Principles of effective communication and feedback education essay

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Introduction

In order to complete PEL Patch one I have used peer to peer and self-assessment to evaluate the PEL Patch One group seminar presentation. This presentation aim was to identify examples of good teaching which reflected knowledge and awareness of: InclusionPrinciples of effective communication and feedback in supporting learningResources: e-learning and new technologiesIncorporation of literacy, numeracy and ICTMethods of assessmentMethods of evaluationAll these topics have been presented and discussed during the presentation. In this document I will analyse and reflect on the peer feedback given in Moodle, after the group sees this presentation. This work group was composed of five elements: Summer, Laura, Andrew, Lenny and Mario. Our group was the first to present this series of Teaching Good Practices group presentations. Below is the frame-work of our presentation (Appendix Two); Start: Icebreaker (Summer & Andrew), Effective Communication (Laura & Lenny), Inclusivity (Andrew & Summer)Middle: Resources (ALL), Incorporation of LLN or ICT (ALL)End: Methods of Evaluation and Assessment (ALL) References (Mario)

Teaching Strategies

For our PGCE presentation we have provided examples of good teaching practice using an androgogical approach. Recce and Walker (2000) outline that this approach places more emphasis on students' capability to function as self-directed learners rather than teacher dominated learning (pedagogical approach). Mezirow (1981) says that a pedagogical approach is more suitable to children and andragogical approach is more suited to adults

because adults prefer to be self-directing rather than being dependent on a teacher (cited in Reece and Walker, 2000). Adults are more aware of their learning style. Our first strategy with this presentation was to incorporate the three domains of learning; Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor. The three domains are closely linked. We started by clearly identifying aims and intended learning outcomes, followed by an " Icebreaker" session. Then various small group discussions and a whole group role play, demonstrating good teaching practices such as " effective communication", " How to create a feedback sandwich", etc. In this way we taught making use of the affective domain encouraging peers participation in debates. During our presentation we set some group work for our peers. The main goal of this work was to stimulate deductive thinking (cognitive domain). The participants needed to discover in their groups the fastest way of passing a ball between themselves. The results of this exercise were fascinating. Their thinking evolved from passing over distance to rolling the ball down their joined hands (cognitive and psychomotor domain). We role played examples of good and bad teaching practices (affective domain). The examples of good teaching practices were; effective feedback, question and answer, in this case the feedback sandwich. Good points, areas for improvement, finishing off with positive reinforcement. An example of bad practice of ineffective feedback is too much praise. As in Reece and Walker (2000), the skills of communication are essential for all forms of education. Teachers have a responsibility to develop in their student's skills in oral and written communication. Using question and answers techniques students receive oral information, process it and respond. This stimulates students own

questioning skills and is very important for developing the cognitive domain. Question and answers techniques were widely used in our group presentation. Reece and Walker (2000) suggest this helps develop subject matter and oral skills. Another example of good teaching practice used in by our group was the use of visual aids. They can be widely seen in the PowerPoint presentation (Appendix 2) prearranged by our group. Other examples include the use of videos, with examples of effective communication, animated pictures with appealing graphics and using large font. Reece and Walker (2000) suggest that there is no definitive answer for a choice in a particular visual aid. A good visual aid assists in the learning of a particular topic for a particular group of students however it does not mean it will work for all the groups or for all students. Our group presentation has taken into consideration Reece and Walker (2000) teaching strategies. This is the way we give out information to our students; by talking or working with a white board, smart board, question and answers, assignments etc. Of course you need to take into consideration the choice of teaching strategies this was widely influenced by the group's ability and size. As Reece and Walker (2000) suggests strategies that are appropriate to large groups are lectures, demonstrations, discussions/debates, questions and answers and video. The two main approaches to the problem of large groups is developing own lecturing skills and makes students more active. It is advisable to explore both at the same time. Reece and Walker (2000) also suggest a good strategy for a large group is to deliver carefully planned lessons with a strong structure; this helps students to organise themselves. Being heard is essential but teachers need to know the limit of their voice projection.

Speaking slowly and using pauses helps to give emphasis and cues. The same authors, state that visual aids need to be seen by everyone. Therefore in our presentation we used large writing, small chunks of information, and the use of colour and pictures/videos. Showing confidence, moving about and being relaxed and controlled is very important as it is to smile. Giving the students real life situations with positive and negative example helps to bring topics to life and is widely appreciated by students. We delivered our presentation to a large group. During our presentation we have used social learning as a main teaching model. This model emphasises the way that each person relates to others and their role in society. To conclude, in our presentation we have used an extensive variety of resources and active learning methods, as for example class discussion, work group, quiz etc. Collocating appropriate questions and tasks we challenged our peers to think and apply their knowledge incorporating the three domains of learning and High order " thinking" skills (evaluate, criticise, invent display etc.). This considered by Bloom (1956) and subsequently by many others the essence of all learning. This way we have stretched our peers to their full potential.

Self-assessment

In order to first heavily critique my workgroup presentation and understand such " bizarre" outcomes from my personal experience with team members, I have researched how teams work, subsequently I have found a very interesting article in " Team Processes" that cover the most relevant theory on this matter, below is a extract of this e-journal blended with my personal views of the presenting group dynamics (downloaded from ema. sagepub. com by guest on March 23, 2013). Kerry et al. (2012) notes that, prior

research has suggested that four types of team processes enable teams to adapt and perform effectively: cognitive (for example, shared mental models), motivational; (for example, cohesion and collective efficacy); affective (for example, team climate); and coordinative (for example, backup and performance monitoring) processes (cited in Burke et al., 2003). This article confirmed my initial reflective thoughts; my reflection started the moment I was introduced to my team members. As a reflective and theorist learner I have been confronted with the initial, on-going very radical and stubborn demands, as well as comments from the most activist (learning style) team member. This explains my initial disappointment and expectations for the group preparation and presentation. I would like to note without citing names that one of the persons in my group has an attitude problem towards me, for which I can find no justification other than social inclusion problems. These initial thoughts have been confirmed and witnessed by other group members. This was during a discussion where my personal and professional competencies have been publicly questioned. Obviously my cognitive, affective, coordinative processes and motivational qualities were not on the same " wave-length" as this particular team member. Firstly, the effective communication required for a group presentation of this nature, was compromised by personal conflicts, lack of communication and agreement with this team member. To explain this, confirm group dynamics and process, coupled with my decision not to abandon the group preparations and presentations from day one, is probably best described in the e-journal referenced earlier where the authors have noted that Mathieu et al. (2000) have demonstrated that team performance

depends on the emergence of shared mental models, which allow individuals to describe, explain and predict events in their environments in the same way. At the team level, shared mental models are'... knowledge structures held by members of a team that enable them to form accurate explanations for the task, and in turn coordinate actions and adapt their behaviour to demands of the task and other team members' (cited in Cannon-Bowers et al., 1993: 228). In order to best explain why I think that this theory justifies my decision to continue the preparation and presentation of this work group; I would like to highlight the last couple of lines of this same article. Kerry et al. (2012) also notes that although, there are likely to be multiple mental models ideally shared among team members, task and team mental models are needed for a team to perform successfully, and shared task mental models describe procedures and strategies for task accomplishment (cited in Mathieu et al., 2000). The same authors also discuss that shared team mental models include team interaction and team member models. A team interaction model describes roles and responsibilities of team members, patterns of team interaction, exchange of information and interdependence of roles and sources of information (cited in Mathieu et al., 2000). A team member's mental model describes team members, knowledge, skills, attitudes, preferences and tendencies (cited in Mathieu et al., 2000). Kerry et al. noted that Zaccaro et al. (2001) suggested that team motivation comes from team cohesion and collective efficacy, team cohesion has been defined in two ways: the degree to which team members are attracted to, and motivated to stay with, the team (cited in Zachary et al., 1995); and how resistant the team is to disrupting influences (cited in Carron, 1982). The

same authors also suggest that Hackman (1976) argued that team cohesion might have a social or task focus. Social cohesion refers to the strength and number of friendships in a team (cited in Zachary et al., 2001). Task cohesion occurs because of the necessity for collective effort to achieve goals otherwise unattainable through individual team member effort (cited in Zaccaro et al., 2001). After this introspective of my group " relationship" I would like to add to my self-assessment Kolb's learning styles where he explains that different people naturally prefer a certain single different learning style, this also have been taken in consideration when I initially wrote " bizarre" outcomes. Bizarre outcomes are surprising in a way because the presentation had good acceptance and peer feedback, with no apparent personal divergences, but with big disappointments on my personal delivery expectations. After reading Zaccaro (2001) I have to conclude that my " not as planned" performance was greatly influenced by group dynamics, but in a way the divergence of learning styles and ideas ended up being beneficial to the group presentation. In general I found that the group presentation went well, but I have not delivered my presentation as was initially planned because of disagreements with the team member mentioned above. It is all about group dynamics and my motivation for working within this, which was damaged by a poor group relationship. I am not blaming the group for my performance during the presentation being poor, only descriptive and the only form of interaction that I have provided to the audience was in form of question and answers and a couple of PowerPoint slides. I also did not look confident in my presentation and in the initial minutes I was obviously nervous. Tuckman's (1965) process model of group dynamics explains the

fundamental basis of group dynamics as we know it in the UK. When people come together, even just two of them, they first form some kind of relationship within their group: the Forming stage. Exploring the boundaries of the relationship often involves a degree of conflict to establish roles and hierarchies and to identify people's personality characteristics, strengths and possible weaknesses. This is the Storming stage. According to Tuchman, once people have established boundaries, they begin to feel comfortable with each other and their behaviours become normalised. Only then can the group really begin to Perform and become a team that achieves its objectives. When the dynamics change, the group will revert to the start of the model and will experience Forming and Storming again. The presentation in general was effective and my personal evaluation of it is was that we captured the audience with inquisitive and much differentiated methods and resources. One of the audience tasks was to guess how many resources have been used in the session and the audience counted fifteen. In my personal opinion the session covered in some detail all the brief topics (mentioned in the beginning of this section), with inclusive and relevant activities to demonstrate the session content. This big mix of resources and inclusive practices is without no doubt the fruit of a team with such a mixed backgrounds and learning styles, but the presentation was well accepted by the audience; tended to be very receptive to a presentation with such a variety of teaching good practices approaches.

Peer-assessment

Peer assessment is an important form of the assessment, for this specific presentation peer assessment has been very useful to reflect and evaluate

the " Good Teaching Practices" presentation. Unlike the other groups that have already presented their work and had in class detailed peer feedback, my group peer assessment has mainly been given on-line using Moodle forums (Appendix Moodle feedback). The main reasons for using peer assessment have been highlighted by Phil Race (2001) as follows: Learners are already doing it between themselvesLearners have the opportunity to learn about assessment principlesMore time for teachers introduce or prepare another subjects or tasks. Contributing to the marking criteria enhances learningDeep learning is achieved by peer feedbackLearners can learn from the successes or mistakes of othersStudent's performance is enhanced because the impact of deep learning and the self-evaluation skills result of peer assessment. Smart et al. (2000) notes that in the deep learning approach, the intention to extract meaning produces active learning processes that involve relating ideas and looking for patterns and principles on the one hand (a holist strategy - Pask, 1976, 1988), and using evidence and examining the logic of the argument on the other (serialist). The approach also involves monitoring the development of one's own understanding (cited in Entwistle, McCune & Walker, 2000). Peer feedback, formative or summative, encourages student autonomy and higher order thinking skills. These type of feedback has been easily given and assessed using Moodle Forums but I think these type of feedback could have been more beneficial, if the participants have given their feedback anonymously. This would enable people comments to be ruthless. Peer assessment feedback is very important, providing relevant formative feedback that students can use to analyse and reflect with the ultimate goal of improving

their work or skills. First, I will recognize how peer feed-back has identified my work group good practices, this will be the points to take forward and apply in future presentations. Secondly, I will identify the " needing improving" peer feedback and I will reflect how I will take this feedback in board and will improve this in my teaching practice. Positive feedbackExtract of some of peer-assessment positive feedback on Moodle: Clear aims and objectives founded on the briefImaginative and entertaining use of physical resources (toilet paper, Easter eggs, tennis balls, head spell, quiz) to create an interactive & inclusive experience, which illustrated theory Good use of humorous E resources (videos, visuals, the smart board & Moodle hand-outs) to make pointsCommanded the space well - used the white board, as well as the projector. Asked the audience to move (kinaesthetic learning)The whole group took part all the way through = very inclusiveUsed the group's strengths i. e. Lenny for practical & fun illustration of theory, Laura for drama, Mario for E resources - I particularly loved the inclusive idea of using Google translate, to read out text for dyslexicsGood balance of active and thought provoking, passive learningMario also evaluated E resources - looking at the downside, as well as the benefits. Integrated communication theory into the explanations & referenced it. Inclusion & the other terms were clearly defined & explained. The other elements of the brief (Comms, LN & ICT, resources, evaluation, assessment) were metThank you for your session in week 1. You managed to set a high standard for us all to reach, plus you had less time to prepare than the rest of us so well done! The whole session was so well put together. The team ' role-play' type presentation was extremely effective. You also utilised everyone's skills strengths to the

maximum. I think there were definitions without references in a few places if I am to pick holes, but struggling to do so! I was particularly impressed about how you shared your material on the ' cloud'. Very well done team! Plenty of humour (you can't go wrong with the Two Ronnies - too safe? - and they have probably never been linked to Moravian before) and a well-considered range of resourcesTaking these points from the positive feedback, I have to agree with my peer's feedback that the presentation was well planned and structured and it was well accepted by the majority of the audience. The Moodle forums are evidence that our presentation " Good Teaching Practices" have incorporated itself many successful examples of good teaching practices. Below is a resume of the negative feedback received via Moodle forums and the explanation of how I link my reflection from peer's feedback to academic theory. Negative FeedbackExtract of some of peer-assessment negative feedback: A bit of a late start, but.... Although students found it slightly difficult to respond to 'interesting thing' questionOne error in presentation; 'ojective' rather than objective! There could have been more evaluation of the other elements of the briefCould have included sheet of referencesI do think you told us about many different ICT resources but perhaps you could have shown them to as well? I did find the communication definition too long to be read off the screen perhaps. I was thinking you could have used more of the group as some were redundant a lot of the time however after seeing all the other presentations, you were all standing up all of the time in front of us and as a group you worked well. Well doneThe other thing was the chalk font on the board for some of the slides. I couldn't always read it...Some nerves were on showReece and Walker (2000) suggest that

deep learning is achieved by peer feedback and recommends that teachers may help students to be deep learners by designing active learning experiences. They also suggest being engaging in applying learning to problem focused situations encourages discussion and reflection. As a result the feedback from our presentations received from our peers promotes deep learning. Through this feedback I can structure reflection from my peers' comments. The result of my reflection is identifying areas for improvement. For instance after my colleagues feedback, especially the negative feedback, I know that I need to be more careful of spelling mistakes in presentations, pay more attention to explanation details and when I talked about the resources I could have shown practical examples as well. Peer feedback is essential as it would be very difficult to gather information whilst teaching. According to Reece and Walker (2000) the only true evaluation is self-evaluation through feedback. This means that for improvement to occur I would need to recognise a fault by myself. The key principles of providing feedback are firstly to apply and assess own competencies; secondly give constructive feedback about these competencies and aspects of practice, followed by gathering data about practice for analysis (Reece and Walker, 2000). Another way to improve is to try out new methods, compare feedback, for previous methods in practice. Finally feedback should assist evaluation of one's own teaching. During this process it is important to analyse the pros and cons of different sources of feedback. Positive aspects need to be celebrated and repeated and negative aspects and implications minimised. Reece and Walker (2000) emphasize that getting feedback from students (in this case: teachers or colleagues) is very important as they are

omnipresent in the lesson, they can react/comment to something that is not normally done. The downside of students' feedback (especially teenagers/adolescents) is that they may not have the skills and vocabulary to be able to express themselves and their feelings. Also they are likely to give answers you expect because of the fear of being honest may have a bearing on their chances of success. In conclusion, the delivery of our group presentation to our PGCE colleagues and their feedback turned out to be an invaluable asset in self-evaluation and reflection on the overall group performance. Reece and Walker (2000) suggest that getting feedback from other teachers or colleagues is advantageous as they have gained skills in observation and can provide effective feedback.

Conclusion

Of course the negative feedback is the most important one to take in consideration, because this feedback is the starting point of reflection to areas where improvement is required. Our presentation started late and there was one spelling mistake in the PowerPoint document. Probably I am the one to blame in this matter; I have been lecturing until very close to the time of the presentation, and the team wanted to do a run through before the start, so hence the delay. I also have created this PowerPoint document but the final review has been done as a group and no one identified the spelling mistake, obviously the lack of time was against us. Another point for reflection as a group was the shortage of hand-outs, this is because I have been stopped from doing this by myself by the most activist group member, obviously the loss was collective and this reflected in the feedback.

Personally I did not feel that I have been working entirely as a group and as

the comments reveal some group members were redundant a lot of the time, me the most. One of the more important comments to me was the " some nerves were on show", obviously I was nervous with a presentation of this type and I have verified it on the presentation video footage. I would like to conclude that this presentation in teaching good practices was very important. It helped me to consolidate knowledge. Most importantly the peer feedback gave me and the group an opportunity to analyse, reflect and learn from our mistakes.