

INNOVATION IN DOCTORAL PEDAGOGIES: REPERTOIRE, LIMINALITY, AND DECENTREDNESS

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Abstract

This paper reports on research in progress on the notion of the development of doctoral pedagogies. Drawing on a range of disciplines, including cultural sociology, anthropology, organizational studies and education, this paper challenges the traditional relationship between a doctoral student and 'supervisor' in terms of the power differential, often characterised as an expert/novice relationship. This thinking can trap supervisory relationships in a 'transmission' or 'training' style, with students on the receiving end of instruction and lectures from experts. The paper considers how we can rethink our practice and build a more collaborative, collegial approach to developing our students by cultivating a 'decentred' approach to supervision relationships. I argue that the role of doctoral development is an enculturation process, through which students learn about the community they are joining, its history, its key debates, as well as its culture and discourses.

Through the theoretical resources and metaphors of 'the doctoral journey' and 'rites of passage', the liminal spaces students pass through offer opportunities for productive decentred pedagogies in which supervisors construct ways of valuing their students' expertise and their academic contributions, facilitate their critical inclusion/induction into the academic community. Critical inclusion is based on collaborative relationships, and moves beyond a transactional 'tips and techniques' approach to one whereby students are invited into a discourse fraternity. Doctoral pedagogy is then conceived as the development of research literacies, helping students to develop the repertoire of successful members of the academic discourse community - one that mirrors established professional norms, ways of being, and ways of doing research work. Each repertoire will differ in different contexts/disciplines and is more than just a measurable list of competences. Doctoral students, in current super-diverse times, engage with a broad variety of networks, communities and resources and learn through many different trajectories, tactics and technologies to form a distributed patchwork of competencies, skills, dispositions, values, etc. A student's doctoral repertoire will be biographical, reflecting who they are, where they come from, and what they bring to their research.

The paper will explore useful activities for cultivating a decentred approach to doctoral development and consider the ways in which such collegial, practices can be embedded as a way of developing researchers at departmental/institutional level

Keywords: Doctoral Pedagogy, Repertoire, Liminality, Power.
