Dialogue as a Possibility for Knowledge in Organizations

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Abstract

Taking dialogue to be social practice within organizations, we reflect and ask ourselves: Under what circumstances does dialogue work as a process that can promote or hinder knowledge development in organizations? In response, we extend organizational perspectives by situating knowledge construction within interactions influenced by dialogue and conversation. The key issue is that humans communicatively constitute knowledge by way of interaction and social practices that vary according to their social-historic contexts (see Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009; Putnam & Nicotera, 2009). We present the case of a Brazilian Innovation unit charged by the government to incorporate knowledge-dialogue dynamics in organizational change processes. Through this case, we illuminate ways in which communication constructs and upgrades knowledge within organizational environments.
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Through interaction and relationships, organizations are actively built, dynamic and fluid, non-stable and unitary (Cheney, Christensen, Zorn & Ganesh, 2011). Observing organizations in their subjective side or dimensions means to consider their behavioral, spiritual, and emotional features (see Davel & Colbari, 2003) and to understand their relevance beyond their utility as management processes and structures. The subjective perspective foregrounds the notion that reality that only exists when it is experienced and given a signification (Hatch, 2006). Moreover, subjectivity situates human construction of reality as primary: “What we perceive is a process in which we are active participants, not neutral receivers or passive observers” (McAuley, Duberley & Johnson, 2007, p. 39). Political matters, problematic situations, differences in prioritizing, miscommunication, and ambiguities, contradictions, and inconsistencies in understanding the same task, are all elements that require deeper involvement and insight—with interaction as the process that can assist in this sensemaking (see Sias, 2009; Weick, 1979, 1995, 2006) and with dialogue as the process that can fundamentally transform our worlds.

In this essay, our goal is to integrate and distinguish among processes of knowledge production, interaction, and dialogue by delving into the theoretical contributions of each and by presenting the case of a governmental agency in Brazil that incorporated dialogic processes in their change management procedures with resulting transformations of individuals, work processes and outcomes, and organizing as a whole. To accomplish our goal, we begin by (a) discussing some rudimentary distinctions and interconnections among dialogue, interaction, and knowledge. We next delve into (b) dialogue in the process of interaction before addressing (c) the ways in which dialogue is part of the construction of knowledge and self awareness. We bring these ideas together in the fourth section, (d) implications, where we present the case of a Brazilian governmental agency that undergoes
organizational change through dialogic techniques and processes. We offer (e) a conclusion that provides closure on our thoughts in this paper but that also encourages reflection on the possibilities within dialogue for transformation.

**A Starting Point: Dialogue, Interaction, and Knowledge Production**

Dialogue is seen as a means by which knowledge is achieved in organizations, and the reason is simple: social practice takes place when individuals construct their relations and these relations produce meanings. The old idea that there is one group in the organization that is the thinker, innovator, or designer, and another group that is the doer, implementor, or producer no longer works. This division of labor happened mainly because expertise was considered to be compartmentalized with different skills required for different tasks (Hartelius, 2008). However, such divisions do not recognize that there is no productive process that can start and end around a single person’s ownership of expertise: there must be interaction. So dialogue is focused as a process of interaction that can influence fundamentally the course of events (Shotter, 2006, *apud* Brundin, Melin & Nordqvist, 2008), and as action occurs, knowledge production become a consequence: those who know less learn with those who know more, those who know about different areas with those whose credibility lies in specialized knowledge. These positions continuously change and “knowledge [becomes] as an inherent aspect of action” (Deng & Poole, 2011, p. 210)

In the words of Sapir (1929/1958), “We always see the world through the lenses of our language.” This process, called language in activity (*language activity*), means activity within interpersonal relations and cultural contexts, not only as the processes whereby the organization develops but also as the site of constant rebirth. In other words, it all starts when people talk and share their ideas, converse, and dialogue. These spaces for interaction enable growth, evolution, and the change of ideas and of the involved participants.
Interaction promotes upgrades in knowledge as individuals and the organization as a collective grows with the expanded background information they acquire through sharing. Knowledge is drawn right from the literal meaning of the word: awareness, ability to perceive a phenomenon more sharply. Knowledge is built and rebuilt in daily practices (Deng & Poole, 2011). Gorz (2005) proposes the creation of forms of knowing—not replaceable and not formalizable—but reconstructed in, or reconstituted through, diversified discourses that permeate organizational spaces. As such, these different kinds of knowledge and knowledge creation processes as a whole are living processes: “The knowledge from experience, insights, capacity for coordination, self-organization and communication /.../ forms of a living knowledge acquired in the traffic of the quotidian” (Gorz, 2005, p. 9).

Communication theory comprises the practical dimension, or the act that is put into effect, and the relationship that takes shape by means of the significant gestures, all steered by language (França, 2008, p. 86). Varey (2006, p. 194) perceives communication as interaction acts and not as objects and artifacts. Interaction cannot be understood as a process of information but a process of “construction and negotiation of meanings (a process of communication).” Communication is an interaction marked by reflexivity with which one part acts over the other—past and future are activated by the action in the present. Thus, “communication is connected to movement” (França, 2008, p. 90).

**Dialogue in the Process of Interaction**

Interaction qualifies distinctively the idea of action by emphasizing its shared aspects (França, 2008, p. 71). Action involves the actor and the assignment (Weber, *apud* França, 2008); all that is involved in the social act is interaction. Interactive processes are a sequence of interconnected phases whose complexities make it impossible to understand when analyzing a single phase. Thus, the practice of dialogue in contemporary organizations leads to the “producing and sharing of sense by and between interlocutors” (Maia & França, 2003,
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p. 188). It is a relation marked by the interactive situation and by the social-historic context. Dialogue is unique inasmuch as it involves the communication moment at which people find a connection. It is exactly this connection that the power to change the self and be open to be change by others makes place. It is through words and acts that we are placed in the human world and the human world becomes situated in us (Arendt, 2008, p. 189), with the meaning of the word reached “according to its contextual representation” (Martino, 2007, p. 61). The word has no meaning by itself; meaning will only take place upon the interaction of people and within the space where an activity occurs (Shotter, 2004).

The reciprocal nature of these interactions and questioning leads to community that can develop knowledge:

True community does not come into being because people have feelings for each other (though that is required, too), but rather on two accounts: all of them have to stand in a living, reciprocal relationship to a single living center, and they have to stand in a living, reciprocal relationship to one another. (Kaufmann, 1970, p. 94)

As noted by Kaufman, the core of community and knowledge is the reciprocal relationship between living, interacting human beings. The interactive component is essential to community. Moreover, “enactive approaches emphasize the use of representations in practice, and the consequent communicative constitution of such knowing (Tsoukas, 2011, p. xvii). The resulting theoretical approach is that of a dialogue seen as a form of social practice. The effects of the dialogue are constituent as individuals construct or create social realities by using it. Likewise, in organizations, individuals engage in social practices by negotiating meanings and constructing the world at the same time as they, the individuals, are constructed by those meanings and that world.

The “order of interaction” (Goffman, 1983, 1987) is where representations are promulgated. For Tsoukas (2011, p. xiv) “representations and meanings are instantiated through the pragmatics of human actions.” Organizational knowledge is achieved by means of processes of representation, meaning, and improvising (Tsoukas, 2011). The organization
agents, guided by the discourses, change part of their referential and roles, model their practices and perform their tasks” (Waiandt & Davel, 2008, p. 387).

According to Arendt (2008, p. 191), as human beings acts, they are able to “accomplish the endlessly improbable.” Arendt (2008, pp. 191-192) says:

Without discourse, action would not be action because there would be no actor; and the actor, the agent of the action, only exists if it is, at the same time, the author of the words. /.../ No other human activity but action requires so much from the discourse. It is through action and discourse that men [sic] can show who they really are, they can reveal their personal and unique identities and thus, present themselves to the human world.

This agency and presentation to the world is through Discourse. Discourse is revealed through human living and sharing. Organizations are discursive constructions insofar as discourse—as talk in interaction with its political, material, embodied, and contextual nature—is the real foundation on which organizational life and change are built (Ashcraft et al., 2009; Fairhurst & Putnam, 2010). Taylor (2004) suggests that attitude in communication takes place as a discursive phenomenon; therefore, it is essential not to overlook the properties of language found in such a communication game. Three fundamental factors reside in this process: context, interaction, and the ability of people that involves verbal interaction for the performance of people in organizational environments.

This performance of actions involving the creation and sharing of meanings is dialogue; dialogue is to perform communication. Westwood and Clegg (2003) consider that the essence of social construction is a concern with the experience and the production of meaning that people have developed in their living contexts. The words have particular meanings within the relationships that develop and take shape according to various negotiation processes that occur naturally in an organizational reality. Gergen and Warhus (2001) also see the process of constructing meanings as a social activity: "The meaning, therefore, has no origin in and is not stored within the mind for future use, but is created
through action and regenerated (or not) by a subsequent process of coordination” (p. 111). The degree to which the interacting parts are familiar with a certain word (in the case of an organization, a certain task) and with the context in which interaction is operating enhances the possibilities of dialogue.

The main implication is to clarify how sense and sensemaking takes place by means of dialogue under an approach that is not linear or persuasive (Wolf, 2001) but is relational, and recognizes that this process operates in the moment in which knowledge is created. Knowledge is constituted and recreated in daily social practices that are present in the moment individuals interact and make meanings in relation to their experiences.

As such, language meanings, thoughts, and actions do not occur in abstract but within conversations. Conversation is the most common type of language in activity and it has three characteristics: interactive, locally managed, and universal (see Nofsinger, 1999) that distinguish conversation from speech. When individuals engage in interaction, awareness of conversation goes beyond self consciousness to address how my attitudes affect others. Braga (apud OLIVEIRA, 2009, p. 60) understands interaction to be “symbolic and practical processes, organizing interchanges between humans, turn[ing] their actions and objective feasible.”

According to Bakhtin (apud Pearce & Pearce, 2004, p. 117) dialogue is “undetermined and an emerging process,” a human opportunity to “discuss or create truth and strengthen actions” (Hammond et al., apud Hawes, 2004, p. 175). Dialogue, even when considered in processes of negotiation, is a creative form of communication that treats relationships respectfully and produces shared solutions (Kellett, 2007; see also Deetz & Simpson, 2004). When conceptualizing dialogue as a “politically responsive constructionist theory of communication” (Deetz & Simpson, 2004, p. 145), we come to decisions that
strengthen creativity and commitment and that generate opportunities for the organization members to productively contribute to mutual problem resolutions.

The dialogue is referred to as a formal property of “spontaneous speech” and, by means of it, a process whereby people get themselves organized (Taylor & Robichaud, 2004, p. 399). França (2005) notes that “to understand discursive practices as ‘communicative interactions’ is the same as to emphasize the presence of interlocutors and see discursive interfaces as moments of negotiation” (p. 95) for the creation of knowledge. Dialogue provides for the legitimate experience of each individual in connection with others to determine what really counts as knowledge (Marchiori, 2008, p. 200). Finally, it is understood that the essence of the dialogue lies in the search for the truth, in the cultivation of the “I know that I do not know” and in getting to know from the experience of relationships (Socrates, apud Leahy, 2001). As Buzzanell (in press) notes, dialogue encapsulates communicative processes that transcend the here and now to create understandings in new ways and in content that we don’t yet know. … it is … a process permanently etched into our interactions with others. It upends our convictions and forces us to question our values. It requires that we engage in sensemaking … at some elemental level whereby we engage in our mutual right to and need to connect.

Dialogue, then, is an essential human action, with dialogial and monological movements (see Buber, 1977). These movements reflect the need to consider the presence of the other, expressing in external gestures what the soul wants to show. Beyond moving towards the other, one must turn inwards and watch himself or herself. Knowledge that changes occurs to the extent that the individual appraises it through the lenses of her own feelings, values, spiritual mood, and emotions (i.e., it is not enough to only share it with other people). Dialogue, therefore, with its many forward and backward movements, pushes and sometimes pulls back in the development of human knowledge. Knowledge construction processes may be hurt when what is heard is not really what was meant, and what is lived is not really what one has accepted and desired in life.
Dialogue: Construction of the Knowledge and Self Awareness

Socrates put significant emphasis on dialogue in search for knowledge by understanding that truth is born amid humans, in the process of dialogic communication. Clarity comes out when dialogue is in progress and when dialogue comprises statements from all involved parts. Deetz and Simpson (2007, p. 150) suggest that organizations are able to “emphasize the importance of shared meaning and finding common ground at the expense of encountering difference and mutually constructing understanding,”, so as to demonstrate that each of these ways redefines understanding of dialogic transformation.

Dialogue changes the quality of thought beneath interactions (Pearce & Pearce, 2004), since the more interlocutors interact in a conscious and desired way, the more they tend to abandon their individualist thinking habits. Accepting that knowledge is not fixed or predetermined means to consider knowledge as an ongoing negotiation and with control over knowledge produced socially (Murphy & Eisenberg, 2010). Knowledge comes when people access their interpersonal networks to develop interpretations of how to deal with ambiguous situations (Murphy & Eisenberg, 2011). By considering this context, the circle between dialogue and knowledge comes to a close. To Murphy and Eisenberg (2011), knowledge occurs in the relational dimension of communication.

Such knowledge comes from the experiences drawn from interpersonal relationships, of conversation, from the collaborative routines built by individuals in the organizational context in which they are involved, and according to the situations that need to be reviewed in relation to the dynamics of such organizational environments. Actions and interactions are thus examined, as are the artifacts and the language utilized in social interactions (Deng & Poole, 2011), which, by means of dialogue, build knowledge in the organizations. That is why
defining knowledge as a situated practice, problem-solving, and thinking, suggests its fundamentally communicative nature. Because it is necessarily situated in practice and a specific context, knowledge requires communication among individuals in order to make sense of it, to exchange it, and therefore to derive benefit from it. These processes are all rooted in human communication, and require an understanding of communicative processes. (Flanagin & Bator, 2011, p. 177)

Such processes allow for an organization to build its own knowledge and help individuals to interpret, make decisions, and act in a wide range of situations. It is fundamental that organizations, by means of dialogue, foster the creation of knowledge, and understand that the knowledge each individual possesses within an organization is what distinguishes it from others. An organization is movement, and knowledge is also movement in relation to the innovation the interlocutors bring to the organization when dialoguing. This movement is implicit in Hayes and Walsham’s (2003) statement that “Knowledge is ‘socially embedded and inseparable from practice’ (p. 73), and contrasts with information that serves as an input that is contextualized and understood through complex and situated processes of knowledge creation” (Flanagin & Bator, 2011, p. 176).

Implications

Perspectives inspired in dialogue-knowledge relationship “argue that knowledge is relative, specific to a particular context, and reflects esoteric viewpoints that may or may not be understood beyond the specific locations in which they are embedded. From the relational perspective, the focus is on the processes by which knowledge is gained and shared” (Flanagin & Bator, 2011, p. 176). In order to put more substance to the discussion and illustrate what we mean by dialogue and knowledge in this context, an illustration is provided.

A project designed by the codename of Innovation was part of a far reaching philosophy of the federal government of Brazil. Innovation’s aim was to spread, throughout the country’s administrative units, the idea that organizational change is present in today’s world and that it is mandatory that public and private entities engage in organizational change
processes to search for more productive managerial systems, capable of sustaining not only
the output but also the development of people. The implication here is that this is one of the
situations where knowledge needs to be generated, grown, and utilized. For instance, each
unit involved with this Innovation project had the primary task of understanding the nature of
the government’s challenge.

A pilot run of the Innovation was conducted and a Federal Administrative unit in
Belém, the capital of the northern state of Pará, was a branch that volunteered to participate.
The involved consultants set up a list that contained dialogue-inspired presuppositions that
they would then put into work. These presuppositions would allow for the reading of the
implications on the entire project in its ability to introduce change in personnel management.
One clear statement was that acquiring knowledge was a preponderant aspect for successful
accomplishments and that meant acquiring skills to achieve that knowledge. The organization
had to accept the fact that it had to involve people and that change would only be effected with
dialogue.

This Innovation unit reported results that they said were gained through dialogue and
through a process whereby they identified points affecting the interactions of the local staff in
daily activities. Although containing some classic findings similar to those found in prior
research studies, these lists, in our opinion, can be viewed from the lens of dialogue and
knowledge construction. We provide these lists because they display how circumstances act
as exigencies toward and justify thinking of dialogue as a generator of knowledge.
Specifically, the lists cover a range of topics that represent (a) one level of knowledge known
(or suspected) and levels to be acquired, (b) problems to be solved, and (c) obstacles to be
removed. With regard to the level of knowledge known (or suspected) and levels to be
acquired, the Innovation group’s list included:
Tasks were being performed without prior definition of goals individually and in groups, and no outcome could be foreseen.

No tool was available for follow up, and no personal evaluation was possible.

There was poor communication among leaders and subordinates, causing lack of constructive criticism and difficulties in working processes, results, and competences.

Programming and scheduling were inadequate for proper training, drill, and human resources development, with no needs analysis being shared with crew members.

Career growth followed traditional procedures of automatic promotion (i.e., length of service) so poor involvement, commitment, satisfaction, and performance was expected. Evaluation output originated exclusively through the boss’s judgment with no trustworthy and reliable criteria being involved.

The **Innovation** group needed to become conscious and to “own” the fact that no solution for these listed problems could be attained “outside” them. They, and the consultants brought in to assist them with change processes, recognized that internal communication, especially top down and seemingly straightforward communication from upper levels was working poorly. The group needed to dialog and, at a deeper level, become better able to anticipate, be responsive to, and incorporate paradigmatic changes in the current business world. The agency also needed to enhance awareness of the requirements and demands of sound management for better results, productivity, sustainable growth, corporate social responsibility, and skills development—that is, upgraded knowledge.

As a first step, agency members sought, and were guided in their, learning about the content of their own communication as the site in which preliminary knowledge could be achieved. Building deeper levels of knowledge then grew from the same source: the work environment with dialogue functioning as one of the tools as well as the fundamental process
in organizational change. The engagement of dialogue and knowledge (re)creation produced consequences in skills and in management—that is, in the work itself and what employees brought to this work as well as in the design and administration of processes and products (for overviews of dialogic consulting and change management, see Bushe & Marshak, 2009; Marshak & Grant, 2008; Schwarz & Huber, 2008; Seo, Putnam, & Bartunek, 2004).

The second list consisted of problems to be solved. This list rested on the idea of another kind of knowledge that was essential to the change processes. This knowledge was the understanding of the group’s own administrative model and how much people were willing to invest to improve their interactions and, as a consequence, improve overall performance. The following presuppositions were implied and such norms and decision premises were made conscious through interaction. These presuppositions were phrased as problems to be solved, but they could alternatively be called codes of conduct and opportunities for commitment:

- Participation of all involved will be required, with no exception; commitment will be drawn from this sense of belonging.
- Dialogue will bring knowledge of how individual and group treatment are perceived by the entire group. This treatment should involve fair management of compensation for the efforts put in the tasks.
- Permanent discussion of individual roles and group participation will be implemented.
- Understanding the ways to insure that this office becomes effective for outside stakeholders, included the community, will be considered essential.

Third, throughout the change processes, there were obstacles. These obstacles often consisted of material difficulties and points of resistance in terms of workers’ perceptions, emotions, and ties to past ways of working individually and collectively. Therefore, another
knowledge base or list consisted of the following anticipated obstacles to organizational change that were phrased in terms of propositions and causal (if-then) statements:

- High volume of work and the urge to correct flaws from others affects motivation.
- Dissatisfaction with prevailing compensation policies tends to interfere with commitment.
- Skepticism over the actual goals of the organizational system may be a consequence of low autonomy in the office to implement decisions.
- Fear of the consequences of admitting poor performance (i.e., fear of being fired) would cause people to not admit difficulties and mistakes.
- Difficulties in establishing individual and group goals in quantifiable metrics resulted from the absence of strategic planning and lack of clarity regarding expected outcomes from staff members and the organization as a whole.
- Low ability to provide feedback in spite of apparent good relationships among staff members meant that staff members experienced difficulties in speaking frankly about different shortcomings.

After introducing these three sets of lists and developing in organization members the capacities to deal with the gaps in knowledge known (or suspected) and to be acquired, problems to be solved, and obstacles to be removed, the Innovation group set upon an integrative task. To pursue greater productivity, deepen knowledge, and promote dialogue to affect change, members of the government agenda had to develop confidence in the utility and effectiveness of dialogue. They needed to have this confidence so that they could face up to their situations. Ways to develop confidence tended to work best when several conditions were achieved. First, there needed to be high impact changes and accountability in personnel management, with mechanisms for feedback receptivity and responsiveness (see Redding,
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1972) being implemented. These mechanisms included following up on action plans, maintaining a results orientation, and doing evaluation as encouraged and guided by dialogic processes. The agency employees also needed greater and broader motivations for self-awareness and understandings of their own roles in the organization. Moreover, hidden conflicts had to be unmasked and discussed for solution—with the process of uncovering these hidden conflicts continuing over time as the workers became more comfortable with the process. They began to better accept each other’s responsibility and the sharing of expectations and obligations (i.e., roles). They gained greater ability to engage in self analysis and reflection about each other’s capabilities and development needs. Actions also were redirected to skills development with a new awareness for requesting tailored training and seminars.

The knowledge that developed within the Brazilian *Innovation* unit also included dialogue on less developed competences and what to do to enrich them. The result of these identified needs, assumptions, and processes for change resulted in greater group and individual performance impacts. The workers also perceived that they acquired greater capacities to establish and negotiate goals and also greater consciousness of the need to be responsive to such planning. Dialogue and negotiation implications were recognized and rewarded as new factors and processes introduced into the everyday interactions of organization members, and the knowledge obtained through such processes, was considered innovative.

In their appraisal of perspectives on dialogue theory, Cissna and Anderson (2008) mention the relatively few high-profile theorists, philosophers, and social commentators, such as Buber, Bakhtin, Gadamer, Habermas, and Bohm, whose writing have inspired existing work on dialogue. The question they raise, among others, is how the communication discipline can shape dialogical concepts in new and productive directions. Of interest for
organizational studies is a related question about how strategy might inform, and be informed by, dialogue. In an article on the place of strategy in dialogic theory, White (2008) points out that there is a stark contrast between both concepts: whereas the idea of strategy is connected to notions of goal-oriented success, instrumental effectiveness, and self-conscious calculation, dialogue emphasizes “an accommodation of otherness, a commitment to ethical processes, and the potential of a spontaneous and unreserved authenticity to produce profound personal and social transformations” (p. 5). Although these sets of conditions and distinctive characteristics would make strategy and dialogue seem incompatible, White (2008) offers some points of connection and apparent enthusiasm in their application to human interaction:

(…) imagine two interlocutors who each are faced with a choice of engaging with the other communicatively (i.e., dialogically) or strategically. If they both choose strategy, then neither is particularly advantaged nor disadvantaged: they make their trade or conclude their negotiations and, one imagines, each gives as good as he or she gets. If they both choose dialogue, however, then the transformative potential of dialogue is brought to bear and the fruits of collaboration and true cooperation are reaped by both: The fictitious falls away and every word – every word! is an actuality, tongued perhaps with fire. (p.12)

White continues to say that, depending on the circumstances, strategy-dialogue intersections might promote therapeutic personality change, social support, personal empowerment, and cultural transformation. Commitment to dialogue demands that humans challenge taken-for-granted assumptions of the world and leads interlocutors to hear one another. Success in strategic interaction guided by dialogic principles means that humans can engage in processes of relevantly relating to others. These processes involve interaction to communicatively constitute knowledge.

**Conclusion**

The main question in this study was the relationship between dialogue and knowledge. Dialogue is a complex concept, applicable to all social environments and with the potential to create knowledge at any time. The broad impact of this relationship is at the
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group and organizational levels. In an organization, all starts with planning. Sustainable, inclusionary, and innovative planning must be collective and dialogic. In this level, people have to think about what they are suggesting and must know what they are talking about. Otherwise, dialogue cannot produce knowledge.

Working in the concept of dialogue requires relating to philosophers. These philosophers include numerous writers, thinkers, and theoreticians—Buber, Howe, Matson and Montague, Ruesch, Jaspers, Meerloo, Rogers, Habermas, Johannesen, Stewart, Brown and Keller, Arnett, and Thomlison—who have explored dialogic communication in one form or another. Their approaches and emphases vary, but each deals with some of the prime aspects of dialogue. Because of the diversity in these philosophers’ and theoreticians’ approaches, a dialogic and knowledge construction orientation toward communication has been characterized by different names including: presence, encounter, genuine communication, therapeutic encounter, supportive climate, nondirective therapy, existential communication, facilitative communication, helping relationships, authentic exchange, conversation, I-Thou relationship, and dialogue (Thomlison, 2011). Similarly, knowledge can be generated only in an environment that is non manipulative, and where there is mutual openness, recognition of uniqueness, and mutual confirmation. The knowledge-dialogue intersectionalities are like the concentric circles that form when a stone is thrown in water: each time a message goes from one interlocutor to the other, the straight line between sender and receiver enlarges a circle around it--the more understood one message becomes, the more knowledge it generates. The more the dialogue-knowledge intersectionalities continue, the more participants can engage in praxis. A praxis of imagination, courage, and conscience are real possibilities in dialogue: “It is in these accidental moments of dialogue that we may find new opportunities for transcendence. And thus, we may (e)merge in dialogue and begin dancing in the light of new meaning” (Poulos, 2008, p.117).
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