

Postscript: Reflecting on Ruptured Pedagogic Moments in Teaching for Change

Introduction

HEIs have a rich history promoting the sharing of knowledge. In the contemporary era, this idea of sharing knowledge has come under increased strain due to the adoption of commercialised and market-driven practices driving education delivery (King et al. 2014). Despite MOOCs requiring considerable human and capital resources, the prospect of being able to address issues of scale and access to higher education exists (King et al. 2014). At its core, MOOCs reaffirm the HEI history of sharing knowledge, enabling individuals from potentially disadvantaged backgrounds to have access to higher education, as long as they have Internet access. For the case study in question, offering a MOOC was of strategic importance for our institution. It afforded the institution the opportunity to reaffirm its position as a leading research-intensive institution, attract international students and contribute to the knowledge economy of the world in a distinctly African way.

MOOC pedagogy has evolved much since the days when MOOCs were mainly steered by full lectures placed in an online environment. This “instructivist” model of a MOOC sees the course presenter as the custodian of all knowledge, and as all information is rendered asynchronously,

there exists little opportunity for student–teacher interaction. In an attempt to democratise these educational practices, MOOC companies have encouraged course developers to adopt what is commonly referred to as a “connectivist” approach. Learning designers make use of a combination of videos, articles, quizzes and forums in an attempt to maximise the potential for students to construct their own knowledge, but also to share their constructions of knowledge. This approach, however, necessitates students to be intrinsically motivated and technically competent to navigate a MOOC platform.

Norton (2013) provides a useful exploration as to why students are motivated to pursue MOOCs, namely enhancing vocational knowledge, improving employment prospects through new credentials and evidence of achievement, and general broadening of the mind. For the case study in question, the course was presented on the British-based FutureLearn platform, wholly owned by the UK-based Open University. Established in December 2012, FutureLearn develops MOOCs with 109 local and international institutions in almost every conceivable subject area. Thus far, it has attracted close to 7 million students from around the world. FutureLearn encourages their partner universities to produce as many courses as possible. They do, however, have an appropriate course portfolio. Their research of the market indicates that there is a strong demand for continual professional development (CPD) courses, falling under the course portfolio. CPD courses are characterised by subject areas, including healthcare, business and management, and education. Individuals who enrol for these courses are typically post-graduate students looking for ways to improve their vocational knowledge and career prospects. The case study in question can be deemed a CPD course in the subject area of education. Titled “Teaching for Change: An African Philosophical Approach”, students are encouraged to learn more about this philosophy, its relevance and its capacity to respond to teaching and learning problems in a just manner. The age demographic for “Teaching for Change”, indicated in the figure below, further affirms its status as a CPD course, as most students enrolled fall in the 26–35 age group. As discussed earlier, CPD MOOCs afford participants the scope to exchange ideas and experiences from their institutional contexts around the world (Laurillard 2014).

As a CPD MOOC, “Teaching for Change” focuses on pedagogic encounters (more specifically, teaching and learning) to address societal problems endemic to the African continent. Though deemed an “African philosophical approach”, the course encourages participants to engage with the course content, while situating themselves within their own educational contexts. The course presenter argues that although “African”, the philosophical principles are not endemic to Africa alone, but that any individual, irrespective of his or her context, can participate and share his or her contextualised understandings of knowledge. The course trailer, used to market the course, particularly emphasised the notion of learning together. Subsequently, the course has demographic data indicating a large proportion of students stemming from the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia and South Africa. There were also a few individuals from more remote areas such as Ecuador and Afghanistan, among others. The student distribution graphic seems to indicate that, although the course is deemed an “African philosophical approach”, students were not deterred from enrolling for Teaching for Change.

Throughout the four weeks, students engage with subject matter pertaining to:

- African thinking and doing: a way of practicing philosophy of education
- educational encounters as forms of human engagement through an examination of case studies
- moral, compassionate and restorative justice in relation to defensible African education
- teaching and learning in the context of change
- ethno-philosophy and communitarian philosophy of education in relation to *ubuntu* and justice.

Learning Design and Reflections on Learning Through Teaching for Change

Standard MOOC pedagogy postulates a range of activities encompassing video presentations, discussions and automated assessments (Laurillard 2014). This pedagogy negates the variable teaching costs associated with

supporting students while a course is running, allowing for large-scale enrolments (Laurillard 2014). “Teaching for Change” adopted a similar pedagogy with an emphasis on students being self-reliant and able to support one another.

Although there are many theories regarding teaching and learning, Laurillard’s (2012) book *Teaching as a design science: Building pedagogical pattern for learning and technology* provides an overview of the main theories regarding teaching and learning, from which the learning design underpinning “Teaching for Change” draws. Laurillard’s book provides a framework for considering teacher and learner activity, individual and social aspects of learning and the interplay between theory and practice (King et al. 2014). Additionally, the book refers to numerous learning experiences. For instance, learning through *initiation* (reading/watching/listening), *inquiry*, *practice*, *production*, *discussion* and *collaboration* (Laurillard 2012). The first four of these learning experiences focus primarily on individual learning, whereas learning through *discussion* and *collaboration* refer to social learning.

An *initiation* experience, encompassing reading, watching or listening, focuses primarily on the actions of the teacher, such as the teacher explaining a concept (Laurillard 2012). This does not necessitate a student providing any articulation, although the FutureLearn MOOC platform affords a student the opportunity to add commentary on what is presented by the course presenter (Laurillard 2012).

In Teaching for Change, an *inquiry* learning experience typically follows *initiation*, encompassing reading, watching or listening. During such a learning experience, a student can modulate his or her conceptual understanding through an investigation of texts, documents and other resources. Laurillard (2012: 12) commonly refers to this as “learning through finding out”. With an *inquiry* learning experience, there also exists an opportunity for intrinsic and extrinsic feedback (Laurillard 2012). Extrinsic feedback was in the form of *discussion* posts.

Learning through *practice* experiences pertains to a student’s application of theory. Students use their developing conceptual understandings towards the realisation of a goal, generating action to achieve. These actions are consequently used to modulate their emerging conceptions intrinsically (Laurillard 2012). Examples of how technologies would be

able to facilitate this type of learning would be case studies, modelled answers, simulations, adaptive worlds and micro worlds (Laurillard 2012).

Laurillard (2012) terms learning through *production* a consolidation and an account of a students' learning of *initiation*, *inquiry* and *practice* experiences. Learning through *production* is simply an articulation of a student's current conceptual understanding that may be in the form of an essay, report, presentation, video, photo, blog or discussion post, to mention but a few. Through such a *production*, the student avails him- or herself of extrinsic feedback from not only a teacher or lecturer, but also peers engaged in all the teaching and learning activities. A *production* learning experience in Teaching for Change was again possible through comment posts. Comment posts in Teaching for Change were manifestations of students developing their understanding.

Regarding the social learning experiences, Laurillard (2012) refers to two types, namely learning through *discussion* and learning through *collaboration*. According to her, learning through *discussion* requires an initial impetus from the teacher in the form of a question or issue. Students are afforded the opportunity to modulate their understandings further, generate ideas and to pose additional questions. Technologies that support this form of learning are asynchronous online discussion forums, synchronous chats and seminars (Laurillard 2012). In Teaching for Change, there were close to 5000 comments posted.

Learning through collaboration differs to learning through *discussion* as it incorporates aspects of learning through *practice*, *production* and *discussion*. Simply put, as learners engage they may exchange their products of learning through *practice* towards the production of a joint product. Educational technologies, such as wikis and other online knowledge-building platforms may serve as a deliberative sphere through which students are able to engage with one another, sharing different conceptual understandings and the applications thereof. Through this deliberative process, the opportunity exists for students to reach some form of consensus in the form of a joint product. In Teaching for Change, this took the form of a *discussion* thread.

The FutureLearn platform afforded the Teaching for Change learning design team the latitude to create a MOOC encompassing a range of

learning experiences. Students' productions in the form of comments served as points of *discussion* and potential points for *collaboration* throughout the course.

As discussed earlier, MOOC pedagogy is characterised by videos, articles, quizzes and discussion forums. Teaching for Change is no different in that it incorporates many of these characteristics but strives to promote a rich social learning experience as well. Themes dealt with include giving thought to African philosophy of education, examining different approaches (genres) to African philosophy of education, exploring a communitarian understanding of African philosophy of education, and African philosophy of education and the cultivation of justice. At the onset of the individual themes in Teaching for Change, there is an initiation experience. As discussed by Laurillard (2012), these *initiation* experiences typically constitute students *reading, watching* or *listening*. In the case of Teaching for Change, a video is used to explain a concept or to provide a brief overview. This does not necessitate a student providing any form of articulation, but encourages a student to modulate his or her own conceptual understanding intrinsically based on what is presented (Laurillard 2012). The videos in Teaching for Change incorporated a plethora of pictures and animations to help support learning experiences to follow.

As a CPD MOOC, there were several reasons for students enrolling in Teaching for Change, as outlined. Although enrolled students were sufficiently motivated and the course marketed as a collective endeavour, it was still important to *initiate* learners to engage in the learning experiences that were to follow. Here, the introductory videos in Teaching for Change played an important role. Students watching the videos could get an overview of the current research in the field of an African philosophy of education. These videos were used to evoke students' intellectual curiosity. Laurillard (2012) argues that enabling students with existing ideas is fundamental to formal education and the progressive development of new ideas. Videos as *initiation* experiences could therefore be viewed as an attempt to foster active learning. These videos were accompanied by a range of different questions for students to consider. Students were encouraged to share their initial comprehension about what constitutes

an African philosophical approach before engaging with the rest of the course content and learning activities that followed. An example of a question posed by the course presenter would be (all quotes are reproduced verbatim and unedited):

Like I am working in analytical philosophy of education, I am interested to know your own educational interests. My interest in African philosophy of education is stimulated by a concern for more deliberative educational encounters amongst students and educators. And what are yours? (Waghid 2017a, b).

To which a student replied:

As a teaching assistant at one of African universities and in my personal opinions African philosophy of education encompasses all what we do daily (theoretically and practically) in our settings. It entails what we should be doing to respond to the nature and more importantly to critically solve our encounters upon our nature and experiences. This latter means African philosophy of education is uniquely Africanizing the education in imparting skills and knowledge. For years African philosophy was not credited. It was refuted and devalued. But denying this philosophy means there are no humans and life Africa. So, African Philosophy has all so long we accept that Africa has its system. (Elias 2017)

The above response may serve as a validation of how students were motivated to engage in the learning activities that followed.

Following an initiation step in Teaching for Change, there was an *inquiry* learning experience step. This was in the form of a reading or suggested reading, provided by the course presenter. Through an investigation of these readings, a student was afforded the opportunity to modulate his or her conceptual understanding, facilitated by the course presenter (Laurillard 2012). For a learning experience to be effective, it would necessitate a high level of student motivation and self-efficacy, as students investigate and reflect on such readings (King et al. 2014). Teaching for Change, as discussed earlier, can be categorised as a CPD course, typified by post-graduate students, looking for ways to improve

their vocational knowledge and career prospects. It is, therefore, assumed that students who enrol for this MOOC are sufficiently motivated to engage with the content and peers.

Access to digital resources, online guidance and software tools, may result in a more effective approach to learning through *inquiry*, according to Laurillard (2012). As mentioned earlier, access to digital resources in the form of links to open educational resources were provided. These open educational resources such as *A companion to African philosophy* (edited by Kwasi Wiredu, 2004), were opportunities for students to work independently from the course presenter and to understand the course presenter's conceptual understanding of the aforementioned philosophy in relation to education. Laurillard (2012) defines this learning through *inquiry* as an attempt to empower students to control their own knowledge and skills development, in contrast to teacher-centred learning activities. It is, however, noted that providing students with such an *inquiry* learning experience, for instance, providing a link to an open educational resource, may not be enough for students to approximate whether their understanding was indeed improving. Here, the course presenter and peers played an important role. The course presenter's role in this regard encouraged students to provide reflections in the form of comment posts on the FutureLearn platform. Students also played a prominent role in the learning design, challenging peers' ideas posted on the platform. As already mentioned, the course presenter was not able to respond to every commented post on the Teaching for Change discussion forums. Therefore, throughout the inquiry learning experiences, comments posted by the course presenter, such as the one below, ensured that students would be stimulated to engage in the learning activities to follow.

Welcome to you all! I am excited to know that you are engaging with the text and one another. Yes, this is a course about African thinking and doing – that is, think about and of problems or ideas related to Africa then try to uncover reasons for such situations. When one does so, you are thinking and reflecting about issues. This is my understanding of African philosophy of education! (Waghid 2017a, b)

Through an *inquiry* learning experience in Teaching for Change, students were encouraged to adopt a critical and analytical approach, engaging

with content, towards a greater sense of ownership that would hopefully develop throughout the course.

Laurillard (2012) describes learning through *production* as a consolidation and an account of a student's learning in terms of the initial learning through *initiation*, *inquiry* and *practice* experiences. Learning through *production* is simply an articulation of a student's current conceptual understanding that may be in the form of an essay, report, presentation, video, photo, blog or discussion post, among others. Through such a *production*, the student avails him- or herself of extrinsic feedback from not only a teacher or lecturer, but also from peers engaged in the teaching and learning activities. According to the analytics provided by FutureLearn, each student produced approximately 10 comments per week. The comments were posted in the range of different learning experiences throughout the 4-week course amounting to a total of over 5000 comments.

Learning through *practice* experiences pertains to a student's application of theory. Students developed conceptual understandings towards the realisation of a goal generating action to achieve. These actions were consequently used to modulate their emerging conceptions (Laurillard 2012). Examples of how technologies would be able to facilitate this type of learning would be case studies, modelled answers, simulations, adaptive worlds and micro worlds (Laurillard 2012). Teaching for Change makes use of five case studies as modelled responses. These modelled responses, presented as videos, show how an African philosophy of education could be used to address problems endemic to the African continent. Case studies include food security and insecurity, military dictatorships, terrorism, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the South African student protests due to the hike in tuition fees. To ensure authenticity and to make sure that the case studies are true to life in nature, news footage was acquired from an ITN Source. ITN Source libraries house footage from Reuters, ITN, ITV Studios, Fox News and Fox Movietone, UTV, Asian News International and other specialist collections. For each case study video, an audio narration was provided by the course presenter.

For the first case study, pertaining to military rule, an African philosophy of education framework is applied. This relates to identifying the

problem of military rule, ascertaining the reasons why military rule is a problem and finally looking at the educational implications or consequences thereof. Using criticism, an examination of women's farming knowledge is conducted in the second case study. This examination yields potential reasons for why women engage in farming practices. The case study suggests that through women drawing on their lived experiences, using both local and global understandings of crop production, adopting an integrationist approach, there is scope to enhance agricultural practices. For the case study reflecting on the South African student protests, the framework for an African philosophy of education is again used. The course presenter first identifies the reasons behind the protests; second, examines the historical and cultural perspectives of the student protesters; third, discusses the inequity with regard to higher education access; and last, elucidates the implication of these protests for university education. For the case study on combating terrorism, the course presenter uses *ubuntu* as a means to address terrorism. The case study argues that *ubuntu* could serve as a means to promote human co-existence, the recognition of the other, and deliberative engagement to resolve any potential instance of terrorism. The final case study in Teaching for Change deals with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa as an example through which *ubuntu* justice—moral, compassionate and restorative justice—can be practised. Through this exploration of the TRC, the course presenter discusses how *ubuntu* justice, through compassion and forgiveness, is a means of enacting a moral concern for human beings, compassion and healing, contributing to a culture of respect for human rights and dignity for all citizens of the country.

As mentioned, these case studies, presented in the form of videos, were accompanied by questions setting out specific goals for students. For instance, pertaining to the case study on the South African student protests, the course presenter provided an in-depth analysis of how the adoption of an African philosophical approach could be used to address student protests, with the accompanying question following:

Now that you have some idea of what a critical discourse means, can you think of a problem in your environment that can be addressed on the basis of some of the features of criticality explained thus far? (Waghid 2017a, b)

In this way, by using FutureLearn *discussion* forums, students were able to share their developing understanding with reference to their own practices. Although the course presenter did not provide a commentary on every comment posted there, analytical responses served as a reference point for students to determine whether they were applying the concept appropriately within their own context. Consequently, using such responses, students could become self-reliant through intrinsic feedback opportunities. An example of this independent learning includes the following comment post:

In my country the Black Lives Matter, Women's March, and NODAPL (No Dakota Access Pipeline) social movements are all examples of African American, women's, and Native American marginalization. However, through the eyes of critical discourse, these movements present much broader macro problems-how to end institutionalized violence, a persistent gender inequality across race and class, and the degradation of the environment. By reflecting and mobilizing citizens in a democracy toward greater advocacy and social justice work, the consciousness of the public is raised by protests, marches, social media documentation, etc., that are, therefore, positively disruptive because they force people to question long-held views or prejudices they might have had about people and ideas and why change is necessary for progress. (Chandler 2017)

Through such posts, students demonstrated their ability to improve their learning independently from the course presenter. Nevertheless, due to the social nature of FutureLearn courses, there are many instances of students obtaining extrinsic feedback from the course presenter and peers. As students situated their cognition in real-world contexts, the course presenter posted comments such as:

Thank you, some of the comments have been highly provocative and is at times needed to keep the conversation going! Yet, as Hannah Arendt so aptly reminds us in her famous book *On Revolution*, 'violence only breeds more violence' and when the voices of reason disappear a different form of totalitarianism (domination of one by the other) emerges! (Waghid 2017a, b)

This *practice* learning experience ensured that the Teaching for Change curriculum became meaningful for students. Such authentic learning experiences ensured that the philosophical concepts, which may initially have been viewed by a student as being abstract, could be contextualised within any given context. The effectiveness of such a *practice* learning experience is aptly summed up by the following comment by a student:

That case study was brilliant. My understanding is therefore that the goals of African philosophy of education are clearly defined. The strength of their unity is clearly seen in the harmony with one another, the result a crop that feeds a nation.

At the SEC/DigiFest 2017 conference, the chief executive officer of FutureLearn, Simon Nelson, described FutureLearn as the “world’s premier social learning platform”. FutureLearn puts a strong emphasis on *discussion*, where *discussion* is the reciprocal criticism of ideas leading towards the development of deeper conceptual understanding (Laurillard 2012). A major theorist is often cited as the source of the idea that peer *discussion* should play a prominent role in all learning interventions. Peer *discussion* is an effective strategy to negate teacher-centred transmission models, but requires careful orchestration for students to develop their cognitive understanding. Educators have embraced Vygotsky’s ideas that peer *discussion* could serve as an impulse for productive internal *discussions* leading to learning. For Teaching for Change, it was our aim to move away from teacher-centred transmission approaches towards social constructivist approaches, where the course presenter is primarily seen as a moderator, rather than as the sole source of knowledge.

The wide-ranging demographic of MOOCs, characterised by students scattered across multiple continents, confirmed that asynchronous online *discussions* were the only viable option to pursue in online education. Fortunately, asynchronous online *discussions* offer several didactic benefits. For instance, students are not limited by length or frequency of posts; students are afforded the time to reflect and consequently to change their contributions; the degree of anonymity afforded by an online space affords students the self-confidence to engage online; and it takes less time to read a message than it does to listen to an individual’s argument

(Laurillard 2012). The FutureLearn platform afforded students the opportunity to produce a comment post at every step in Teaching for Change. As already mentioned, these posts represented students' comprehension having engaged in prior learning experiences. The feedback that students provide to peers serves as a point of *discussion*. However, the value of these posts rests primarily on whether learners are indeed challenged and are able to respond to criticism with evidence and justification (Laurillard 2012).

Laurillard suggests that, if discussions are to have clear pedagogic value, parameters should be set as to what indeed makes *discussions* valuable. Educators should play prominent roles motivating students to engage. For Teaching for Change, it was important for the learning designers to establish a context conducive to online *discussion*. As with many online courses, this was established by providing students with suitable multimedia and text resources together with clear guidelines indicating what is to be expected from students; however, CPD MOOCs are often characterised by students who are suitably motivated and holding the intellectual prowess to engage online (Laurillard 2012).

Further to the establishment of such a context, Laurillard (2012) suggests that an educator should play a prominent role in creating opportunities for students to apply their understandings to a real-world context, as discussed in the *practice* learning experience. Additionally, open-ended questions were also used to provoke *discussion* among students. The creation of an encouraging, relaxed and supportive environment, by which students' contributions could be affirmed and constructive feedback provided, was encouraged.

Research suggests that for peer *discussions* to be effective, students need to be able to:

- hold a particular stance to a concept or conjecture;
- provide justification for their stance;
- share and criticise points of supposition;
- reflect on their own perspectives;
- work towards an agreed understanding; and
- apply what is learned (Bonk and King 1998).

Throughout Teaching for Change, students were able to adhere to the above criteria by using more than 50 questions posed throughout the course. Students were challenged to adopt a stance in relation to the philosophical topic discussed. They were then encouraged to provide justifications for their points of view and to contextualise their ideas and experiences within their responses. Moreover, their posts represented the consolidation of their learning. Laurillard (2012) refers to this consolidation of *initiation*, *inquiry* or *practice* experiences as a *production* learning experience. Thus, a deliberative sphere was established encouraging the sharing and criticism of ideas. Moreover, as students negotiated meaning with peers, there was an opportunity to apply what they had learned through the aid of responses, as discussed in the *practice* learning experience. Laurillard (2012) suggests that *discussions* of such a nature will drive internal dialogue and consequently richer understanding of concepts in students.

Researchers in the field of social constructivism often argue that even if online *discussion* occurs on forums, it may not be indicative of a *discussion* forum learning potential (Dysthe 2002). Researchers often argue that merely providing a *discussion* forum does not confirm that meaningful discussion will occur, but that students need to be provided with structure to scaffold their learning (Wu and Hiltz 2004). Earlier, we explored aspects which may result in effective *discussion*, such as encouraging students to hold a stance to a concept or conjecture; provide justifications; share ideas and embark on criticism of points of supposition; reflect on perspectives; work towards an agreed understanding and apply what was learned to a given context (Bonk and King 1998). Expanding on this, Laurillard (2012) proposes two methods in which structured interactions can be scaffolded: first, by initiating students into a particular type of intervention; and second, assigning students to play particular roles. In utilising the first method in Teaching for Change, students were encouraged to make use of interventions such as posing questions, explanations, conjectures, comments and criticism.

Through the above interventions, the course presenter ensured that students could contribute by questioning one another regarding a point of view, provide justifications for their points of view, and proffer conjectures, comments and criticism regarding their understanding as they

engaged with the course content. Laurillard (2012) argues that when students make use of such interventions, reflect on and subsequently modulate their understanding, we can begin to distinguish between what is merely discussion from opportunities for *learning through discussion*.

Towards a Conclusion

Throughout Teaching for Change, students were exposed to a range of learning experiences namely *initiation, inquiry, production, practice* and *discussion*. In many instances, there were overlaps in the learning experiences, as discussed earlier. Arguably, the most difficult learning experience to design for was learning through *collaboration*. This learning experience differs from the other learning experiences in that it aims to build a shared conception negotiated through deliberation (Laurillard 2012). There were many instances of students demonstrating learning through *collaboration* in Teaching for Change, with students taking on different roles in the online debates that ensued. In Teaching for Change, learning through *collaboration* was confirmed by deliberations in the form of *discussion* threads on Teaching for Change. Laurillard (2012) argues that it is these shared outputs that distinguish collaborative learning from learning through *discussion*.

Despite there being indications of collaborative learning in Teaching for Change, questions often arise about whether this form of learning holds pedagogic value. It is often asked why the imperfect understandings of students should be of value if the teacher is not present. Slavin (2004) argues that learning through *collaboration* holds its worth if it incorporates three learning activities. For a MOOC with thousands of students, these learning activities would need to be sufficient to motivate students to work towards a shared goal in Teaching for Change. The first of these motivating features used in Teaching for Change was what Slavin (2004) refers to as peer modelling. Peer modelling in Teaching for Change involves students sharing their ideas in the form of comments on the FutureLearn platform. As ideas are shared in the form of comments, there is an opportunity for the reciprocal articulation and criticism of these comments. For “peer modelling” to be effective, listening, explain-

ing, questioning, summarising, speculating and hypothesising skills are important to pursue in learning encounters (Boud et al. 1999). Slavin (2004) refers to this as cognitive elaboration. The deliberative sphere through which students engaged in criticism served as a motivating feature, what Slavin (2004) refers to as practice with one another. Slavin (2004) adds that practice with one another is more likely to occur in group learning than in individual learning experiences.

Schwartz (1999) emphasises that it is ultimately the productive agency of an individual that enables learning through *collaboration*. Students should demonstrate the intention and willingness to collaborate with one another (Schwartz 1999). Schwartz (1999) furthermore maintains that if these social values are adhered to, then students will be sufficiently motivated to engage in negotiation, learning and producing a shared output. This was indeed evident in Teaching for Change, where students, in a sphere of mutual respect, continually supported one another towards a shared African philosophical understanding. As a student produced a comment, it would be open to criticism. It was through such formative feedback comments that students could adapt their understanding. Through this iterative process, students continually provided alternative solutions to a given comment, which resulted in students modulating their understanding and, consequently, generating a new jointly revised understanding, expressed through a comment posted on the Teaching for Change forums. Given the large student numbers that this course attracted, the course presenter could not be expected to address every comment posted on the forums. This formative feedback, therefore, served as an integral component supporting students through the weeks of the course running.

At the advent of Teaching for Change, the course presenter clearly stipulated his role as that of a moderator, as he explained that he would not be able to address every comment posted on the forums. As discussed earlier, he encouraged students to “come to speech”. Towards learning through *collaboration*, the course presenter intermittently joined in *discussions*, especially where students were showing an inclination towards learning through *collaboration*, to produce a joint product or understanding. His role was not to provide any form of validation or verification, but to put it as he refers to in the course trailer, as “learning together”.

His presence in the *discussion* forum, therefore, served as a motivating factor facilitating learning through *collaboration*. Podcasts at the end of every week also served as a motivating factor for supporting learning through *collaboration*. Many students posted comments acknowledging the course presenter's efforts for reading their comments and addressing the comments in the form of an audio recording or podcast.

A synopsis of research in the field of collaborative learning provided by Laurillard (2012), proposes the following guidelines towards fostering meaningful interaction among students:

- encouraging students to contribute, based on clear argumentation;
- argumentation should be derived from course content; and
- contributions should reflect a theoretical underpinning.

With Teaching for Change, open questions at the end of every philosophical concept discussed were used to corroborate meaningful pedagogic interactions. Students were encouraged to provide statements and reflections while scaffolding one another in developing philosophical understandings. This was indicative of meaningful *collaboration*, as discussed by Laurillard (2012). The learning design underpinning Teaching for Change attempted to provide students with a range of learning experiences, encompassing learning through *initiation, inquiry, practice, discussion*—referred to by Laurillard (2012), as learning through *collaboration*.

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