Memory Work as a methodology for evaluating learning in online environments

LTHs 10:e Pedagogiska Inspirationskonferens

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Who am I?

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Agenda

- Frigga Haug’s Memory work
- Adapting the Memory Work
- A week of online learning
- Results
  - Advice from student to student
  - The social challenge
  - What is "a waste of time"?
- Learning objectives and learning outcomes
The Methodology of Memory Work

- Collective Memory Work (qualitative methodology)

- Created during the 60s by a group of feminist researchers tired of the discrepancy between theory and everyday experiences

- Aim: To develop a methodology where researchers could use their own and others’ life experience in their research
The Memory Work assignment

- Describe an experience where the online teaching has aided or impeded your learning
- Choose a specific event that happened during the week of online teaching
- Write in 3rd person (he or she) as it makes it easier to analyse the text and make it a piece of common/shared data
- Please, don’t interpret your text. That will be done later. Just describe the situation, thoughts, feelings and reactions in your 3rd person voice.

(A written example is given)
Adapting Frigga Haug’s Memory Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Memory Work</th>
<th>Haug’s Memory Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recent memories</td>
<td>Distant memories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory</td>
<td>Voluntary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power relation between teacher and students</td>
<td>Group decides together, which topics to focus upon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction to basic economy and finance (e.g. terminology)

1. Debriefing
2. Presentation of learning programmes
3. Memory Work

Evaluation and discussion of the Memory Work
Changing challenges

1. semester
- Advice has been followed
- Procrastination
- Indefinable frustration
- Lacking basic economic terminology

2. semester
- Advice has been followed
- Concrete frustration
- Lack of teacher
- Transgressive experience

3. semester
- Advice has been followed
- Specific frustration
- Missing the meaning / took time from exam
# Advice based on MW and student discussions

## 1. Time

Technical obstacles are a permanent – not a temporary – condition, i.e. be present 10 minutes in advance

## 2. Time

You’ll be facing the challenge of procrastination

=> Meet frequently and set specific tasks for each day

It is normal to experience doubt and anxiety about one’s ability to handle the task during this week

Expect to spend at least 50% of your time finding and selecting relevant material

Seek active learning such as quizzes, tasks, note-taking, making questions for each other

## 3. Time

Meta-communication: lack of teacher who defines what needs to be learned

Start by discussing and defining learning objectives

For online meetings appoint a moderator and a notekeeper

Compensate for lack of social contact (e.g. arrange something social in the afternoon)
The need and fulfillment of social contact

Teacher was accessible via Skype four hours every day. Very few made use of it, but many commented that it made them feel more comfortable knowing that the teacher was "somewhere out there."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Missing the social contact</th>
<th>How to compensate for the missing contact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loneliness leads to procrastination</td>
<td>The group meets (an hour) online every day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing the chit-chats</td>
<td>Group sets aside 15 min for chit-chat before the meeting begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t concentrate working alone</td>
<td>Log on to Messenger with another group member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General feeling of missing the company of others</td>
<td>Arrange something social in the afternoon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though all students missed social contact, they also wrote about the unpleasantness of having your personal space invaded and that it was going beyond normal limits being on camera and having other people’s faces so close to yours. Students tidied their flat before a meeting – or spent considerable time setting the camera so that no one could see their mess.
Memory Work clarifies the problems

1. Did I learn anything?
2. I didn’t learn anything
3. I couldn’t use it for my exam project
4. No performance grading
5. I could have learned the same thing faster and more efficiently
6. I miss my friends/group members. My doubt is growing too as there is no one to immediately reassure me that we are moving in the right direction
Students’ real learning outcome

1. It is a possibility to meet online when the weather is bad, somebody is ill or logistics are challenging
2. Net etiquette during online meetings
3. Awareness: I can upgrade myself through online educational resources
4. Online resources are not always what they promise (Behind payment walls. Specific starting dates. In other languages than English. Low academic level)
5. It takes time and independence to navigate and select relevant resources that I can learn from
6. (in order to learn, I have to be an active learner using quizzes, writing notes, solving tasks and preferably study together with somebody else)
My learning from MW

- The most efficient platform to understand and thereby improve students’ online learning
- Awareness of what students considered important (i.e. what they chose to focus on)
- Understanding the subtleties of their challenges and frustrations, but also their positive experiences.
- Possibility of viewing the same situation from different perspectives (when described by different students)
- Insight into their different ways of dealing with challenges (e.g. procrastination)
J
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Jolly good fun