Constructing One's Own Growth: Narrative Structure of a Hero's Journey in Instructional Design

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Abstract

Constructivism offers a refreshing perspective in education that emphasizes subjectivity and student creativity. The Hero's Journey is a common structure distilled from myths by Joseph Campbell. To better implement constructivism in the classroom, the Hero's Journey is examined to build instructional design following the hero's journey. The Hero's Journey offers a surprisingly helpful mechanism to practice constructivism in the classroom.

Key words: Constructivism; Hero's Journey; Instructional design

INTRODUCTION

We are looking for a new way to teach, and to learn. Traditional behaviorism views knowledge as objective truths that can be acquired by students. But such a view objectifies knowledge and deprives knowledge of life. Students are mechanically memorizing the predetermined truths and apply them in certain ways. In order to complement the deficiency brought about by such a mechanistic view of knowledge, constructivism is introduced into education as a new paradigm of teaching. Though containing different types, among which the most prominent are radical and social constructivism, constructivism advocates the core idea that "learners construct their own knowledge," meaning "students are active participants in a learning process by seeking to find meaning in their experiences" (Boghossian, 2006). Thus, constructivism acknowledges the subjectivity of the learners and encourages creative constructions by individual learners of their own learning experiences.

Though a promising and well-accepted approach, constructivism is difficult to apply in education. The majority of the constructivist practice in education is recorded in science subjects (Sjøberg, 2010). This paper proposes a narrative approach in applying constructivism in instructional design. Specifically, this paper first examines a pattern that follows the Hero's Journey brought up by Joseph Campbell in his renowned book *Hero with A Thousand Faces*. Then this paper discusses how the Hero's Journey can be incorporated into instructional design. Finally, the paper discusses how the narrative structure follows constructivist principles closely and thus provides a superb opportunity for applying constructivism in education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

One of the most powerful and universal forms of learning, narratives or stories have been studied by instructional designers to create engaging curricula (e.g. Denning, 2004; Dickey, 2005; Hokanson & Fraser, 2008; Dickey, 2006; Schank, 2002). Narratives are charming to instructional designers because learners naturally understand knowledge in a linear pattern, and because stories are engaging and contain immense emotional power.

From thousands of different stories, a common pattern is distilled from myths across different cultures by Joseph Campbell. In *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, Campbell presents this pattern of story as the Hero's Journey in three different phases: separation, initiation, and return (Campbell, 2008). And Campbell recognizes that in the

Hero's Journey dwells the "characteristic efficacy to touch and inspire deep creative centers" (Campbell, 2008, p. 1).

And this efficacy to touch human's deep consciousness is first recognized by screenwriters and game designers. Christopher Vogler adapted the mythic structure from Campbell as a guide for screenwriters in his book *The Writer's Journey*. A plain application of the Hero's Journey, *The Writer's Journey* depicts a quest consisting of 12 stages and is widely accepted and further inspired game designs (Dickey, 2006).

It is through the application in films and games that the Hero's Journey caught instructional designers' attention. Attempts have been made to take a share of that universal power that touches on every human being's soul and instill it in the classroom. Dickey (2006) analyzed the underlying structure used in game design and focused on how the narrative devices scaffold problem solving. Hokanson and Fraser (2008) emphasized the engagement a narrative structure brings to a curriculum and briefly mentioned the implication of the mythic structure on instructional design. Williams, Ma, Richard, Prejean (2009) applied the Hero's Journey to their instructional design in a program and recorded how their designs corresponded to different stages of the Hero's Journey.

However, both Dickey (2006) and Hokanson et al. (2008) failed to provide a corresponding framework for instructional design. Williams et al. (2009) provided thoughts on how to transplant eight of the twelve stages of Hero's Journey to instructional design, but it was an account of their specific attempt and is not general enough to provide a framework for further development. In addition, all existing literatures refer most to the engaging value of the Hero's Journey. They fail to recognize the immense value of the Hero's Journey for educating and human's spiritual growths. The Hero's Journey should lie at the very heart of all instructional design and should be supported with a larger theoretical framework.

This paper first proposes a more general framework for implementing the Hero's Journey in all instructional designs. It then shows how such a framework conforms to the elements of constructivist teaching. Finally, this paper argues that the Hero's Journey shares the same fundamental views toward education as constructivism.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Learning is growth, cognitively, affectively, and mentally. Growth is an essential part throughout our entire lives. We learn first in the playground when we are children, then we learn in a more abstract way in the classroom, and finally we learn in the real world during adulthood.

Learning or growth is a personal thing. Everyone has their individual start and travels on different paths. At one time, my path intersects with your path and we may learn together for a while. But finally we depart to the next phase of our own journeys.

So the learning process must also reflect individual differences, to a large extent. Even during the short timespan when we share common learning goals and grow together, we are pursuing our individual goals. So comparing your learning outcome with mine moves us away from what truly matters: how this phase of learning fits into *my* entire growth throughout *my* life.

Unfortunately, current instructional design starts from the assumption that everyone shares the same goals, and such goals mean the same to everyone. So students receive the same learning materials and are guided to learn the same skills and knowledge. We give students the exact same test, with the exact same focus point, and they are assessed and rated according to the exact same standard. This inevitably leads to the hierarchical system in education: some become superior and some inferior. But in reality, everyone is moving on their own journey for personal growth. Just because we happen to learn together for a short time, it doesn't mean your performance can define mine.

This calls us away from a uniform and objective way of learning. We need to move toward a more subjective system in which students' individual differences, perspectives, and their real growth are taken into account.

Luckily, constructivism as the latest popular education theory helps us to do exactly this. Constructivism in education is a broad term and encompasses different perspectives, including social constructivism, radial constructivism, etc. But the "link between the philosophy and educational practice is quite tenuous" (Murphy, 1998). Murphy (1998) considered constructivist theories by Ernest, Jonassen, Wilson and Cole, Pau Ernest, Honebein, and Vygotsky, and devised a constructivist checklist. According to Murphy (1998), characteristics of a constructivist teaching include the following:

1. Multiple perspectives
2. Student-directed goals
3. Teachers as coaches
4. Metacognition
5. Learner control
6. Authentic activities and contexts
7. Knowledge construction
8. Knowledge collaboration
9. Previous knowledge constructions
10. Problem solving
11. Consideration of errors
12. Exploration
13. Apprenticeship learning
14. Conceptual interrelatedness
15. Alternative viewpoints
16. Scaffolding
17. Authentic assessment
18. Primary sources of data

This paper proses a framework for instructional design following Campbell's "The Hero's Journey". Such a framework provides instructional designers a

way of practicing constructivism in the classroom. As described in the next part, the Hero's Journey brings students' individual problems and growth goals to the front, and assigns teachers the roles as coaches and guides throughout the process. On such a journey, students each pursues his or her own goals and retain a higher level of control over the learning process. At the same time, the mentor or teacher provides mini tasks that scaffold students' skills, encourage students to explore one's own journey, and allows room for considering errors and correction. Finally, such a framework requires authentic assessment where both mentors and students take part in.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN STEPS FOLLOWING THE HERO'S JOURNEY

According to Campbell (2008), the typical hero's journey consists of three parts: call to the adventure, entering the higher realm, and return. This structure is found across all cultures and history. It sheds light upon the universal human's need to grow, by first being attracted to a better world (call to the adventure), then leaving one's comfort zone (entering the higher realm), and eventually coming back to his original world to spread (or apply) what he has learned in the higher world (return). This structure is essentially a process of new learning: the desire to learn, the actual learning, and eventually the application of one's learning. This process is not unlike that of learning: the students are called upon to challenge themselves and learn new knowledge, the students must shed his prior experiences and image of himself and enter a new realm of knowledge and overcome challenges and difficulties there, and if successful, the students need to know how to apply the newly acquired knowledge to his life or his prior situations and circumstances in life. And the Hero's Journey is a desirable pattern to follow because it is already ingrained in every culture, hence it is already accepted (on a very deep level) by everyone. It is effective because narratives are the oldest way of teaching and imparting knowledge. An instructional design following Hero's Journey is essentially an instructional designer's effort to emulate Life.

Act One

The Ordinary World

Before embarking on a new journey, one needs to have a clear idea of his current situation. Movies usually start with a depiction of the hero in his ordinary world, focusing specially on the hero's flaws and defects in an attempt to seek empathy from the audience. Depicting the problem also sets the aim of this journey——getting rid of the problem and living a better life.

Similarly, at the beginning of a course the student needs to realize one or more problems or defects in his or her own cognitive development. This is helpful for both motivating students and setting the goals of the learning activities. Only when the student discovers for him or herself that there's still room for improvement will the student be really motivated to learn. Identifying one's own shortcomings at the outset also sets the final target for the learning.

However, this step —depicting the ordinary world and identifying one's flaws—is commonly omitted. Most of the time instructors just move on to the course requirements and depiction, without involving the students in the process.

So at the beginning of a course, students could be presented with a task, one similar but less demanding than the final task of the course. Predictably the students will not perform well on this task; but instructors should guide the students in converting this failing experience toward a determination to overcome current shortcomings and grow. Alternatively, an ideal model can be set up, one that already possesses the cognitive capabilities to be cultivated in the course. By either pushing students or pulling students, these two approaches can help motivate students and set up a clear goal for the course.

Call and Refusal

By identifying the hero's flaws, the story also calls the hero to the unknown adventure. Such a call can be symbolized by a ball falling into a well (frog prince), or a discomfort in the hero's current circumstance (Elsa in Frozen I). In Frozen II, the movie presented the call with a real call—Elsa keeps hearing a song coming from nowhere that urges her to take an adventure.

In the classroom, such a call can be accomplished in two ways: cognitive or affective. The cognitive call is made when students realize their shortcomings and are willing to learn and grow. The affective call is more often seen in movies and TV series: a really funny episode or cool scenario is built in the very first part of a story. Such episodes contain immense emotional power and attract the viewers on a deep level that they are now willing to devote into the story until the ending.

Presented in either way, such a call can be rejected by the hero at first. Heroes are hesitant towards the adventure. This usually creates the main conflict in the first part of the story.

In instructional design, the call is usually accomplished by setting up challenging tasks, such as course requirements. However, such a call is usually not enough to motivate students. Giving the students the choice to refuse and reconsider is crucial to motivating students. Intrinsic motivation comes when one has the freedom to choose (Patall, 2010). Without such freedom, the most justified tasks become mandatory. In most cases, the student is presented with the course requirements and is hurried to finish assignments.

In contrast, the Hero's Journey presents the tasks and allows the students to reflect, consider, and even refuse.

The task to urge the students to take the challenge falls on instructors. The instructor must remain open-minded and deal with the students' doubts, reluctance, and excuses. The student must be persuaded by words, rules, or dire consequences. In the Writer's Journey, as in movies, consistent refusal usually leads to tragedy.

Meeting With the Mentor
One way to persuade the students to willingly take the task is to provide help. In this way, the instructor/teacher acts as a mentor. Mentor is one of the archetypes identified in storytelling. Usually presented as a wise old man with white long beard, the mentor is a source of endless wisdom and provides the hero with tools and knowledge to overcome difficulties in the new world.

In the classroom, teachers are mentors. When students feel trepidation and are not willing to take on the tasks, the teacher as a mentor shall provide necessary help and guidance in helping them finish initial tasks, ones that are not so demanding and help build up students' confidence and sense of achievement.

In addition to teaching guidance, current technology provides students with a great resource of information from the internet. So they can readily obtain help from a wide source. Furthermore, videos can also be informational and save the classroom time for more challenging tasks.

Crossing the Threshold
Having received help and training from the mentor, and having overcome his own doubts and fears, the hero now leaves the ordinary world and crosses the threshold.

In the classroom, initial tasks should be set that are relatively easy. And the purpose of such tasks is to familiarize students with the skills, tools, and help available. The initial tasks should also mirror the more complex tasks that come up later in the course. The way that the tasks are accomplished should be the same as that in later assignments, too. This is similar to the game settings. At the beginning, the player enters a task that provides instructions (e.g. which button makes the character fly or jump in the game) and kill some entry-level enemies.

At this stage, editors usually cut sharply from Act One to Act Two. And audience experiences a shift in energy at this crossing. Similarly, A sharp shift in the way the course is conducted, the pace of the course, or the language, or the setting of the classroom should be effected. This helps the students experience and feel a noticeable shift too. The stronger the feeling of shift, the more conscious the students are of the new world.

Act Two
In the second phase, after the hero answers the call, either willingly or reluctantly, the hero enters a higher realm. In this realm, new rules and new resources are presented to the hero, together with new challenges. It is usually a phase where great trials are faced and great rewards are received. A most-loved scene is where the hero experiences a Cinderella-style transformation: heroines from impoverished backgrounds put on beautiful clothes; Elsa in Frozen changes her outfit after releasing her fears; superheroes receive new weapons or new equipment that endow them with superhuman powers. These symbolize the new capabilities, new rules and new resources. Changes to appearance make such new environment visible and more impactful.

At the beginning, the audience's first impression of this new world should strike a sharp contrast with the ordinary world in Act One (Vogler, 2007, p. 159). Different rhythms, different priorities and values, and different rules should apply in this world.

Interestingly Vogler in his book compared this stage to college learning experiences. He commented that a mirror of this stage in the learning experience would be a series of pop quizzes, meant to sharpen their skills and prepare them for the mid-term exam (Vogler, 2007, p.160).

Such a contrast can be achieved by giving a different pace to the course. Either it can be sped up or slowed down a little. Or the format of the teaching can be switched from teacher-centered to student-centered. The environment of the classroom can be changed: the arrangement of the desks and chairs can be different.

Tests, Allies, and Enemies
Another function of this stage is to help the hero find his allies, get his own team, and identify his enemies. In this stage, the student should be more aware of the help he can get from various sources. This includes not only the mentor or the teacher as a source of knowledge, but also other sources where knowledge can be provided, i.e. his allies. This should include first, the classmates or his group members, the internet where large amounts of information can be accessed, friends and families of his, etc.

These mini quizzes should guide students to learn how to use his own resources in a constructive way; how large amounts of information can be found on the internet; how knowledge in the business world can be gained from a family member running his own business; and how he can try to engage the help of a classmate who is good at photoshop.

Identifying enemies and rivals is another important step. This helps the hero keep his goals clearly in sight. In the classroom, this is omitted and almost non-existent. The enemy or the thing that prevents the students from accomplishing more difficult tasks is usually abstract. It can be, for example, a reluctance to learn, a lack of knowledge, or a lack of cognitive skills. And a lack of something abstract is usually ignored.

However, identifying the obstacles to one's learning is crucial. Thus it is helpful to bring such negative influence into visibility. This builds up students' motivation and

keep their goals in mind. The instructor need either constantly refer to such "enemies"; visible objects can also be utilized to symbolize the enemies.

Whether seeking out allies or identifying enemies, students go to the class to gather all relevant information and resources. In movies and games, a bar is usually where information is exchanged and directions are provided. Similarly, the classroom, can conveniently play this role. The class or classroom should be a place where information can be gathered to help the students finish their tasks. And the information provider should not be only the instructor, but also the classmates. Class lectures and activities should be carried out to fulfill this function.

Approach to the Inmost Cave
As the hero journeys on, building his team and gathering useful information, he now approaches the core of his mission. This has been foreshadowed in the first act when he identifies his problems in the ordinary world. The placement of the ordeal is either at the middle of the story——a Central Crisis, or at the two third part, corresponding to the Golden Mean.

When the hero reaches the innermost cave, the deepest chamber, he now faces the greatest challenge and the most fearsome opponent—death. This is where the hero typically dies, at least symbolically. In the movie Genie, the hero is thrown into the deadly cave. In Frozen II, Elsa descends onto the frozen waterbed and is frozen herself.

Death is the most significant part and retains the magically transforming power. Psychologically, this death is the death of our personality, our holding on to a past experience, a certain emotion, or an identity of ourselves. Only when a part of us dies in some way can a new part be grown into us. This is the most essential part where growth happens, where the hero can really be transformed.

The placement of the ordeal is either at the middle of the story——a Central Crisis, or at the two third part, corresponding to the Golden Mean. In class, this ordeal can be arranged either as the mid-term exam, as a Central Crisis; or as a building up of skills towards Act Three. So in a 16-week course, an ordeal is given around the eighth or twelfth week that lets the students face whatever he resists the most at the beginning of the course, when he was called onto the adventure.

This ordeal is different from the task set up at the beginning of the course. The task in Act one is an easier version of the final task, which allows students to apply the knowledge learned in the course. However, at the center of Act two, the ordeal aims to endow students with new capabilities. So students recognize the lack of knowledge in the first act, acquire the knowledge in the second, and then apply it in the third.

Whether such an ordeal is presented as a mid-term exam, or a paper, or any other tasks, it is essential to dramatize the task and make the students fully aware of the obstacles they overcome by finishing these tasks.

Students must be guided to identify the part of themselves that they must modify, renew, or give up. They then should be led to reflect and become aware of the part of themselves that grow and change in this part. Symbols can also be used to help visualize the transforming process.

Reward
Death is paired with reward. Psychologically, this is the natural development. When ego dies, higher self is born. When misconception dies, new awareness is born. In the movies, such scene usually involves a celebration, campfire scenes, love scenes, elixir theft, new perceptions, etc.

A great example comes from the miniseries from South Korean: the Eighth Episode Theorem. Viewers know that in most romance stories (usually consisting 16 episodes in total), the hero and the heroine's first kiss usually happens in the eighth episode. Obviously, writers and storytellers in South Korea know about the law that to engage viewers, a highly emotional event, one signifying the initial success of the heroes, must happen somewhere in the middle.

Traditionally, only a small part of the class——those who get a good score in the mid-term test—— have a feel of this award. But every student should receive and feel such a reward, though this could be in various forms. And the reward need be so emotionally intense that quenches their thirst they have had since the beginning of the course. Some long-awaited events should happen during this "Mid-term."

That is why simply setting a mid-term exam for as the ordeal is not powerful enough. All students need an opportunity to feel the death of his old self and the birth of a new identity. Such growth is personal and cannot be arbitrarily decided by a test score.

Portfolios should be kept for each student. At the very beginning, each student should be guided to identify the biggest obstacles that he faces, thus setting his personal goal in this course. Correspondingly, students' performances in the mid-term test should be assessed qualitatively, taking into special account of each student's individual obstacles identified at the beginning of the journey. Emotionally, upon finishing the mid-term task, students should have a sense of achievement and actually feel his personal growth.

Act Three

Return
Having survived the ordeal and having received his reward, the hero is now called upon to return to the ordinary world. Again, the hero must gather up courage to cross the boundary between the ordinary world and the higher realm. The road back causes Act Three. It is another moment of crisis that sets the hero on a new and final road of trials.

Act Three tests the hero's newly acquired skills and

capabilities. It offers the hero an opportunity to apply the new knowledge to his own real life situation. This is also the final test, passage of which proves definitely that the hero has learned his lesson and is ready to move to other quests.

Whereas in Act Two students enter the higher realm, with new rules and new resources, and accomplish the ordeal successfully with the help of the allies and mentor, starting here, he needs to go back to the ordinary world, one he reluctantly left or happily escaped, and deal with the problems now.

This is a heightened version of Act Two. After the students experience the emotional high of successfully completing the mid-term task, it is now time for them to come back to the original problem that brought them onto the journey and solve them. After experiencing heaven, it is now time to bring the heavenly knowledge down to earth. The ordinary world is the earth that the heroes must eventually come back to.

Mirroring the "crossing the threshold" stage, the return could be met with reluctance from the students. Hence the mentor needs to lead the students back to the original problem. If there is any inner resistance, doubts, fears, reluctance on the part of the students, students need to be given a chance to openly discuss these and a choice as to how to continue the journey. As in Act one, being allowed to reject, consider, and choose is a vital component of motivation.

The Resurrection

A new personality must be created for the hero to enter the ordinary world, so that he can approach the old problem in a different way and potentially solve it. The hero now has new skills, new knowledge, and new personalities. In many revenge dramas, this is also the audience's favorite part where the hero shows up in front of the old nemesis with brand new and more powerful capabilities. Having overcome death, the hero is now equipped with new capabilities to bring life to the old situation.

To intensify the transforming power, visible and outer changes should be intentionally designed to mirror and symbolize the inner change. For example, the students should be constantly reminded of their new capabilities, behaviors, and appearances. The students could act differently and dress differently.

According to Vogler (2007), the final test can happen in various ways: cleansing, showdown, death and rebirth, choice, climax, and catharsis.

For example, in showdowns the hero faces the villain in an ultimate contest. It could be a fight, or an ultimate choice that tests the hero's values. A great example of facing an invisible enemy is found in the movie Shrek, where Fiona needs to choose the ogre or the charming prince that she wants to marry. And she has learned her lesson to not judge a person by his looks, so she chose the Ogre.

Similarly, the final task should be designed to test whether students can apply the newly acquired knowledge without falling back to their old selves. Such tests can be presented as a choice, a contest, or a showdown.

Traditional final exams partly fulfill this role, with one big shortcoming. The traditional exams give out scores that rank students. But all students should have learned something, and what they have learned varies. But a scoring system defeats such purpose——scores announce that everyone has the same learning goals and most have not done so good a job.

The assessment should be different for each student. And the criteria are whether the students have improved on the "problem" they had at the beginning of the journey. Such assessment should include both the instructor and the student themselves.

Return With Elixir

This is the final part where we heal the wounds or the missing part in the hero's life or untie the emotional knots that obstructs the free flow of energy. The ending could either be circular, the traditional happy ending, where all the questions are resolved. In a movie, every character's certain unhappiness is dealt with and light is brought to all. Or the ending could be open-ended.

In class, the questions brought up in the beginning or in the middle of the class should all be answered and solved. In addition to this, instructors can bring up even more difficult, real-life questions and leave these as more potential journeys for the students to explore.

So the final exams are not final. After the exams, at least a session should be held where students are given time and room to consider their growth, or the reasons for failure to grow. Instructors should guide students to acknowledge their growth and help them identify places for further improvement.

DISCUSSION

In the Hero's Journey, each student has his or her own unique journey to travel on. Each identifies their own goals and constructs their own learning as they move on, thus offering multiple perspectives. (Elements No. 1, 2, 7.) The learner retains the most of the control over the entire process and the teacher acts as the guide or coach. (Elements No. 3 and 5.) The tasks the students confront on the journey should be authentic activities and build on their previous knowledge. (Elements 6 and 9.) In each task, students are called upon to solve the problem at hand, to explore their options, and to consider their errors with the help from their allies, which could be the classmates or the teacher. (Elements 8, 10, 11, 12, and 16.) From cooperating with their team members, each offers their own perspectives and each student should be assessed based on the problem they identify personally. (Elements 15 and 17.) And most importantly the students'

perspectives and construction of the learning process are the primary source of data that inform assessment. (Element 17 and 18.)

Reflection is of utmost importance in the hero's journey. Instructional design following the hero's journey allows invention and self-organization on the part of the students. Such subjectivity is essential in constructivist teaching. "Reflective abstraction is the driving force of learning" (Fosnot, 2005, p. 47). The first third of the journey is entirely devoted to addressing students' doubts and fears, the overcoming of which should lead to higher motivation on the part of the students. Throughout the whole journey, students need frequently reflect on their learning and lots of time need be allotted for discussing their reflections.

Instructional design following the hero's journey shapes the classroom into a space for communication, discussion, and exchanging each student's construction of knowledge. In constructivist teaching, the classroom is a "community of discourse engaged in activity, reflection, and conversation" (Fosnot, 2005, p. 47). In such a community, "learners are responsible for defending, proving, justifying, and communicating their ideas to the classroom community" (Fosnot, 2005, p. 47).

Instructional design following the hero's journey allows students to construct their own subjective knowledge. In constructivism, knowledge is not a copy of reality, but "a mapping of actions and conceptual operations that had proven viable in the knowing subject's experiences" (Fosnot, 2005, p. 17). In the hero's journey, each student's obstacles towards accomplishing the tasks are different. They discover for themselves the individual paths toward the goal. And upon finishing the tasks, which can be generic, each student achieves different perspectives and gains different knowledge. The hero's journey thus lays out a path for growth, but does not dictate what the growth is and leaves that for each learner to decide.

The hero's journey offers a more specific guide for constructivist instructional design. It also opens the door to a plethora of examples----all the movies, novels, and stories that build on this journey offer endless guidance and inspiration. But the hero's journey also requires a bold move on the part of teachers. For example, one third of the course (act one) is devoted to persuading and motivating learners, while traditional teaching is relatively interspersed. This requires a leap of faith from instruction designers. Additionally, the hero's journey calls for different assessment tools that are based on each individual's own construction of learning. This can be a topic for further research.

CONCLUSION

In fact, the Hero's Journey is itself a fundamental way of learning. Previous works combining the Hero's Journey with instructional design fail to recognize the immense power of narratives, or myths. They were borrowing from the entertainment industry the successful structure underlying games and movies, primarily for the "engagement" value of such a structure. But the authors don't realize that learning and individual growth were at the very heart of the Hero's Journey. In fact, Volger himself repetitively compared the Hero's Journey to learning (Vogler, 2007, p. 226, p. 231). Furthermore, the mythologies, all built upon the structure of the Hero's Journey, are about the wisdom of life (Campbell, Morrison, 1988, p.9), which stays very relevant even today.

In line with constructivism's focus on subjectivity, the Hero's Journey provides instruction designers a way to guide students on their quests to find their inward growths (Campbell, 1988, p.139). The Hero's Journey is democratic, subjective, and student-centered. It offers a structure into which various knowledge and information taught in traditional classrooms can be built and organized.

It is intriguing that at the edge of learning theories, the Hero's Journey from the oldest tales of humankind echoes constructivism in so many ways. The two ends of the spectrum of man's learning, the modern and the ancient, thus meet and converge, forming a complete circle. This paper merely suggests an initial structure merging the two, further research into the actual application of the structure in various subjects is needed.

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