Dialogic Education for the Internet Age

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Publications
- e.g. Wegerif, Li and Kaufman (for 2015)
- The Routledge Handbook of Research on Teaching Thinking

Research Projects
- Virtual Reality
- Global Dialogue for Peace
- Metafora
- Statstalk

Assessment tools:
- Autonomous Learning Scale
- Group Thinking Measure

PhD Students
- Mobile learning
- Affordances of social networks
- etc

MA in Education: Technology, Creativity and Thinking (TCT)
- Module: Teaching Thinking in the Internet Age. + PhDs and EDDs.

Accreditation of “Thinking Schools” and “Digital Excellence” in education
Overview

1) Evaluating the Face-to-Faith programme
2) The aim: Dialogic Open-Mindedness
3) Dialogic education
4) The Internet Age
1) Evaluating the Impact of the Face-to-Faith Programme of video-conferencing and blogging

1) A questionnaire to measure ‘Dialogic Open Mindedness’
2) Computer-supported discourse analysis of changes in blogging
3) Discourse analysis of videos
4) Case studies of schools interviewing some staff and students

Pilot study now and main study to run September to December 2015
2) Dialogic open-mindedness is about being open to learning from others and is best seen in the way in which individuals and groups respond to others whom they perceive as different from themselves.

Example questions include:

• After talking to others I sometimes think differently about myself (+)

• When other people disagree with my views I feel uncomfortable (-)
Dialogic education is teaching *for* dialogue as well as teaching *through* dialogue. Face-to-Faith involves teaching for dialogue. Teaching how to listen to others, how to ask good questions and how to reason. There is good evidence that teaching for dialogue raises attainment on a range of measures.
Philosophy sessions 'boost primary school results'

By Hannah Richardson
BBC News education reporter

10 July 2015 | Education & Family

Weekly philosophy sessions in class can boost primary school pupils' ability in maths and literacy, a study says.

More than 3,000 nine and 10-year-olds in 48 UK schools took part in hour-long sessions aimed at raising their ability to question, reason and form arguments.

A study for the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) found pupils' ability in reading and maths scores improved by an average of two months over a year.

For disadvantaged children, the study found writing skills were also boosted.

The trial of the Philosophy for Children programme (P4C) focused on children in Years 4 and 5 - aged nine and 10.

It was part of efforts by the charity, EEF, to evaluate ways in which schools are spending pupil premium money beneficially on children from poorer backgrounds.

The disadvantaged pupils in the trial, those on free school meals, saw their reading skills improve by four months, their maths by three months and their writing ability by two months.
Thinking Together results

This new study on P4C reproduces findings for our Thinking Together approach to dialogue in the classroom. Teaching Thinking Together (a dialogic method) one hour a week for a year also led to increases in Maths and Science results as well as in Non-Verbal reasoning test scores.
(Class 5 D) Rules for Talk

1. Everyone should have a chance to talk
2. Everyone’s ideas should be listened to
3. Each member of the group should be asked
   - what do you think?
   - why do you think that?
4. Look and listen to the person talking
5. After discussion, the group should agree on a group idea
Change around B12

- Diagram of shapes around B12

Images of children working on a task
But why did the groups do better?

**Pre-test start**
Trisha: Square and diamond, it's 2
George: No it's not
Trisha: It is 2
George: No it's not
Trisha: It is
George: No it's not

**Post-test start**
Trisha: That has got to be a diamond, a square with a diamond with a circle in that one, number 6, do you agree?
George: No, what do you mean?
Trisha: OK no it's got to be square

Later ...
George: I don't understand this at all
Trisha: Because look on that they've taken the circle out yes? So on that you are going to take the circle out because they have taken the circle out of that one
George: On this they have taken the circle out and on this they have taken the diamond out and on this they have put them both in, so it should be a blank square because look it goes circle square
Pre-test
Post-test
The key: Learning to listen

When researching groups of children solving reasoning test problems together it was found that the key to success was the children learning to listen and to change their minds. This suggests we were teaching not just talk but also dialogue: thinking as holding more than one perspective in mind and being open to other voices.
Why did individuals think better?

Why did some children in our research do so much better at reasoning tests after teaching them how to talk together better?

Simple: because they had an inner companion questioning them, asking ‘Why?’ ‘Are you sure?’ ‘Have you tried all the other alternatives?’
The key to dialogic education

Authoritative discourse “remains external”

Internally persuasive discourse “enters into my words and changes them from within” (Bakhtin)
In every dialogue there is a ‘third’ voice – this can be a Generalised Other of the community of practice or the call of infinity

Accountable talk or Infinite talk?
The third voice

– **Trisha**: That has got to be a diamond, a square with a diamond with a circle in that one, number 6, do you agree?
– **George**: No, what do you mean?
– **Trisha**: OK no it's got to be square
To learn something new always means to see from a new perspective

1) seeing from the perspective of a specific other (eg your friend)
2) seeing from the perspective of a generalized cultural other (eg being accountable to the community – e.g the voice of Italy or Maths)
3) seeing from the perspective of the ‘Infinite Other’ or seeing as if from the outside, (eg genuinely asking why something is happening, looking at it in a new and unexpected way, an infinite regress of questions – )
Three kinds of talk as types of identity or identification

1. Cumulative – identification with the group
2. Disputational – identification with self
3. Dialogic [Exploratory] identification with the space of dialogue itself
The Internet Age
Encyclopedia Britannica vs Wikipedia

Authority of truth, One-to-many

A dialogue, Peer-to-peer Participation
Need to check
Participatory view of knowledge

According to the logic of the Print Age, education is the transmission of true knowledge through reading the right books. The essence of Wikipedia knowledge is not the passive representation of true knowledge but the active participation in dialogues that construct knowledge.
Dialogic Education for the Internet Age

Oracy – bounded
dialogue in a community

Print – one to
many
empires

Internet – unbounded dialogue
Core competences of Internet Age

The main 21st Skills and complex competences are about learning how to engage in dialogue with others via the Internet

- **communication**
- **digital competence** involves the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) and thus basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT);
- **learning to learn** is about learning to ask good questions and listen to the answers
- **social and civic competences**. Is about finding a voice in internet mediated dialogue ‘equips individuals to engage in active and democratic participation’
- **intercultural awareness** – how to thrive in a world of multiplicity

(EU core competences for lifelong learning)
Dialogue as an aim of education

Not from A to B but A to A + B

The direction of development is not from being this one voice to becoming that other one voice but from being just one voice to becoming the whole dialogue and having empathy with all the voices ...
The challenge of the Internet Age

A global space of interaction in which there are multiple voices and no certainties is already the reality of life for everyone on the Internet. Dialogic education for the Internet Age – like the Face to Faith programme - has a crucial role to play if people are to be able to thrive not only economically but also psychologically in this new context.
Thanks for listening!

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