evidence of discussion on *Etherpad* or *Moodle*, a digital story and peer review. The repetition of these sets of exercises starts from simple to more complex texts, enabling students to become comfortable with the software without being too pressured, in the first instance, with complex terminology.

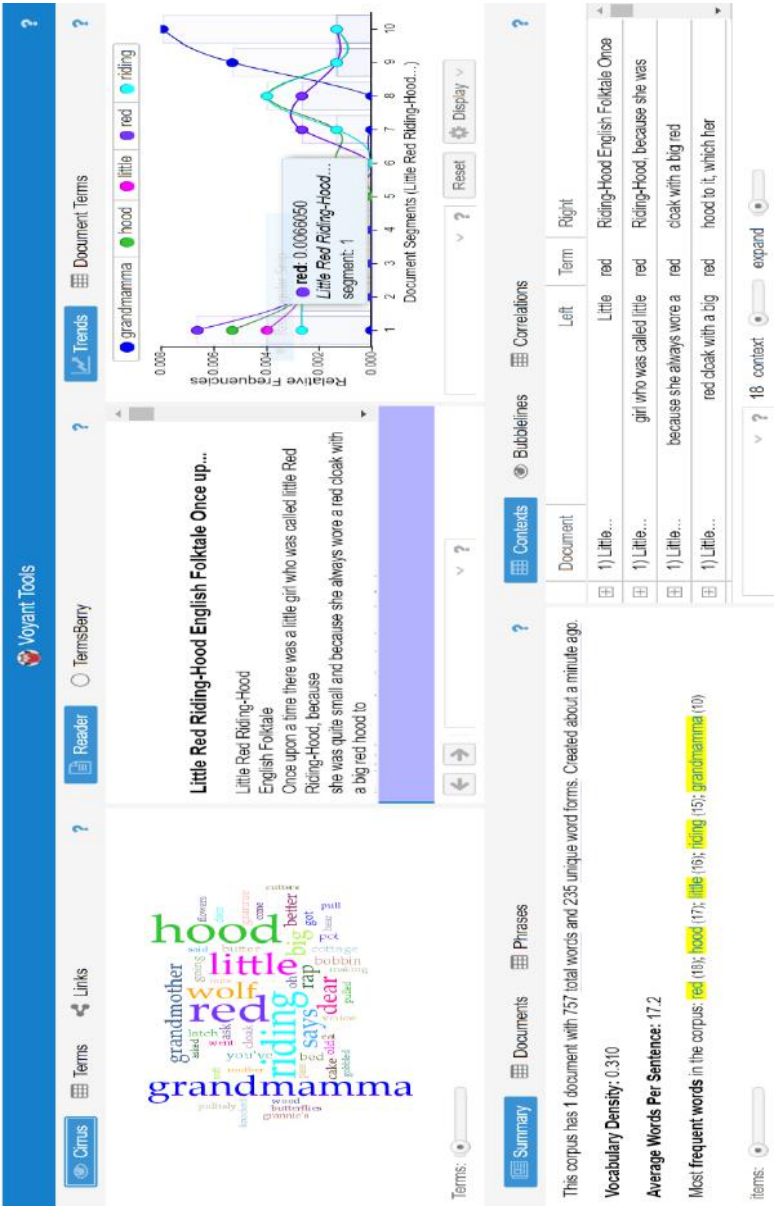
Assignment 1: Key Texts: '3 three little pigs'

In this assignment, three versions of the fairy tale, 'The three little pigs' will be circulated. The class will be divided into three groups. Each group will be given a different version. The first story is the traditional version most students would be familiar with (Steel 1922). The second story is a similar sequence of events from the perspective of the wolf who believes he is a victim of injustice and a sensationalist media (Scieszka & Smith n.d.). The third story introduces a range of extra characters, with a completely different outcome (Trivizas n.d.). The three groups of students will have to complete the following exercises based on the text they have been given. Some of the exercises are individual pieces of work and others are collaborative:

- *Voyant* word cloud: INDIVIDUAL WORK
- Text analysis: INDIVIDUAL WORK
- Table of characters and actions: SUB-GROUPS – COLLABORATIVE WORK
- Generate a timeline of events (research exercise): COLLABORATIVE WORK
- *Etherpad* discussion OR *Moodle* discussion (peer review): GROUPWORK
- Retelling the story: INDIVIDUAL WORK
- Peer review: INDIVIDUAL WORK

The Word Cloud and Text Analysis

When one inputs a corpus in *Voyant*, it generates a word cloud (above) and certain correlations and contexts, such as where the most-used words in the text appear in the document. *Voyant* shows vocabulary density, average words per sentence and the most frequent words in the corpus. It can also show the words appearing most in proximity with one another.


Voyant Tools
Cirrus
Terms
Links
Reader
TermsBerry
Trends
Document Terms
grandmamma
hood
little
red
riding
Little Red Riding-Hood English Folktale Once up...
Little Red Riding-Hood
English Folktale
Once upon a time there was a little girl who was called little Red
Riding-Hood, because
she was quite small and because she always wore a red cloak with
a big red hood to
red 0.0066050
Little Red Riding-Hood...
segment: 1
Relative Frequencies
Document Segments (Little Red Riding-Hood...)
Terms:
Reset
Display
Summary
Documents
Phrases
Contexts
Bubblelines
Correlations
This corpus has 1 document with 757 total words and 235 unique word forms. Created about a minute ago.
Vocabulary Density: 0.310
Average Words Per Sentence: 17.2
Most frequent words in the corpus: red (18); hood (17); little (15); riding (15); grandmamma (10)
Document
Left
Term
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1) Little...
Little
red
Riding-Hood English Folktale Once
1) Little...
girl who was called little
red
Riding-Hood, because she was
1) Little...
because she always wore a
red
cloak with a big red
1) Little...
red cloak with a big
red
hood to it, which her
Items:
18
context
expand

The key outcomes in this part of the exercise are develop e-Learning skills, i.e., to learn a new type of platform that is not social media, which is free and hopefully fun to use. It employs visual and analytical points. Students will be encouraged to play around with *Voyant* and see what emerges. This exercise is a first step to get students to understand how to compute words and assign meaning. The aim is also to stimulate data visualisation. This submission will be marked and feedback will be given to students after the *Etherpad* discussion.

The Table of Characters, Action and the Timeline of Events

The next three pieces of 'sub-group' collaborative work will involve the groups working together to create a table of action, a table of characters and a timeline of events. Depending on the size of class, this could be three or six groups. The key aim here is to stimulate dialogic communication where mutuality and propinquity develop (Wirtz & Zimbres 2018: 5). Students have to read their assigned story and discuss via online communication channels of their choice. They have to agree on the narrative structure of the story as per Todorov and Propp (Haspelmath & Sims 2013). Disagreement must be noted in the reflection cell. The group must only complete the narrative structure related to their story – 1 (which will be numbered). The other two structures (stories 2 and 3) must be left blank.

Todorov & Propp's Narrative Structure					
	Equi-librium	Distur-bance of equil-ibrium	Recogni-tion of the distur-bance	Attempt at repair	New Equi-librium
Story 1					
Story 2					
Story 3					
Reflection					

The Table of Characters

Students must follow the same procedure for filling in the table of characters or archetypes. Students have to read their assigned story and discuss via online

communication channels of their choice. They have to agree on the list of characters featured in the story. Disagreement must be noted in the reflection cell. The group must only complete the narrative structure related to their story – 1 (which will be numbered). The other two structures (stories 2 and 3) must be left blank. Students may refer to the list below to see if any characters in their allocated story match those listed here.

Todorov and Propp also defined what they called universal characters from their analysis of Russian folktales (Haspelmath & Sims 2013). Jung (2014) added to this list, which together is as follows: Mother, Child, Trickster, Judge, Mystic, Artist, King, Clown, Mediator, Soldier, Teacher, Hero, Heroine, Beggar, Seductress, and Servant Hero, Villain, Heroine, Father, Helper, Donor, Mentor.

Archetypes				
Characters	Story 1	Story 2	Story 3	Reflection

Timeline of Events

In this exercise, students in their groups will be asked to collaborate in finding free open-source software that will enable them to create a timeline showing the three to five key events in the story. The aim of this exercise is to get students experiment with search terms in order to get to the right software. Students have to collaborate to agree on the key elements and then collaborate to populate it. A basic example of a timeline will serve as an illustration; however, students will be encouraged to be creative with their submissions.

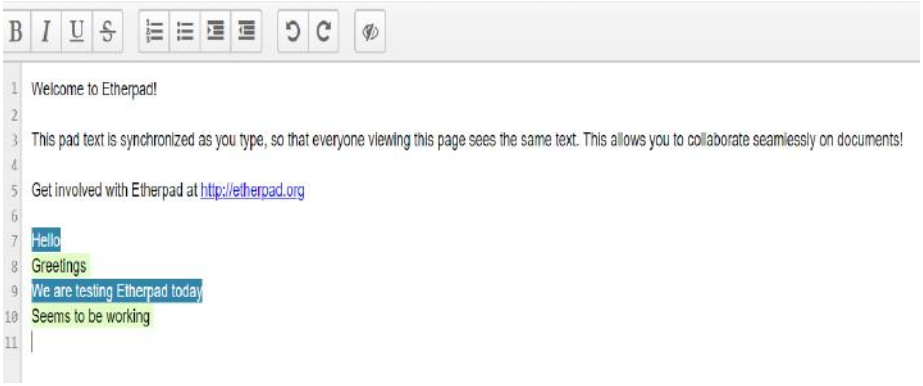
Example of a basic timeline (showing literature related to Stereotyping)

Group submissions will be marked and feedback will be given after the *Etherpad* discussion.

Etherpad Discussion

The *Etherpad* discussion involves the entire class and is preferable over *Moodle* discussion, as *Etherpad* is more easily available as a live collaborative tool. The group submissions of the Action, Archetypes and Timelines will be uploaded to *Moodle* for students to review, prior to the *Etherpad* session. In this session, the lecturer pays a facilitation role, allowing the discussion to flow. A few stimulating questions may be posed if discussion is slow. One such question is to ask which of the three stories is the authentic one. *Etherpad* is favoured over other collaborative tools, as it is very sparse in appearance with few tools. One is able to see live updates to texts and is a means of focusing on the centrality of the text (in this case discussion). After the discussion, students will have access to a copy of the text on *Moodle*.

The following is an example of what *Etherpad* looks like:



Refashioning the Story and Peer Review

The final part of the assignment is to retell the story from one's own perspective, given exposure to two other versions and a multitude of viewpoints from class members. Students are also to read the academic texts on stereotyping and representation before filming their digital story of no more than four minutes. Scholars using participatory visual methodology always insist that the focus is never on technical competence, but the capacity to explore the complexity, partial truths and multiple subjectivities (Lather 2007;

Mitchell *et al.* 2005; De Lange 2008; Mitchell, De Lange & Moletsane 2016; Ngidi & Moletsane 2019). Students will be encouraged to rename and recast characters in the story while considering:

- The visibility and invisibility of characters (concealing, excluding, naturalizing)
- Who had the dominant voice? (universalising)
- Who was a minor voice? (obscuring)
- What was the equilibrium?
- What was the cause of disturbance of equilibrium?
- What resulted in the new equilibrium?
- What were the effects of the new equilibrium?

Students' submissions will be peer reviewed by one another and the lecturer will assign the final mark. It is envisaged that this set of exercises would expose students to the field of digital humanities through these tools. It is anticipated that students will be able to use the digital tools in addition to narrative structure and archetypes to decode stereotypes embedded in mainstream media. It is also envisaged that students will be more receptive to a multiplicity of viewpoints.

Assignment 2: Key Text: 'The Stanford Prison Experiment'

In this assignment, the entire class watches one text: *The Stanford Prison Experiment* (Zimbardo 2016). This film will be uploaded to *drop box*, or made available via *Moodle*, should the size allow for it. This text is a cinematic interpretation of the events occurring during Professor Zimbardo's social psychology experiment in 1971. Here Zimbardo secured the participation of unknowing volunteers, who were then 'mock arrested' from their homes. Zimbardo simulated a prison at the Stanford University and then randomly assigned roles of prisoners or guards to participants. The experiment was to last fourteen days. It was terminated by the sixth day as the guards were showing signs of heightened aggression and brutality (even though they were not real guards) and the prisoners were showing signs of extreme stress and anxiety (even though they were not real prisoners). It is claimed that *Endemol's Big Brother* franchise emanated from Zimbardo's experiment and Orwell's 1984.

The groups from Assignment 1 will remain the same for Assignment 2. The three groups of students will have to complete the following exercises based on the text everybody watched. Some of the exercises are individual pieces of work and others are collaborative:

- Students have to watch the film: INDIVIDUAL
- Collate 10 references related to the film or Zimbardo's experiment: INDIVIDUAL
- Generate *Voyant* word cloud: INDIVIDUAL WORK
- Do a text analysis: INDIVIDUAL WORK
- Generate table of characters and actions: COLLABORATIVE WORK
- Generate a timeline of events (research exercise): COLLABORATIVE WORK
- Etherpad discussion OR *Moodle* discussion (peer review): GROUPWORK
- Telling your story: INDIVIDUAL WORK
- Individual discussion with lecturer and written review

Students will go through the same procedures as the previous assignment. The final part of the assignment is to tell one's own story, given exposure to the film and multiple ideas around this influential experiment. Students will read the academic texts on stereotyping and representation before filming their digital story of no more than four minutes. In this iteration, the only difference is the evaluation of DST. Here students will not peer review one another's work, due to the possibility of sensitive issues being raised. The lecturer will engage with individual students using *Etherpad* as interactive and dialogic feedback, and thereafter a summary of written feedback will be given to individual students.

Concluding remarks

'In order not to be myopic, it is essential to conceptualise stereotypes within social and cultural contexts' (Todd quoted in Nelson 2009: 4). In the context of this set of exercises, feedback will attempt to veer away from myopia by relating student experience to the larger political and economic structures. In addition, students will be asked to reflect on their own experiences of stereotyping. They will be encouraged to commit to cognitive labour, by trying

to avoid stereotyping people they do not know or do not care about. It is envisaged that this part of the practical experience would stimulate thinking around belonging, inclusion, and shared values.

Decolonial scholars would argue that conceptualising stereotypes must be in relation to political economy and questions of humanity (dehumanisation and subsequent invisibility). Digital Humanities scholars would argue that stereotypes must be understood in the context of digital production of the subject (and the bias inherent in technology). It is for these reasons that exploring stereotypes in a teaching and learning context necessitates the use of digital story telling of some form or the other.

This is so as to experiment with visibility, multiple subjectivities, relational communication that in turn could encourage participation and reduce social barriers, and finally get students comfortable with digital literacy.

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