Formulating frameworks for both guiding SET approaches and also analysing data

Discussion with the SET community of practice in Gauteng, South Africa

(with thanks to Rejoice Nsibande)

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August 2021

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Outline of discussion

Conceptual frameworks

- Tensions between orientations to 'evaluation'

- Student learning
  - A framework for centering student learning
  - Rich data

Analytical approaches

- Student engagement & alienation

- Interactional dynamics

Tensions in orientation

- Student > academic > discipline > dept > institution > national > global
- More often >>>
  - Vulnerable to waves of discourses and ossified policy-imposition

Some discourses:
  - Collegial rationality
  - Accountability/ audit
  - Student voice in tension w consumer
  - Transformation

Belluigi, D. Z. Playing broken telephone with student feedback: the possibilities and issues in transformation within a South African case of a collegial rationality model of evaluation. Book chapter in Nair, S. & Mertova, P. (eds). Enhancing Learning and Teaching through Student Feedback in Social Sciences, Woodhead Publishing, Cambridge, UK. ISBN 978-1-84334-655-5. Pp. 1-27. https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-1-84334-655-5.50001-5

- Quality (of curricula/ teaching/ learning)
  - Management?
  - Assurance?
  - Enhancement?
  - Equity?
  - Transformation?
- Atheoretical
- Decontextualised / atomistic vs social models
- Evaluation as a form of research; SET as data to be triangulated

Framework for 'shared understanding' of quality & evaluation

Table 2. Key aspects of contextual conceptions of learning.

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Definition of learning	Learning is an ongoing process that involves constructing knowledge rather than simply acquiring knowledge.
Definition of knowledge	Knowledge is an artificial object; knowledge is not prepositional; knowledge cannot be imbibed just through books and papers; knowledge is constructed during social activity.
Ways of acquiring knowledge	By engaging in formative and summative tasks; discussing information and comparing understanding with others.
The relation between knowledge and competencies	To be competent is 'to be able to'; competencies are tied to the situation at hand or a certain context; competencies are not universally transferable.
Type of data collection	Qualitative and quantitative.
Focus of evaluation	Aspects that are perceived as affecting student learning; students' perceptions and experiences of different learning situations.
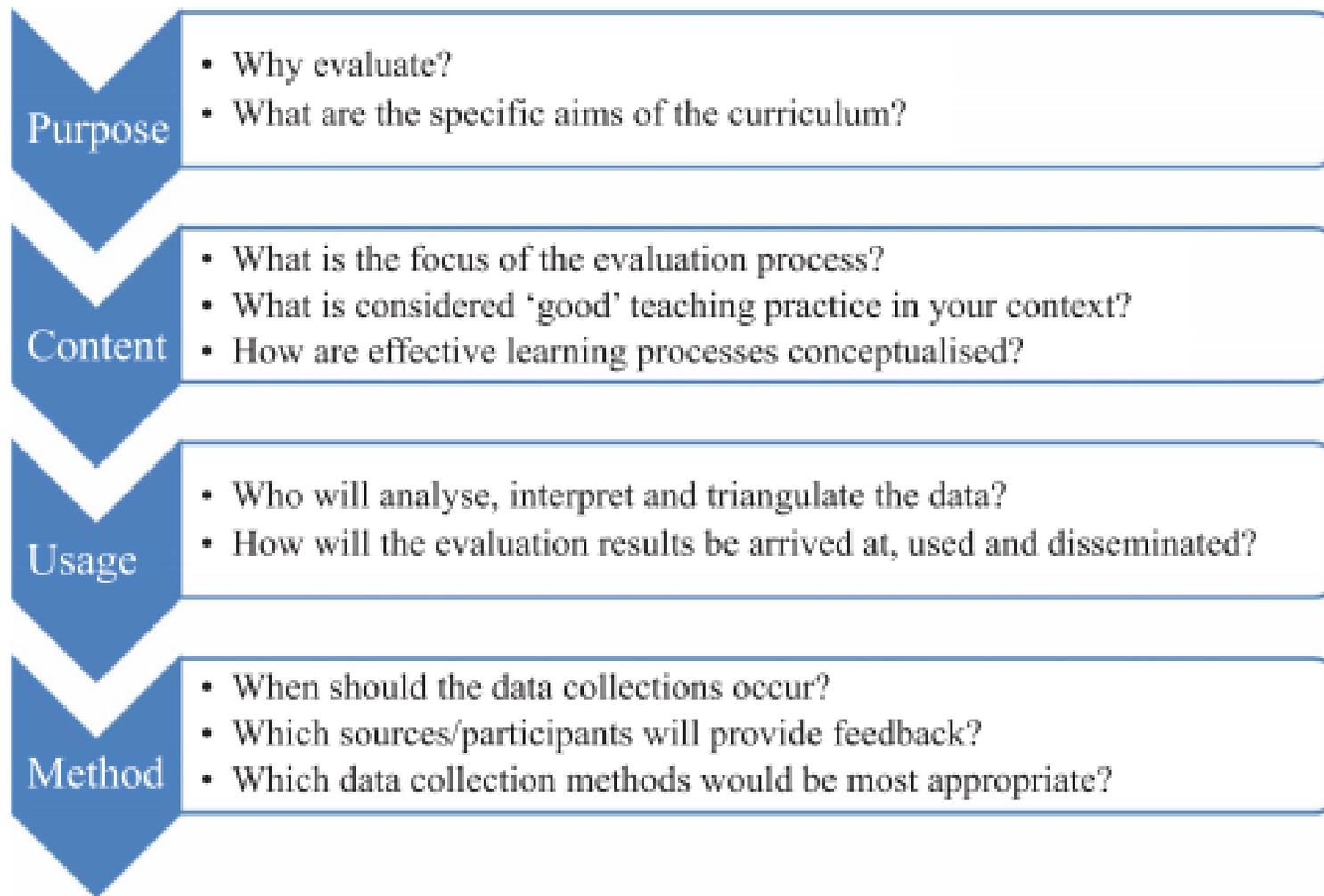
Figure 1. Aspects and questions important to evaluating contextualised teaching–learning interactions.

Rich data about student engagement

(some of my own experience)

Your words:

dissapointed, fearful... No idea which way to turn
becacuse I really was completly invested and they
assesors responces ~~was~~ were more than awful,
completly on a different page to me.
uninspired. Bleak. the end.

1. When a work I was **invested** in was **assessed.**


VN 2: Fran's experience of assessment

Assessment brought out "dark" feelings and "an overwhelming kind of dread" for Fran (VN 2). She felt exposure and vulnerability, fearing artworks which she had laboured over might be rejected. Attending the assessment event was akin to attending "my funeral", with a sense of inevitable disaster as if "headed straight for like a plane crash". Many times that growing anxiety led not to

Your words: A PIECE WAS TAKEN FROM ME

EMPTY
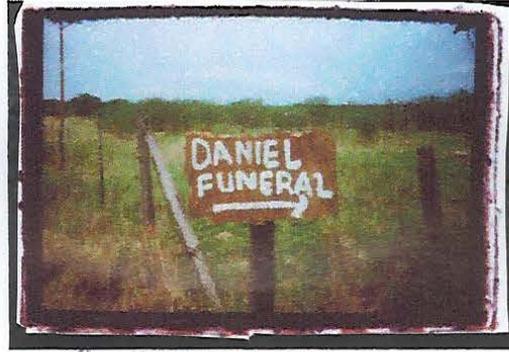
A DEATH OCCURRED

TRAPPED IN A CAGE

Belluigi, D. Z. 2016. Influences on the struggle over content: considering two fine art studio practice curricula in developing/ed contexts. Teaching in Higher Education, vol 21, no. 6, pp. 700-715. https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2016.1183617

Belluigi, D. Z. 2017. 'The significance of conflicting discourses in a professional degree: Assessment in undergraduate fine art practice' Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, vol 38, no. 2, pp. 209-221. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01596306.2015.1075961

Belluigi, D. Z. 2017. 'La question d'auctorialité : une épine au chapitre de l'évaluation en arts' in Ludec, Diane & Beland, Sebastien. [Eds]. 2017. REGARDS SUR L'ÉVALUATION DES APPRENTISSAGES EN ARTS À L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR. Quebec, Presses de l'Université du Québec. DOI: 10.2307/j.ctt1z27hpf

Belluigi, D. Z. 2018. 'Practice-based reflections of enabling agency through arts-based methodological ir/responsibility' in Du, X. and Chemi, T. [Eds]. Arts-based methods in education around the world. River Publishers. https://www.riverpublishers.com/research_details.php?book_id=476

Alcock, A., & Belluigi, D. Z. Positioning Home for Resilience on Campus:First-Generation Students Negotiate Powerless/full Conditions in South African Higher Education. Education as change, 22(1), 1-28. [22(1)]. http://dx.doi.org/10.25159/1947-9417/3206

Belluigi, D. Z., Alcock, A., Farrell, V., & Idahosa, G. 2019. Mixed metaphors, mixed messages and mixed blessings: how figurative imagery opens up the complexities of transforming higher education. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in the South*, 3(2), 110-120. https://sotl-south-journal.net/?journal=sotls&page=article&op=view&path%5B%5D=105&path%5B%5D=50

Analytical approaches

- Inductive (open-ended)/ deductive (pre-existing)
- Too often evaluation 'dictated' by aims ('intentionality') of curriculum designers/ QA approaches
- Must also provide space for unintended & the perspectives of the 'beneficiaries'
- Careful of majority/ minority descriptions
- Careful of reified constructions of students ('intersectionality'; deficit constructions)

Engagement & Alienation
(cognitive, affective, conative)

Mann's (2001) seven perspectives of alienation to analyze the student data:

1. **The sociocultural context of the 'postmodern condition'** – Drawing from Lyotard, this perspective holds that because HE requires students to maintain the "inner cohesion" of society, the focus on utilitarianisms, instrumentalism, performativity, skills & competencies is alienating (Frosh, in Mann, 2001:8).

2. **The primacy of discourse to position as subject/ object** – Foucault's early work (1972) building on Lacan, shows that particular discursive formations position the subject in particular ways that may be experienced as alienating (Mann, 2001:10).

3. **Student as outsider** – Education can be seen as a colonising process where those in power impose their perceptions of reality (Mann 2001: 11)3. The student stands at the edge of the discipline and must decide whether to join and at what cost. The demands of learning the language of rational, abstracting, academic discourse and processes may require students to repress their being as non-rational, creative, unconscious and desiring selves, the very selves which they may need for engaging in learning.

Sarah J. Mann (2001) Alternative Perspectives on the Student Experience: Alienation and engagement, Studies in Higher Education, 26:1, 7-19, DOI: 10.1080/03075070020030689

Informed my teaching of academic staff, such as Belluigi, D. Z. (Ed) 2015. Evaluation of teaching and courses: Reframing traditional understandings and practices. CHERTL, Rhodes University. https://www.ru.ac.za/media/rhodesuniversity/content/chertl/document/report02_small.pdf

And most of the analysis of student data from my research in creative arts education, including my Phd and articles such as this Belluigi, D. Z. The importance of critical judgment in uncertain disciplines: A comparative case study of undergraduate fine art visual practice. Arts & Humanities in Higher Education 17 (3). p.305-322. https://doi.org/10.1177/1474022217712641

4. **Bereft of the capacity for creativity** – Because 'the self' is contingent on events (Satre, 1962, in Mann, 2001:12) and dependant on others (Winnicott, 1971, in Mann, 2001:12), being is a situation where one's self is not validated in relationships and contexts leads to a loss of 'self', agency and desire (Mann, 2001:12). When such estrangement from the student's creative and autonomous self occurs, it is replaced by a compliant self.

5. **Exile from 'self'/ loss of ownership of learning process** – Assessed work can be seen as part of a system of exchange undertaken for strategic reasons. Marx's four perspectives on alienation shed light on what the alienated experience of learning in higher education might be: (1) **alienation from the product of one's labour**, where what one produces is in a dominant relationship to oneself, reducing one's inner life and bringing to the forefront the world of products, outcomes, tasks; (2) **alienation from the process of production**, where work is experienced as external to oneself, to be undertaken at specific times, at the behest of 'others' and such that leisure time is the only time one feels 'at home'; (3) **alienation from oneself as a species-being**, where one feels oneself to be alienated from one's very self as a human being; and (4) **alienation from other human beings**, where relationships are no longer relationships between individuals but between the positions allotted one by the particular social system, e.g. students and lecturers (Lukes, 1967, in Mann, 2001:13).

6. **Assessment practices 'disciplining into docility'** – This perspective is drawn from Foucault's later work (1979), where power in the modern world is seen to be expressed through examination and confession as two technologies of power. Examination makes the individual visible by objectifying and individualizing him/her; the confessional creates conversations between a speaker and an 'other' who listens, judges and has the power to forgive but requires the confession in the first place. Assessment practices locate the student in a particular hierarchy of success and expertise, which when linked to failure can contribute to alienation.

7. **Self-preservation** – The student feels it is safer to disengage by repressing his/her desire, and approaching the new ordered world from a superficial perspective.

Interactional relations
(for peer and teacher-student relations)

- In-group and out-group dynamics (RS-race & RS-gender)

Thondhlana, G., & Belluigi, D. Z. (2016). Students' reception of peer assessment of group-work contributions: problematics in terms of race and gender emerging from a South African case study. *Assessment in Higher Education*, 42:7, 1118-1131. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2016.1235133

- Injustice – 'politics of belonging'

- Huber and Solorzano (2015) model allows the charting of the situated nature of micro-, meso- and macro-relations of racism/ sexism etc, from the interactional to the institutional, to larger societal conditions.
  Micro-curriculum gives you access to one situation of **microaggressions** range from:
  - microassaults (name-calling, threats or purposeful description) often carried out in subtle, automatic or unconscious forms;
  - microinsults or layered assaults (with implications of negativity or deficiency based on race and its intersections with gender, class, sexuality, language, immigration status, phenotype, accent, or surname);
  - microinvalidations (downplaying feelings, denying racism or white privilege); to cumulative assaults that take a psychological, physiological, and academic toll

Belluigi, D. Z. & Thondhlana, G. (2020) "Your skin has to be elastic": The politics of belonging as a selected Black academic at a 'transforming' South African university. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*. https://doi.org/10.1080/09518398.2020.1783469

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