



Using Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Learning to Encourage Storytelling about “Country” with Student-created Animations

Final report

Project team members:

Project leader: Associate Professor Garry Hoban
Team Members: Mr Anthony McKnight
Dr Wendy Nielsen
Ms Debbie Wray
Project manager: Ms Carol Thomas

Project website: <http://slowmation.com>

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Executive summary

The *Indigenous Ways of Knowing* project endeavoured to link an approach to storytelling, which has been called a “Relational Knowledge Approach,” (Harrison, 2009; Martin, 2008) to an innovative way of students making their own animations called “Slowmation”. The two intentions of the elective subject, *Aboriginal Ways of Learning*, were for preservice teachers to develop an understanding of “relatedness to country” and to apply this way of thinking to their own “special place” through making a “slowmation”.

The project involved four UOW academics, Associate Professor Garry Hoban, Mr Anthony McKnight, Dr Wendy Nielsen and Ms Debbie Wray and 15 final year preservice teachers. The Relational approach was used in two electives with mostly non-indigenous students. The thrust of the approach was for the students to choose their own special ‘place’ (holiday spot, tree, river, park), learn about Aboriginal ways of knowing using an experiential approach (through storytelling and sharing including a two day excursion to a sacred site with an Aboriginal elder) and then create a slowmation to represent their learning as an animated story. The animation approach used was “Slowmation” (abbreviated from “Slow Animation”) which is a simplified way for students to make their own narrated animation (Hoban, 2005, 2007, 2009).

The project aimed to provide the following deliverables:

1. Develop the “Relational Knowledge Approach” whereby Non-Indigenous and Indigenous pre-service teachers will be able to engage with Indigenous knowledge systems through their own experiences and develop their identities from reflecting upon their own experiences of country and its elements.
2. Pilot the approach in a new elective EDWA401: Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Learning including a two day excursion to a sacred site with an Aboriginal elder.
3. Pilot the approach in a second new elective EYEK402, Developing Culturally Appropriate Teaching Resources.
4. Develop one module (2-3 text pages) for the web site explaining how to use this approach in other Aboriginal subjects.
5. Presentation of project outcomes at the Australian Association for Research in Education Conference in Melbourne in December 2010, with possible later publication of findings as a journal paper.

All deliverables were achieved as well as these *additional* deliverables:

- four video modules were designed and created to provide a more comprehensive explanation of the approach which can be accessed via the link on the project web site www.slowmation.com. This web site is public providing national and international access to the slowmation ideas and the web site has had over five million requests since March 2010 from users in 65 different countries. This project will increase the popularity of the site.
- A refereed paper was presented at the 2010 Australian Society for Computers In Learning in Tertiary Education Conference at Brighton-le-sands in Sydney. The paper, *Animated Storytelling about “My Special Place” to Represent non-Aboriginal Preservice Teachers’ Awareness of Relatedness to Country* won a highly prestigious “Best paper award”. This paper was modified and then published in a high quality journal:

McKnight, A., Hoban, G., & Nielsen, W. (2011). Using Slowmation for animated storytelling. *Australasian Journal of Educational Technology*, 27(1), 41-54. (Journal Ranking 24/177 ISI 2010, impact factor 1.655)

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SECTION 1

Background

In Australia, preservice teachers are usually educated in a four-year degree with subjects that use a western knowledge system. Increasingly, teacher education courses are introducing subjects to inform preservice teachers about Aboriginal ways of knowing in order to develop an awareness of Aboriginal cultures and practices. Central to these subjects is an awareness of the distinct nature of Aboriginal ways of knowing in terms of Aboriginal paradigms and epistemologies. According to Wilson (2001):

An Aboriginal paradigm comes from the fundamental belief that knowledge is relational. Knowledge is shared with all of creation...It is with the cosmos, it is with the animals, with the plants, with the earth that we share this knowledge. It goes beyond the idea of individual knowledge to the concept of relational knowledge. (p. 176-177)

Aboriginal epistemologies involve knowing about your place with and on Country through developing, maintaining and nourishing respectful relationships in relation to all the connecting entities of creation. For individuals, relatedness and relationships are enhanced through the various 'contemporary' life stages and teachings. These teachings are strongly dependent on the stories told by Elders and so it is important for individuals to develop responsibility for living respectful relationships with country and understanding the wholistic nature of “relatedness”. Although it is increasingly recognised that preservice teachers should develop an understanding of Aboriginal ways of knowing, it is usually presented didactically in preservice teacher education subjects. To build a deeper sense of relatedness and relationships, it would be useful to develop a subject that uses an experiential approach to enable preservice teachers to experience and feel Aboriginal ways of knowing. In addition, it would be useful to enable preservice teachers to use technology to creatively represent the development of ‘new’ Aboriginal ways of knowing from their ‘old’ Western ways of knowing.

SECTION 2

Theoretical Framework

At the University of Wollongong in the Faculty of Education in 2010, a new fourth year preservice elective subject, *Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Learning*, was designed to introduce non-Aboriginal preservice teachers’ to Aboriginal ways of knowing, particularly through the means of experiencing knowing through storytelling. This approach was utilised because storytelling is a well-established and often-used teaching and learning practice within schools and Aboriginal education. In designing the subject, a conceptual framework for the subject was developed based on a Relational Theory approach which draws upon teachings of Respectful Relationships (Harrison, 2009) and an Aboriginal theory of Relatedness (Martin, 2008). Uncle Max Harrison is a Yuin Elder and Lawman who influenced the first author in his cultural education, which included: “once you take the story from country onto another it loses its sacredness” (personal teachings, 2010). Further,

Martin’s theory articulates Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, Doing and Being succinctly and respectfully for university research and teaching. It is imperative to show respect to Martin and her ancestors in using her theories, as ways of knowing, doing and being are particular to her country and cannot be simply adopted for another place or country. To be respectful to Yuin country and ancestors, Harrison’s respectful relationships approach and teachings have been combined with Martin’s explicit guide for researchers to re-figure Yuin stories and teachings in academia for the pre-service subject that is the focus of this study.

Experience-based education presents the laying of individuals’ openness to knowledge through the agency of the land (Birrell, 2008). According to Birrell (2008), the land holds stories and Aboriginal Ways of Knowing that involves less emphasis on the intellectualisation of the stories, and rather more emphasis on the emotional feeling and observed nature of the story. Martin’s (2008) Relatedness Theory underpins the relational approach that is key to the current research. Martin’s methods provide a culturally-appropriate platform for research on our preservice teachers’ developing sense of Aboriginal ways of learning, being and doing, a research platform that acknowledges the power relationships within western research approaches. We share Martin’s view that through an appropriate research approach, power can be shared respectfully between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal knowledge systems and the people who negotiate the systems. In Martin’s (2008) Quandamookah ontology and First Story Worldview, there are seven entities: People, Land, Animals, Plants, Skies, Waterways and Climate: “The term Entity is preferred to the term ‘elements’ because it more strongly acknowledges their essential places and roles within our ontology” (p. 68). The entities are not ranked in any order of importance, as each entity is just as important as the other. In contrast to many western stories, the people or human entity is not the primary focus of Aboriginal stories and all entities are as just as important for the ‘person’ engaging in the story. However, all of the entities’ ancestors are the core of the stories that inform and centralise everything for the human learning through the stories.

Most of the theory for the Aboriginal Ways of Knowing and Learning subject and the corresponding research project has been drawn from the stories from country and in showing respect for them, contributes to protecting them from being dismantled by western hegemonic influences. Showing respect within the subject design and teaching approach was essential for this protection, and it was a major focal point in the first few weeks of the subject that was brought into individual and collective awareness, and then developed, distilled and continually refocused. As Country is the source of Aboriginal knowledge, country was therefore presented at the forefront of the relational approach in guiding the pre-service teachers’ experiences in and out of the classroom. Aboriginal knowledge has been described by Mowaljarlai (1993), a senior traditional lawman of the Ngarinyin people in the West Kimberley, as ‘pattern thinking’. Pattern thinking is a system of relationships that has no bosses, no rules and the relationship comes from the land (Radio National

Transcripts, 1995). In striking contrast to a Western worldview that is outcomes-based, traditional Aboriginal learning of knowledge sought no particular outcomes, judgements or opinions on individuals’ learning journey (Edwards & Buxton 1998). The journey is the individual’s interpretation, experience and/or experimentation in relationship and relatedness to land and its entities through story, dance, art, respect and lore (Harrison 2008; Martin 2008; Edwards and Buxton 1998) where Aboriginal knowledge lies. Showing respect for Aboriginal stories in their use, exploration and discussion was critical as we provided the preservice teachers a ‘hands-on’ experience of practicing what they had learned to that point from earlier work in the previous year’s Aboriginal Education core subject that is a mandatory subject and the prerequisite for the elective subject being described here. More specifically, developing further awareness of the hegemonic influences of western institutions and as individuals reflecting on such processes as assimilation and the power of ‘whiteness’. For example, a Dreaming story was shared in order to demonstrate the basic understanding that an adult cannot tell another adult what to do. Through exploring the preservice teachers’ experience with country through storytelling, it becomes possible to see how stories set the morals, behaviour and processes that lay the foundation for both the design of the subject and protocols for assessment that lie at the intersection of two conflicting knowledge systems.

To examine the “relational approach to country” as it intertwines purpose, process and outcome for the subject, in particular, relation to country as an Aboriginal way of knowing, being and doing, the pre-service teachers selected their own special place and participated in a ‘traditional’ Aboriginal cultural education experience, on country, to re-frame their understandings of their own special place through Aboriginal ways of knowing. We expected that new understandings of their own relationality to this special place would develop and we sought a means for our preservice teachers to represent the journey of developing their ‘new’ relationship to their special place. Accordingly, the preservice teachers were expected to create their own narrated animation using a new but simplified way of making an animation, called a ‘Slowmation’.

SECTION 3

Slowmation: A simplified way of making animated stories

A “Slowmation” (abbreviated from “Slow Animation”) is a stop-motion animation created by preservice teachers that is played slowly at 2 photos/second to tell a story (Hoban, 2005; 2007; 2009). It is a simplified way of creating an animation that engages preservice teachers in telling a story through making a sequence of five connected multimodal representations. In previous studies it has been used to enable preservice teachers to explain science concepts and this is the first study to use the process for storytelling. The creation process integrates features of clay animation, object animation and digital storytelling. Similar to clay animation

(Witherspoon, Foster, Boddy, & Reynolds, 2004), slowmation uses a stop-motion technique that involves the manipulation of models as digital still photos are taken of each manual movement. However, a slowmation is played at 2 frames/second to explain a story or science concept whereas clay animation is played at 20 frames/second to animate the story. Like object animation, a range of materials that are commonly found in primary classrooms (Laybourne, 1998) can be used such as plastic models, wooden, paper or cardboard cut-out models. Similar to digital storytelling (Lambert, 2002), a key part of creating a slowmation is that a narration and existing photos of animals, plants or objects can be added by learners to explain the story or science concept as the models are animated as in a narrated flip book.

Preservice teachers can learn how to use the approach in a two hour workshop that will give them enough skills to create their own narrated animation. In sum, a slowmation displays the following features:

- *purpose* — the goal of a slowmation is preservice teachers to make an animated mini-movie to tell a story and through the creation process, learn about the story’s meaning. The design of the slowmation can include a range of technological enhancements such as narration, music, other photos, diagrams, models, labels, questions, static images, repetitions and characters.
- *timing* — slowmations are usually played slowly at 2 frames/second, not the usual animation speed of 20-24 frames/second and thus need ten times fewer photos than in clay or computer animation, hence the name “Slow Animation” or “Slowmation”;
- *orientation* — models are made in 3D and/or 2D and usually manipulated in the horizontal plane (on the floor or on a table) and photographed by a digital still camera mounted on a tripod looking down or across at the model. This makes the models easier to make, move and photograph;
- *materials* — because models do not have to stand up, many different materials can be used such as soft play dough, plasticine, 2D pictures, drawings, written text, existing 3D models, felt, cardboard cut-outs and natural materials such as leaves, rocks or fruit; and,
- *technology* — preservice teachers use their own digital still cameras (with photo quality set on low resolution so as to avoid overloading the editing software) and free movie-making software available on their computers (eg iMovie or SAM Animation on a Mac or Windows Movie Maker on a PC).

In sum, slowmation greatly simplifies the process of making an animation whereby preservice teachers use 2D or 3D models that may lie flat on a surface, design the animation to play slowly at 2 frames/second requiring 10 times fewer photos than normal animation, and use their own digital still camera and movie making software on their own computers.

SECTION 4.

Role of Slowmation

The purpose of getting the preservice teachers to create a narrated animation such as a slowmation was for them to reflect and represent their thinking and feelings about their “special place”. During the subject the preservice teachers did a two hour workshop on how to make a slowmation which then provided them with the necessary skills to make their own. Most of the preservice teachers took between 5-10 hours to make their own slowmation as a way of representing their personal journey through the subject.

In constructing their animation many of the preservice teachers took digital still photos of their “special place” and then inserted themselves into the story with plasticine models, cut out photographs or small models which they animated using a stop-motion technique. Hence the structure of the animations included digital still photos of the special place that were dispersed with animated cut outs or plasticine models and constructed backdrops. Similar to digital storytelling, a key part of the slowmation is the narration created by the preservice teachers to tell the story of how they relate to their special place. One of the preservice teachers explained the role of the narration and the structure of their story:

The narration I have written focused on how country can help you. The person in my story had a bad experience at school and felt the need to go to her special place in order to think and clear her head. The message I was trying to portray here is that Country is more than just nature, it is an entity present in all our lives that can communicate with us to reconcile issues we may be having” (student 4)

SECTION 5

Pedagogical Principles

The subject in this study was an elective in the final year of a four year Bachelor of Education for primary teachers at the University of Wollongong. Fifteen preservice teachers were enrolled in the subject and seven of them gave ethics approval to be involved in data collection. The subject immerses itself within Aboriginal Ways of Knowing, the Quality Teaching Framework and Aboriginal peoples/communities Ways of Behaving. The supportive subject provided opportunities for students to engage in practical ‘hands on’ experiences. A major focus of the subject was a field trip to a significant Aboriginal ‘place’. Students experienced Aboriginal Ways of Learning with ‘Country’ through an Elder. The excursion experience and the subject content assisted the pre-service teachers to engage in and teach Aboriginal perspectives and utilising Aboriginal pedagogies. More importantly the subject helped pre-service teachers in their understanding of and relationship with Country and Aboriginal people to ultimately develop skills to enhance the delivery of meaningful Aboriginal educational approaches for all students in schools. A summary of the critical features that underpin in the design of

the elective subject is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Pedagogical Principles of the Elective Subject

Principles	Example
Introduction	Preservice teachers were required to introduce themselves in an Aboriginal way. That is, they needed to say who they are, where they come from, who is their mob and what they would like to learn. This process allowed them to find connections and a sense of belonging.
Pedagogy	The pedagogy of the subject was based on Aboriginal ways of knowing whereby the notion of community is important. This was modelled throughout the subject in terms of sharing, caring, respect and being an “extended family”.
Special Place	Preservice teachers were asked to think about a place that is special and significant to them. They were asked to consider why it is special to them. For instance, the special place may be somewhere they spent a lot of time, somewhere they have gone to relax, a place where they have camped with their family, or even somewhere they enjoy going. In other words, their special place must have some meaning to them. The special place is integral to this subject and became the focus for developing a “relational approach to country” and representing this in an animated story (Slowmation) as a final task.
Cultural Excursion	The preservice teachers were taken on a cultural excursion to Biamanga Mountain on the south coast of NSW where Aboriginal Elder, Uncle Max Harrison, guided them with some cultural teachings. A cultural excursion provides preservice teachers with an opportunity to visit country and experience country as a teacher and individual. A local Elder guided the excursion, which is essential for the preservice teachers in their experiencing Aboriginal knowledge and culture.
Slowmation Workshop	Half-way during the course, the preservice teachers were led by the second author in a 2-hour workshop on how to create a slowmation. During this time they observed some slowmations created by other preservice teachers, created a simple trial example for themselves and developed sufficient skill to create their own to tell a story about their special place. Examples, instructions and resources are available on the web site www.slowmation.com .
Lesson Plans	The subject requires preservice teachers to complete lesson plans whilst they are working on their Slowmation animation. This helps with their hands-on understanding of how Aboriginal storytelling processes can work with standard curriculum.

Sharing	Sharing and telling stories is an important part of Aboriginal culture. An element of the final task of the subject was for preservice teachers to share their Slowmation stories with others at the end of the elective subject.
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SECTION 6

Data Gathering Methods

At the beginning of the subject, each of the 7 preservice teachers were interviewed by a research assistant to ascertain their understanding of Aboriginal Ways of Knowing with particular regard to a relational approach to country. Typical questions included “What might be your special place be? Why is this place significant to you? How does your special place make you feel? What does ‘country’ mean to you? What do you understand by the phrase, ‘relational approach to country’? The preservice teachers then participated in different activities in the subject based on Aboriginal ways of knowing as well as the 2-hour workshop where they learned how to create a slowmation. This was enough for them to create their own as the third assignment in the subject. At the end of the subject, each of the preservice teachers were interviewed again by a research assistant using similar questions and their slowmations were collected as artifacts of their learning.

Adding a narrative to a story involves an element of narrative inquiry that further assists the current research project as it provides the notion of authenticity. Connelly and Clandinin (2006) describe narrative inquiry:

The study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular narrative view of experience as phenomena. (cited in Clandinin, Pusher & Orr, 2007 p. 22)

The current study is a project aimed at engaging pre-services teachers in Aboriginal ways of knowing. This ‘knowing’ must be bound to a relational approach, and hence, the preservice teachers’ experimentation and exploration of their learning must be respected and related back to stories from country. It is important to emphasize that for many of the preservice teachers, this was their first ‘hands-on’ experience and engagement with Aboriginal ways of learning. As such, for the purposes of this paper, we endeavour to share preservice teachers’ pre and post interview statements as well as images from their slowmations in order to demonstrate what the preservice teachers have learnt. As the researchers we have the benefit of a more holistic view on what the preservice teachers have learnt and we acknowledge that standard formats for conference presentations or journal articles do not allow us to present the preservice teachers’ learning in a totally respectful way. Our interest in the analysis of the preservice teachers’ animations was to see if and how much of country came to the leading

position of their story and if, in their representation, that country is protected. In order to honour the preservice teachers’ coming to know as a process, it was important to not pass judgment or ‘reflect’ on their story with country. We were concerned as instructors that our reflection may lead toward a fantasy position on their learning. By way of example, this ‘fantasy position’ arose as the first author fell into the trap of making a judgement on one student’s reflection of being on country with Uncle Max:

I was taken away from where I am normally involved in busy activities, taken out on country, taken away from everyone, disconnected, your phone not working... for one minute it made you think about things you would never have thought about and all these other things that I never thought I had in me. (student 3).

This statement came from the first interview with the student, and it seemed that her reflection represented a very physical perspective on country (e.g. country as geography rather than entity), but after listening to the post-interview in its entirety, it was clear that her statements demonstrated growth in her understanding of country. This alerted us to the need to take care not to judge someone else’s relationship with country. This was a balancing act in a way, as the subject aimed to guide preservice teachers through and with the stories, but not through opinion or judgment. There is one instance when judgment is appropriate: to protect country against the influence of ‘whiteness’ and to guide and maintain individual relatedness and responsibilities. Morton-Robinson (2005) argues the importance of critical whiteness studies to assist in the analysis and production of knowledge on peoples who are perceived to be ‘raced’ by dominant culture.

SECTION 7

Feedback from Students

The two main intentions of the subject, *Aboriginal Ways of Learning*, were for preservice teachers to develop an understanding of “relatedness to country” and to apply this way of thinking to their own “special place” through the representation of a “slowmation”.

Relatedness to Country

In terms of understanding the phrase “relatedness to country”, it was clear from the preservice teachers’ answers to the question, “What does relatedness to country mean?” that their understanding varied and had a superficial understanding of the phrase. Several of the preservice teachers had an “environmental or “geographical” interpretation at the beginning of the subject:

How you relate to it as in your feelings at what you regard as what is in your country. (Student 1)

It is my relationship to country, things die and are absorbed back. Everything you do is from country. Whole life is around country, animals, etc. (Student 2)

It is people and our relationship to earth. (Student 3)

I'm not able to answer that question. (Student 4)

I'm just starting to grasp that now. It is an Aboriginal perspective – how I treat the land and country will determine what I will get out of it. Don't treat it well and it won't be there forever. I was not taught this when I was growing up. (Student 5)

I think it's just showing your connectedness and how I suppose in some ways in this busy world you kind of... you lose that connectedness sometimes, and so it's sort of bringing this back. It pulls you back into say well it's that environmental perspective as well, it's like just stopping and taking a look around you and realising what's around you, and reading and listening and stuff like that. (Student 6)

One of the preservice teachers, however, did realise that there is also a spiritual connection that is consistent with Aboriginal ways of knowing:

I'm not completely sure but I guess it's just like the connection of everything, the whole country as like... so like the earth can bring spiritual healing and the physical like food. (Student 7)

It appeared from the first interviews that the preservice teachers had little understanding about Aboriginal ways of knowing and relating to country which is not surprising given that most of the preservice teachers in the subject had had very little experience with such ways of knowing. The preservice teachers' change in understandings became clear at the end of the subject during the post interviews, when they were asked to reflect on their new understandings of “relatedness to country”. As shown in the following quotations from the interviews at the end of the subject, the preservice teachers had developed a deeper understanding of the term that reflected Aboriginal ways of knowing showing a more wholistic sense of being “connected”:

Developed a deeper understanding, we have a connection to country and I now understand more of that relationship with country. I didn't really think about why before you went to a special place and [the subject] made you think about what you need from that spot. (Student 2)

How you feel within the environment and feelings. Had never thought of things that way before. (Student 4)

For me it's just that, a sense of belonging I can look around and see the trees and don't see the buildings, as long as I have that attachment through visual, and just that being at peace with yourself and knowing where you are... It's a sense of belonging. (Student 6)

In particular, several of the preservice teachers mentioned that it included a “spiritual connection”:

I didn't understand it at first, it's different for everyone, it's about being grounded, being out there connecting spiritually in your own way. (Student 1)

Yeah, I think before when I started this subject I thought it was physical connection and like the things you do on country. But know I think it's more about the feelings you get as well the emotional and spiritual connection. I think it is still physical as well but more about the emotional way you feel. (Student 3)

Broader, well better understanding, a relationship with country. Aboriginal people had a spiritual relationship with the land, [I] actually believe that now, and I feel that. (Student 5)

I understand, not just a physical thing but more how you are connected and how spiritually connected, what it is teaching you and what you are learning. (Student 7)

One of the preservice teachers emphasised that it was the cultural excursion with Uncle Max Harrison whereby they listened to the stories of the Aboriginal elder as most influential on her thinking:

It was awesome, that was an experience Uncle Max's stories and stuff made you stop and think about country and how it should be used and also made you think about the Aboriginal perspective and like this is my special place and it made you stop and think. [It] should probably place significance to the tradition owners and I wondered how they view this place compared to how I view it and am I doing the right thing.

This student's growing awareness of country, and importantly, his own learning through the indirectness of the relational approach helps to demonstrate the connection Aboriginal peoples have to place. Student 7 figured out for himself that Aboriginal people also have a relationship to the place that this student designated as special. It could be interpreted that this message of Aboriginal peoples' belonging to country has now been felt and not just intellectualised.

SECTION 8

Challenges of Implementation

The main challenge of implementation was that we realised half way through the project that the pedagogical approach was extremely rich and could not be presented in a quality way with one module consisting of 2-3 page of text as promised in the revised budget and deliverables document (10th March, 2010). We hence decided to make video modules, not text based ones and also to design four, not one. This significantly expanded the project and the deliverables but we are very pleased with the result and we hope you are as well. Also we did not cost in video product in the original budget so we did not take our allocated teaching relief in order to absorb the additional costs. Another change was that we decided to present a paper at an additional conference to AARE. The Australian Society for Computers In Learning in

Education (ASCILITE) is a highly prestigious conference with participants from universities all over Australia who are particularly interested in teaching with technology. This paper was refereed and won a highly prestigious “Best paper award”. The modules were demonstrated at this conference to a group of about 100 representatives from different universities and created a great deal of interest.

SECTION 9

Sustainability of the project and future impact

The original ideas for this project on animated storytelling with an Aboriginal perspective evolved out of an ARC Discovery Project DP0879119, *Generating Science Content Knowledge through Digital Animation in a Knowledge-building Community of Preservice Teachers*. The ideas for student-generated animation (Slowmations) was developed for science learning in the ARC-Discovery Project and then adapted for storytelling in this Universities Australia Project. The original ideas can be seen on the web site www.slowmation.com as well as the link to the video modules. By the end of 2010, the site will have received over 2 million requests from users in 65 different countries. We envisage that this project will have widespread impact both in Australia and internationally for cultural competencies. It will certainly be used at UOW in future courses in Aboriginal education and from the enthusiastic response from the presentation at the ASCILITE conference, the modules will be in use at other Australian universities and possibly internationally.

SECTION 10

Conclusion

The drive for social justice in Australian societies is an ever-present one. The key for social change, we believe, is ongoing discussions about values and appreciations of diversity that should be especially fostered in educational institutions such as schools and universities. However, we need more than just talk. We need new pedagogical approaches that make students think in new ways about themselves, their identity, others and their environment. We believe the pedagogical principles and experiential approaches embedded in these modules has the potential to contribute to such new ways of thinking.

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