Exploring good practice in dialogic assessment

March 2017
Dialogue

I think because it was the medium and the conversation that also allowed a little bit more an emotional engagement in it as a process as well, and I don’t get that from writing stuff, in the same way. (Jenny)
Aims of the workshop

• To explore what we mean by professional dialogue and how it’s used to evidence the UK PSF
• To share experiences of institutional dialogue schemes
• To have a go at dialogue and reflect on the experience.
• To discuss the challenges of making dialogic assessment successful
Dialogic process

• What does it mean to me
• What does it mean to you
Differences between dialogue and discussion

Dialogue
• Seeing whole among the parts
• Seeing connection between parts
• Inquiring into assumptions
• Learning through inquiry/discovery
• Creating shared meaning among many

Discussion/Debate
• Breaking issue into parts
• Seeing distinction between parts
• Justifying/defending assumptions
• Persuading, selling, telling
• Gaining agreement on one meaning

Ellinor and Gerard (1998)
Professional Dialogue

• Bohm (1996) “stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us” ... and that this shared meaning is the glue or cement that holds people and societies together”

• Shor and Freire (1987) “Dialogue is a moment where humans meet and reflect on their reality as they make and remake it.

• Encourages positive relationships can profoundly influence learning (Pearce and Down 2011)

• Self reflection is insufficient for professional development because ‘reflection will need to be analytic and involve dialogue with others.....confrontation by self or other must occur’ (Griffiths & Tann 1991).

• Not all dialogue is reflective and that in order to progress and change an individual has to be engaged ‘at the edge of their knowledge, their sense of self and the world as experienced by them’ (Brockbank and McGill 2007:65)
Professional Dialogue in HE

1 - action or learning event

2 - reflection-in-action

3 - description of the action/learning event and reflection-in-action

4 - reflection on the description of action, event or reflection-in-action (Schon’s reflection-on-action)

5 - reflection on the reflection on action

Ref Brockbank and McGill (2007)
Dialogue elements

• Relationship building:
  • sharing, humour, empathy, trust

• Reflection:
  • description, thinking things through, exploring own experience, reasons behind, recognition of own values, reflecting back

• Storytelling:
  • evidence, authenticity, entry to reflection, role and identity

• Meaning making:
  • exploration, explanation, interpretation, reflecting back, meta-analysis, positioning within outcomes, giving feedback, clarifying understanding

(Ref Ruth Pilkington, presentation at YSJU Dec 2015)
Stimulating reflection

• I didn’t see that she was spoon feeding me or doing it for me, very much not the case, she was always batting back into my court and making me think

• ...makes you look at things more critically and questions you with so what questions(susan)

• I was lucky to work with somebody that was very very good at drawing out those things without making a big deal.. (Sarah)
Being mentored

you sort of feel with paper routes that you’re providing the evidence but actually you maybe don’t get as much from it, whereas the dialogue, you know, you’re actually getting feedback, immediate feedback and ideas from the two mentors. (Clare)

it’s not quite so personal if you’re not from exactly the same area, it’s much easier to be a critical friend if you’re not a close colleague or somebody who knows you personally, so I can be quite objective with people who are from business or education because it’s not my particular baby, (Tessa).
Dialogue Activity

• In pairs A talks to B about who they are as a teacher or educational developer for 2 mins
• B finds someone else and tells them about person A
• Repeat in a different pair
• Repeat but while A is talking, B takes notes
• What makes you to listen more attentively or thoughtfully to others?
• What are the challenges of listening in terms of the assessment process?
Being assessed

• *Humility dissipated during the dialogue very quickly and I very quickly felt like an equal, which was fantastic, a credit to the assessor for making that happen* (Karen)

• *And that’s a good assessor who is trying to dig a little deeper rather than just the surface you might expect* (Rosie)

• *I was very aware that the person assessing me was vastly superior to me in her knowledge and her achievements within teaching and learning so I felt quite humbled by that relationship*..(Sarah)
Let’s have a go!
Reflecting on the dialogic assessment experience

• Leading or prompting?
• Question guides?
• Preparing applicants?
• Preparing and supporting future mentors?
Questions
References

• Felten, P Dirksen, H. Bauman, L. Kheriaty, A. Taylor, E. (2013) Transformative Conversations