Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

INFORMING ONLINE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES VIA

PEDAGOGICAL PARTNERSHIP APPROACH: A CASE STUDY

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Bachelor of Science with Honours
(Cognitive Science)
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Final Year Project Report ☒

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INFORMING ONLINE PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES VIA PEDAGOGICAL
PARTNERSHIP APPROACH: A CASE STUDY

CHARIS LEE ENQING

This project is submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
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The project entitled 'Informing Online Pedagogical Practices via Pedagogical Partnership Approach: A Case Study' was prepared by Charis Lee Enqing and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honours (Cognitive Science).

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ABSTRACT

Pedagogical partnership approach is an emerging practice implemented in the West to encourage the collaboration between instructors and students. This case study was to examine the pedagogical partnership approach in the Eastern online educational settings in University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) during the COVID-19 pandemic. It involved the joint-effort of an instructor and a student partner (not enrolled in the focal course) to co-create the online learning experience for 66 university students enrolled in a course. Qualitative research method was used to observe student's online learning behaviour and experience with the support of the quantitative data obtained from the Learning Management System of UNIMAS, eLEAP. The findings show that both good and bad students' learning behaviour as well as learning experience can be explained by the Eastern deep-rooted culture, importance of sense of presence and community, reliable technology and students' personalities. The case study also offers valuable information on the role as a student partner in the partnership as well as challenges faced. It also provides some research ideas and suggestions to obtain a deeper understanding of this pedagogical partnership approach.

Keywords: pedagogical partnership, online learning, online pedagogical approach

ABSTRAK

Pendekatan perkongsian pedagogi adalah amalan baharu yang dilaksanakan di negara Barat untuk mendorong kerjasama antara pengajar dan pelajar. Kajian kes ini adalah untuk mengkaji pendekatan perkongsian pedagogi dalam persekitaran pendidikan dalam talian di negara Timur, khasnya di Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) semasa pandemik COVID-19. Ini melibatkan usaha bersama seorang pengajar dan rakan pelajar (tidak mendaftar dalam kursus fokus) untuk bersama-sama mencipta pengalaman pembelajaran dalam talian untuk 66 pelajar universiti yang mendaftar kursus tersebut. Kaedah penyelidikan kualitatif digunakan untuk memerhati tingkah laku dan pengalaman pelajar semasa pembelajaran dalam talian dengan sokongan data kuantitatif yang diperoleh daripada Sistem Pengurusan Pembelajaran UNIMAS, eLEAP. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa tingkah laku pembelajaran pelajar samada baik atau sebaliknya serta pengalaman pembelajaran dapat dijelaskan oleh budaya Timur, kepentingan rasa kehadiran dan komuniti, teknologi yang boleh dipercayai dan keperibadian pelajar. Kajian kes ini juga menawarkan maklumat berharga mengenai peranan sebagai rakan pelajar dalam perkongsian pedagagi dan juga cabaran yang dihadapi. Kajian ini juga memberi beberapa idea dan cadangan penyelidikan masa hadapan untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam mengenai pendekatan perkongsian pedagogi ini.

Kata kunci: perkongsian pedagogi, pembelajaran dalam talian, pendekatan pedagogi dalam talian

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Several higher education institutions around the world have started to implement a pedagogically driven notion of partnership program in a classroom setting to improve the education system there were various benefits developed throughout the program. The institutions range from small colleges to large universities in England, Israel, Italy, United States and Malaysia developed the programs in various forms of collaboration (Cook-Sather, Bathi & Ntem, 2019). This partnership training also had been enacted in certain areas in the U.S.A. for growth of educational purpose (Goodlad, 1991). In England and Wales, the pedagogical training aimed to improve the performativity of students or the student's results in assessments (Ball,1994), with the interaction in the teaching and learning processes (Bruner,1996). Edwards (1995) also stated that there were roles overlapping in the program, it was very important that it had strong clarity on their goals which is focusing on the needs of the learner and finding the best framework to support novices into the expertise and the development of teaching professions.

Pedagogical partnership is defined as a collaborative and reciprocal process between participants in contributing to an education system transformation in institutions (Cook-Sather, Bovill & Felten, 2014). Partnership also represents a proportional relationship between two or more parties collaborating and working together to a mutual goal (Williamson, 2013). The two main bodies involve students and faculty staff. While both parties have a common responsibility to identify problems, devise and co-deliver the solutions for improvement (National Union of Student, 2012), both parties also show respect for the skills, knowledge, experience and capability that have been contributed in the collaboration (Williamson, 2013).

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National Union of Student (2012) stated that the corollary of partnership pedagogy is the true, honest and purposeful distribution of power as it involves active engagement and responsibility. The philosophy of this partnership ship is to combat a deficit paradigm in which the staff assumes the roles of enablers of disempowered students, implicit in certain types of student participation, staff would rather aim to recognize the power differentials whilst appreciating the efforts of individual students and staff in a joint environment of mutual learning and working (Healey, Flint, & Harrington, 2014).

Furthermore, it is also expressed that the foundation of partnership is to inspect students with the power to co-create both knowledge and learning process. The cooperation acts a working relationship between the institutions and students in producing a desired result through decisions and the consequences of it which leads them to the plausible top-grade educational establishment (Williamson, 2013). Welsh Government's (2013) policy statement on higher education stated that:

Partnership is about more than just listening to the student voice and enabling students to have input in decisions that affect them. True partnership relies upon an environment where the priorities, content and direction of the learning experience are all set by students and staff in partnership. (p. 21)

During the HEA's Students as Partners Summit that was held in Escrick, Yorkshire on 24-25 September 2013 (Healey, Flint, & Harrington, 2014), several reasons were establish for an efficient and rewarding way of teaching and learning. First, it is developing and delivering immersive learning experiences for student, making higher education more open an inclusive, and to conform with real convictions and educational values. Next, creating a sense of identity and belonging, improving awareness and expertise for students and academic staff, and resolving some of the issues that challenging higher education currently. Finally, it is about providing a proactive alternative to consumerist higher education models, aligning with

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national policy imperatives that put collaboration and cooperation as a key to quality improvement, as an ethical obligation for students and academic staff, and as a solution to the emerging multifaceted challenges that higher education encounters.

Pedagogical partnerships have become an efficacious and powerful educational tool that able to improve students academically whilst gaining some positive effects and results (Healey, Flint & Harrington, 2014). Partnership approaches emphasize on design or development of classroom, research, curriculum, and institutional restructuring. This approach is able to increase the involvement of the traditionally marginalized students (Cook-Sather & Agu, 2013). Time and attention are needed to develop the relationship. These partnerships are recognized as revolutionary developments in the landscape of higher education now (Ryan & Tilbury, 2013).

1.2 Background of study

Pedagogically driven notion of partnership was first introduced as a national policy for the training of teachers in school and Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in England and Wales (Edwards, 1995). This pedagogically collaborations was based on the model of teaching and learning from Neo-Vygotskian(1978).

As there were numerous studies on student-faculty partnership had been conducted in Western setting (Bovill et al., 2016), only a few studies had been done in an Eastern setting. The Eastern and Western cultures are highly diverse culturally and historically. Though several educational policies and initiatives are adopted from each other, there are two entirely different approaches to the education system in Western and Eastern. As Lin (2006) suggested, western society tends to be more imaginative and assertive while eastern society tends to conservative and reserved. As the comparison done by Iyer (2015) between the Eastern and Western education systems, it has shown that both systems differ in terms of classroom and curricula structure, management, resources used, teaching and learning

methods, and expectation of both student and teacher. In the East, the classroom is mainly teacher-centered, where the teacher is the authority and is highly respected by students. According to the Eastern cultures, students are prohibited from questioning the expertise of teachers (Cheng, 2020). Thus, students tend to be more passive in learning and less interactive with teachers as it is a one-way learning process. Student-centered classrooms in the West highly encourage students to participate actively through the entire learning process and teachers act as facilitators to offer guidance and discussion with students. A sense of ownership to learning is created along the process. Furthermore, the ultimate goal for Eastern students is the scores and grades obtained in the exam. This, in fact, leads to the occurrence of short-term book-based knowledge due to memorization for the sake of high grades. On the other hand, western education systems emphasize on skill-honing and critical thinking.

1.3 Purpose of study

The purpose of this study is to provide opportunities for a close collaboration between faculty and student partners in UNIMAS. While all the previous researches have been done based on the physical classroom in Western countries, this research is aimed to support the transition of first-year students from physical class to online learning and their needs as a learner on online classroom practices.

1.4. Problem statement

Previous research has shown significant benefits on pedagogically orientated education collaborations in the physical classroom. Furthermore, World Health Organisation (WHO) declared that the COVID-19 as a pandemic on 11 March 2020. The subsequent lockdown faced by the whole nation had resulted in a rapid shift from physical class to online learning announced by the Higher Education Ministry with the purpose of flattening the pandemic infection curve (Menon, S., 2020). During the constraints of the pandemic, there are is paradigm change in the educational system towards online education system. However,

the impact and feasibility of online education and the potential to teach digitally effectively remain uncertain. The abrupt and accelerated transition from a traditional learning environment to online learning has had a significant effect on students' attitude towards learning (Verma, Verma, Garp and Godara, 2020). It is essential for higher education institutions to develop strategies and activities to assess students and support them in digital learning platforms.

Besides that, previous studies had been mostly conducted on Western context, more studies are needed to further investigate the Pedagogical Partnership approach on Asian cultural context.

1.5 Research objectives

The primary objective for this study is to examine the online pedagogical practices employed in a chosen course which was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, there are four specific objects that are aimed to be achieved which is to examine students' online learning behaviour and student's experience, to identify strategies to improve students' learning experience and the challenges faced while implementing this partnership approach. The best practices that have been identified in this Pedagogical Partnership approach for informing online pedagogical practice will be taken into account for producing tor modifying a suitable pedagogical partnership model to the actual online class implementation.

1.6 Research question

1. Which learning method will be suitable to be used to deliver information or knowledge during online learning specifically for the selected class of students and course?

2. How does the partnership pedagogical approach help in both teaching and learning process?

1.7 Definition of terms

Table 1

Definition of terms

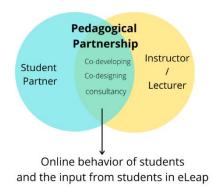| Terms	Definition
Pedagogical partnership	A collaborative and reciprocal procedure through which all participants have the chance to participate fairly in the conceptual framework, decision making, implementation, research to analyzation of pedagogy (Cook-Sather, Bahti & Ntem, 2019).
Online pedagogy	A collection of prescribed methods, techniques and activities for teaching academic contents in an online or mixed setting where students are separated from the university professor or lecturer and other students geographically (Harvard University, n.d.)

1.8 Conceptual model / Research Framework

Figure 1. Conceptual framework of research

1.9 Scope of study

This study was participated by 100 first-year University Malaysia Sarawak undergraduate students and one student partner who are majoring in Cognitive Sceience regardless of age, gender and ethnicity. In order to observe the learning situation in the online classroom, only one specific course will be examined throughout the research. Therefore, it will only involve students who are enrolled in the core subject namely "Introduction to

Cognitive Sciences" under the teaching of one instructor in UNIMAS in the first semester of 2020/2021. Besides that, the student partner participated in this study will not be enrolled into the course but also a Cognitive Science major student in UNIMAS.

1.10 Significance of study

The findings of this study will be useful for any higher education institutions that want to incorporate Pedagogical Partnership strategies in the institutions that involve the online learning environment of Eastern cultural context in the online educational settings.

<div align="center">**CHAPTER TWO**</div>

<div align="center">**LITERATURE REVIEW – provide an introductory paragraph**</div>

2.1 Previous studies on Pedagogical Partnership Approach

The Students as Learners and Teachers (SaLT) was piloted in 2006 in Bryn Mawr College, United States. It is a pedagogical partnership approach to unite students and faculty staff on a mutual engagement to a shared institutional objective of promoting inclusiveness in higher education environments. Due to a voice of an underrepresented Latina student on the experience of racism on campus, a project named 'Toward Culturally Responsive Classroom' was launched in 2007 which five students of difference ethnicities collaborated with five faculty members for a semester. The pedagogy aimed to create an inclusive and responsive education classroom despite the diversity of identities, cultures, and systems of privileges (Bernal, 2002). The written reflections were then collected from the student and faculty members on their experiences, then eight interrelated recommendations were formulated to make the education environment more inclusive and responsive (Cook-Sather & Des-Ogugua, 2019). After ten years, the findings of the project remain valid and relevant.

Western Sydney University in Australia has begun introducing Partnership Pedagogy in early 2019 as one of the professional learning modules and as a primary concept that integrates the university curriculum for its university academic staff, students and external partners like the community, industry and commercial providers (Barrie & Pizzica, 2019). They believe that they are able to prepare students in this global environment of exponential growth, conflict and new knowledge horizons (UNESCO, 2015) via this partnership collaboration. The pedagogy is built on the sincere curriculum co-creation with partners, involving them in co-design, co-develop, and co-deliver the curriculum in the most suitable way, and co-credential and co-evaluate the curriculum outcomes (Barrie & Pizzica, 2019). Four principles are employed to ensure that the collaborations are inclusive, sustainable and

effective, which is reciprocity, interdisciplinary, interdependence and integrity. The shared

control of the development process among partners are acknowledged in the Partnership

Pedagogy. Students are expected to deal with social issues as a citizen through this

commitment. This further offers an opportunity to revitalize the curriculum development of

the university and enhances the connection between the university, the community and the

organizations that employ the graduates of the university (Barrie & Pizzica, 2019).

McMaster University in Canada established a student-faculty partnership namely

Student Partners Program (SPP) to work on teaching and learning projects in 2013 (Cockcroft

et al., 2018). The Applied Curriculum Design credit course was one of the projects developed

for third- and fourth-year students to learn and propose the construction of curricula and

courses. Besides that, they also establish a sequence of learning modules in first year courses

(Goff, 2014).

University of Utara Malaysia is the first university that had a pilot Pedagogical

Partnership project in Malaysia. Based on the case study done by Kaur, Awang-Hashim and

Kaur (2018), it reported on the advantages of a long-term partnership between faculty

members and students in co-create the classroom through the perspectives of post-graduate

students. The result suggested that even though the partnership could make a meaningful

contribution to student engagement and development, yet the students' experiences were

different in several ways if compared to the studies done previously in Western countries. It

was then explained that due to the culture difference between Western and Eastern settings,

especially the power distance between faculty members and students. The deep-rooted

hierarchical relationship and the power disparity between students and faculty members may

hinder the involvement of participants in the student-faculty partnership (Robinson, 2012).

2.2 Outcomes of Pedagogical Partnership Approach

It was reported that numerous positive outcomes from the partnership driven pedagogy approach in higher education institutions. The three main bodies including student partner, academic staff and the institutions itself are believed to gain more than one benefit (Cook-Sather et al., 2019).

From the perspective of students, they are able to gain more awareness in metacognitive, engage in the restructuring the teaching and learning process which is a more democratic process and social justice throughout the partnership (Cook-Sather et al., 2014). Furthermore, the connections between students and institutions become stronger when the sense of belongings increases. Colón García (2017) suggested that if every student participated in the collaborations in which they were able to provide feedback and explore the best suited teaching and learning method, the sense of belonging will increase inclusiveness.

Hutchings (2005) suggests that the students' perspectives on their learning and willingness to link their learning to real-life circumstances in a way that it will provide insights into academic staff's instructional methods. This helps academic staff to discover their blind spots and understand students in a deeper sense. Based on the case study done by University Utara Malaysia (Kaur et al., 2018), a positive classroom dynamics serves as an positive outcome after the clear and substantive interaction between the academic staff and students in co-creating classroom over period of time and create a positive learning atmosphere in which the educator politely welcomed different viewpoints and diffused classroom challenges.

On the stand of an institution, a quality partnership between academic staff, students, institution and society enables the institution itself and its students remain involved and committed in a working environment that is changing rapidly with growing social problems. These partnerships offer a medium for the institution to connect with the society in order to

examine the current trends in employment and education and collaborate to define the future

of work (Barrie & Pizzica, 2019).

Despite all the benefits gained personally and institutionally, there are still challenges

underneath these partnerships. Among which the most relevant is the reconfiguration of the

power ties between faculty and students (Barnes et al., 2010).

2.3 Analysis of students online learning behaviour

An analytical and data-driven research was conducted by Estacio and Raja Jr (2017)

to assess if learning behaviour of students can be extracted and visualised from Moodle

action logs in a blended learning environment. Moodle is an online platform and most of the

tasks are assessment related. The data identified in the study helped instructors to track the

progression of the course and allowed them to quickly recognise the poor performance of

students, thus, to modify the strategies accordingly. Data mining algorithms like vector space

models were applied in this research to combine the student action logs and convert them into

a range of numerical values which then was used to produce visual representations of student

activity level. The visualisation allowed faculty members to identify strategies that should be

used to maintain the activity of students within the planned learning results. The findings

showed that the main framework of blended learning mode still relies on classroom

discussions physically despite the accessibility and availability of the online learning

resources. Furthermore, it was suggested that there was no linear relationship found between

the time spent on Moodle and the academic achievement of students.

Agnihotri et al. (2015) studied the login data and used it to aggregate students using

the data they produce when engaging with Connect, a web-based assignment and evaluation

platform for students. The research used a clustering method based on machine learning to

categorize students based upon their efforts, results and logins. The data analysed classified

students into three groups, high performance students, low performance students, and

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persistent students (Luik & Mikk, 2008). The findings showed that there the number of logins was not directly proportional to the performance.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research method

In order to satisfy the objectives of the research, a case study approach that involved both qualitative and quantitative research was used to establish a rich overview of an event from different perspectives and expectations (Merriam, 1998).

Student partner was required to meet with instructor partner weekly before and after class to plan, prepare and provide insights in co-creating the online pedagogy of the chosen course. Qualitative data from the reflective journal was not measurable and quantifiable, yet it was able to provide a holistic overview and analysis of the research topic without restricting the extent of the study (Collis & Hussey, 2003). On the other hand, the quantitative research method was used to monitor the online learning behaviour of students and their input on given online activities or tasks on UNIMAS official learning platform, eLEAP.

3.2 Research design (Validity and Reliability Issues)

The research approach that was adopted for the purposes of this study was the inductive one. Based on this approach, the research started with specific observations that are used to generalise the research theories and conclusions. The motives for taking up the inductive method was that it was best suited for the qualitative data produced from small samples. However, the generalized theories and conclusions generated were solely based on the number of observations from the perspectives of a student partner (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Furthermore, the findings from both qualitative and quantitative data were processed using convergent methods. This involved collecting both types of data around the same time, evaluating the data parallelly but examining both data separately, then comparing the outcomes side-by-side and presenting both forms of data jointly. The discussion between