3. Debate/Panel discussion/Round table

Drawing perspectives for future Higher Education
- Creative epistemic encounters beyond discussion

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We suggest transcending conventional conference formats to take academic encounters beyond discussion and into a dialogical space of creation.

The headline “Creative University” urges us to introduce a hands-on process designed on the backdrop of socio-epistemology, complexity theory, learning philosophy and design theory.

Focus is on learning processes taking place in the shared space between students and teachers. In some ways the methods suggested suspend the classical concepts of teaching and replace them with a structured generative dialogue within which knowledge exchange and knowledge production can take place.

The session introduces an ‘on the spot’ creative epistemic practice combining empirically based research presentations with an art based co-creative dialogue between participants exploring possible futures in higher education. We introduce co-creative process design as an approach to didactic design.

Model 1: Progression in On the spot epistemic practice/didactical co-creation

To explore the form of communication that can facilitate co-creative dialogues between teachers and students, we turn to Shaw (2002) who takes her point of departure in complexity theory. Shaw (2002, 2005) describes a communicative approach to user-driven design, which could be transferred into an educational context, i.e. open and meaningful communication capturing participants’ interest, revolving around what excites or even frustrates participants. This implies a willingness to explore and improvise, and associations arise in a process of weaving in the actions to co-create the
The purpose of dialogue between students and teachers is not just to understand their existing approach to teaching but also to co-create new ideas for teaching design. The teacher becomes facilitator to encourage lively dialogue and encompass different views, even conflicts, regarding how and what is going to be taught. This requires teachers and students to be at ease with open approaches. Teachers must let go of fixed agendas and help students do the same. “Leading becomes being able to articulate issues and themes as they emerge and transform” (Shaw, 2005: 21). A learner-led approach requires the teacher/facilitator to be very conscious of the form of communication used in dialogues with students about content.

The implications for practice are new and constructive ways of working with students in order to co-create teaching and learning designs which motivate and enhance students’ learning processes, but at the same time may be daunting for teachers. Further research documenting the benefits of the principles, the learning processes and learning outcome as well as the pitfalls and challenges is needed.

References


