The Process of Designing and Analysing a Qualitative Study into Multiple WIL Experiences

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The Process of Designing and Analysing a Qualitative Study into Multiple WIL Experiences
Overview

- Background research
- Evolvement of the design process
- Analysis process
- Implications for the facilitation of Teaching and Learning
- Conclusions
The Research Team

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Inspiring tomorrow’s professionals
The Search for Perfect WIL Model

Researchers sensitive to range factors
- Model that dovetails with ever changing student needs
- Best chances of subsequent employment
- Reasonable administrative overheads
Baseline Research

• Drysdale’s major International study explores psychological factors related to WIL (Drysdale et al., 2011).

• University of Huddersfield formed part of this study.

• Our initial analysis suggested, the more WIL experiences, the more hope, agency and intrinsic goal motivation reported (Purdie et al., 2011)

• This study aims to tease out experiential details of learning on placement, draw strategic implications for the sector.
UK Models of WIL

- UoH ‘all course have work related elements’ (UoH, 2008)
- UK fees now £9000
- Sandwich fees viable – Wilson suggests £1000
- Sandwich degree
  - work experience sandwiched inside academic studies
- Short placements: History, Community Studies
- Professional placements
  - Workplace mentor
  - Match student learning outcomes with available placements
The Qualitative Project

- Most qualitative research discipline specific
- This research over a range of disciplines
- Not role specific placement
- Aim broad aspects of
  - Personal development
  - Learning
  - Sense of progression across work placements
Design Process – Focus Group and PCP

- Aimed focus group, identify common issues
- Project objectives incompatible with RA short contract
- Instead Kelly’s Repertory Grid (Fransella, 2005) based on Personal Construct Psychology (Kelly, 1995)
- Investigates how individuals make sense of the world and their identity. Participants asked to consider:
  - Work characteristics of colleagues
  - His/her own characteristics
  - Points along placement journey
- Outcome: few links made, little about relational aspects
Design Process Salmon Line to Placement Timeline

- Salmon Line (King & Horrocks, 2010)
- Single line between 2 concepts to facilitate reflection on how progression occurs from one concept to another.
- Developed this to include temporal aspects of learning from multiple placements: a line labelled ‘before placement’ and ‘after placement’
- Called ‘Placement Timeline’
- Successful in eliciting data addressing the project aims.
Significant moments in learning and personal development

Episodes of work experience/placements, in chronological order

Before placement(s)

After placement(s)

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What does the placement time do?

**Before Placements**
- Encourages elaboration on aspects of learning and personal development.
- Allows the consideration of work experiences outside of the university degree.

**After Placements**
- Facilitates thinking about the progression of skills and abilities across time.
- Helps students think about how they have changed.
- Facilitates comparing/contrasting of different work experiences, and making links between them.

**Facilitates thinking about the progression of skills and abilities across time.**

- **Work task-oriented only.**
- **HealthCare Auxiliary/Career Unit:**
  - Ward 7: Elderly
  - Ward 8: Skeletal
  - Ward 9: Community
  - Ward 10: Surgical

- **Most germanic, hot, and overwhelming, placement, but best experience overall.**
  - Worked as staff nurse, made me very happy, very catharsic.

- **Helps students think about the bigger picture, and how their experiences fit together.**
  - I've got fantastic feedback, non-CCLI, was the best case scenario. It was
    refreshing, that's what he called me, refreshing... I was a student
    that was not interested in going on, I was one of those students
    that... didn't want to go. I was thinking that the
    placement was in placement, that's essentially.
Semi-structured interviews can yield large volumes of textual data.

Thematic analysis looks for patterns.

Template analysis (King, 2012).

Accommodates a priori focus i.e.:
- overarching issues of learning and personal development
- Shared by students across diverse subject areas.
Template Analysis

- Develop coding structure (template) from initial transcripts
- Applied to subsequent interview data
- Modified as new themes or subtleties come to light
- Focus on overall issues – not job specific roles
- Details coded as low level themes
- Subsumed in higher level themes as analysis progresses.
- Allows research teams to share early findings.
Example Templates

• Show in word
Implications

- Purpose: explore how multiple WIL impacts on the student learning experience.
- Soft skills development on WIL
- Findings now about advocating change to WIL models
  - Principles and practicalities developed over many years
- Challenge teaching and learning practitioners to consider our research when planning WIL delivery


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