

Knowledge Area Module 1:
SBSF 8110: Theories of Societal Development

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ABSTRACT

Breadth

This paper critically assessed the educational philosophies of Bohm, Freire, and Senge and their dialogical contribution to the societal change in adult learning theory and its classroom impact. Senge studied and implemented the U Theory in organizational learning in an effort to create learning communities. Freire approached classrooms with his dialogical and situated pedagogy aimed at leveling the imbalance of power and improve learning from the student's perspective. Bohm's analysis of the flawed thought process demanded an engagement of thinking for learning to move from accumulated to tacit knowledge.

ABSTRACT

Depth

The Depth Demonstration will include the preparation of an Annotated Bibliography that is reflective of current thinking on the use of dialogue for adult learning. The Annotated Bibliography will include at least 15 articles related to dialogue and selected from peer-reviewed journals that have been published within the last five years. In addition, a 25-to-30 page literature review will include a synthesis of the research on the use of dialogue in adult learning, critically analyzing them as they relate to the theories of Bohm, Freire and Senge. This fusion should illuminate opportunities to improve adult learning by including dialogue.

ABSTRACT

Application

The Application demonstration will consist of facilitating dialogue for five weeks in Values in World Literature course, and a ten-page paper that analyzes the effectiveness of applying elements of Bohm, Freire, Senge, and current research regarding facilitation of dialogue. The resulting paper will synthesize concepts from the Breadth and Depth, briefly reexamining Bohm, Freire, Senge, and current research, outlining a need for dialogue-based adult learning models.

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BREADTH

SBSF 8110: Theories of Societal Development

Though individual to each person, learning commonalities provide educational institutions an opportunity to create learning models and adapt teaching methods appropriately. Researchers in the educational field continually strive to improve the models and implement them in the classroom. Knowles (1998) presented findings that supported his theory of adult learning, andragogy, which differentiated adult learning from child learning. Dunn (2000) summarized the findings of Knowles: Instructors need to be aware that their students bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the classroom. They should encourage the students to be active in their own learning by using the education and experience they currently possess. This will enrich the learning environment for both teacher and student, though it does require more effort from the teacher to nurture. Based on the work of Knowles, adult learners will not succeed in an environment where they take notes while listening to a lecturer.

While a classroom is often the first image that comes to people when they hear the word “learning,” the typical classroom does not evoke much of the spirit of practice of learning. Classroom learners are usually passive. The classroom concerns mostly listening and thinking, not doing. For many people, classroom imagery evokes strong feelings of the need to avoid errors and the importance of getting “right answers.” Real learning processes, in contrast, are defined by trying something new and making many mistakes. (Senge, 2006, p. 300)

Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) found similar methodology. He asserted that in a usual college setting a professor lectures, only occasionally leaving the floor open to discussion. This questioning and answering period commonly serves to clarify lecture points, not engage students in a thorough critical analysis about the topic. More often,

any discussion is delegated to a graduate teaching assistant in a session separate from class. Freire (Freire & Freire, 1994) described this traditional methodology as educators depositing knowledge into the empty minds of the students, as if depositing coins into a bank. Senge cautioned that this typical classroom scenario lacks engagement in real learning. Freire (2005) saw knowledge as gained through experience and interactions encountered on a daily basis.

Knowledge is not *extended* from those who consider that they know to those who consider that they do not know. Knowledge is built up in the relations between human beings and the world, relations of transformations, and perfects itself in the critical problematization of these relations. (p. 99)

Theorists

In this paper, I will critically assess the educational philosophies of Senge, Freire, and Bohm and their dialogical contribution to the societal change in adult learning theory and its classroom impact. I will begin with a presentation of the problems encountered in adult learning, and then illuminate how each of the theorists viewed dialogue as a vehicle to enhance adult learning in the classroom.

It seems a difficult task for a foundational institution, such as higher education, to change what Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) viewed as authoritarian-style classrooms with more egalitarian, progressive models. Freire (Freire & Freire, 2007) revealed that Einstein believed imagination was more important than knowledge as people seek to “turn the impossible into the possible” (p. xxiii). On a path to reinvent the classroom, Freire strongly held to one fundamental principle: “Changing is difficult, but possible and urgent” (p. xxiii). According to Freire, the state of the adult classroom needed immense change to meet the needs of its learners. Freire believed that education demanded and

deserved hope and the creativity of imagination. Even though a task may seem overwhelming, if it is worthwhile, it must be done.

Dialogue has successfully worked as a means to resolve conflict (Bohm & Edwards, 1991), seek personal growth and enlightenment (Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers, 2004), educate the illiterate (Shor & Freire, 1987), and improve the level of communication (Bohm & Nichol, 2004). Upon reviewing the challenges facing nontraditional college students, the theoretical investigation of dialogue may offer enlightening opportunities for its use in the classroom. These theorists introduced a dialogical method that supports the needs of adult learners. David Bohm (1917 – 1992) worked primarily as an American physicist, Paulo Friere (1921 - 1997) worked as a Brazilian educationalist, and Peter Senge (1947-) works as senior lecturer at MIT and the Founding Chair of the Society for Organizational Learning. A pioneer in dialogue, Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) saw dialogue as a way for groups of people to arrive at a “common meaning” and to discuss important, yet difficult topics (p. 5). Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) used dialogue to break down power differences and traditional educational authoritarianism, to liberate, and to educate adults in literacy. Senge continues to encourage the use of dialogue for organizations as a way for them to grow and succeed in our ever-changing, global market. These theorists challenged conventional ideas of learning, knowledge, and thought. Freire (2005) disputed the traditional transfer of knowledge; whereby, the learner absorbs the words and thoughts of others as an empty vessel. Freire argued that knowledge required the teacher and student to be curious, searching, and conscious together. Educational theorists Knowles (1998), Kolb (Kolb & Lewis, 1986), and Rogers (1969) supported Freire’s experiential perspective.

The Problem with Thought

Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) also agreed with the experiential learning model while he focused on the role of thought in the learning process. He explored the teachings of Krishnamurti, who disagreed with institutional education and dismissed accumulating knowledge as learning.

Learning does not mean starting with a certain amount of knowledge, and adding to it further knowledge. That is not learning at all; it is a purely mechanistic process. To me, learning is something entirely different. I am learning about myself from moment to moment, and the myself is extraordinarily vital; it is living, moving; it has no beginning and no end. When I say, 'I know myself,' learning has come to an end in accumulated knowledge. Learning is never cumulative; it is a movement of knowing which has no beginning and no end. (1995, p. September 20)

Traditional education involves a set curriculum with outlined objectives. Lesson plans support curricula through detailed, daily activities developed and followed in an effort to meet the objectives. Names, dates, and facts considered necessary for the foundation of knowledge tend to be seen as objects for memorization rather than a basis for engaged learning. Grounding a lesson on the Civil War in an era would illicit an improved understanding of the behavior of the historical figures more than simple memorization of dates, names, and places that does little to set the stage of the bloodiest war on U.S. soil.

Instead of valuing the manner esteemed by formal education, Krishnamurti felt that “a mind that is entrenched in the authority of knowledge cannot possibly learn” (p. September 21).

It is rather difficult for most of us to differentiate between learning and acquiring knowledge. ..The mind that is learning is an innocent mind, whereas the mind that is merely acquiring knowledge is old, stagnant, corrupted by the past. An

innocent mind perceives instantly, it is learning all the time without accumulating, and such a mind alone is mature. (p. September 21)

Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) saw this difference between learning and acquiring knowledge as evidence of a problem in the difference between thought and thinking. Thinking involves active processing of information with awareness, whereas thought works like a computer gathering data and reacting without engaging awareness. Bohm agreed with Krishnamurti and the need for suspending personally biased thought to allow the mind to open to new information and for seeing things in a new way. While acquiring and retaining knowledge has benchmarked learning for educational institutions, Krishnamurti and Bohm recognized that true learning involved new ideas and fresh perspectives, not tired lectures and regurgitated facts. Bohm asserted that the correct usage of the brain should not simply file and store experiences. Instead, Bohm suggested that true learning occurred in the thinking process, where the mind was able “to question and to suspend the activity of thought enough to allow you to give attention to whatever may be relevant” (p. 144). Hence, thought is rote and thinking is aware and engaged.

Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) argued that no reason existed to hold onto “assumptions without evidence” (p. 40). He believed that intelligence required that assumptions not be defended. In the act of learning, opinions are not that important. A student’s quest for truth will not “emerge from opinions” (p. 40). Life and its supported world does not exist because one thinks it does, but rather because it does exist. A debate regarding why birds fly south in the winter would seem useless without observation and data collection. While someone may feel strongly about why his or her

opinion is most correct, it is worthless without supporting evidence. Learning occurs when the brain is active and questioning. This leads to the importance of awareness. A student's awareness of the mind's quick thought process could energize them to suspend limiting assumptions, pay attention to, and learn from new experiences.

The flawed thought process may hinder adult learning. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) found that experiences create opinions, and once created, people react to defend their opinions. According to Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991), one sees and responds from memory without awareness of what is happening.

To further clarify this approach, we propose that, with the aid of a little close attention, even that which we call rational thinking can be seen to consist largely of responses conditioned and biased by previous thought. If we look carefully at what we generally take to be reality we begin to see that it includes a collection of concepts, memories and reflexes colored by our personal needs, fears, and desires, all of which are limited and distorted by the boundaries of language and the habits of our history, sex and culture. (p. 3)

This automated response mechanism of thought imperceptibly influences perception, which then affects behavior. Even rational thought becomes suspect upon closer scrutiny. Rationality is called upon when individuals attempt to make decisions while putting emotions aside. Emotion makes up only a portion of the flawed thought process, as a lifetime of experiences and societal pressures affect decision-making.

People identify with their opinions and feel attacked when their opinion is challenged. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) interpreted the defense of opinions as evidence of fearing being wrong, fearing that one cannot trust oneself or one's thoughts. This leaves adult learners vulnerable to embarrassment and feeling stupid. To counter this vulnerability, people identify their opinions as truths, though they may only be assumptions based on their background.

Additionally, Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) found that people defend their opinions by “thinking the defense” and put aside thoughts that question what they defend (p. 12). This unfortunate course of action leads to self-deception as, “Thought defends its basic assumptions against evidence that they may be wrong” (p. 12). When confronted with new information that counteracts previous knowledge, people resist change rather than challenge existing ideas and engage a fresh thinking process.

Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) identified the resulting fragmentation seen in the features of thought:

1. See divisions (results) without understanding origin.
2. Thinking wants to correct the result and sees it as independent of itself.
3. Thoughts contain inertia. (p. 14)

Fragmentation isolates problems from solutions. Examples of these features can be seen in the problem of pollution. People living on the banks of a polluted river will face numerous challenges if they cannot see the connection between their energy needs and the power plant upstream. As they work toward cleaning the river, their efforts will be thwarted unless they uncover the source of the pollution, which also serves as the source of their electricity. The problem is bigger than cleaning the river. It involves a cohesive understanding between their energy needs and their clean water needs. Bohm argued that this “pervasive incoherence in the process of human thought is the essential cause of the endless crises affecting mankind.”

If we look carefully at what we generally take to be reality we begin to see that it includes a collection of concepts, memories and reflexes colored by our personal needs, fears, and desires, all of which are limited and distorted by the boundaries of language and the habits of our history, sex and culture. (Bohm & Edwards, 1991, p. 3)

If people assume that they need that power plant because they have always had it and cannot fathom living without it or with an alternative source of energy, fear of dealing with the source of the pollution may limit the solutions. When something has always been done a certain way, it becomes difficult to question those issues regardless of how they directly relate to problems.

Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) recommended suspension as an avenue to address the problematic cycle of thought, because “thought generally conceals these problems from our immediate awareness and succeeds in generating a sense that the way each of us interprets the world is the only sensible way in which it can be interpreted” (p. 5). Putting assumptions aside can open doors to revelations about the problem at hand, its causes, and most importantly the numerous solution possibilities.

Thought lacks self-awareness, or proprioception. Bodies have proprioception as seen in their awareness of the bodies’ actions, like knowing a hand is raised. Thought holds to opinions founded in experience, traditions, and beliefs without question, and typically without proprioception. Thought reacts as a reflex without engaged, attentive thinking; without reflecting on the cause of the reaction. Students encountering new information in the classroom may be closed to new information without realizing why, or that they are even doing so. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) warned that “thought is very active, but the process of thought thinks that it is doing nothing – that it is just telling you the way things are” (pp. 10-11).

Learning at the Tacit Level Requires Suspension

According to Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004), everything done requires tacit knowledge. “Tacit’ means that which is unspoken, which cannot be described – like the

knowledge required to ride a bicycle” (p. 16). At this level, learning is extremely personal and individualized. Bohm believed that change at the tacit level constituted real change in the processes linked to thought.

According to Senge (2006),

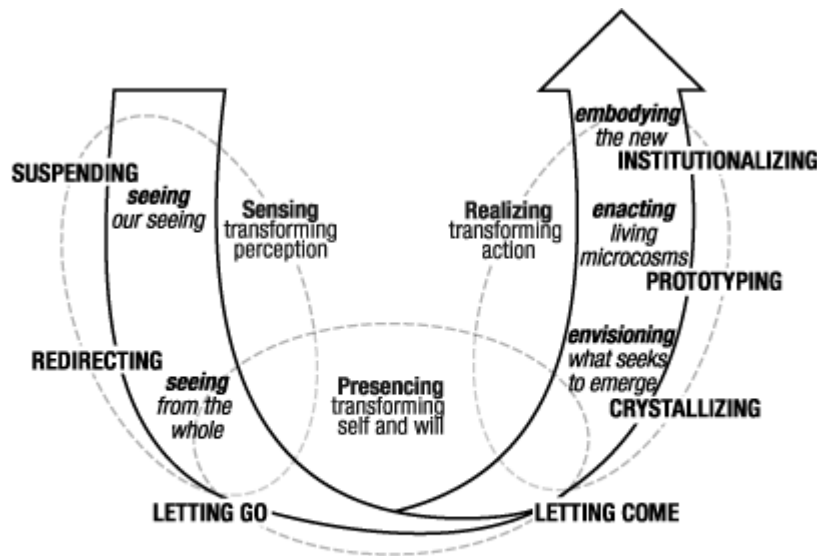
Learning always has two levels. At one level, all learning is judged by what the learner can do, the results he or she produces... But we wouldn't say we had learned to ride a bicycle if we succeeded in riding only once. On the deeper level, learning is about developing a capacity to reliably produce a certain quality of result. It is about becoming a “bicycle rider” not just riding one time, and this capacity is what grows as a result of the deep learning cycle. (pp. 284-285)

Though it may be tempting for an instructor to feel that a student who earned an A on an exam has learned the material, Senge suggested that results-based learning might not produce the educated learner. Instead, the instructor should strive for the student to know the information on a deeper level that sustains indefinite results.

Senge (Senge et al., 2004) identified a new type of learning based on sensing, presencing and realizing “extensions of what happens in all learning processes” (p. 88).

Senge (2006) suggested using the U process as “a framework for organizing” deep learning over time:

1. Sensing: deep, inquiry into their mental models through seeing reality beyond their filters;
2. Presencing: moving from there to a deep process of connecting with purpose and visioning, individually and collectively;
3. Realizing: then moving into rapid prototyping to translate visions into concrete working models from which feedback can be garnered and further adjustments made. (Appendix 3)



© Peter Senge, C. Otto Scharmer, Joseph Jaworski, Betty Sue Flowers. *Presence: Human Purpose and the Field of the Future*. Cambridge, Mass.: SoL, Society for Organizational Learning, 2004. Page 225.

Typical change does not move far down the U toward presencing. Usually, when presented with new information, one either reacts based on input from thought, or quickly translates the new information to something known and deals with it that way. Students notoriously use what they know to help them understand and remember new concepts. As mentioned earlier, adult students come to the classroom with a myriad of life experiences that need to be respected and built on for their learning. This serves as a problem if they are unable to set aside the assumptions that grow from those experiences and cut themselves off from new learning. Students that have worked in manufacturing may resist understanding the subtleties necessary for corporate room negotiations. Likewise, students who have only worked at the corporate level may resist the theories of Marx and Weber because of their positive experience with capitalism. For deep learning, sensing needs to occur out of reach of old ideas that remake it as

something known. With thoughts, opinions, and assumptions suspended, new information has a chance to illicit real change from within.

Senge (Senge et al., 2004) found that sustained awareness in observation mode pulled the subject into a presence described as feeling “more alive, more awake, are acutely present than ever before”, like “I am the audience, and they are me”, “seeing from within the source from which the future whole is emerging, peering back at the present from the future. In these moments, we can feel linked to our highest future possibility and destiny” (p. 90). Such presence opens one up to ideas and solutions otherwise considered improbable. Senge explained that moving up the U toward realizing “involves bringing something new into reality, just as in the standard model of learning – but this action comes from a source that’s deeper than the rational mind” (p. 91).

Senge (Senge et al., 2004) recognized Bohm’s imperative, “to evolve our awareness, so that it might naturally become more whole, more in line with our connectedness to the world. Without such awareness we’re blind to the impact of our current ways of thinking” (p. 208). Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) believed that thought created the world, all resulting problems, and then feigned innocence. Thought’s reactive, experience-driven response to new stimuli lacks proprioception, the self-awareness of the relation between intention and action. Bohm recognized that, “You think because you have an intention to think” (p. 28). Intention drives thought, and thought influences feelings. Without proprioception throughout this process, feelings and thoughts may be distorted. Bohm called for the suspension of thought “to help make proprioception possible, to create a mirror so that you can see the results of your

thoughts” (p. 29). By putting the erred thought process on hold, new information can be examined with neutrality. Without suspension, without clarity of awareness, thought constantly causes problems and tries to solve them.

We live in a world produced almost entirely by human enterprise and thus, by human thought. The room in which we sit, the language in which these words are written, our national boundaries, our systems of value, and even that which we take to be our direct perceptions of reality are essentially manifestations of the way human beings think and have thought.

In essence thought, in this sense of the word, is the active response of memory in every phase of life. Virtually all of our knowledge is produced, displayed, communicated, transformed and applied in thought. (Bohm, Factor, Garrett, and Burg, 1991, p. 2)

This process imbeds thought in the origin of problems. Senge (Senge et al., 2004) referenced Einstein, “when he spoke the ‘optical delusion of our consciousness’ whereby we experience ourselves ‘as something separate from the rest’” (209). This ‘optical delusion’ occurs when people react to situations without questioning their response, without understanding their involvement, their connection. Senge related this idea of interconnectedness with the work of Maturana.

Maturana’s work embodies his commitment to ‘a manner of co-existence in which love, mutual respect, honesty, and social responsibility arise spontaneously from living instant after instant.’ He says that we become more human through realizing ‘that we do not see the world as it is but as we are’ and reminds us that ‘no human being has a privileged view of reality.’ (Senge et al., 2004, p. 209)

Hence, each person has their own personalized view of reality skewed by the experience of memories and emotions stored in the brain and conveyed through thought. Senge (Senge et al., 2004) and Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) invoke Maturana’s social responsibility by requesting a need for suspension of thought, a quiet

reflective space to gain proprioception, and realize one's involvement in the creation and solution of problems.

Applying this insight to learning invokes a need to realize the lack of proprioception in current educational institutions where students intake, relate and regurgitate information as necessary to pass required courses. Without proper suspension and awareness of intent, deep learning does not occur.

Problems with Traditional Education

Many educational settings hinder opportunities for Freire's pedagogy and Bohm and Senge's presencing methodology. For adult learners encountering difficult theoretical concepts, Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) found it best to begin with concrete situations familiar to them. Freire suggested that those in education may be so wrapped up in academia that they are distanced from the concreteness of the lives outside of their institutions. He found that educators often moved from knowledge to concrete, whereas the majority of people outside academia begin with the concrete. Learning can be enhanced when educators acknowledge their experience and begin lessons there. Most people do not sit around theorizing about fixing problems outside of their experience, rather they set out to solve those that present themselves on a regular basis.

According to Freire (Freire & Freire, 2007), another problem with current educators occurs when they "train" and "tame" learners with standardized techniques (p. 26). Shor (1987) found an example of such taming behavior in the routine practice of teachers summarizing content at the end of class or paraphrasing a student's comment

as disruptive to the learning environment. Shor felt that these habits inhibited thought provoking discussion and made “students into persons who cannot interpret themselves, who must be translated and converted into standard usage, as if they are speaking an exotic tongue” (p. 158). Not only does this disempower students, Shor found that this technique also leads to students fearing humiliation by a correcting teacher.

Senge (2006) warned that organization learning had been limited by “making learning an ‘add-on’ to people’s regular work” (p. 287). Rather than incorporating learning into the typical workday, most companies hold training seminars with improved processes that rarely find their way into daily routines. Increased training within the work place focused on systems learning often fail because the typical work environment impairs the necessary reflection, critical thought and thoughtful dialogue necessary to identify the cause of the problem. For organizational change, training needs to be supported in everyday work tasks. Senge referred to the U process in a need for presence of mind that permits clear assessment of the whole problem. Reflection allows learning to occur over time. Typical problem solving involves reacting without delving into the cause. In a world on fast forward where people are inundated with email, texts, voicemail, faxes, and the internet’s capacity of information, taking time to reflect and critically analyze a problem seems fanciful. Senge found, and many who have followed his advice have learned, that to grow and succeed in this fast-paced world, institutions must learn and they need reflection to accomplish that goal of becoming a learning organization.

Senge (2006) also found fragmentation in organizational structures where people feel they need the support of management to initiate change. This phenomenon leads to a goldmine of untapped talent and resources, and problems never realized by the head of the organization remain unresolved without change coming at every level in an organization. Useful change needs to come from those actually working within the process. Standard procedures that come from the top of an organization often come without an intricate awareness of the setting that the procedure will affect. The employees given the responsibility of carrying out the protocol should amend it as it fits best into their setting and communicate those changes to management, rather than wait for management's approval. Change at this level, in the trenches, involves everyone in within the system to feel empowered and respected, characteristics of those in a learning organization.

Dialogue as a Solution

Dialogue Improves Communication

Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) initiated the use of dialogue to improve communication by creating a collective space for suspension and awareness. Dialogue infiltrated consciousness in the 1980s, when Bohm suggested "that a pervasive incoherence in the process of human thought is the essential cause of the endless crises affecting mankind" (p. 2). Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) observed that groups that used dialogue successfully work together to make change.

In our modern culture men and women are able to interact with one another in many ways: they can sing dance or play together with little difficulty but their ability to talk together about subjects that matter deeply to them seems invariable to lead to dispute, division and often to violence. In our view this condition points to a deep and pervasive defect in the process of human thought. (p. 41)

Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) recognized that discussion of important issues tended to lead to dispute, which he believed resulted from the flawed thought process.

To better understand dialogue, Schirch and Camp (2007) synthesized a comprehensive definition:

Dialogue is a communication process that aims to build relationships between people as they share experiences, ideas, and information about a common concern. It also aims to help groups take in more information and perspectives than they previously had as they attempt to forge a new and broader understanding of a situation. (p. 6)

Based on Bohm's (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) desire to suspend thought and assumptive beliefs, Freire's (Shor & Freire, 1987) need to analyze relationships and break through power inequities, and Senge's (2006) interest in applying the U theory process to enhance organizational learning, dialogue served as an ideal medium.

The process of dialogue included small groups of up to forty individuals coming together to converse with one another to address a mutual concern. Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) described dialogue as a method where:

[A] group of people can explore the individual and collective presuppositions, ideas, beliefs, and feelings that subtly control their interactions. It provides an opportunity to participate in a process that displays communication successes and failures. It can reveal the often puzzling patterns of incoherence that lead the group to avoid certain issues or, on the other hand, to insist, against all reason, on standing and defending opinions about particular issues. (p. 2)

Though the method may vary from group to group, the basic procedure of dialogue generates a safe environment where participants work to suspend their assumptions in an effort to initiate shared learning. When a group of people comes together with the intent of purposeful awareness, they create an amazing opportunity to learn about one another and themselves. In this environment people can put aside their skewed

perceptions, and be receptive to new ideas that they may have otherwise been closed to. This setting increases the potential for a group to problem-solve in a harmonious rather than combative manner.

Dialogue Enhances Learning

Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) believed that the “essence” of dialogue “is learning” (p. 2). In this sense, dialogue enhances learning situations. Although suspending thought may seem counterproductive to learning, it actually encourages deliberate thinking rather than reactive thought that often thwarts engaged learning. Applied in a classroom setting, dialogue could offer a way for lessons to be fresh and individualized every term. Rather than adhere to a set lesson plan, instructors could use course objectives as an outline and let the students influence how to fill in the details.

The use of dialogue could transform tired and boring adult classrooms into collective, interactive, and engaged sites of learning. Competing for grades could become unnecessary as learning would become the ultimate goal. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) saw dialogue as “a common participation, in which we are not playing a game against each other, but with each other. In a dialogue, everybody wins” (p. 7). Though he wrote about the application of dialogue as a means of improving conversations, his words easily translate to classroom learning.

Employing dialogue encourages a quiet space where people can process information in a new way. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) compared suspending assumptions to withholding a reaction. Instead of allowing thought’s reaction to incoming information influence behavior, people engaged in dialogue resist that influence and analyze it in a new light. Bohm believed that suspension helped “make

proprioception possible, to create a mirror so that you can see the results of your thoughts” (p. 29). Thought constantly lies at the source of problems and then tries to solve them without awareness of its influence, and this cycle continues unless one takes a moment to actively stop it. Suspension offers people an opportunity to be aware of thought’s influence;

We do not notice that our attitude toward another person may be profoundly affected by the way we think and feel about someone else who might share certain aspects of his behavior or even of his appearance...The kind of attention required to notice this incoherence seems seldom to be available when it is most needed. (Bohm et al., 1991, p. 3)

People may find that they are often unaware of the cause of their attitude. With the automated, imperceptive process of thought suspended, small groups of people have a chance to interact, learn about one another and converse in a trusting, unbiased atmosphere. Establishing a safe environment through the use of dialogue can encourage adult learning.

Dialogue for Collaborative Learning

Senge (Senge et al., 2004) explained,

When we’re learning something new, we can feel awkward, incompetent, and even foolish. It’s easy to convince ourselves that it’s really not so important after all to incorporate the new – and so we give up. This is our own psychological ‘immune system’ at work. (p. 35)

Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) found that dialogue sessions consisting of 20 to 40 people created a microculture where collective meaning begins, and that thought becomes more powerful than resistant individual thought. Senge’s (2006) research supported Bohm’s microculture idea in team learning. Senge investigated how teams learn, “as opposed to individuals in teams learning,” distinguished from individuals succumbing to conformity resulting from group pressure (p. 221). Senge realized the “potential of

collaborative learning – that collectively, we can be more insightful, more intelligent than we can possibly be individually” (p. 242).

Dialogue sessions allow a team to come together to “practice” dialogue and develop the skills it demands. The basic conditions for such a session include:

1. Having all members of the “team” (those who need one another to act) together;
2. Explaining the ground rules of dialogue;
3. Enforcing those ground rules so that if anyone finds himself unable to “suspend” his assumptions, the team acknowledges that it is “discussing” not “dialoguing;”
4. Making possible, indeed encouraging, team members to raise the most difficult, subtle, and conflictual issues essential to the team’s work;
5. Creating practice fields where participants have opportunities to come together and learn how to dialogue is crucial in creating effective, learning communities. (p. 242)

Dialogue also helps build learning communities, as Senge (2006) illustrated with West Des Moines public schools. Superintendent Les Omotani of West Des Moines public schools used community dialogues to improve the education conversation more than ten years ago. Typical “immovable walls” questions arose, “teams of teachers and administrators and community members” worked out details, and “two processes, dialogue and implementation – again, reflection and action – were moving in parallel, and feeding each other” (p. 308). The dialogues provided a space for participants to discuss everything involved in the education of the students including resources, teacher training, school hours, objectives, and a myriad of other topics. The schools actually responded by increasing the number of days that students met in the school year, a typical immovable scenario. This community consisting of three low-income schools improved student performance and reduced achievement gaps. Omotani credited the dialogue forums, “It was definitely the result of those conversations. It was all about developing a capacity to talk together in very diverse groups, developing a

collaborative network of people who were supportive of one another, and through this tapping people's deep caring for kids" (p. 308).

The active use of dialogue creates a more harmonious environment where the group learns something new together in an organic, encouraging manner. Participants may feel empowered with the focus on the idea of the group learning together. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) believed that dialogue provided groups an opportunity to arrive at common meaning, to make "something in common" – a new kind of learning (p. 3).

Dialogue improves team learning where individual opinions are suspended while the group works to create new meaning. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) observed that certain thoughts play greater roles than others, these he categorized as "absolute necessity" (p. 25). He found that all serious arguments involved different beliefs of what are absolutely necessary or unyielding viewpoints. The clash of two absolute necessities results in an emotional charge such as anger, hate, or frustration.

As long as that absolute necessity remains, nothing can change it, because in a way each person says that they have a valid reason to stick to what they've got, and they have a valid reason to hate the other person for getting in the way of what is absolutely necessary. (p. 26)

These arguments would be better served if the participants used dialogue to suspend their assumptions and analyze their value systems that produced the absolute necessity. Bohm found that people avoided conversations about issues of absolute necessity, but through sustained dialogue people loosened up, began to question and explore what is absolutely necessary. Dialogue "gets to the root of our problems and opens the way to creative transformation" (p. 27). This process opens groups to a new resourcefulness unexplored in typical group interaction. World and work views regarding issues of absolute necessity hinder learning in any environment. Bohm saw that

liberation from thought created a freedom that “makes possible a creative perception of new orders of necessity – because we’re driven by impulses from thought” (p. 27).

According to Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004), the collective participation in dialogue created an opportunity for the participants to do the following:

1. Actively engage in thinking with the group, not defend opinions
2. Build trust with the group and the process
3. Suspend and analyze opinions
4. Listen to everybody’s opinions, and help suspend them
5. Understand how it feels to be “sharing common content” (p. 30).

In the collective space where groups met the above conditions, Bohm labeled this “participatory consciousness” (p. 30). He believed that by attaining this state, the participants had set their individual opinions, bias and assumptions aside and achieved true dialogue, a communion of minds sharing something in common. This allowed for an opening of communication between the collective and individual harmoniously “in which the whole constantly moves toward coherence” (p. 31).

Dialogue in the Classroom

Whether students and faculty could find such harmony in the classroom remains an essential question in this analysis of dialogue. Of the three theorists, Freire alone employed dialogue in the classroom. Freire saw dialogue as a way to break down power differences and engage students in their learning. Freire (2005) implemented his dialogical educational method in Brazil using a “culture circle,

Instead of a teacher, we had a coordinator; instead of lectures, dialogue; instead of pupils, group participants; instead of alienating syllabi, compact programs that were ‘broken down’ and ‘codified’ into learning units. (p. 38)

Student centered.

Freire's (Shor & Freire, 1987) student-centered approach depended on dialogue to engage the students in their learning process. Freire noticed that many people involved in education may be so wrapped up in academia that they are distanced from the concreteness of the lives outside of their institutions. He saw educators as often moving from knowledge to concrete, whereas the majority of people outside academia begin with the concrete. Acknowledging this phenomenon allows educators to invest in the concreteness in common with their students. Freire referred to this as, "situated pedagogy" and notes its impact on improving student participation in the classroom dialogue (p. 103). Freire highlighted the efforts of a physics instructor who appropriately used this strategy in his Astronomy course. The instructor's first lesson involved having the students go into their neighborhoods and ask people what the sky means for them. In doing this, he began an examination of the sky with the concreteness of what people believe. This is an example of how dialogue in conjunction with situated pedagogy can increase participation by challenging passivity and increasing student responsibility. Rather than sitting and passively listening to a lecture, the students have an active role in their learning. Not only did this physics lesson engage the students as active participants in their learning, it involved sharing the opinions of others, removing the risk and fear of being wrong.

Shor compared this to the self-directed learning movement in the United States, where he employed,

Strategic dialogue to draw out conceptual rigor from experience. I try to begin courses with my own verbal restraint, so that there is an opening for students to speak...I can't always question them vigorously then. If I come at them immediately with conceptual questions, it can drive the students into silence,

because the verbal environment feels dense, unfamiliar, aggressive, judgmental. As a way of circling in, I ask students to interview each other in groups of two, and find out from each other some details of your lives, and then have your partner make the class report on you. This reduces intimidation and also helps students being a peer dialogue which encourages them to take each other more seriously. (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 154)

Shor's method employed a version of Freire's situated pedagogy and created an atmosphere of learning safe from condemning remarks and reinterpretation of student participation.

Mutual Inquiry.

According to Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987), dialogue allows "the object to be known" to be put out between the educator and student as an object of "mutual inquiry" (p. 99). Freire believed that educator responsibilities included preparing the object to be presented to the class based on his/her previous knowledge of and experience with the object realizing that not everything is known about the object.

Dialogue is the sealing together of the teacher and the students in the joint act of knowing and re-knowing the object of study. Then, instead of transferring the knowledge statically, as a fixed possession of the teacher, dialogue demands a dynamic approximation of the object. (p. 100)

As the students learn, the teacher relearns, expanding critical comprehension of the object. Freire foresaw the possibility of amazing breakthroughs as teachers ignite excitement as they relearn the object with the students, rather than reciting water-downed lectures replayed term after term without gain. Freire used his interest in subjects as a starting point from which he sought to encourage "curiosity" and "enthusiasm" in his students, so they could "illuminate the object together" (p. 101). This may be seen as slightly frightening for the student used to listening to an esteemed lecturer impart their wisdom to them in a passive mode. Sharing their intent to use

dialogue to create an improved learning environment should help students overcome any discomfort in adjusting to this new process. The educator should detail their expertise, but realize that admitting when they do not know everything improves the validity of the student-teacher relationship.

Freire (2005) worked to educate when he would

Enter into dialogue with the illiterate about concrete situations and simply to offer him the instruments with which he can teach himself to read and write. This teaching cannot be done from the top down, but only from the inside out, by the illiterate himself, with the collaboration of the educator. (p. 43)

In conversation with students, Freire (Freire & Freire, 2007) insisted that an important obligation for educators included “opening up a path” (p. 35). He used dialogue to draw attention to hidden things and help students understand that such things exist for them to discover. Shor succeeded in this when dealing with classroom silence.

[T]he very routine of a teacher filling the silences conditions students to avoid their own inductions. I try using the silence to provoke the students’ active reflection on what to do next. Sometimes I say to the class that I will not always fill the silences, but want them to take on the responsibility also. Students expect teachers to do all the active learning and to have the final word, so even these internal summaries are moments before the class hour ends where I ask them to practice induction instead of leaving all the learning to me. (Shor & Freire, 1987, p. 158)

In these silences, students should find a way to relate to the learning rather than wait for someone else to do it for them.

A Dialogue is essentially a conversation between equals...Dialogue is vulnerable to being manipulated, but its spirit is not consistent with this. Hierarchy has no place in Dialogue. (Bohm et al., 1991, p. 8)

Dialogue changes the unbalance of power in the classroom. Though the teacher may serve as the content expert, the students bring experiences and ideas that create a unique learning environment for all involved. Transparency in the process, the

expertise, intentions, and role of the instructor could help avoid manipulation. Serving as the facilitator, instructors “are essential. Their role should be to occasionally point out situations that might seem to be presenting sticking points for the group, in other words, to aid the process of collective proprioception” (Bohm et al., 1991, p. 8). In line with this facilitation role, Freire (Freire & Freire, 2007) noted that the teacher should know themselves and their objectives clearly and coherently.

Challenges.

Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) used dialogue in corporate settings with set agenda and power differences. His successes in this arena may indicate future successes as it is applied in the classroom. As for any success, challenges should be addressed upfront. Bohm outlined the following difficulties in dialogue:

1. Frustration in response to so many opinions;
2. Anxiety in a new process;
3. Various participant roles, where some people were dominant and others passive;
4. Feeling pressure to participate or feeling left out. (pp. 36-38)

Bohm envisioned that people would work through frustrations if they believed the process necessary and worthwhile. Transparency helped Bohm manage the difficulties encountered in the dialogue process and Freire breakdown power differences in the classroom. With perseverance and transparency, these obstacles to dialogue can be averted.

Future for Dialogue in the Classroom

In this paper, I critically assessed the educational philosophies of Bohm, Freire, and Senge and their dialogical contribution to the societal change in adult learning theory and its classroom impact. Senge studied and implemented the U Theory in organizational learning in an effort to create learning communities. Freire approached

classrooms with his dialogical and situated pedagogy aimed at leveling the imbalance of power and improve learning from the student's perspective. Bohm's analysis of the flawed thought process demanded an engagement of thinking for learning to move from accumulated to tacit knowledge.

Current research should reveal dialogue's effect on classroom learning and offer insights into mainstream implementation. The challenges anticipated for dialogical lessons involve time and resource constraints, patience in a difficult process, and typical resistance to change. As stated in the introduction, change in our educational system is necessary and urgent.

Though Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) believed that learning should not be the goal of dialogue, he observed that "it is an arena in which learning and the dissolution of blocks can and often do take place" (p. 6). Given this perspective, it seems that rather than dialogue being used to replace the current classroom model it would best serve as an additional instrument of teaching. As needed, dialogue engages participation, creates a safe, bias-free learning environment, improves team learning, and elevates the conversation of difficult subjects. Dialogue may prove to be the tool that empowers the hope that education needs to move forward and progress toward meeting the needs of increasingly diverse classroom.

With sound pedagogy and groundbreaking theories for improving learning models, the culmination of Bohm, Freire, and Senge's ideas has trickled into the educational consciousness. This paradigm shift exemplifies societal trends seen in President Obama's 2009 administration. As dialogue balances power relationships, necessitates transparency, and encourages a diversity of voices, so does the White

House. This move from exclusivity to inclusivity, from secrecy to transparency, from power of the few to power of the many, from monologues to dialogues illuminates the societal trends of the country.

While dialogue may not be the talisman of all that ails education and its societal setting, it offers a process of hope.

To me, without hope there is no way we can even start thinking about education. In fact, the matrixes of hope are matrixes of the very educability of beings, of human beings. It is not possible to be unfinished beings, such as we are, conscious of that inconclusiveness, and not seek. Education is precisely that seeking movement, that permanent search. (Freire & Freire, 2007, p. 87)

Breadth Summary

As education administrators continue to seek successful pedagogies, fragmentation thwarts comprehensive systemic analysis. Cohesive collaboration through dialogue at the executive, administrative, and teacher level reveals promise for creating organizational change. This breadth essay synthesized the ideas of Senge, Bohm and Freire. Together their use of dialogic communication illuminated the sources of problems, eliminated fragmented and biased thought, created organizational change, and engaged deep learning. This paper analyzed the problematic, automated thought process, the need for suspension of that process to gain tacit level learning, the challenges of traditional education, and the potential of dialogue as a solution. Dialogue was shown to improve communication, enhance individual and collective learning, and as an effective tool in the classroom. The emergence of dialogue with traits of collaborative, transparent, present, and unbiased thought process reflects the current trend in the White House. Given this social change, now seems a prime time to further the study of dialogue for learning and rally for its support.

In the following Breadth essay, I will review current literature that has investigated the use of dialogue in adult learning. I hope to find specific guidelines for its successful implementation in the classroom.

DEPTH

SBSF 8110: Theories of Societal Development

Depth Annotations

Black, L. (2005). Dialogue in the Lecture Hall: Teacher-Student Communication and Students' Perceptions of Their Learning. *Qualitative Research Reports in Communication*. 6 (1), 31-40.

Black (2005) sought to answer if students could be engaged dialogically in a lecture setting. Her study used Buber's concept of dialogue that included "presence, openness, mutuality, emergence, and voice" (p. 32). This study addressed three research questions:

1. What communication behaviors does the instructor use to teach dialogically?
2. How do students describe the teacher-student communication?
3. What aspects of teacher-student communication do students say helps their learning? (p. 50)

Black conducted her study during the summer session so a typically large classroom of 250 only consisted of 50 students. Questionnaires were submitted through nonrandom sampling, as extra credit was awarded. The findings were reported based on the five elements of Buber's dialogue. Instances of presence were found as the teacher had the students refer to her by "her first name or by the nickname "Dr. C"" and her use of personal examples. Openness was found in the teacher's effort to know the students, their names, experiences, and validating them and their opinions. Mutuality was seen in the teacher's "modeling of presence and openness and creating opportunities for students to talk together"; here she seems to be modeling facilitation rather than traditional instructor properties (p. 35). Emergence was occurred when the teacher "changed her plan of how to conclude the activity" in response to the group's

discussion. Voice was nurtured when “she asked questions that encouraged students to talk about their personal experiences” and “she encouraged students to ask questions and thanked them for offering unsolicited comments during lecture and discussion” (p. 35).

Students overwhelmingly characterized the classroom communication as “open”, teacher/student communication as “personal”, the teacher as “approachable”, and felt that they could voice their opinions (p. 36). Students identified interaction as the greatest asset to their learning. They found that it opened communication, increased their active engagement, and advanced their learning. In addition to interaction, agency was found to be the primary themes as helpful to student learning. In agency, the students found their voice, safety, and empathy in the classroom.

Black concluded that dialogue could be used in a lecture hall, regardless of the errors of the study. I found this to be an unrealistic study without much substance to further pursue dialogue in a lecture hall setting. Not only did the study experiment with a class one-sixth the size of a typical lecture hall, the study included minimal illustration of meeting the tenets of dialogue. Black also failed to compare her class to a typical one, and the lack of a control group diminished the veracity of her findings. I believe this study’s results would have been helped by comparing them to a comparable class, where the instructor acted normally without an effort put into dialogic instruction.

This study provides a rough draft for further studies that could be improved upon by addressing the criticisms mentioned above. Further investigations into the effectiveness of dialogue in a lecture hall setting should include typical attendance, a control group, and improved facilitator methodology.

Black, L. (2007). Interactive Whole Class Teaching and Pupil Learning: Theoretical and Practical Implications. *Language and Education*. 21 (4), 271-283.

“The paper concludes that interactive whole class teaching can really become an effective mechanism for learning only if certain assumptions regarding its function as a pedagogic tool are challenged within policy guidelines and in day-to-day teaching practices” (Black, 2007, p. 271). This suggested the need for institutional practices, curriculum development, and lesson plan creation should support dialogical practices. Black admitted that little evidence existed of such process in classrooms, though England’s latest policy document favored a more student-centered pedagogy. Given this, Black argued that concepts such as IWT and ‘accountable talk’ presented to teachers within “a coherent theoretical framework which accommodates an informed account of how children learn,” would effectively promote learning (p. 273). Black found two common characterizations of productive teachers. The first focused on teacher-pupil interactions, where collaboratively they develop common meaning and generate shared knowledge. The second acknowledged the bidirectional flow of information, where teacher and student learn from one another where power is balanced between pupil and teacher for effective dialogue.

Hindrances to effective IWT included current pedagogy embedded deeply of question and answer style, the need to improve inclusive participation, challenge underlying assumptions. Black noted that time constraints hurt the level of dialogue. The pressure to cover a lot of material and improve test scores, teachers sacrifice extended dialogue for coverage of material. Black concluded,

To really promote effective practice, classroom dialogue needs to be endorsed as a flexible tool for enhancing children’s learning and not as a tool for raising attainment levels in summative forms of assessment. It should not be

implemented along with a rigidly prescribed curriculum which hinders teachers' use of classroom activities that are genuinely collaborative in form and content, whether that is in small group or whole class contexts. (p. 279)

To improve implementation, Black called for evidence and transparency to engage pedagogical change.

In this article, Black did well to redeem her earlier flawed study. Though this was more of an address of issues than a research study, Black's ideas on conquering the obstacles to implementation of dialogue in the classroom seem well substantiated and thought out. Supportive curriculum that fosters dialogic instruction, collaboration, and balanced power through transparency are useful solutions for educators looking to make the transformation of their monologic style dialogic.

Billings, L., & Fitzgerald, J. (2002). Dialogic Discussion and the Paideia Seminar. *American Educational Research Journal*. 39, 907-942.

This case study examined types of discussion in Paideia Seminars. Data collection involved observations, questionnaires, and interviews. The authors concluded that the observed discussions reflected the teacher's transitional status in conducting dialogic discussion, with some features of "ideal" Paideia Seminar dialogue represented and some features of "teacher-fronted" discussion represented (Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002, p. 907).

The authors noted that an important element of their study of classroom dialogic discussion relied on the phenomenon that "More is happening in discussions than what can be surmised by the accumulated meanings of spoken words" (p. 910). They also found that classroom discussions met a dialogic theoretical necessity in their egalitarian nature, this relates to the importance of participants feeling balanced in power. Hence, all participants' ideas, beliefs, and understandings about a text are valued, and

participants share responsibilities for talking and listening” (p. 910). The authors recognized that such an environment where all voices and opinions are heard required a skillful teacher.

The reported findings suggested that the teacher implemented most of the Paideia Seminar methods, and included some of her own. She assigned the necessary reading to prepare for the seminar, though not all participants did the reading. The teacher arranged the desks in a circle. She did not set ground rules. The teacher asked open-ended questions, some prepared in advance and others in response to the discussion. She encouraged thoughtful, civil discourse. In addition to these Paideia Seminar expectations, the teacher stated her own opinion, provided positive feedback on the level of discourse, maintained regular eye contact and “asked questions that required students to understand her way of thinking about the literature” (p. 920). Upon analyzing the results of the nature of the discourse, the authors found that the discussions tended to follow the IRE (initiation, response, evaluation) sequence of a teacher-initiated question followed by a student response and the teacher responding with evaluative feedback. The prevalence of IRE has been well documented in other studies, as has been the teacher’s leading questions, and dominant male talk. Analysis of the “teacher-fronted” discussions led the authors to view the phenomenon from varying perspectives. As a positive factor, discussions occurred, this is an effort “to engage students in an active way, rather than having students listen to lectures,” and a way to encourage student interaction (p. 934). From a negative perspective, such discussions can be monologic, reinforcements of the authority structure where the teacher endorses and discourages the conversation and limits the discussion. From a

dialogue perspective, students were not engaged in the creation of the objectives, so no shared meaning occurred in that arena. In addition, the teacher did not use many of the techniques of facilitating dialogue. The authors concluded that the success of dialogic discussion depended on the teacher, in contrast to administrators who placed it on the students.

This was an interesting study that followed a high school teacher as she implemented Paideia Seminars. The results revealed the importance of the role of the facilitator and a need for additional training and support. This was a small review of implementation in three courses in one school, where the same teacher facilitated all three courses. The study would have been strengthened by implementing the seminars in numerous schools and training several teachers to work as facilitators. The results have been seen in other studies, such as the prevalence of IRF, monologic lecture style and student-teacher power imbalance. Implementation was difficult for a teacher committed to dialogic instruction, which suggested the difficulty of change and need for supportive training.

Boys, M. C. (1999). Engaged Pedagogy Dialogue and Critical Reflection. *Teaching Theology and Religion*. 2 (3), 129-136.

Boys (1999) sought out to “engage course participants in critical discourse that will have a transformative effect on society” (p. 129). Through the use of engaged pedagogies, committing to dialogue and critical reflection, she hoped to “stimulate persons to participate in creating collaborative learning communities that deal intelligently with vital matters” (p. 129). Boys stated that this conversation has its limits and is “educative only when people already know something and are thinking carefully about it” (p. 130). Hence, the dialogue depended upon information being critically

reflected and depended “upon attentive listening, regard for the other, recognition that each of us knows more than we can say, and a willingness to restrain oneself in order to hear others” (p. 130).

In alignment with Freire, Boys saw conversations as an opportunity to “bridge the gap between our world and another’s, and blur some of the boundaries of power” (p. 130). Similar to Bohm, Boys acknowledged the need to understand one another in order to understand ourselves. Boys also noted that the art of conversation depended heavily on the ability to ask a good question.

Like Bohm, Boys found that, “Perseverance is key. If the other is truly a partner, then the relationship must endure through tensions and difficulties (p. 133). Boys emphasized that dialogue, “is not a mere method” but “*a way of life*” which calls for attention to “the emotions, virtues, and skills that nurture relationship” (p. 133). The process demanded “emotional authenticity” in an environment of mutual concern, trust, respect, appreciation, and affection” (p. 133).

Boys reflections from her experience teaching theology and religion with dialogic processes illuminated the need for perseverance, well stated questions, presence, and authenticity that required knowing oneself. Her essay offered a great amount of information and challenged educators to begin their own conversation about dialogue.

Bunkers, S. S. (2000). Dialogue: A Process of Structuring Meaning. *Nursing Science Quarterly*. 13, 210-213.

Bunkers (2000) found that her profession of nursing required “the education of critical-thinking, self-reflective practitioners of nursing” which led her to investigate “the processes of teaching-learning in the education of nurses” regarding the creation of

space for such self-reflection (p. 210). She identified the necessity of engagement accessed through dialogue, “which encourages us to engage the known and not-known” (p. 210). For the purpose of her project, “dialogue is a process of structuring meaning and is a cornerstone of educating critically reflective nurses” (p. 210).

The teaching-learning setting consisted of a dialogue group that met every other week for the academic year at Augustana College where “students and the professor come together to talk about what the students are experiencing in their nursing education” for one-hour. Rules for the session included: mandatory attendance, complete confidentiality of what is shared, take turns co-leading the group, and the professor serves as a facilitator and resource person. These sessions were created “(a) to give nursing students an opportunity to critically reflect on their experiences in nursing education in an atmosphere of understanding and acceptance, and (b) to provide a time when students can engage in and practice open, honest, and clear communication while learning to listen to others” (pp. 210-211). This gave the students a chance to practice the important art of self-reflection and dialogue.

Bunkers discussed dialogue from the three principles of a human becoming perspective as committing to developing shared meaning through dialogue, accepting that all participants come together without judgment, and with a spirit of persistence to reveal new thought.

The described nature of dialogue, letting go of preconceived assumptions, holds limitless possibilities for the emergence of new thought and action. When all involved are focused on communicating coherently in truth, the formation of new thought and action holds the potential of seeing the familiar in a new way. (p. 213)

Bunkers supported the use of dialogue in nursing education and felt that it was the key to change. This article was difficult to follow and did not follow a typical research study style. The results of how well dialogue helped the nurses learn critical, self-reflective thinking remained unclear. Bunkers' paper serves as an informative assessment of dialogue, rather than a quantitative, definitive study.

Burbules, N. (2006). Rethinking Dialogue in Networked Spaces. *Cultural Studies <=> Critical Methodologies*. 6 (1), 107-122.

Burbules (2006) addressed the cultural bias of dialogue; noting that nondominant groups may withhold participation and be silent. Recommendations to better understand and overcome such bias include listening and analyzing the silences rather than push students to contribute. Burbules distinguished four types of dialogue: "inquiry, instruction, conversation and debate," but acknowledged other forms such as analytic dialogue. He saw resistance to dialogue as a resistance to the type, not the dialogue (p. 113). Burbules noted the importance of third spaces, where misunderstandings are viewed as differently understood, not a mistake, which can then lead to an enhancement of understanding. "The key idea here is not about bridge building, fusing, blending, or reconciling; it is about conflict, a disruption of ordinary meanings that leads to a new possibility" (p. 114). Burbules referred to these disruptions as creative misunderstandings, where conflict and tension lived in third spaces. "Third spaces are problematic and problematizing moments, risky and as prone to chaos, or even heightened conflict, as to producing new understandings" (p. 114).

The situational character of third spaces poses an interesting challenge to instructional dialogue, as they cannot be recreated. Groups cannot be manipulated to have the same experience; dialogue needs to be serendipitous and spontaneous to be

real. Requirements for third spaces included: a willingness to be open, a tolerance for friction/risk/uncertainty, and a discerning judgment of whom to pursue conversation with, as not all threads are worthy of time. Third spaces are a “potential framework in which to recognize and discuss those conflicts with fresh terms and perspectives and, in that, possibly to understand them better” (p. 115). This counters the traditional view of dialogue that sought to solve disagreements with persistence.

Burbles noted the use of the internet for dialogue, “A contact zone that fosters communication (and conflict) among extended virtual communities who would never have engaged one another before” (p. 116). Freire’s concern with power imbalances is highlighted in the technological globalization, as the digital divide is reinforced by the haves and the have-nots. The majority of the world’s population is not networked and is shut out from opportunities to be heard.

Burbles felt that the “disembodiment” phenomenon has been exaggerated, yet suggests the effects of online, anonymous dialogue could be to increase or decrease trust and notes that different features highlight certain voices, perspectives, and ways of communicating. Possibly, the internet is a heightened voice for the writer, whereas face-to-face dialogue advantages the verbally gifted. He commented on how round the clock communication affects dialogue.

Always accessible, never fully alone, the wired personality is both more connected to more disparate others and, for that very reason, all the more forced to make choices about availability, about prioritizing the importance and duration of replies, and about filtering incoming messages and information. (p. 118)

This illuminated the need to question “who is participating in a dialogue, and who is not, and why?” (p. 118). Silence has even more interpretations online – could be a

technological issue or a desire to retain power through silence. Another outcome of communication that goes global, English becomes a more “privileged medium of expression” and increases the language barrier to those without access to English (p. 119).

Burbles suggested that anonymity of the web may open third spaces.

The experimental or exploratory advocacy of ideas or values not typical of my personality and affiliations – playing with ideas (and identities) in interactions with others that, because of some anonymity and distance, feel safe to me a, and because of this opening up a possibility for entering a communicative space in which something truly surprising and new may emerge. (p. 119)

A prolific author in the study of dialogue, Burbles article seemed apologetic and defensive for earlier writings that embraced dialogue in teaching. In response to his critics, he noted the challenge of cultural bias of dialogue and ways to address it.

Burbles main objective, to address dialogue in networked space, illuminated the use of the internet for dialogue. The ability of the web to create third spaces, offered hope to online learners. Addressing the challenges of reaching the majority of the world’s population remained a problem, as connecting them digitally may not be fiscally responsible. It seemed that the voices of those not present should be considered in dialogues online, as in dialogues held in person.

Charaniya, N. K., & Walsh, J. W. (2004). Crossing Borders of Religious Difference: Adult Learning in the Context of Interreligious Dialogue. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*. 2004 (104), 29-37.

The authors found three outcomes of the interreligious dialogues, “transformed worldviews, new behaviors, and/or fresh visions of how interreligious dialogue can change society” (p. 34). Charaniya and Walsh (2004) concluded,

We strongly suggest that adult education research and practice embrace interreligious dialogue as a venue to expand the margins of adults' self-understanding from the perspective of religion. This will advance civil society by moving religious literacy in general and interreligious dialogue in particular from beyond the margins of our field and into the general river of discourse we now refer to as being about culture.

Though these two women had an amazing experience through their interreligious dialogue, its application is limited toward the classroom. The success of dialogue proved exceedingly useful and provided hope for its use in adult learning, but lacked suggestions for implementation into a classroom.

Freedman, E. (2007). Is Teaching for Social Justice Undemocratic? *Harvard Educational Review*. 77 (4), 442-473.

Freedman (2007) responded to criticism of Freire's critical pedagogy:

1. Too great an influence of the teacher
2. Paradox of critical humanism,

The only trustworthy knowledge is that which results from dialogue, but such dialogue can only exist under a hypothesized set of social conditions that are not yet realized. Given that such dialogue is not currently available to us, what process can we possibly use to determine what the required social conditions are? (p. 5)

Critics argued that those most central to the discussion are unfamiliar with the topics needing to be discussed, similar to Menos' knowledge paradox where one cannot learn anything new. In response, Freedman found that dialogue can work even with strong debaters as long as "everyone remains open to the possibility that their original convictions may have been misguided" (p. 6). In the classroom, the power imbalance must be addressed, and the teacher needs to redistribute the power working more as a facilitator.

Freedman witnessed, “Critical pedagogy sets teachers up to promote a specific method of sociopolitical analysis...the Freirean curriculum is inherently politically biased” (p. 7). From this, Freedman detailed the risks of what he saw as political indoctrination. To avoid the indoctrination, “the teacher must make it likely for students to acquire knowledge of the relevant evidence, as well as an ability and willingness to interpret this evidence” (p. 10). Freedman felt that through transparency and the ability to analyze, students could resist indoctrination. He suggested additional transparency into the politics of the teacher, curriculum, and administration. He specifically supported dialogue use within curricula development, where it could be used in the initial process of planning.

Freedman identified the potential weakness of dialogue in the classroom and offered useful solutions. This article underscored the importance of leveling the power imbalance and teaching with transparency.

Harriger, K. J., & McMillan, J. J. (2007). *Speaking of politics: preparing college students for democratic citizenship through deliberative dialogue*. Dayton, Ohio: Kettering Foundation Press.

Political will is strongest, however, when it grows out of what people believe is essential for their well-being” (Harriger & McMillan, 2007, p. 11). Tapping into that political will proves problematic as citizens differ on which issues should be given preference.

Making sound judgments about what is most appropriate is crucial. So the first political act is making a collective decision when there is a discrepancy between what is happening to us and what we think *should* be happening, yet there is no agreement on what *should* be. (p. 11-12)

Harriger and McMillan's statement revealed the need to ensure that a given course of action is consistent with the citizens' collective values. The Wake Forest experiment employed deliberation "as part of action and not merely a different way for people to talk, opens a door into politics for students who say that they don't know how to get meaningfully involved." According to Harriger and McMillan, deliberation provided the educative conversation before acting on the chosen course of action. With an opinion and a willingness to consider those of others, deliberation provided a framework to exchange ideas for the purpose of arriving at an agreed upon collective action. The authors believed that this methodology would lead students into the political, where "they saw how a democracy engages its citizens, generates political will, informs judgment and amasses the powers needed for effective action" (p. 12). The Kettering Institute referred to this as organic democracy, different from democracy initiated by "institutional politics and the machinery of government" (p. 12).

The authors sought to understand:

1. How students' civic attitudes and behaviors are effected by the college experience;
2. If students exposed to political deliberation would feel differently about their role as a democratic citizen;
3. Distinguishing effects based on who participated in the deliberation.

Their methodology included a longitudinal study that followed 30 students, "Democracy Fellows", who enrolled in a deliberative democracy class their first year, 30 randomly selected students, "class cohort", asked to participate in annual focus groups, and an additional 30 students who attended a campus deliberation hosted by the Democracy

Fellows the second year of the study. Feedback from one graduate of the study indicated that the project had opened her to the political dimension of her life. Harriger and McMillan proposed, “When students have this insight – when they realize they can be political actors – they have had a truly liberal education, which is an education that is liberating” (p. 13). Results of the project implied that this particular student was typical of the group, as the participants reported that they were “more likely to vote – even though they knew that the elections were not the be-all and end-all of democracy” (p. 13). Participants “seemed more inclined to think of citizenship in terms of responsibilities carried out through collective problem solving,” which contrasted with nonparticipant students “who thought of citizenship primarily as asserting individual rights” (p. 13). The Wake Forest experiment challenged teachers to work as moderators facilitating the deliberation, rather than as content knowledge experts. Teachers worked hard to avoid guiding conversations, as they would in a typical learning environment.

Harriger and McMillan found numerous critiques for their deliberation methodology, where in summary it is charged with creating an unequal playing field where the loudest, most intelligent speaker wins. The authors also discovered an equally impressive collection of support for the use of deliberative dialogue in classrooms, “as a classroom tool, deliberation provides a means of exposing students to important civic knowledge, skills, and experiences needed for citizenship” (p. 25).

Harriger and McMillan summarized their findings,

[Participants] were more involved in traditional political venues, more expressive of the responsibilities of citizenship, more analytical and critical of political processes, more efficacious in their political attitudes and language, more communal in political language and outlook, and more imaginative in recognizing possibilities for deliberation and its broader application. (p. 32)

One challenge of this report was that it was unfinished, as it served as the beginning of a book, so the data supporting the concluding statements and the detailed methodology was missing. Trusting the integrity of the Kettering Foundation and the authors, this study found positive support for the use of deliberation in moving students to embrace the political part of their lives. Using this form of dialogue seemed appropriate for preparing students as participants in their democracy. The most useful insight provided by the article was acknowledging the challenge of teachers in their role as facilitators.

Howard, L. A. (2002). From Ivory Tower to Town Hall: Using Dialogic Inquiry as a Critical Pedagogy. *American Behavioral Scientist*. 45, 1125-1134.

Howard (2002) argued for a need for “community involvement, critical thinking, and public discourse” (p. 1126). She viewed critical pedagogy as an ideal way for students to become engaged learners, and for teachers to inspire, “demystify what is reified, and put their own beliefs at risk” (p. 1129).

Critical pedagogy works to incorporate the lived experience of students into the curriculum. Thus, education becomes a student-centered collaborative process in contrast to a teacher-centered transmission of (often) disconnected facts and figures. (p. 1129)

Howard proposed the use of Buber’s Interhuman relationship to create “mutual respect and responsibility, honesty and directness, sincerity and empathy, and an authentic accepting vision” for critical pedagogy (p. 1131). Howard described Buber’s concept of Interhuman relationship, “[o]nly in partnership can my being be perceived as an existing whole” (p. 1131). Howard focused heavily on the use of seeming for teachers in their desire to control a classroom, its content, behaviors, assessments, etc. An additional barrier to dialogue lies in the inability of teachers to acknowledge the students as collaborative learners rather than “obstacles to avoid in the pursuit of the

status maintenance” (p. 1132). The final barrier occurs when teachers see their role to impart knowledge, rather than to help students unfold their rich potential.

To achieve Buber’s dialogue, we must turn toward the other out of mutual respect and responsibility. This turning means imagining as the other might, helping the other become and to be, and affirming the person even if his or her ideas do not coincide with our own. We must participate by engaging in frank, sincere expression that comes from being. Furthermore, we must have positive attitudes, admit to error, submit graciously to the criticisms of others, commit to the dialogical process, and recognize that conflict forms a starting point rather than a conclusion (Buber, 1965/1990). (p. 1133)

In her article, Howard explained how dialogue and critical pedagogy could engage students in their learning and in turn, their community. Through her identification of Buber’s barriers, she opened a door to improving the role of an instructor to that of a facilitator. Teachers should focus on being true to themselves, perceiving students as collaborators, and guiding students in unfolding their potential.

Innes, R. B. (2006). What Can Learning Science Contribute to Our Understanding of the Effectiveness of Problem-Based Learning Groups? *Journal of Management Education*. 30 (6), 751-764.

Innes (2006) hypothesized,

I present a brief overview of the theoretical rationale for problem-based learning and focus on the implications of two key assumptions of this model: (a) the authenticity of the presenting problem is the key to stimulating productive dialog in problem solving groups and (b) the quality of the dialog is directly linked to the quality of learning. My specific premise is that theory and research in learning science privilege dialogic communication as a catalyst for the construction of useful knowledge. (pp. 751-752)

In his study, he acknowledged the importance of authenticity in driving conversations for the problem-solving groups, as it allows students to see their ideas as relevant in such real world settings. Innes suggested presenting “a group of students with a complex

unstructured problem that is similar to the problems they will confront in nonschool environments” (p. 754).

In addition to the need for authenticity, Innes believed that the quality of dialogue was “the most important factor that determines the quality of learning in a group problem-solving situation” (p. 754). Though essential, Innes found evidence that achieving dialogue in the classroom is difficult. Whereas traditional teaching focuses on semantics, practical learning for the real world focuses on pragmatics. Innes recognized that knowledge’s utility lived in students’ ability to find new connections in applicable environments through dialogue.

Innes believed that his dream of problem-based learning required quality dialogue,

A promising picture of how learning is enhanced through methods such as problem-based learning groups imagines that all of the elements in this complex learning environment interact in a system where synergy produces powerful and useful knowledge. (p. 758)

Innes believed that dialogue was just one piece of successful learning, but the crux of problem-based group learning. His article revealed a need for authenticity in the applied problem, which student dialogue could help create. While the typical classroom does not offer an environment conducive to dialogue, Innes showed that those who do will improve the usefulness of their learning.

Isaacs, W. N. (1993). Taking Flight: Dialogue, Collective Thinking, and Organizational Learning. *Organizational Dynamics*. 22 (2), 24-42.

Isaacs (1993) reasoned that with the increasing complexity of global and institutional problems, individualized leadership is no longer adequate in providing solutions, as “the interdependencies too intricate, and the consequences of isolation

and fragmentation too devastating” (p. 24). Therefore, he called for “collaborative thought and action” through dialogue (p. 25). He noted that dialogue improves the quality of conversation, and provided an excellent cohesive explanation. This paper served to map out the evolution of dialogue.

What makes dialogue ... unique is its underlying premise: that human beings operate most often within shared, living fields of assumptions and constructed embodied meaning, and that these fields tend to be unstable, fragmented, and incoherent. As people learn to perceive, inquire into, and allow transformation of the nature and shape of these fields, and the patterns of individual thinking and acting that inform them, they may discover entirely new levels of insight and forge substantive and, at times, dramatic changes in behavior. As this happens, whole new possibilities for coordinated action develop. (p 25)

Typically, action results from shared agreement arrived at through compromise, whereas with dialogue, the revelation occurs through shared meaning.

At MIT, Isaacs worked to learn how to nurture such coordination. It involved “reflection on ways of knowing, on language, and on the embodied experience of meaning, turns out to have exceedingly practical applications, and suggests equally powerful applications for cultivating learning within organizations” (p. 25).

If people can be brought into a setting where they, at their choice, can become conscience of the very process by which they form tacit assumptions and solidify beliefs, and rewarded by each other for doing so, then they can develop a common strength and capability for working and creating things together. This free flow of inquiry and meaning allows new possibilities to emerge. This capability exists in every community, but in most organizations it is dormant. Dialogue allows it to be awakened. (p. 26)

In terms of collective action or coordination, people seem to assume a need for consensus, but in doing so, Isaac noted a need to limit options and focus on the most favorable solutions to the majority. Dialogue works differently, where there is an opportunity to question assumptions and underlying structure. There are no boundaries

to the solutions. Isaacs MIT group brought together union and management, health care providers, and even students and administration.

Isaacs pointed to fragmentation as the source of the breakdown in typical reflective practices. Here Isaacs sounds like Bohm, “We act mindlessly, as if our assumptions and categories of thought were perfectly representative of reality. Our own creations, our thoughts, take on a seemingly independent power over us” (p. 31). He noted that “rather than reason together, people defend their ‘part’ (p. 31).

With the understanding that Bohm suggested dialogue as a way to alter the ‘tacit infrastructure’ of thought, Isaacs believed that,

To understand dialogue and its contribution to collective learning, one must explore the domain of collective thought, and in particular, the underlying processes that seem to govern it. This opens an inquiry into the nature of ‘tacit thought’ as it is helped by individuals and collectives. (p. 33)

Herein lies the challenge as tacit knowledge is to “know more than you can say,” as is the knowledge to ride a bicycle, the classic example. Communication itself is tacit.

Isaacs found that reflection itself would not be enough for one to truly gain access to that which is tacit, but required “collective attention and learning” (p. 33).

Isaacs review of the history of dialogue revealed extraordinary success for its use in resolving conflict and organizational learning. Though Isaacs did not delve into the use of dialogue in the classroom, his article illustrated the power and potential of dialogue.

Miller, P., & Hafner, M. (2008). Moving Toward Dialogical Collaboration: A Critical Examination of a University-School-Community Partnership. *Educational Administration Quarterly*. 44 (1), 66-110.

Miller and Hafner (2008) asked, “From the perspective of community, school, and university participants, in what ways were the tenets of Freire’s dialogue – humility,

faith, hope, and critical thinking – experienced as the UNP partnership was planned and implemented?” (p. 67). In this study, a university and community worked together in addressing community issues. The authors found numerous positive aspects. In community conversations, they worked with no preconceived agenda, were responsive to community needs, and the UNP director was a humble listener. In fact, study participants complimented the director for “her humble demeanor and way of collaborating with the community” (p. 85). Co-chair leadership, involving a representative from the community and the university, helped the UNP process. Miller and Hafner noted that awareness of details, such as locating the headquarters and meetings in the community supported the Freirean perspective to meet the people where they are. And the use of subgroups in the planning process “allowed some group members who were typically not comfortable speaking up in the large group setting... an opportunity to share ideas with their fellow participants, and for many a less intimidating, group environment” (p. 89). The group also did not use the official titles of “doctor” or “professor” in “a conscious effort to remove potential barriers to the development of open and equal interactions” (p. 88).

The data indicated that UNP made a purposeful attempt to be guided by the Freirean dialogical tenet of faith in humankind. Specifically, it appeared that the partnership used an assets-based perspective as it worked toward its goal of increasing educational opportunities for youth residing in Westside neighborhoods. Rather than identifying problems to be fixed, the partnership sought to build on existing Westside strengths to address pressing needs. Taking a ‘funds of knowledge’ approach, UNP placed great value on the extensive experiences of Westside residents and group

participants. As a result, instead of reinventing solutions, UNP often directed resources toward the further development of ideas and programs that were already in existence.

(p.89)

This is an example of Freire starting with the concrete, with the people. Program completion originated from seeing strengths within the community to build on rather than identifying problems. Similar to Freire's concept of faith in humankind, a funds of knowledge approach places great confidence in the abilities of the people and builds on their knowledge and experiences rather than supplanting them with ideas from "outside experts." (p. 90)

In line with this perspective, when asked their greatest contribution to the project, community members identified their experience in the neighborhood and University participants stated their academic knowledge.

In an effort to employ the Freirean need for hope and keep participants engaged, UNP identified itself as action oriented, "constant demonstration of progress toward tangible goals and frequent communication of this progress to group members" (p. 92). Another Freirean piece was to "challenge oppressive structures, not their victims," the UNP process worked to identify "history and systems as contributors to inadequate educational outcomes" rather than the students (p. 93). This is also in line with Senge's desire to avoid the deficit perspective, where students are seen as lacking and the system needs to fix it. If the students are failing, it's important to scrutinize the structures of the system.

Difficulties that the project encountered included power dynamics, where community members identified various factors, "such as educational levels of

attainment, professional affiliations, and knowledge of ‘the system,’ had contributed to a sense of intimidation that had great influence on the amount of power that participants perceived themselves as having during the UNP planning and implementation process” (p. 96). Another obstacle to dialogue was described as the mainstream meeting style. Participants voiced preference for alternative meeting styles, less traditional and academic. When it came time to narrow the goals, many participants felt left out as their issues went unaddressed and then they became unengaged.

The authors claimed that the study findings “suggested that the intentions of almost all group participants” followed Freirean tenets of humility and openness (p. 100).

Factors such as inequitable intergroup power dynamics, mainstream styles of meeting, and diffuse (and consequently unaddressed) needs among participants all diminished the UNP group’s capacity for establishing a partnership process that was genuinely mutual and rooted in Westside needs. (p. 100)

While this study highlighted the use of dialogical collaboration, without additional monitoring, it failed to show the endurance of the resulting decisions. It would be interesting to follow-up on the community-university relationship.

Mitchell, S. (2006). Socratic Dialogue, the Humanities and the Art of the Question. *Arts and Humanities In Higher Education*. 5 (2), 181-198.

Based on Socratic methodology, Mitchell (2006) provided early Plato interactions that demonstrated the range of Socrates’ educational method: adjusting questioning styles “to the status and disposition of his interlocutors” (p. 183). He questioned until contradictions emerge.

In considering dialogue as an educational model in the humanities, Mitchell noted various hurdles. Students may fear that this method does not lead to producible

outcomes, “the benefit of this kind of learning is not immediately apparent” (p. 189). Accrediting boards may also struggle with the lack of “auditable outcomes” (p. 189).

The author concluded that dialogue sessions provided an alternative to traditional academic inquiry with limitations. He found that the dialogue worked only because of their learning in other classes that provided ideas and methods of intellectual study. With the intellectual content of their other classes, students benefited from the enlightening experience of dialogue as a supplement to their traditional learning.

Mitchell suggested using a Socratic form of questioning and answering in the seminar that supported the traditional lecture where the tutor facilitates discussions and guides toward main topics while maintaining a balance of exposition with reflection. The tutor must pursue questions that develop understanding of the subject and develop aptitude for intellectual engagement. Mitchell acknowledged the importance of question formulation, presentation, and context. The meaning of a given question could be significantly altered by its inflection, whether it is preceded by silence, broken by a pause, directed to a specific member of a seminar group with a smile or a frown, or delivered in a neutral manner to the general body of the class. Mitchell also found that the same question posed to groups of international versus domestic students provided different results. The connotative or associative meanings of words can take on different meanings to different students, depending on their background and experience.

Mitchell developed guidelines to assist tutors in asking questions within the seminar. He suggested that questions be clear, intelligible, and exact or concise. Questions need to be rephrased as needed for additional clarity and asked in sequential

order. Once the tutor is confident in their question, they should wait quietly for a response.

Once you have waited, and there is still no response, the question should be directed to a particulate member of the group – as long as you are reasonably confident that he or she can attempt to answer it. If the student struggles, encourage others to help. (p. 194)

With an insight into the benefits and limitations of Socratic dialogue, Mitchell supported its use, specifically in “the modern humanities seminar” (p. 195). As he concluded,

The ultimate aim is this: students should leave their studies with the means of reflecting upon themselves and the world in which they live; they should recognize that such personal and social questions will proffer no clear answers, and that this is, of course, the very reason why they should go on insistently asking them. (p. 195)

Mitchell’s integration of Socratic dialogue into a study hall offered students an intimate setting to engage in dialogue with other students and the tutor. The usefulness of Mitchell’s article was in his detailed suggestion for questioning. His inability to split from traditional lecturing seemed to limit his awareness of all that dialogue has to offer.

Roberts, P. (2005). Freire and Dostoevsky: Uncertainty, Dialogue, and Transformation. *Journal Of Transformative Education*. 3 (2), 126-139.

After analyzing Freire and Dostoevsky, Roberts (2005) concluded that despite their differences they both lead to a deeper “understanding of the significance of uncertainty, dialogue, love, and struggle in transformative education” (p. 126). Roberts analysis determined the necessity of uncertainty, as it provided the “basis for investigation: seeking to know more” as seen in Freire’s educational philosophy and as played out in Dostoevsky’s novels (p. 129). Roberts found that Dostoevsky’s “characters take different possibilities seriously...exposes readers to the alternatives necessary for

authentic deliberation and choice,” as seen in Freirean dialogue (p. 132). Both Freire and Dostoevsky explored “the interconnectedness of reason, emotion, and politics” (p. 133), with Freire stressing the importance of hope and whole being knowing, and Dostoevsky’s preoccupation with “the relationship between reason and feeling” (p. 133). Freire believed that education is a transformational process gained as people engaged in critical, dialogical, praxical activities, and Dostoevsky’s characters underwent such change in detail. Rogers concluded that educators could gain an enhanced understanding of these topics from reading Freire and Dostoevsky.

While Roberts’ suggestion of reading Dostoevsky offered deeper understanding found through fiction, it provided no substance to one seeking evidence of dialogic communication.

Saunders, H. H. (2001). *The Virtue of Sustained Dialogue among Civilizations. International Journal on World Peace.* 18, 35-44.

Saunders (2001) argued that dialogue needed to occur “between people rather than civilizations” (p. 35). He specifically referred to “sustained dialogue that builds a “cumulative agenda,” develops a “common body of knowledge,” and teaches participants that “relationships can be transformed” (p. 35). Saunders saw sustained dialogue of individuals among civilizations as the only technique that would end a clash of civilizations. He focused on how to create a dialogue among civilizations, through citizens’ “capacity to make and build peace and to build social capital essential to economic development” (p. 35).

He recognized that dialogue was more than technique for problem-solving, it was a “different way of relating” (p. 38). Saunders noted two important points in regards to dialogues among civilizations; the necessity to deal with conflicting groups at a “human

level-person by person” over a period of time, and how essential sustained dialogue is to creating peace. With forty years of experience, twenty-five of them in high level government positions, Saunders found that while governments negotiate, enforce, and fund, only citizens outside of that realm can affect human relationships. Saunders disagreed with political scientists that believe that politics is about power, instead he believed that politics is about relationships and transformable by dialogue.

Saunders’ article might not seem to fit dialogical learning, but it supported the power of dialogue in changing relationships. If dialogue changed relationships across borders, it certainly has a good chance of doing so in the classroom.

Senge, P. (2006). Dimensions of Learning Cities. *Reflections: The SoL Journal*. 7(1), iv-viii.

Senge (2006) responded to the difficulty of changing the status quo of how organizations resist change.

1. Intertwine producing and learning by providing “organizational practice fields” characteristic of sports and the performing arts;
2. Incorporate “practical tools and methods... into redesigned work settings” that “enable groups of people to develop a better understanding of complex issues and learn how to learn together” (p. 183).

For organizational learning, Senge supported dialogue as an option for teams to practice tackling difficult problems.

While this brief article does little to offer solutions for dialogue in the classroom, it actually illuminated the need for dialogic communication, as a practice field. This was especially relevant in supporting faculty as they transform into facilitators.

Senge, P. (2000). Systems Change in Education. *Reflections: The SoL Journal*. 1 (3), 52-60.

With his industrial age notion of schools where students are pushed through like cogs on a conveyor belt, Senge (2000) strongly argued for organizational change that acknowledged schools as living systems where learning would deepen when lessons come alive. When viewing a school as a living system, key assumptions can be discussed and challenged. Senge identified the main Industrial Age assumptions about learning that he suggested needed further discussion:

1. The deficit model assumes that students are lacking in something that only the school can provide. Senge found that this led to students feeling disrespected and needing to be fixed. Senge suggested that schools should assist natural learning.
2. The assumption that learning is only cerebral, fragments learning from the full five senses to the head. If knowledge is measured by the ability to do something, then Senge noted that most of what is learned in school is trivial.
3. The notion that kids are either smart or dumb is an underlying necessity of tracking and evaluating students as they are forced to conform.
4. The application of the Industrial Age management system to the education system; hence the fragmentation of management where schools are run by individuals responsible for their particular job separate from the collective.

- a. Teacher-centered, ensures children learn, “I make sure that the kid demonstrates to me whether or not the learning I am seeking has occurred” (p. 56). Students learn to please teachers.
 - b. Anachronistic approach in an era where lifelong learning is paramount.
 - c. Fragments knowledge, “The fact that life isn’t quite like that, that life presents itself to us whole, that challenging problems are challenging because they have many interdependent facets, remains invisible to the fragmented academic theory of knowledge” (p. 57).
5. Naïve realism, teachers teach “as if they are communicating facts” (p. 57). The importance of understanding the difference between facts and perceptions. This reinforces the deficit theory, where teachers are experts and the student is therefore inferior.
6. Assumption that the school is a machine producing graduates. That somehow the school is an assembly line where the product is finished at age 18. “Everyone is supposed to move from stage to stage together” (p. 57). This assumption pushes children through without awareness of any individuality. This reinforces the dumb/smart kid assumption, and those left behind are labeled “learning disabled”.

Senge concluded that real educational change should come from asking the untainted seven or eight year olds, because we have been indoctrinated and do not know any better than the system that raised us.

Unlike a machine, a living system creates its own purpose. It discovers itself through reflection and heightened awareness, becoming aware of what it is doing and why. In social systems, this requires asking purpose questions together, especially including those less habituated to the way things have been.

If I had one wish for all of our institutions, and the institution called school in particular, it is that we dedicate ourselves to allowing them to be what they would naturally become, which I human communities, not machines. Living beings who continually ask the questions: Why am I here? What is going on in my world? How might I and we best contribute? (p. 58)

Senge encouraged ending the Industrial Age approach to schools and engaging in dialogue to work toward making schools organizations of learning.

While this article summarized part of his book used in the Breadth section, it reiterated the need for a paradigm shift in the institution of education.

Skidmore, D. (2006). Pedagogy and Dialogue. *Cambridge Journal of Education*. 36 (4), 503-514.

Skidmore's (2006) literature review found that dialogic instruction involved the students impacting the syllabus' topics, where students engage thinking not simply memorizing or remembering. He noted that the results of Nystrand study "support the hypothesis that dialogically organized instruction is superior to monologically organized instruction in promoting student learning" (p. 504). Additionally found "recitational patterns of talk" prevalent and negatively effected learning, positive aspects of dialogic approach included "teacher's use of authentic questions...; uptake, where the teacher incorporates students' responses into subsequent questions; and the extent to which the teacher allows a student response to modify the topic of discourse" (p. 504).

Skidmore noted that authentic questions needed to be "topic-relevant" and immersed in

quality interactions, where “students are treated as active epistemic agents, i.e., participants in the production of their own knowledge” (p. 505).

He found that the mode of interaction had consequences for learning, “the teacher can orient towards controlling what knowledge is produced, or towards structuring the activities through which students produce knowledge” (p. 505). Skidmore found the Nystrand study “impressive in scope” making a “strong case for the superior effectiveness of dialogically-organized instruction” students taught in this way tend to do better in written tests than those taught using a monologic, recitational approach” (p. 505). Given this, Skidmore questioned the pervasiveness of ineffective pedagogy. Skidmore defined dialogic enquiry as “knowledge ... co-constructed by teacher and students as they engage in joint activities” (p. 506). The relationship between the teacher and students is dialogic, but not with equal power. This is more of a dialogue with imbalance of power. Rather than reinforce teacher-authority, typical of the feedback in the I-R-F (initiation-response-feedback) sequence, teachers can “clarify, exemplify, expand, explain, or justify a student’s response; or to request the student to do any of these things” (p. 507). This type of exchange “can also be used by the teacher to help students plan ahead for a task they are about to carry out, or to review and generalize lessons learnt from tasks they have already performed” (p. 507).

Skidmore commented that the greatest finding of his literature review was that classroom discourse seemed “one of the most important influences on students’ experience of learning in schools” (p. 511).

Different patterns of classroom talk afford different structures of opportunity for students to participate in the construction of knowledge within the curriculum... The more dialogic modes of interaction, in which students play an active part in

shaping the verbal agenda of classroom discussion, can help them to secure improved attainments in outcome, when compared with the results of teacher-dominated transmission approaches... A shift to a more dialogic mode of engagement with learners may have a redistributive effect, i.e., improving the quality of teacher-student has the potential to bring about general rise in achievement, but at the same time to narrow the gap between those with lower and higher levels of prior attainment. (p. 511)

Skidmore suggested additional research to inquire into the prevalence of teacher-led recitation. He wondered how far teachers would go to improve the pedagogy.

Over-reliance on recall and display questions in teaching furnishes a school uniform for the mind, confining students' emotional involvement to an impoverished set of available affective positions, such as the rivalry fostered by competing for the teacher's attention, the disappointment (or relief) of being ignored, or the shame of being put in the spotlight and giving the wrong answer. (pp. 512-513)

Skidmore found that dialogical pedagogy "signals the co-presence of the teacher as a concerned other" (p. 513). Skidmore called for rehumanizing education, which coincides with Senge's learning system. Skidmore concluded, "A dialogical approach to pedagogy indicates the need for students to be given the opportunity to appropriate academic concepts and turn them to their own communicative purposes, in pursuit of desired social goals; there is no cognition without affect" (p. 513).

While Skidmore's query identified positive studies supporting the use of dialogic education, his article left the reader with more questions than answers. His literature review emphasized the need for further research to investigate how to move teachers from their ineffective, ingrained teaching styles to proven, deep learning methodology. This would entail putting teachers outside their comfort zone and taxing them with additional training.

Tran, L. U. (2008). Dialogue in education. *Journal of Science Communication* 7 (1), 1-2.

Tran (2008) discussed language as an avenue to knowledge, through interaction. Teachers should teach the language of their topic to help “students make sense of the talk which surrounds them, and relate it to their existing ideas and ways of thinking⁴; and that students’ reasoning abilities and scientific understanding can be advanced through improvement in their use of language⁵” (p. 1) .“Human thinking is shaped by the social activities, using the tools – especially the language – invented by its culture, which are temporally and geographically influenced” (p. 1).

Tran’s short article supported the importance of language in dialogue. As many subjects have their own terminology, he noted that the teacher was responsible for ensuring that the students were fluent in the language of their topic. Having a common language or terminology was essential to dialogic communication. Tran’s comments highlighted the importance of share language between the students and the instructor before engaging in learning.

Tran illuminated a foundational necessity that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. Often times language is taken for granted, but without this common form of communication, dialogue would fail. Shared language and terminology of the topic of study should not be assumed and teachers or researchers interested in dialogue should take note that common communication exists before engaging in dialogue.

Literature Review

Boys (1999) assertion that dialogue “is not a mere method” but “*a way of life*,” illustrates the power of dialogue (p. 133). A review of recent literature on the effectiveness of dialogue in the classroom leaves the reader little room to disagree with Boys. The results clearly favor the use of dialogic methods (Black, 2005; Black 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Bunkers, 2000; Burbles, 2006; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Isaacs, 1993; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Mitchell, 2006; Roberts, 2005; Saunders, 2001; Senge, 2006; Senge, 2000; Skidmore, 2006; Tran, 2008). What is not so clear is how to move forward in implementing dialogue in the classroom. Among the reviewed literature, several studies discovered resistance to dialogic methods (Black, 2005; Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Mitchell, 2006; Senge, 2006; Senge, 2000; Skidmore, 2006).

Themes carried over from Bohm, Freire and Senge prevail in the writings reviewed for the depth section of this KAM. The power of dialogue to suspend assumptions, improve the quality of conversation, and provide an avenue to mutual discovery initially suggested by these three theorists is intense, indeed. For the purpose of this literature review, I propose to inquire into three specific areas of dialogue. I will critically analyze the review of articles based on their interpretation of guidelines for dialogue, the role of the facilitator, and the resultant effect on learning.

Dialogue Guidelines

Based on findings in the Breadth section, Friere (1987) used dialogue as a student-centered, mutual inquiring, educative practice that lead to breakthrough learning. Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991; Bohm & Nichol, 2004) brought groups of up to forty individuals together to actively engage thinking, build trust, suspend presumptive thought, openly listen, and work toward creating shared meaning. Senge (2006; 2004) supported Bohm's guidelines and emphasized a need for presence through sustained awareness. He encouraged the use of team dialogue sessions as organizational learning practice fields. These practices relied on the creation of a safe, bias-free, harmonious environment, and engaged deep learning that led to tacit knowledge. Current literature supports and expands upon the work of Freire, Bohm, and Senge.

Persistence.

Boys (1999) found that success in dialogue required persistence; and with more than forty years of experience, Saunders (2001) agreed. Bunkers (2000) concurred, "Committing to the notion of dialogue is committing to the process of risking, of forging ahead with persistence amid tensions of wanting to stay the same" (p. 212). Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) called this sustained dialogue. By staying with the process, he found that people eventually loosened up and began meaningful discussions. Bohm found perseverance necessary in overcoming the initial frustration and anxiety that challenged dialogue. A staple of dialogue, persistence bestows a guarantee to oneself and the group that they will stay with the process, through the challenges, until it comes to its natural conclusion.

Presence.

Boys (1999) emphasized that dialogue called for attention to “the emotions, virtues, and skills that nurture relationship,” and that the process demanded “emotional authenticity in an environment of mutual concern, trust, respect, appreciation, and affection” (p. 133). Howard (2002) agreed that the process needed mutual respect. Attention to emotions and creation of an atmosphere of trust, respect and appreciation requires sustained awareness, or what Senge (2004) called presence. Senge explained the need for presence, as it lifted self-awareness and brought the dialogue to a level of authenticity and whole body awareness. He found that presence opened dialogue participants to ideas and solutions otherwise unseen. Black (2005) agreed that dialogue required presence, “being genuine and fully engaged in the interaction” (p. 32). Roberts (2005) and Innes (2006) concurred, and found authenticity the driving force behind the effectiveness of dialogue elements. The importance of presence in dialogue should not go unnoticed. Dialogue requires deep self-awareness throughout the process.

Open.

Successful dialogue depended on mutuality where the participants were open to the dialogue process (Black, 2005; Boys, 1999; Freedman, 2007; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Roberts, 2005). Freedman described this as a willingness to be open to being wrong, whereas Miller and Hafner believed it important to create an environment where people felt open to the process. In response to critics, Freedman (2007) found that dialogue could work even with strong debaters as long as “everyone remains open to the possibility that their original convictions may have been misguided” (p. 6).

Dedication to openness in the dialogue process necessitated that participants suspend their opinions, assumptions, and beliefs (Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Bunkers, 2000; Burbles, 2006; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Isaacs, 1993; Saunders, 2001; Senge, 2000). Bunkers (2000) anticipated greatness from such openness, “The described nature of dialogue, letting go of preconceived assumptions, holds limitless possibilities for the emergence of new thought and action” (p. 213). Investigating dialogue at MIT, Isaacs explained the effect of assumptions on pattern of thought.

What makes dialogue ... unique is its underlying premise: that human beings operate most often within shared, living fields of assumptions and constructed embodied meaning, and that these fields tend to be unstable, fragmented, and incoherent. As people learn to perceive, inquire into, and allow transformation of the nature and shape of these fields, and the patterns of individual thinking and acting that inform them, they may discover entirely new levels of insight and forge substantive and, at times, dramatic changes in behavior. As this happens, whole new possibilities for coordinated action develop. (Isaacs, p. 25)

Isaacs' statement reveals the influence of Senge and Bohm. The incoherent sphere that thought creates produces equally incoherent thoughts when left unchallenged. Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) encouraged the suspension of thought as a way to look at something with new, unbiased eyes. Senge (2004) found that this opened group-think to arrive at a new level of deep learning with amazing results for organizational learning.

Isaacs expanded on how fragmentation caused a breakdown in typical reflective practices. Here Isaacs sounded like Bohm, “We act mindlessly, as if our assumptions and categories of thought were perfectly representative of reality. Our own creations, our thoughts, take on a seemingly independent power over us” (p. 31). He noted that “rather than reason together, people defend their ‘part’ (p. 31). Bohm found these

patterns of behavior disjointed and evidence of a need for a better way. Isaacs concurred that dialogue provides the means to coherent conversations, "Dialogue is an attempt to perceive the world with new eyes, not merely to solve problems using the thought that created them in the first instance" (p. 32).

Black found it important to be open in another way, by "recognizing and accepting the genuine being of the other person and understanding that the other is fundamentally different from oneself" (p. 32). Acknowledgment of others and their right to not be the same creates a unique, yet important guideline for the dialogue process. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) found that suspension of thought provided one an opportunity to analyze the potential consequences of the typical reflexive response that influences behavior. In this act, Bohm felt that such suspension allowed fellow participants to become a mirror that led to an improved understanding of oneself. Boys (1999) recognized the need to understand one another in order to understand ourselves. The necessity for and creation of self-reflection permeates dialogue (Bunkers, 2000; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004). Seeking new learning involved being open to the process and new ideas, suspending thought through a self-reflective awareness, and entering a space open to new possibilities.

Tacit.

Billings and Fitzgerald (2002) noted that an important element of their study of classroom dialogic discussion relied on the phenomenon that "more is happening in discussions than what can be surmised by the accumulated meanings of spoken words" (p. 910). Boys (1999) found that dialogue depended upon recognition that each of us knows more than we can say (p. 130). Tacit knowledge evolves through shared

interactions, even though explanations of how it happens seem elusive. Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) believed in that true knowledge existed at the tacit level, and that learning at this level is extremely individualized.

Understanding the unique, elusive quality of tacit learning requires an awareness that learning does not just occur in the head. Senge (2000) identified the irrational idea that learning involved only the cranium, as one of the failures of the current, traditional educational system in the U.S. Skidmore (2006) advocated for dialogic whole-body, natural learning, “The flat mental landscape of knowing without feeling is ill-suited to real-world decision-making; rather what we need is a partnership of the heart and the head for successful living” (p. 512). Such a partnership would support tacit learning. With the understanding that Bohm suggested dialogue as a way to alter the “tacit infrastructure” of thought, Isaacs believed that,

To understand dialogue and its contribution to collective learning, one must explore the domain of collective thought, and in particular, the underlying processes that seem to govern it. This opens an inquiry into the nature of ‘tacit thought’ as it is help by individuals and collectives. (p. 33)

Herein lays the challenge, as tacit knowledge involves indescribable whole-body awareness and deep implicit understanding, like the knowledge to ride a bicycle.

Isaacs found that reflection itself would not be enough for one to truly gain access to that which is tacit, but required “collective attention and learning” (p. 33). Instead, a dialogue provided the necessary reflection and collaborative insight. “By providing a setting in which these subtle and tacit influences on our thinking can be altered, dialogue holds the potential for allowing entirely new kinds of collective intelligence to appear” (p. 41). Isaacs’ findings supported the implementation of

dialogue for team learning, but more importantly provided guidelines to the process, emphasizing the need to access learning on a tacit level. Moving from accumulated to tacit knowledge requires attention to the whole person and subsequent dialogical interactions.

Emergent.

Burbles (2006) found that the important discoveries of dialogue occurred spontaneously. The importance of allowing the process to be emergent, rather than predetermined, surfaced in several studies (Black, 2005; Bunkers, 2000; Miller & Hafner, 2008). Bunkers noted, "Imaging, valuing, and languaging are all interwoven in dialogue. The coconstruction of reality exists in the meaning of the moment-to-moment encounters of self with others and the universe" (p. 212). Senge (2004) acknowledged the importance of sustained awareness in the spontaneity of life. Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) suggested that dialogue sessions should not follow a set agenda, but should rather provide opportunities for participants to converse openly in an opportunity to learn about and from one another. Freire's (Shor & Freire, 1987) insistence on shared enthusiasm and curiosity for the object of study reveal an emergent, rather than set learning process. Dialogical learning presents itself spontaneously as the conversation opens creative and unique perspectives. Following the emergent lines of thought through a loosely structured process provides access to deeper understanding.

Previous Knowledge or Experience.

Mitchell (2006) discovered that dialogue illuminated contradiction and relied on previous knowledge or experience.

But the educational imperative of the dialogue remains clear: through a process of question and answer interlocutors come to understand that they do not have a

proper grasp of what they initially thought they knew. The dialogue, in itself, cannot reveal knowledge, but it can indicate the area in which the search should take place, establish the principles to be followed in the course of inquiry, and encourage the discussant (and the reader) to continue this process of investigation and reflection once the interview has come to an end. (p. 184)

Many authors agreed, and insisted that participants embark on the dialogue with knowledge or experience relating to the topic of interest (Boys, 1999; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Mitchell, 2006). Boys found dialogic conversation limited and “educative only when people already know something and are thinking carefully about it” (p. 130). Hence, the dialogue depends upon existing information and its critical reflection. Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) felt that learning need to occur together, as the student and teacher jointly examined an object of study. Given that, Freire believed that the student brought their life’s experience into the classroom, and seemed to feel that that was enough to move forward in the academic process. Authors from the literature review typically called for a more formal exposure to a topic of discussion than Freire supported; regardless the outcome remains the same. Participants of a dialogue should come to the process with some knowledge or experience that provides them with a basis for conversation.

Create Shared Meaning and New Insights.

Numerous authors agreed that dialogue leads to shared meaning or new insights among participants (Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Bunkers, 2000; Bubbles, 2006; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Isaacs, 1993; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Mitchell, 2006; Roberts, 2005; Saunders, 2001; Senge, 2006; Senge, 2000; Skidmore, 2006; Tran, 2008). Saunders

found that dialogue led to “a common body of knowledge and experience” (p. 37).

Bunkers expanded upon this idea,

Dialogue as a process of liberating discovery occurs multidimensionally, bringing new understanding of persons, places, events, and community; it is the invention of new thought... Originating new thought is the core of dialogical encounter... When all involved are focused on communicating coherently in truth, the formation of new thought and action holds the potential of seeing the familiar in a new way. (pp. 212-213).

At its core, dialogue brings people together to discuss a common concern or issue.

Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) intended for dialogical conversations to bring participants to a shared, common meaning through a creative perception allowed by the suspension of thought. Through this process, groups arrive at conclusions together. The resultant shared insights lead to win-win solutions.

Engaged Participation through Voice.

Advancing the classroom from teacher-centered to student-centered, student should participate in the elements of their learning (Black, 2005; Black, 2007; Billing & Fitzgerald, 2002; Bunkers, 2000; Howard, 2002; Senge, 2000; Skidmore, 2006).

Skidmore (2006) suggested that dialogic instruction required student involvement in creating the syllabus' topics. He believed that this method evoked thinking, not simple memorization, or remembering.

Committing to dialogue is committing to envisioning an ongoing structuring of both personal and shared meaning...contributing to envisioning new ways of viewing the world community... Committing to dialogue is choosing to participate in the liberating discovery of a new sense of community. (Bunkers, p. 211)

Bunkers noted that together the student and teacher created a new sense of community. Bunkers' statement revealed a commitment to engaging students in their

own education, supporting Freire's (2005) findings that learning occurred within the student from the inside out.

A student-centered approach relies heavily on the students' contribution, their voice. The necessity of balance of voice in dialogue, as noted by various articles, seemed intricate to the dialogue process (Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Bunkers, 2000; Burbles, 2006; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Isaacs, 1993; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Saunders, 2001; Senge, 2000; Skidmore, 2006). Black (2005) noted that voice, "even when contradictory," should "exist together" in the classroom (p. 32).

Conversation reaches new heights when diversity of voice comes together in dialogue. This balance requires respect by participants and their willingness to share as well as listen. Boys found that dialogue depended "upon attentive listening" and "a willingness to restrain oneself in order to hear others" (p. 130). This invokes the need for presence, maintaining awareness by silencing self-talk, and opening the mind to hear others. Boys (1999) and Burbles (2006) found silence another aspect of voice, or lack thereof, intricate to the dialogue process. Burbles addressed the potential cultural bias of dialogue, where non-dominant groups may withhold participation and be silent. Recommendations for overcoming unengaged silence included listening and analyzing the silences, rather than pushing students to contribute.

Skidmore called for a rehumanizing education, which coincides with Senge's (2006) system learning. Skidmore concluded, "A dialogical approach to pedagogy indicates the need for students to be given the opportunity to appropriate academic concepts and turn them to their own communicative purposes, in pursuit of desired

social goals; there is no cognition without affect” (p. 513). With such an empowering stance toward student-centered education, Skidmore’s findings coincide with those of Freire (2005) and Senge. Dialogue depends on engaged participation, for without it everyone involved loses the benefit of diverse ideas and creativity. Though dialogue is a democratic process where participants can choose how and when to share their voice, it requires engaged participation, even if a participant chooses to keep their voice silent. That silence should be an active recognition of voice, not a withdrawal from the process.

Balance of Power.

Dialogue requires balance of power between participants, especially noted as teachers have traditionally held the power in a classroom environment (Black, 2005; Black 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Bunkers, 2000; Burbles, 2006; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Isaacs, 1993; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Saunders, 2001; Senge, 2000; Skidmore, 2006). In alignment with Freire, Boys viewed conversations as an opportunity to “bridge the gap between our world and another’s, and blur some of the boundaries of power” (p. 130). Billings and Fitzgerald (2002) found that classroom discussions met a dialogic theoretical necessity in their egalitarian nature, where participants felt a balance in power. Hence, all participants’ ideas, beliefs, and understandings about a text are valued, and participants share responsibilities for talking and listening” (p. 910). Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) used dialogue to break down power differences and traditional educational authoritarianism. In an environment where participants feel equal, intimidation and fear no longer control the discussion. Instead, participants share their voices and listen with equality.

An analysis of the current literature found the major themes relating to guidelines for dialogue to include persistence, presence, open, tacit, emergent, engaged participation through voice, previous knowledge or experience, create shared meaning and new insights, and balance of power. Given these findings, a look forward requires a review of facilitator guidelines.

Facilitator Guidelines

In our eyes, the teacher bears a great burden for initiating dialogic discussion, for setting the stage, for turning students' outlooks on what it means to discuss. (Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002, p. 93?)

In addition to creating an environment of trust, openness, and balance, teachers must model ideal dialogue participation as they transform into facilitators in their pursuit of dialogic instruction. Boys (1999) stated, "Without this hermeneutic of affection, it is not possible to teach in a dialogical fashion" (p. 131). Boys (1999) characterized the need for dialogical education as praxis, "understanding that the pedagogical process entails teaching a subject with its demands to persons with their own needs, hopes, abilities, and limitations in particular contexts" (p. 134). Boys found that such a transformation required,

1. An ongoing conversion to dialogue,
2. Attentiveness to specific contexts,
3. A flow of energy between reflection and engagement or action,
4. Posing problematic situations,
5. Sensitivity to power relations. (p. 134)

Numerous other researchers echoed Boy's recommendations and included nuances relevant to dialogical instruction. An important piece of moving toward using dialogue in the classroom involves participant collaboration.

Collaborative.

Black (2007) recognized the importance of collaboration and the bidirectional flow of information, where teacher and student learn from one another. Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) noted that this method of mutual inquiry enabled the student to learn and the instructor to relearn about an object of study. Senge (2006) found that collaboration led to new insights unavailable to an individual. Howard (2002) noted that the facilitator needed to perceive others “without objectification” as collaborative learners rather than “obstacles to avoid in the pursuit of the status maintenance” (p. 1132). A move toward collaboration requires a change in the status of the teacher.

Numerous authors agreed with a need for change where the unquestioned, all-knowing teacher or leader transforms to an approachable, interested co-learner (Black, 2005; Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Isaacs, 1993; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Saunders, 2001; Skidmore, 2006). Skidmore defined dialogic enquiry as “knowledge ... co-constructed by teacher and students as they engage in joint activities” (p. 506). He found that the relationship between the teacher and students was dialogic, but not with equal power.

Though Skidmore interpreted classroom dialogue as having an imbalance of power, he suggested ways of interacting that supported more balance. Rather than reinforce teacher-authority, typical of the feedback in the I-R-F (initiation-response-feedback) sequence, teachers can “clarify, exemplify, expand, explain, or justify a student’s response; or to request the student to do any of these things” (p. 507). Skidmore believed that this type of exchange “can also be used by the teacher to help students plan ahead for a task they are about to carry out, or to review and generalize lessons learnt from tasks they have already performed” (p. 507). He realized that the

dialogical pedagogy “signals the co-presence of the teacher as a concerned other” (p. 513). These ideas seem realistic, as they support the teacher’s commitment to dialogic instruction, as a teacher not as a facilitator. Though not alone with his support for collaboration, as noted earlier, most researchers called for a balancing of power. I revisit this hurdle to dialogic instruction and offer ways to tackle it later in this paper.

Authenticity.

As with all participants involved in the dialogue process, the facilitator role needs authenticity (Black, 2005; Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Bunkers, 2000; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Mitchell, 2006; Roberts, 2005; Skidmore, 2006; Senge, 2000). Howard (2002) identified being versus seeming as a barrier to effective facilitation. He noted that dialogue could not happen if an individual spent time seeming a certain way or living up to an image, rather than just being. Howard focused heavily on the use of seeming for teachers in their desire to control a classroom, its content, behaviors, assessments, etc. As a facilitator, teachers need authenticity, an effort to be true to themselves. Presence, supported by Bohm, Senge, and Freire, requires a level of authentic, self-awareness that should encourage being. Committing to dialogue involves an awareness that would encourage facilitator authenticity.

Effective Questioning.

Boys (1999) stated that the art of conversation depended heavily on the ability to ask a good question. The same applies to dialogue (Mitchell, 2006). Basing his research on the Socratic Method, Mitchell provided a detailed explanation of how to use questioning outside the lecture hall, in a study group seminar. The tutor guided the

conversation toward main topics while maintaining a balance of exposition with reflection, and pursued questions that developed understanding of the subject and aptitude for intellectual engagement. Mitchell developed guidelines to assist tutors in asking questions within the seminar. He suggested that questions be clear, intelligible, and exact or concise. Mitchell warned against asking leading questions, which only lead to rote regurgitation of information without reflection. Questions needed to be rephrased for additional clarity and asked in sequential order. When the tutor felt confident in their question, they should wait quietly for a response.

Once you have waited, and there is still no response, the question should be directed to a particulate member of the group – as long as you are reasonably confident that he or she can attempt to answer it. If the student struggles, encourage others to help” (p. 194).

Shor and Freire (1987) believed that routine practice of teachers answering their own questions when students did not promptly answer, conditioned students to sit passively and quietly. They also found that rigorous theoretical questioning at the beginning of a course led students into a fearful silence. Shor worked on developing the classroom dialogue while becoming familiar with the students before moving on to conceptual questioning.

Mitchell acknowledged the importance of question formulation, presentation, and context. He found it imperative to choose effective questions, and crucial to pay attention to the presentation.

The meaning of a given question will be significantly altered by its inflection, whether it is preceded by silence, broken by a pause, directed to a specific member of a seminar group with a smile or a frown, or delivered in a neutral manner to the general body of the class. (p. 193)

Mitchell noted that delivery was as important as the actual question. As stated above, several nuances can change the effect of the question. Students may be reluctant to answer a question asked with a tone of dissent for fear of being wrong and ridiculed.

Mitchell also found that the same question posed to groups of international versus domestic students provided different results. The connotative or associative meanings of words took on different meanings to different students, depending on their background and experience. Numerous authors agreed in a need for cultural awareness in dialogue (Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Burbles, 2006; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004; Mitchell, 2006; Skidmore, 2006; Tran, 2008).

Transparency.

While Skidmore seemed to accept the inevitability of power imbalance in classroom dialogue, Freedman (2007) believed that the teacher should address the issue and work toward redistributing the power. Transparency seemed an appropriate response to dealing with the traditional teacher-student power structure (Black, 2007; Boys, 1999; Freedman, 2007; Miller & Hafner, 2008). Freire (Freire & Freire, 2007) identified transparency as a way to breakdown power differences.

Another concern related to too much teacher authority, a critique of Freire's critical pedagogy, included political indoctrination (Freedman). To avoid such indoctrination, Freedman suggested, "the teacher must make it likely for students to acquire knowledge of the relevant evidence, as well as an ability and willingness to interpret this evidence" (p. 10). In this instance, the teacher is encouraged to provide multiple interpretations and allow students to come to their own conclusions. Freire

(Freire & Freire, 2007) noted the importance of the teacher knowing herself/himself in order to be aware of her/his own objectives.

Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) used transparency to manage the difficulties associated with dialogue, such as coping with anxiety in a new process, pressure to or not to participate, frustration in hearing so many opinions, and various roles. Sharing feelings, physical and emotional responses with the group reveals underlying tensions and provides a way to investigate the cause of the feelings. Hence, transparency with an openness of self-awareness should help address the concerns of power differences, indoctrination, and challenges to the process.

Need for Training.

Traditional education models often rely on what Freire (Freire & Freire, 1994) referred to as a banking model where teachers act like bankers, depositing knowledge into the minds of students as though they were inanimate banks. Freire considered this ineffective and Senge (2006) found the model to lack engagement of learning. Howard (2002) found this traditional role of the teacher exploitive and defeating, whereas dialogic instruction unfolded potential and encouraged growth. Change on this level requires institutional support and training. Black (2007) argued that dialectical concepts should be presented to teachers within “a coherent theoretical framework which accommodates an informed account of how children learn,” to effectively promote learning (p. 273). Black noted that successful facilitative elements involved clear objectives, structured demonstrations, accurate explanations, inclusive and engaged instruction, and reflection of learning and assessment.

Senge (2006) responded to the difficulty of changing the status quo.

1. Intertwine producing and learning by providing “organizational practice fields” characteristic of sports and the performing arts;
2. Incorporate “practical tools and methods... into redesigned work settings” that “enable groups of people to develop a better understanding of complex issues and learn how to learn together” (p. 183).

Senge found that training needed to be incorporated into daily work tasks, not simply added on in a separate space. He believed that for true organizational change to occur, the system needed to create practice fields where groups come together to dialogue on the issues arising from implementation. This provided an opportunity for people to practice dialogue and address concerns.

We must turn toward the other out of mutual respect and responsibility. This turning means imagining as the other might, helping the other become and to be, and affirming the person even if his or her ideas do not coincide with our own. We must participate by engaging in frank, sincere expression that comes from being. Furthermore, we must have positive attitudes, admit to error, submit graciously to the criticisms of others, commit to the dialogical process, and recognize that conflict forms a starting point rather than a conclusion. (Buber, 1965/1990 as cited in Howard, 2002, p. 1133)

Guidelines for facilitators embarking on dialogic instruction revealed in current literature include collaboration, effective questioning, transparency, authenticity, and training. With a clear understanding of guidelines for the process and the role of the facilitator, the time has come to assess the impact of dialogue on learning.

Impact on Learning

As stated earlier, the positive impact of dialogue on learning appears sound. The usefulness of dialogue in learning goes beyond the classroom. Saunders (2001) felt that this different way of relating had the potential to change groups of people and their relationships. He witnessed such change in his foreign diplomacy work. Bunkers agreed and concluded that dialogue “has the potential for the changing of change” (p. 213).

Charaniya and Walsh (2004) found that their interreligious dialogues provided the following outcomes, they “transformed worldviews, new behaviors, and/or fresh visions of how interreligious dialogue can change society” (p. 34). At MIT, Isaacs (1993) worked to learn how to nurture coordinated organizational behavior that resulted from dialogue. It involved “reflection on ways of knowing, on language, and on the embodied experience of meaning, turns out to have exceedingly practical applications, and suggests equally powerful applications for cultivating learning within organizations” (p. 25).

If people can be brought into a setting where they, at their choice, can become conscience of the very process by which they form tacit assumptions and solidify beliefs, and rewarded by each other for doing so, then they can develop a common strength and capability for working and creating things together. This free flow of inquiry and meaning allows new possibilities to emerge. This capability exists in every community, but in most organizations it is dormant. Dialogue allows it to be awakened. (p. 26)

These comments echo Boys’ (1999) sentiments that dialogue “is a way of life” (p. 133).

Though the application of dialogue seems expansively diverse, for the purpose of this literature review I will focus on the effect of dialogue on learning in an academic sense. Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) found learning the essence of dialogue, Senge (2006) identified dialogue as an imperative to team and organizational learning, and Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) used dialogue to engage students in their learning.

Interaction.

Freire (2005) discovered that daily interactions and experience led to knowledge. Current research supported Freire’s findings that student interaction was an asset to learning (Black, 2005; Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Burbules, 2006; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004; Innes, 2006, Skidmore, 2006). Tran (2008) identified

language as the interactive avenue to knowledge. Students that participated in Black's study identified interaction as the greatest asset to their learning as it opened communication, increased their active engagement, and advanced their learning.

Different patterns of classroom talk afford different structures of opportunity for students to participate in the construction of knowledge within the curriculum... The more dialogic modes of interaction, in which students play an active part in shaping the verbal agenda of classroom discussion, can help them to secure improved attainments in outcome, when compared with the results of teacher-dominated transmission approaches... A shift to a more dialogic mode of engagement with learners may have a redistributive effect, i.e., improving the quality of teacher-student has the potential to bring about general rise in achievement, but at the same time to narrow the gap between those with lower and higher levels of prior attainment. (Skidmore, p. 511)

Skidmore's inquiry into dialogue revealed that student engagement improved student achievement when compared to traditional monologic, teacher-centered environment. Dialogic instruction seemed to raise scores and reduce the margin between low and high achievers.

Burbules (2006) referred to the specific space where the learning occurred within the dialectic interaction as third spaces. There, Burbles found that misunderstandings were viewed as differently understood, not mistakes, which then led to an enhanced understanding. He claimed, "The key idea here is not about bridge building, fusing, blending, or reconciling; it is about conflict, a disruption of ordinary meanings that leads to a new possibility" (p. 114). When presented with a topic, some students may respond in a way that would be traditionally considered wrong. Burbules suggested giving the students space to dialogue on their interpretation. Burbules considered these creative misunderstandings a place of conflict and tension. "Third spaces are problematic and problematizing moments, risky and as prone to chaos, or even heightened conflict, as to

producing new understandings” (p. 114). The situational character of third spaces poses an interesting challenge to instructional dialogue, as they cannot be recreated. Groups cannot be manipulated to have the same experience; dialogue needs to be serendipitous and spontaneous to be real.

Pragmatic.

Innes (2006) found that whereas traditional teaching focused on semantics, practical learning for the real world should focus on pragmatics. Innes recognized that knowledge’s utility lived in students’ ability to find new connections in applicable environments through dialogue. Using practical information as the focal point of learning offered students an opportunity to put their learning to use in the real world. Harriger and McMillan (2007) discovered an impressive collection of support for the use of deliberative dialogue in classrooms when they implemented a citizenship course that included “important civic knowledge, skills, and experiences needed for citizenship” (p. 25). Harriger and McMillan summarized their findings,

[Participants] were more involved in traditional political venues, more expressive of the responsibilities of citizenship, more analytical and critical of political processes, more efficacious in their political attitudes and language, more communal in political language and outlook, and more imaginative in recognizing possibilities for deliberation and its broader application. (p. 32)

The results were impressive, students who took the citizenship class were more likely to vote and understand their role in the political system. Not only does pragmatic material improve the likelihood of engagement, it creates a student-centered atmosphere. Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) found that starting with concrete situations familiar to the students enhanced learning.

Implementation.

Innes (2006) supported dialogic communication as a necessity of useful learning within the confines of a greater curriculum structure.

Although the quality of the dialogs in small groups may be the key catalyst for knowledge construction, small groupwork is a piece of a much larger puzzle. Meaningful dialogs are fueled by the successful implementation of complex curriculum designs. The foundation of every well-designed learning experience is a clear articulation of the concepts and deep principles students are expected to construct. (p. 761)

Black (2007) concluded a similar sentiment.

To really promote effective practice, classroom dialogue needs to be endorsed as a flexible tool for enhancing children's learning and not as a tool for raising attainment levels in summative forms of assessment. It should not be implemented along with a rigidly prescribed curriculum which hinders teachers' use of classroom activities that are genuinely collaborative in form and content, whether that is in small group or whole class contexts. (p. 279)

The findings of both Innes and Black support a need for curriculum that reinforce the nuances of the dialogic process. Dialogue does not fit in with the traditional industrial age, assembly-line approach to learning (Senge, 2000). Rather it requires an attention to individual learning, without time and assessment constraints.

Mitchell (2006) concluded that dialogue sessions provided an alternative to traditional academic inquiry with limitations. He found that the dialogue worked only when learning in other classes provided ideas and methods of intellectual study. With the intellectual content of their other classes, Mitchell concluded that students benefited from the enlightening experience of dialogue as a supplement to their traditional learning.

Burbles (2006) assessed the internet as an arena for dialogue, or "third spaces", for a "potential framework in which to recognize and discuss those conflicts with fresh terms and perspectives and, in that, possibly to understand them better" (pp. 115-116).

He saw this as an opportunity for groups of people to interact that otherwise would not.

He predicted consequences of the constant virtual communication on dialogue;

Always accessible, never fully alone, the wired personality is both more connected to more disparate others and, for that very reason, all the more forced to make choices about availability, about prioritizing the importance and duration of replies, and about filtering incoming messages and information. (p. 118)

Burbules evaluation of constant connection through the internet illuminated the need to question “who is participating in a dialogue, and who is not, and why?” (p. 118). Silence has even more interpretations in a virtual environment, as it could indicate a technological issue or a desire to retain power through silence. Burbules suggested that anonymity of the web may lead to third spaces,

The experimental or exploratory advocacy of ideas or values not typical of my personality and affiliations – playing with ideas (and identities) in interactions with others that, because of some anonymity and distance, feel safe to me a, and because of this opening up a possibility for entering a communicative space in which something truly surprising and new may emerge (p. 119).

The internet opens up a communicative world where one can be anyone, believe anything, and try out various or hidden perspectives. While this may sound appealing, unauthentic voice could sabotage the dialogue process ruining collaborative learning opportunities for all involved.

Another consequence of global, virtual communication concerned Burbules, as English becomes an even more “privileged medium of expression” and increases the language barrier to those without access to English (p. 119). Technological globalization could heighten Freire’s concern with power imbalances as the digital divide creates “a pervasive and self-reinforcing division of technological haves and have-nots” (Burbules & Callister, 2000 as cited in Burbules, 2006, p. 116). The majority of the world’s

population is not networked and is shut out from opportunities to have their voice heard. The use of the internet as a medium for instructional dialogue may increase as the popularity of distance learning through online classes soars.

Concerns

Balance of Power.

While the majority of the literature articles revealed positive dialogic findings, a few barriers need attention and redress. One facilitative issue concerns the need for a balance of power. As long as a teacher's responsibility includes grading, this discrepancy will exist. Schools have toyed with changing grade structures in the past, moving from letter grades to a numeric 4.0 system, some have eliminated grades altogether. The problem with such radical removal of grades presents when students apply for college and need proof of their ability. This power difference, even with full transparency, could pose an intimidating hurdle to the meeker student.

Previous Knowledge or Experience.

Another tentative problem involves the need for previous knowledge or experience, which could be remedied in the curriculum creation process where objectives are created. If student participation is requested at all levels of curriculum and class development, dialogue could provide the necessary blueprint for what knowledge students should bring to the classroom and how they could attain it. As the process should be emergent, the creation process needs flexibility to respond to new ideas and changing students.

Internet.

While the use of the internet as a medium for anonymous dialogue seems problematic, cultural bias poses the main concern with increasing global dialogues leaving the majority of the world without access. Rather than resolve this problem with improved technology, it seems acknowledgment of the silent and their perspectives need to be presented in dialogues that concern them. The facilitator provides this function in deliberation models, which could easily be transferred to the dialogue model.

Conclusion

In an attempt to provide a foundational support for dialogic learning, curriculum needs to include various learning opportunities that support the tenets of dialogue. Participants need persistence to get through the various frustrations of the process, and presence to engage self-awareness and authenticity. They should be open to the process, which includes a willingness to be wrong, suspending assumptions, and the critical reflection that others are unique beings. The process of dialogic interaction involves whole-body, tacit, engaged learning with an understanding that students bring previous knowledge or experience to the conversation. Attention to power differences should be illuminated through transparency enforced by the facilitator. Students should be engaged in the curriculum and lesson plan creation. Said curriculum should be pragmatic, and needs to incorporate space for emergent learning and third space creative misunderstandings where the group will arrive at shared meaning. Teachers need training on the dialogue process, including effective questioning, as they move into a facilitative role, and learning practice fields should be integrated into their weekly schedules. Facilitation requires authenticity, and a commitment to bi-directional and collaborative learning. The overall conclusion based on the literature review exposed

that interaction leads to learning and dialogue supports that interaction, which supports the findings of the breadth portion of this KAM.

Unlike a machine, a living system creates its own purpose. It discovers itself through reflection and heightened awareness, becoming aware of what it is doing and why. In social systems, this requires asking purpose questions together, especially including those less habituated to the way things have been... If I had one wish for all of our institutions, and the institution called school in particular, it is that we dedicate ourselves to allowing them to be what they would naturally become, which I human communities, not machines. Living beings who continually ask the questions: Why am I here? What is going on in my world? How might I and we best contribute? (Senge, 2000, p. 58)

Depth Summary

Implementing change in an American institution that crosses economic, cultural, and geographical lines may seem overwhelming. The breadth section of this KAM identified a need for change and a methodology, dialogic education. The selected authors of the literature review provided a dose of reality in their attempts to implement, review, and discuss dialogue.

The current research based in the theories and ideas of Senge, Bohm and Freire, offered insight into implementation, including dialogue guidelines, facilitator guidelines, and dialogue's impact on learning. Major themes relating to guidelines for dialogue included persistence, presence, open, tacit, emergent, engaged participation through voice, previous knowledge or experience, create shared meaning and new insights, and balance of power. Guidelines for facilitators embarking on dialogic instruction incorporated collaboration, effective questioning, transparency, authenticity, and training. With a clear understanding of guidelines for the process and the role of the facilitator, the impact of dialogue on learning proved essential to learning and improved

with a focus on interaction and pragmatic curriculum. Possibilities for implementation involved all levels of administration and curriculum development. Redress of concerns highlighted dissolution of power inequities, establishing the required previous knowledge, and acknowledging the exclusivity of voices on the internet.

Following these guidelines with special attention to the role of the facilitator, the application section of this KAM will attempt implementation of dialogue in a Values in World Literature course.

APPLICATION

SBSF 8110: Theories of Societal Development

Based on the writings of Bohm, Senge and Freire and current research, guidelines for facilitators in dialogic instruction include collaboration, effective questioning, transparency, authenticity, and a need for training. This paper serves to explore the implementation of dialogue grounded in the theory and current research analyzed in the Breadth and Depth sections of this KAM.

Background

In an effort to apply these elements, I facilitated five weekly dialogue sessions for thirty to forty-five minutes in an undergraduate course, Values in World Literature. This course satisfied a general requirement for bachelor degree programs and consisted of students across various degree programs. Known as a hybrid course, the class met weekly for two hours and twenty minutes and included work online. The online work consisted of a weekly journal exercise and an interactive asynchronous forum. The class size, 6, was typical of day classes at this career college.

Implementation

During the first week of class, I expressed my interest in dialogue and my want to experience it in the class. With full transparency, I explained the dialogue process, suggested guidelines, and my interest in guiding all of us, myself included, to deeper learning (Black, 2007; Boys, 1999; Freedman, 2007; Miller & Hafner, 2008). I introduced dialogue as an alternative to typical classroom discussion, where students would share their perceptions, ideas, and relevant experiences with openness to those of others

(Bohm & Edwards, 1991; Bohm & Nichol, 2004). I explained Bohm's (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) assertion that thought was the source of most problems, and used examples of how misunderstandings and defense mechanisms could arise from assumptive thought. Bohm encouraged thinking, an active processing of information with awareness, rather than typical thought process that acted like a computer gathering data and reacting without engaging awareness. I encouraged everyone to put aside their knee-jerk responses that occurred when they felt threatened or needing to defend their ideas, and instead pause and reflect on their thoughts before sharing them (Bohm & Edwards, 1991; Bohm & Nichol, 2004; Senge, 2000; Senge, 2004; Senge, 2006).

Facilitator

In an effort to balance power and create an environment of awareness and respect, I introduced myself to the class as a facilitator, where I would serve as their guide in an interactive learning journey to new insights (Black, 2005; Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Isaacs, 1993; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Saunders, 2001; Skidmore, 2006). Emphasizing the importance of creating an atmosphere of equality, I explained how my role differed from that of an instructor (Black, 2005; Black 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Bunkers, 2000; Burbles, 2006; Charaniya & Walsh, 2004; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Howard, 2002; Innes, 2006; Isaacs, 1993; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Saunders, 2001; Senge, 2000; Skidmore, 2006). Rather than an authoritarian figure, I shared that I preferred to be seen as a facilitator, as a fallible participant who could and should be challenged, and as a co-learner (Black, 2005; Black, 2007; Billings & Fitzgerald, 2002; Boys, 1999; Bunkers, 2000; Howard, 2002;

Innes, 2006; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Mitchell, 2006; Roberts, 2005; Skidmore, 2006; Senge, 2000). Based on Boys (1999) findings, I encouraged students to share in typical instructor duties and avoided authoritarian behaviors in an effort to equalize power imbalances. Though I used the white-board to track ideas and suggested agenda for the day's activities, I usually sat in a chair in the area where students sat. I encouraged students to call me by my first name, without any title or formality (Miller & Hafner). I continually shared my interest in learning from them, as they all brought life experiences and creativity that would deepen our learning experience. In an attempt to remove myself as the grader and engage as an interested learner, I assessed dialogue sessions as pass/fail. Anyone who actively participated, including those who chose silence, received a pass grade.

Environment

To create an atmosphere conducive to dialogue, I emphasized the respect aspect of behavioral expectations in the syllabus.

Please be respectful of your classmates. Turn all phones off, to silent or vibrate. Listen attentively when the instructor or another student is speaking. Follow the 3 P's to success:

- Be Prepared – complete assignments, readings, and studying prior to class.
- Be Prompt – be in your seat, ready to learn when class begins.
- Be Polite – respect the space, possessions, and opinions of everyone in the classroom.

These expectations were not written for this particular course. I have implemented these behavioral guidelines since I began teaching in 2005. They seemed appropriate in creating an atmosphere of respect in the classroom. The Be Prepared guideline also supported the requirement that students bring previous knowledge to the dialogue

(Boys, 1999; Freedman, 2007; Harriger & McMillan, 2007; Miller & Hafner, 2008; Mitchell, 2006). Freire (Shor & Freire, 1987) identified life experience as sufficient for engaging in dialogical learning, but most of the current research found that learning depended on knowledge learned outside of the dialogue.

Collaboration

I began this dialogic adventure by seeking the collaboration of the students in creating the course structure, as suggested by Skidmore (2006). Providing the students with the course objectives that come with the class, I sought their input on how we could meet those objectives. I suggested that we use a variety of class presentations, assignments, dialogue sessions, and the online portal. The class did well in providing sufficient feedback in this process. The most influential contribution came in the form of a final project that involved weekly class presentations and resulted in a final reflective presentation. This addressed a concern that students had about having numerous final projects and exams in all of their classes the last week of class. The resulting final project eliminated the need for an enormous amount of work at the end of the term, which lessened their finals burden and increased their enthusiasm for the weekly presentations.

Not only did students create the structure of the course assignments, they also chose the readings. I provided twenty groupings of short stories and a simple synopsis of each. The students voted on which group they wanted to read every week. It seemed that this method improved participation above previous classes where many students would not always participate in class activities. As of week five, only once had a student arrived to class unprepared to dialogue on that week's reading.

First Attempt at Dialogue

In our dialogue sessions, we sat in a circle (Freire, 2005). I usually started the conversation by reviewing ideas from the online forum. The forum assignment required students to share their interpretations of their readings using details from the stories as support for their ideas and reply to at least two other students' posts. Participation in the online forum exceeded that of any previous class. By the third week, all students were participating at or beyond the required three posts. The in-class dialogue sessions posed numerous difficulties for me as a facilitator. While I felt willing to share my authoritative position with the class, I still felt responsible for creating and maintaining scholarly level discourse. I noticed that students made more eye contact with me when speaking, than their peers. This made me feel as though they were looking for a sign that they were correct in their statements. I found myself cheering their ideas and participation, rather than quietly listening. This experience was similar to the findings of Black (2007) and Skidmore (2006), where typical I-R-F (initiation, response, feedback) sequencing overwhelmed attempts to move toward dialogue. Regardless of my hope that the students would engage in spontaneous dialogue, I typically initiated discourse, students responded, and then seemed to wait for feedback. Given time constraints, I felt obliged to push the students to move forward in their dialogue, when they may have preferred not to.

Challenges

My success in staying true to myself and authentic in the process left me vulnerable to unusual feelings with my class. Intimidation was one of the most interesting and uneasy feelings that I encountered in the dialogue sessions. Our first

dialogue resulted from reading Edgar Allen Poe's "The Tell-Tale Heart" and several critics' interpretations of the story. For that session, students did not post their interpretations online prior to class. I had given the assignment with the intention, which I vocalized in class, of understanding how one story can have multiple interpretations. After we sat in a circle, one student took over the conversation. I will call him Jim. I should note that he is at least two if not three times my senior. Jim shared with the group that he had taken notes as he read the story and felt that his critical thinking skills led him to the only plausible interpretation of the story. I encouraged other students to share their experiences with the story, but it seemed that no one was willing to contradict Jim. I brought up particular lines, shared my response, and asked what others thought. Jim quickly interjected his perspective and again commented that there was no other interpretation. It was painfully obvious that not only was Jim intimidating to the class, but also to me. I felt at ends. I did not know how to get the dialogue back from Jim's control. My encouragement did nothing to spark discourse from other students. Whether through my failure to properly introduce the process and guideline of dialogue, or possibly an insecurity of Jim, the dialogue had been manipulated by Jim. Bohm (Bohm & Edwards, 1991) warned of such manipulation in his requirement that dialogue occur between equals. It was a surprising turn of events that the manipulator was a student, not the teacher as Freedman (2007) warned of indoctrination.

Second and Subsequent Dialogue

Between classes, I reflected upon the first dialogue. I worried about future dialogue sessions and the ability for dialogue to lead to deep learning in my class. As I monitored the online discussion, I noticed that Jim had not posted. I felt optimistic about

the openness with which the students posted and replied to their peers. I decided that I would continue with the dialogue session in the next class as planned, and if Jim dominated, I planned to intervene and ask to hear other voices. For this second week dialogue, our topics included numerous short stories and fables. All members of the class shared varying opinions and reactions to the stories and one another in a spirited, egalitarian dialogue that revealed depth beyond the online discussion. One student shared his inability to understand the theme of one of the stories. Together the other classmates, myself included, pieced our understandings together in a way that led to a new shared meaning for all of us. It was a great experience that led me to wonder if my frustrations from the previous week were part of the challenges that Bohm (Bohm & Nichol, 2004) addressed as anxiety in a new process and frustration of dealing with numerous opinions. Side conversations with Jim revealed his discomfort with my “out of the box” approach to learning. Confronted with a new process the first week may have led to Jim’s dominant behavior to protect himself from the unknown. Future dialogues continued to exhibit this egalitarian, shared experience similar to our second session. I had hoped that as time progressed, that students would automatically engage in the dialogue as soon as we sat in our circle without prompting from me. This never occurred and I continued to feel that the majority of our discourse followed the I-R-F sequencing. The limited time dedicated to our dialogue made me feel pressure to keep the discourse going, rather than remaining silent and allowing spontaneous dialogue among the students.

Impact

The joyful learning moments when dialogue led our class to illuminate our connections to literature outweighed the frustrations of dealing with the initial intimidation of a dominant participant, my internal struggle to commit to the dialogue while meeting course objectives and time constraints, and those stated by Jim in wanting conventional instruction. Given the positive outcome of my investigation and the enormous literature and theoretical support for dialogue, I will continue to study dialogue as an andragogical tool. I plan to improve my methodology and continue to implement dialogue as future courses allow, and will encourage curriculum committees to provide space for dialogue and its contribution to deep learning.

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