

Storytelling As a Pedagogical Tool in Sound Studies

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Abstract

This presentation focuses on a case study which aims to provide insight into *storytelling* as a pedagogical tool in an acoustic ecology-informed classroom. Storytelling connects individual identities, experiences and histories to broader social and environmental contexts. It transforms the curriculum into a more relevant, meaningful and memorable experience by having learners share their relatable, real-life stories. Collectively, the sharing of individual assimilations of experience can improve teaching and learning (Doll, 2012).

The practice of storytelling in an acoustic ecology-informed classroom was developed at the Sonic Research Studio at Simon Fraser University (SFU: www.sfu.ca/sonic-studio) and has been used over many years for course assignments in undergraduate classes in acoustic ecology (Droumeva & Murphy, 2018). Storytelling in this particular context has not only developed into an effective pedagogy but has also become the source of connection between teachers and learners as a way of making the curriculum more relevant and meaningful.

The case study follows the evolution of an assignment in a third-year university class at SFU on acoustic ecology over the past five years for which students were asked to record and share stories of experiences. This longitudinal investigation provided us with the following findings:

- 1) Storytelling as a pedagogical tool is fundamental to learning. Sharing relatable, real-life stories in the classroom assists in developing mnemonic devices and adds more meaning to the curriculum;
- 2) The acoustic dimension of storytelling emphasizes aural literacy and the development of critical listening skills;
- 3) The sharing of real-life stories of experience not only supports understanding ourselves but also leads to self-cultivation.

Keywords: storytelling; narrative; acoustic ecology; pedagogy; self-cultivation