

Chapter 2

Multi–Vocality and Post–Processualism as Methodological Assets of the ‘Collaboration Game’

C. Karagiannidis

University of Thessaly, Greece

S. Efraimidou

University of Thessaly, Greece

A. Koumpis

ALTEC Software S.A, Greece

ABSTRACT

In recent years the gap between educational theory and practice has been closing, but although there have been calls for ‘reflexivity’, there has been little critical examination of its meanings. Proposed reflexive methodologies still perpetuate many traditional hierarchies, and fail to consider the creative nature of the educational process as such. Much research work also takes place within the commercial sphere, and post-processual ideas cannot advance educational practice unless they can be implemented in some type of an e-learning system. In our Chapter we examine theoretical considerations of reflexivity, representation, subjectivity and experiential engagement to highlight their relevance to everyday educational practice, and their potential to undermine existing suboptimalities in the classroom.

INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT OF OUR IDEA

With the emergence of what we shall call interpretative and reflexive approaches to education

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-60960-569-8.ch002

through the reaction against the processual (or process-oriented) education of the 1970s and 1980s, the desire for the inclusion of other voices in the educational process is born. This was and still is a conscious step toward creating *reflexivity* within the educational profession, i.e. dissolving the rigorous praxis and constraints

of the interpretative process that followed the science-oriented approaches and realizing and accepting that interpretation occurs at all stages of the educational practice.

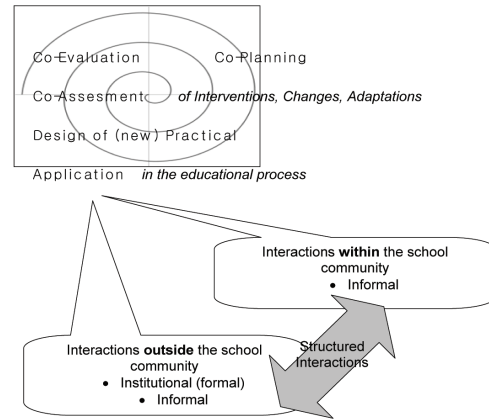
Multivocality seems to become an “it-word” used for whenever other people besides professionals are incorporated into the interpretation of educational-related core assignments, whether through community of experts, internet forums etc, or when the role and voice of a particular professional as a person is emphasized.

However, the concept of multivocality has up until now always focused on listening to different voices *in the present*. Various people have been consulted to discuss issues regarding a particular educational case or issue, from their point of view as professionals or experts *today*. But is it not possible to also allow voices from people that have been involved in the educational process in the (long or not so long) past to speak up regarding their own involvement within an educational process. This is where the concept of multivocality comes into play. It becomes a way of dealing with the educational profession and / or practice not only from the view-point of the currently involved actors but also from interpreting a case through the voices of other stakeholders besides the originally involved inter-actors.

In our chapter we explore what we call the the ‘Collaboration game’ from two aspects namely the issue of multi-vocality and the issue of post-processualism and by means of adopting a service-based approach.

Even if several educational services exist, these services are still un-configurable by the education expert and represent the professional (‘business’) logic view without considering the specific needs of the particular pupils. These services are designed in a silo manner and hardly, if not impossible, interconnected by the actual needs of the individual pupils. Though this reality is more or less widely adopted in the domain of general education, the needs for individualized interventions in the area of special education form rather the rule

Figure 1. Collaborative practices and interventions within and outside the classroom



than the exception. The implications of what we call ‘Collaboration as a game’ to the technical architecture of any plausible solution should take into account following the three dimensions that will be addressed in a use case we shall present in the chapter:

1. Inter-school unit dimension: It represents the overlap among processes and practices from a set of intra-organizational school units. This overlap is usually the result of necessary interaction between processes, which could be explicit or implicit. However, this interaction is not subject to a series of sequential activities but may occur between any of the entire set of activities running into the particular school organization. Indeed, all professional knowledge is not spread according to the activities predefined sequence. These interactions can exist between the same school unit, or two or more different school units.
2. Cross level-Intra- school unit dimension: It represents the common knowledge of members of the same school unit level but from different environments. This set is the federator of the community of participants

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