Knowledge beyond colour lines

Towards repurposing
knowledge generation in
South African Higher Education

EDITORS

Monwabisi K. Ralarala

Lorraine S. Hassan

Rajani Naidoo

13 TRANSFORMING THE TUTORIAL SPACE TO ENHANCE KNOWLEDGE SHARING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Lawrence Meda, Subethra Pather, Najwa Norodien-Fataar and Hanlie Dippenaar

Introduction

Since the advent of democracy, the dominant debates in South African universities have focused on the lack of transformation in staffing, academic programmes, curricula and institutional culture as key concerns in higher education. However, the #FeesMustFall student protests of 2015-2017 signalled a turning point for higher education institutions, as staff and students called for more financial student support, improved academic support and the decolonising of the university (Meda, 2019). This chapter addresses critical questions about transforming tutorial spaces to enhance knowledge sharing in teaching and learning in higher education, focusing on the lecturers' perspectives of the tutorial space, the level of lecturer-tutor engagement in this space, and curriculum transformation. It argues for new ways of transforming the tutorial space to enhance knowledge sharing practices as part of curriculum development. Curriculum transformation calls for a renewal of pedagogy and classroom practices that enhances a culture of openness, critical thinking and knowledge sharing. The tutorial space is ideally suited to contribute to curriculum transformation. Central to this chapter is understanding lecturers' role in the knowledge sharing context to decolonise institutional cultures and practices in delivering the curriculum. Pertinent questions are:

- What knowledge do lecturers share with their tutors?
- What motivates them to share their knowledge?
- How can the shared knowledge enhance the tutorial space?
- What is the level of engagement in the knowledge sharing process with their tutors?

In a decolonised environment, having students as partners allows for student voices to contribute to knowledge sharing and delivery, which refers to tutorials in this chapter. This chapter's authors define tutorials as forums for small group teaching designed to involve students as active participants in class discussions, reading, writing and other specified learning activities. In addition, they define tutors as senior students who have relevant

skills, abilities and emergent disciplinary knowledge that may contribute to them being facilitators of learning and teaching in higher education.

Literature Review

The extant literature on tutorial development in higher education focuses on the role of tutorials and highlights the importance of tutoring programmes to support students' successful transition into higher education. The literature reviewed for this study also identifies tutors as key role players in providing students with appropriate academic support for a more personal learning experience (Pather, 2018). Tutoring forms a part of the university teaching and learning process and can be regarded as an essential strategy for improving students' academic success and professional goals (Fandos & Morillas, 2014). Some academics have also identified tutoring as a recognised pedagogical tool in the broader context of higher education teaching. In some universities, lecturers have regarded tutoring as a professional competency and have included it as part of their teaching support strategy (Jiménez, 2010). Roodt (2013) suggests that the implementation of tutoring in the formal curriculum aims to minimise students' deteriorating academic performance and promotes active learning in South African universities. Clouston (2005) adds that tutorial programmes are effective for problem-based learning, adding that, in a tutorial class, new learning and critical thinking opportunities are applied and re-applied until students have a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Shabanza (2017) contends that the tutorials conducted require both the lecturer and tutor to be active in their defining roles, as an absence of one of them as role players will compromise tutorial learning.

The research on tutorials also focuses on the planning, policy and implementation of tutorials systems. In South Africa and across the globe, the research shows that effective tutorial planning and implementation at higher education institutions positively influence student success, engagement and throughput rates (Clarence, 2018; Layton, 2013). Studies on tutors and tutoring also acknowledge that a clearly defined institutional policy relating to tutorial management, resources, recruitment, training and support of tutors and academic staff can help deal with the many complexities involved in effective tutoring (Pather, 2018). In addition, Fandos and Morillas (2014) argue that high-quality tutoring enhances retention and facilitates advancement throughout the higher education pipeline, contributing to undergraduate students and tutors' academic success. However, Hinton (2012) warns that institutions engaging in poor tutorial planning processes could derail an institution's operational plan for student success and retention.

Another body of research focuses on collaborative lecturer-tutor partnerships and suggests that tutoring is all about forming this partnership to provide students with quality learning experiences. Underhill, Clarence-Fincham and Petersen (2014) describe this as a reciprocal

collaborative lecturer-tutor relationship in tutorial programmes. However, Layton (2013) warns that the partnership should not be about the lecturer telling the tutor what to do and what not to do, but rather, it should be a partnership where both parties co-learn and co-create knowledge. Clarence (2018) suggests that the main rationale behind tutorials is more than just tutoring students for academic success but extends further to include sharing ideas, co-constructing knowledge and developing more independent tutors.

However, from the literature review, we noted a limited number of studies that focus on the lecturers' role in knowledge sharing to transform the tutorial space. This study attempts to address that gap by examining the lecturer and tutor's sharing of knowledge and engagement in the tutorial space. A type of knowledge sharing that could be visible in the tutorial space is closed-network knowledge sharing. According to Cheng, Ho and Lau (2009), closed-network knowledge sharing allows for a more personal and directed sharing interaction, where the lecturer has the freedom of choice regarding what information is shared and with whom. The success of a closed-network knowledge sharing activity includes factors such as trust and personal relations. This chapter focuses on this area and examines the lecturer and tutor partnership's strengths and constraints in knowledge sharing in the tutorial space.

The idea of lecturer-tutor partnerships in transforming the tutorial space is not a new concept in higher education teaching and learning. Vygotsky's (1978:86) zone of proximal development (ZPD) that refers to "the distance between the actual development level and the level of potential development", which can be overcome with adult guidance or collaboration with a peer, can be considered a peer-lecturer partnership in an academic space to enhance learning. Similarly, this tutor-lecturer partnership in the tutorial space can be enhanced with the lecturer's guidance and collaboration with the tutors.

However, in more recent developments, the idea of 'students as partners' gave rise to a 'third space' in academia, initially designed as a space for social justice and equality (Bhabha, 1994). The student-lecturer partnership has always been centred around activities that do not alter or add to the pedagogy and other key decision-making spaces within academia. Thus, engaging in the third space would require a paradigm shift regarding how students engage with lecturers and acknowledge and understand both parties' contribution to the learning and teaching process (Cook-Sather & Felten, 2017). This idea of transformation of students and lecturers as partners is not an easy task. According to Hawley, McDougall, Potter and Wilkinson (2019:3), it requires a rebalancing of the lecturer-student power dynamic, only possible where a culture of reflexivity is developed: where students and lecturers are forced to reflect on their position in relation to dominant norms.

This chapter examines the tutorial space and lecturer-tutor partnership in knowledge sharing by investigating the phenomena from the lecturer's perspective. Undoubtedly, the relationship between the lecturer of a module and the tutors who support learning is one of

the most critical elements of effective discipline-specific tutoring. Lecturers and tutors work in a professional space with a common purpose: to enhance student learning and success. Although academics use different models to implement tutorials, they firmly agree that tutorials are potentially effective in students' learning. Maitland and Lemmer's (2011:141) study of tutor-mentor programmes found that "lecturer participation and involvement is positively linked to programme success: lecturers are responsible for training and advising tutor-mentors and for allowing them entry into their professional space". The lecturer-tutor knowledge sharing, planning, preparation, support and collaboration illustrates the relationship's critical nature and its impact on tutorial and student learning success. In the context of higher education institutions' massification, Davids (2014) outlines the danger of tutors often being used by academics as a source of labour to implement universities' academic programmes. However, re-imagining the lecturer-tutor partnership will enable lecturers to find new ways of engaging with students, the curriculum, pedagogy and knowledge sharing within the context of the shifting debates in higher education institutions. This chapter's aim is thus to rethink the transformation of tutorial spaces within higher education institutions. Southwood (2012) refers to this as an opportunity to re-imagine a new pathway to teaching and learning characterised by participation, reflection, interrogation, construction and negotiation.

Theoretical framework: activity theory

The study purpose was to explore the tutorial space's transformative potential by examining the lecturer-tutor relationship as partners in this space from the lecturers' perspectives. The study area is analysed through the lens of Engeström's (1987) activity theory model (Figure 13.1) to understand the complexities of this relationship in terms of how knowledge sharing in tutor practices within the tutorial space can change institutional cultures and transform teaching and learning practices. Engeström's activity theory illustrates an activity system in which connected elements represent individual and group actions, cultural mediation, and the dynamics of a collective social system. The apex of Engeström's activity theory model examines group actions and mediation in the relationship between the three elements: subject, object and tools, while the base of the model examines the social elements: community, rules and division of labour.

FIGURE 13.1 Engeström's expanded activity theory model (Engeström, 1987).

In Engeström's model, an activity system is part of a complex network of six interdependent components connected vertically and horizontally. The two-way arrows in Figure 13.1 indicate that the influence between each of the six components is bidirectional: subject, object, tools, rules, community and division of labour. Activity theory offers a framework for analysing interaction complexity between individuals and their environment by identifying the components of an activity system, relations, different voices, underlying contradictions, and transformations. Higher education is focused on one central activity system: teaching and learning.

Contradictions and tensions may occur between the elements within activity systems. Engeström defines contradictions as "sources of change and development", which drive the activity system (Engeström, 2001:137). The activity system's significance hinges on its capacity to define and analyse the effect between the six components and the contradictions explored in this chapter.

In this study, Engeström's activity theory is used descriptively and analytically to illustrate lecturer-tutor relations and contradictions in the tutorial space. In this particular activity system, the lecturer-tutor relationship and interaction in knowledge sharing is the subject and unit of analysis. The activity system's object is delivering a transformed tutorial programme that enhances teaching and learning effectiveness. A transformed and decolonised tutoring programme and curriculum is the outcome of this activity system. By analysing the subject and object, we explore the lecturers' perspectives of transforming tutorials and how this may influence the desired outcome. The mediating tools in the activity system are teaching and

learning strategies used in the tutorial programme; lecturer-tutor engagement in planning meetings; and knowledge sharing through tutorial content, assessment and training. The division of labour describes the lecturer and tutor's role in the content and delivery of tutorials. We investigate the implicit and explicit division of labour and what constraints and tensions are identified in the relationship. This study's rules refer to the institutional tutor guidelines and the specific rules of tutor-lecturer engagement. Rules also take into account expectations and behaviour within the context and community. The community in the activity system refers to all participants in this space: tutors, lecturers, students and the wider institutional structure that supports the tutorial programme.

Context of the study

This case study was conducted at two education faculties of higher education institutions in the Western Cape. One a university of technology, and the other is a traditional university. The study investigated the tutorial space and the lecturer-tutor relationship from the lecturers' perspectives. The aim was to identify how lecturers engage with their tutors within the tutorial space.

The two institutions have different tutor models, processes and practices; however, this study's focus was not on the models but the lecturer and tutor's relationship and engagement in the tutorial space. Nevertheless, it is useful to understand how each institution employs its tutoring system. At the university of technology, tutorials do not form part of the formal teaching and learning programme and, in this regard, are optional. Therefore, lecturers can use the tutorial system in their modules if they deem it necessary. In most cases, tutorials support high impact modules and underperforming students. The challenge with this system is that tutorials are neither timetabled nor formally evaluated and assessed. In the Faculty of Education at the traditional university, tutorials are compulsory for all large classes (75 or more students), form part of the formal programme and are indicated on the institutional timetable. Students are allocated a tutor and tutorial classes as part of a specific module.

Despite these significant differences between the university of technology and the traditional university, both universities' tutor systems employ, train and contract undergraduate and postgraduate students as tutors; and monitor and evaluate the tutorials.

Methodology

The study adopted a qualitative approach within an interpretive paradigm, as it allowed participants to provide rich textual data about their partnership as lecturers and tutors. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2017) postulate that a qualitative approach is suitable for a study that requires textual data as it enables researchers to interact extensively

with participants, which allows for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. An interpretive paradigm was selected because of its compatibility with a qualitative approach (Lapan, Quartaroli & Riemer, 2012); it enabled researchers to understand and interpret textual data that participants provided (Creswell & Poth, 2018). According to Schultz and Hatch (1996), an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative approach seek to provide an interpretation and comprehensive understanding of the subject under investigation.

The study was done as an exploratory case study of two universities' education faculties in the Western Cape. A case study design was chosen (Yin, 2018) as researchers sought to explore how lecturers and tutors engage in enhancing tutorials in their universities. Bartlett and Vavrus (2017:6) concur that a case study approach enables researchers to explore a particular phenomenon. The sample of the study comprised 16 lecturers from both institutions. Purposive sampling, characterised by the deliberate targeting of information-rich participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2017), was used as researchers wanted to select lecturers actively involved in tutorials. Convenience sampling was used to select a university of technology and a traditional university as they were easily accessible by the researchers, and they both have undergraduate BEd programmes that employ tutorials.

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. Data were analysed using ATLAS.ti (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2017; ATLAS.ti, 2020), where information was coded and categorised into themes and presented using content analysis. Engeström's activity theory was used as a theoretical framework to guide data analysis and discussion.

Ethical issues were covered, first and foremost, by obtaining ethical clearance from the two universities. The study's purpose was explicitly explained to the participants, and they were informed that their participation was purely voluntary. Participants signed consent forms before taking part in the study, and they were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study at any point in time. Pseudonyms were used to maintain participants' confidentiality.

Findings and discussion

This section presents the study's findings, followed by a discussion guided by the activity theory's theoretical framework. This section focuses on data collected from lecturers involved in tutorial programmes at the two institutions.

The findings show a collaborative, dynamic and interactive relationship of the six components of activity theory that allowed us to view each component individually and in relation to others, thus providing a holistic view of lecturer-tutor engagement and knowledge sharing. Figure 13.2 provides information on the six components related to this study. The findings

and discussion, to illustrate the dynamics of the activity system in which the connected components are used to represent individual and group actions, are presented by dividing the activity system triangle into two parts: the top part of the activity system triangle focuses on the subject, tools and object, referred to as ‘the mediating principle’; discussed first. The discussion then follows an exploration of the social components: rules, community and division of labour; the base of the activity system triangle.

FIGURE 13.2 Activity system of the study (adapted from Engeström, 1987:78).

Dynamic interaction of the tool mediation principle of the activity theory

Drawing on the tool mediation principle of activity theory, the subject, tools and object components (top triangle of the activity system) are not static as they affect and influence one another to achieve a transformed tutorial space in higher education. Mediating tools influence lecturers and tutors’ engagement in knowledge sharing, as they work together towards creating a platform that enables an effective and transformed tutorial space. This study’s mediating tools are mainly conceptual and resource tools, such as planning meetings, teaching and learning strategies, training materials and skills. The following sections highlight the lecturer-tutor relationship and the influence of the mediating tools on knowledge sharing. The tool mediating principle’s dynamic interactions highlight the engagement, knowledge sharing and constraints in the system.

Relations between lecturers and tutors

‘Collaboration’ was one of the key themes that emerged from the data. There was a close and collaborative lecturer-tutor relationship in facilitating tutorials at both universities. Cupido and Norodien-Fataar (2018) define collaborative relationships between academic staff and student teaching assistants as supportive interactions towards a common goal. Findings from the study suggest that lecturers formed close connections with tutors on varying engagement levels.

Evidence from the data revealed varying levels of sharing of knowledge and partnership in the tutorial process. Lecturer-tutor engagement varied from the traditionally unequal lecturer-tutor relationship (in which the lecturer assumes the expert role) to a relationship that comprised a collaborative partnership – a reciprocal process through which the lecturer and tutor contributed equally towards the focus of the tutorial programme.

The varied lecturer-tutor collaborative partnership was evident in the following quotes when the tutor took on a more dominant expert role. One lecturer commented:

The tutor takes ownership and assists his students who did not do Computer Application Technology at school So, he helps me mainly with the teaching and the students get in contact with him basically.

Another lecturer highlighted:

The tutor assists by looking at common mistakes that students are making in tests and giving feedback to me. The tutors also fulfil a mentoring role besides the academic tutor role that they play.

Comments from two other lecturers showed a more collaborative relationship:

We sit together a day or two before the tutor goes for a tutorial and we plan and discuss the tutorial.

We meet to clarify issues and solve problems which tutors encountered with students during the previous week.

Discussing and engaging with the tutorial content was crucial for the lecturer-tutor knowledge sharing process built on the tutor’s skills and confidence, besides preparing students for tutorial lessons. The lecturer-tutor engagement is essential in knowledge sharing as it makes tutorials more effective (Cheng, Ho & Lau, 2009).

An interesting aspect that emerged from the data was the fact that the tutors also helped with administrative responsibilities, as commented by one lecturer:

I’m using her (tutor) primarily to assist me in the preparation of the review. So, it’s more administration tasks.

Another form of partnership that emerged from the tutorial programme was the use of tutors in mainstream formal lectures, where the lecturer worked with the tutor. In this partnership, the tutors observed as the lecturer taught different concepts to the class. The tutor's role was to observe and facilitate learning in the class by helping students in small groups. Race and Brown (2004) applaud this approach of lecturer and tutors working together; they postulate that tutorials are likely to be more effective and identify areas that need improvement when tutors and lecturers work hand-in-glove and have a close working relationship (Cox, 2013).

Lecturers and tutors have to work closely to ensure quality in tutorial programmes (Stoesz & Yuditseva, 2018). From the findings, we noted that lecturers provided more of a mentoring role to tutors to ensure that they knew what was expected of them. As one lecturer stated:

Because he (tutor) sits with me. We work very closely together so I know – if I ask him to mark this, when he gives it to me I ask him what were the problems here, which ones did they mention. When I go to the class, he must report back to the tutorial class, he should be able to tell the students where their problems were. So, I know exactly what he's doing all the time.

This extract draws attention to the lecturer being aware of information or explanations shared with students during tutorials. This relationship speaks to the defining roles of the lecturer and the student. The relationship indicated is not one of reciprocal information or content sharing with the tutor. The lecturer takes on a more authoritative role.

It is interesting to note that, in this study, collaborative partnerships showed that there were several contradictions (Engeström, 2001) in one activity system. There were variations in how the collaborative lecturer-tutor partnership occurred, and these variations pointed to the flexibility required in the lecturer-tutor relationship to cultivate student learning successfully.

The different levels of engagement and knowledge sharing in the tutorial processes show the contradictions within the learning and teaching environment, and these contradictions signal a potential for change and development (Engeström, 2001) in the tutorial space in higher education.

Engagement of lecturers and tutors with mediating tools

In some instances, lecturers used tutors for marking assessment tasks for their modules, against the rules set in the tutorial guidelines in both institutions. However, the lecturers were aware of this and were cautious in how they used their tutors for this activity. We found lecturers to be more open and explicit with content and skills knowledge sharing in this activity. Lecturers and tutors collaboratively worked as they engaged in the marking

of assessments. Regular marking meetings and follow-up meetings were scheduled to moderate tasks assessed and get feedback from tutors. The following quotes highlight the transfer of skills and knowledge to the tutors regarding assessment tasks. One lecturer commented:

Tutors are given sample papers to work on as a group before marking, then I would discuss and moderate the task with them. This is done as a way of empowering the tutors and then we come together and look at the marks.

Another lecturer commented:

At the assessment planning meeting I hand out to tutors what they're going to do, explain everything to them, even the answers, we go through everything so they know what they do.

Teamwork was observed in the quote below:

There is team marking, for example, if there was an assignment or a test, we (lecturers and tutors) would mark as a team.

These quotes show close lecturer-tutor partnerships and engagement as they worked towards a common goal.

The knowledge-sharing behaviour in the activities described seemed to advantage the lecturer more than the tutor, although tutors did gain some knowledge and skills in undertaking the assessment tasks. Lecturers needed to provide space in the lecturer-tutor collaboration for tutors to share their knowledge of curriculum concepts within the tutorial programme. Cupido and Norodien-Fataar (2018) show that student teaching assistants can contribute to the lecturer-student feedback and communication loop and open up the possibility for more knowledge sharing within the tutorial spaces. However, Davids (2014) points out that tutors should not be viewed as a source of labour that provides a service for the lecturers in dealing with the heavy workloads and increasing class sizes.

Dynamic interaction of the social principle of activity theory

The social principle of activity theory, the bottom part of the activity theory triangle, highlights the social subject-community relations in the system. According to Engeström (1987), the other two components based on the triangle: rules and division of labour mediate the subject-community relations. The rules regulate the subject's actions toward an object and relations with other participants in the activity. The lecturer-tutor division of labour highlights how tasks towards the study object were divided, including shared responsibilities and power relations. The following two sections bring to the fore the tensions in the definitive roles and the unspoken rules of engagement within the division of labour.

Tensions concerning the definitive role of the tutor

When analysing the data according to the principles of activity theory, constraints and tensions identified were the tutors and lecturers' respective responsibilities and how these were identified in the division of labour. Division of labour has to be negotiated by both parties, as this is essential for the successful implementation of a tutorial programme.

At both institutions, lecturers expressed concern about administrative duties that they needed to perform concerning tutors' monthly claim forms that needed to be checked and signed. Many expressed the view that this function should be the departmental administrator or a tutor coordinator's role. As one lecturer commented,

A lecturer cannot be a coordinator as well, some lecturers are professors and we should not be doing administration work.

Another comment was:

There is a need for someone to coordinate tutor programmes, the absence of a coordinator makes the programme run all over and puts added pressure on lecturers.

The institutional tutor guidelines provide clear roles for the tutor and the lecturer; however, tutors were still requested to perform tasks outside their role as tutors. Some lecturers with heavy workloads and, with the absence of a teaching assistant, used tutors as teaching assistants. One lecturer said:

We are using our tutors now as teaching assistants.

Lecturers and tutors would liaise regularly to solve any challenges encountered. However, lecturers felt that it was the tutors' role to liaise with students experiencing problems. This is noted in the following comment:

If students have a problem, they know they must contact the tutor and meet him.

Similarly, another lecturer mentioned:

Students in the tutorial were supposed to phone the tutor and if they had any problems regarding their tests or their assignments that they had to do, then he (tutor) would intervene and contact the lecturer.

This corresponds with what Davids (2014) argues that tutors and lecturers should work together closely to make tutorials more effective.

Within the tutorial programme's lecturer-tutor partnership, it was evident that the tutor took an active role with the students and was an important lecturer-student link. The tension we identified was in the tutor-student relationship versus the lecturer-student relationship. Lecturers had to be mindful of their relationship with their students and ensure that there were very clear communication channels between the tutor and themselves; likewise, there needed to be clear student-lecturer communication without harming the tutor-student or

lecturer-tutor relationship of trust. However, the solution to this tension was complex as it involved the administrative work and additional marking responsibilities added to tutors' workload, an arrangement which had to be transparent and clear to ensure validity and trustworthiness of all assessments.

Since tutors were in the faculty of education, lecturers encouraged them to develop different teaching-and-learning-related strategies to overcome the challenges they face in their tutorials. A lecturer commented:

I ask tutors to report challenges they are experiencing and encourage them to come up with possible intervention strategies.

Encouraging tutors to develop solutions to tutorial-related problems enable them (tutors) to develop their teaching and learning skills as future teachers and potentially future academics. Lecturers let tutors experience higher education work by letting them perform different tasks in collaboration with the lecturers.

If the divisions of labour and shared responsibilities are not clear and transparent, tutees get confused. If lecturers and tutors work together closely, it is easier to improve tutorials and promote students' active learning (Jiménez, 2010). Roodt (2013) postulates that a positive tutor-lecturer working relationship reduces student failure rates as tutorials are effective. Our data show the tutor's fluid role as a lecturer-student link, their ability to engage in independent learning, and their administrative roles in the tutorial space. These irregularities call for a reconceptualisation of the lecturer-tutor partnership for transformed tutorials. The irregularities indicate the need to re-imagine the lecturer-tutor relationship within the tutorial programme through building practices that focus on knowledge sharing rather than the tutor taking on an administrative and substitute role in the tutorial programme. This means deepening the lecturer-tutor collaboration to include rigorous engagement with the curriculum's conceptual and epistemological aspects, the core part of the tutorial programme.

Unspoken rules of engagement

These rules of engagement were not necessarily acknowledged, supported or enhanced by the institution, and a novice lecturer might not feel comfortable using similar initiatives to enhance tutor programmes. Lecturers followed their own ideas and engagement level with their tutors, perhaps due to a lack of clear regulations on lecturer-tutor engagement. The question is raised as to how these different rules of engagement might influence the student's tutorial experiences and even their final marks. The rules for engaging tutors in tutorials in both institutions were categorically stated. In both universities, tutors were undergraduate students who should not teach as lecturers or mark assessments. It is stated in the tutorial guidelines that tutors should only be there to support lecturers by

facilitating teaching and learning in small tutorial groups. However, this is not what is happening in the tutorials, as one lecturer stated:

I use him (tutor) to assist me with the Grade R Diploma after hours and I make him available to some of the other part-time lecturers as well to assist with the marking of some of the scripts and the assignments, to give guidance to the students.

Similarly, another lecturer who let the tutor do more than just tutoring said:

I sometimes use him (tutor) but very, very few ones to do a lecture for me. He also assists me with reading the marks – then a lot of admin; reading in the marks, checking with me the marks and ja, basically admin stuff as well.

Another lecturer who used tutors to teach her classes when she was absent said:

I only have one tutor for the Computer Application Technology module and he assists me with students who did not do CAT and have a backlog in what we are doing. So, he helps me and once lectured for me in my absence.

There is a need to make the tutor's role explicit in enhancing student's learning while, most importantly, adhering to the stated rules and regulations. Lecturers and tutors need to negotiate clear guidelines on the division of labour to ensure that the partnership is not unequal, with the labour division taking on a hierarchical structure. Monitoring of tutors' duties might be required to ensure compliance and uniformity while retaining lecturers and tutors' flexibility and individual power, which is an important characteristic of the tutoring programme – getting tutors (mostly undergraduates) to work as teaching assistants creates tension and is a constraint (Davids, 2014). This was happening because, as stated by one participant, “there is no evidence of defined roles for the tutors”. Despite this shortcoming, the tutor's fluid role and the unspoken rules of engagement allowed flexibility in the tutorial programmes.

The social components, along with the mediating components from the apex of the triangle, interwove to produce simultaneously transformed tutorial spaces in the two universities. The activity system's interactive nature showed that transformed tutor programmes require flexibility and constant fluctuation to address the various needs of all parties concerned. There is no 'one fit for all' approach, as the personal relationship element is unique to such programmes and will influence success.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to examine knowledge sharing and lecturer-tutor engagement in the tutorial space. It is argued that to transform the tutorial space and enhance teaching and learning practices, strengthening lecturer-tutor relationships and knowledge sharing is inevitably necessary. The collaborative relationship between the lecturer of a module and tutors is essential for offering quality tutorials that benefit

students in higher education institutions. Knowledge sharing should be a regular practice, and it should be made explicit to the lecturer and the tutor. The lecturers need to make conscious, intentional attempts to share knowledge to advance tutors' skills and knowledge. A lack of negotiation by both partners involved in the tutorial process carries the risk of one party playing a more dominant role over the other. This could also lead to the tutorial programme's exploitation, which could jeopardise the programme's success.

In addition, at a practical level, the strengthening of the lecturer-tutor relationship and sharing of knowledge could start by conducting regular meetings. The lecturer's explicit sharing of knowledge and skills with the tutor could build trust in the partnership. In addition, negotiating clear rules of engagement could boost the tutors' confidence and build a strong tutor-lecturer partnership. However, from the data, we can allude that we need to be intentional and conscious about how lecturers share knowledge and engage with tutors as partners in co-creating learning and teaching activities. If lecturers are not intentional and conscious about knowledge sharing and partnership, the power dynamics could lead to tutors being exploited and viewed as labourers in the tutorial space. The lecturer may use the tutor to carry out his or her duties instead of the tutor being empowered to transform the tutorial spaces into vibrant, small group teaching spaces that could advance student learning.

Student tutors as partners in teaching and learning in higher education is a recent pedagogical approach and therefore needs careful and intentional planning. Bovill, Cook-Sather and Felten (2011) suggest that to reconceptualise the current lecturer-tutor relationship and form the foundation for an effective and successful partnership, the following three principles be applied: respect, reciprocity, and shared responsibility in learning. Developing the reciprocal process of knowledge sharing and partnership needed for the lecturer and tutor to contribute equally in a tutorial programme can be a challenge in our current higher education practice, yet this reciprocal process promotes the student's voice. Through shared responsibility, there is the possibility of transforming the tutorial space in delivering the curriculum.

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