

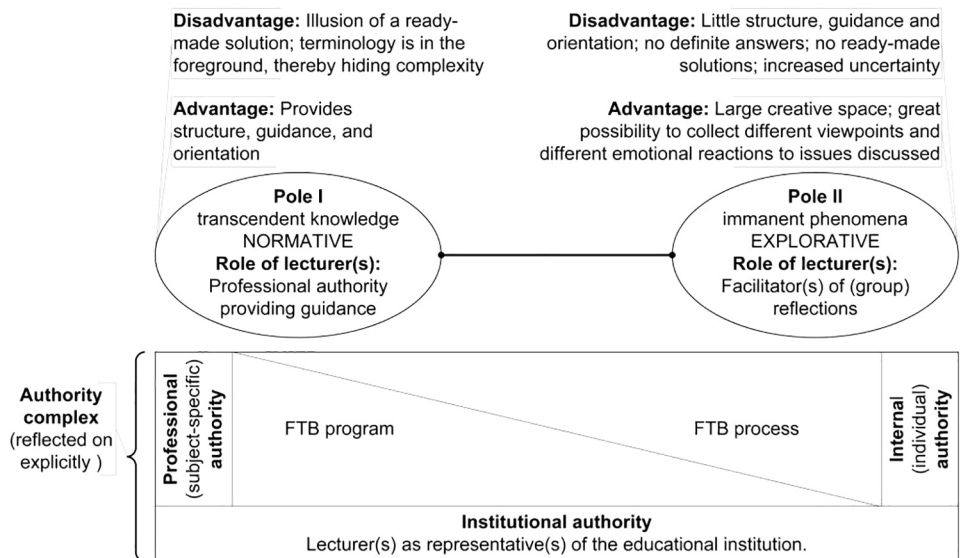
students. In contrast, lecturers as *facilitators* invite students to enter and use a large, creative space together. The difficulty lies in balancing these two contradictory poles.

13.6 Discussion

In this study, I explored an experience-centered teaching approach (ECTA) that places students and lecturers in a situation of *not* knowing. This is because ECTA is based on the premise that the future can never be fully known. So far, universities of applied sciences (UAS) in Austria have continued to accept the normative approach to education. However, the idealization of the benefits of the normative approach to education may well be a fallacy and may even have complicated the students' learning process.

The intervention science approach seeks to balance the best aspects of the normative and explorative approaches to education (Schuster, 2015: 227). A major challenge for lecturers is to use this paradoxical teaching to show that certainties are illusory (Liessmann, 2014: 175), and that the normative approach to teaching is an illusion that allows society to function with a degree of predictability. Such an approach to teaching can weaken the institutional authority of lecturers (Fig. 88) and push students into normative schools of science rather than emancipating them from conventional learning.

Fig. 88: Scope of action of lecturers



Source: Adapted from »A Reflection on the (Harvard) Case Method from a Group Dynamics Perspective« by Schuster & Radel (2018, 305–8)

The success of the emancipatory, experience-centered teaching approach depends on the culture of the educational institution. This includes the inevitable political power

play involving students, student representatives, lecturers, and study program directors. Only a conscious reflection on this power play will lead to the success of this teaching approach.

The basis of the explorative approach is group dynamics (Bion, 2013; Colman & Bexton, 1975; Cytrynbaum & Noumair, 2004; Miller, 1987; Schindler in Spaller et al. 2016), especially the Klagenfurt School of Group Dynamics (Duwe, 2018; Schüller & Spindler, 2013). The most well-known formats are T-groups, Organizational Training, and Group Relations conferences (Schuster & Radel, 2018: 303). Shapiro & Carr (2012: 77) describe the setting of the Tavistock-style Group Relations conference as follows:

Within the conference institution as a whole, the entire membership – in separate groups, one large group, and varying inter-group events – begins to shape its dynamic interaction with the staff they have authorized to lead the learning task. A temporary institution is being created for the purpose of studying itself.

The retreat setting, where both staff and participants lived for 14 days, the sophisticated arrangement of the plenary, multiple groups of different sizes, and spaces and time for relaxation all helped to contain the uncertainty of shared exploration (Shapiro & Carr 74–75). The *here-and-now* teaching approach used the basic idea of the explorative conference institution format described by Shapiro & Carr (2012: 74–77). Since the boundaries of the educational schedule in the UAS system are flexible, the explorative parts were balanced by normative components and required rather intense guidance by the lecturers compared to the conference institution format (Schuster & Radel, 2018: 304–305).

My research partners and I will continue to conduct ongoing intervention research to generate more data on the effects of the exploratory, experience-centered teaching approach on students, lecturers/researchers, and educational institutions, and to refine lecturer/researcher interventions. We will seek lecturers with a background in the normative teaching and research approach who are interested in expanding their teaching and research approach to include experience-centered teaching.

Finally, I would like to distinguish intervention research from field experiments because the distinction is important (Eden, 2017). Intervention research follows a meticulous process with outcomes that are unique and a microcosm of a specific setting. Therefore, they cannot be generalized to other similar situations. Heintzel called this “collective individuality” (2005: 146). What is generalizable and replicable for use in other settings is the research process and its design. Nonetheless, it might be interesting to join forces with researchers who use field experiments or other research methods and to combine these approaches with intervention research to study teaching and education in general.