

# **Educational dialogue:** *Developing your practice*

Video 2: The role of the facilitator

# What is a facilitator?

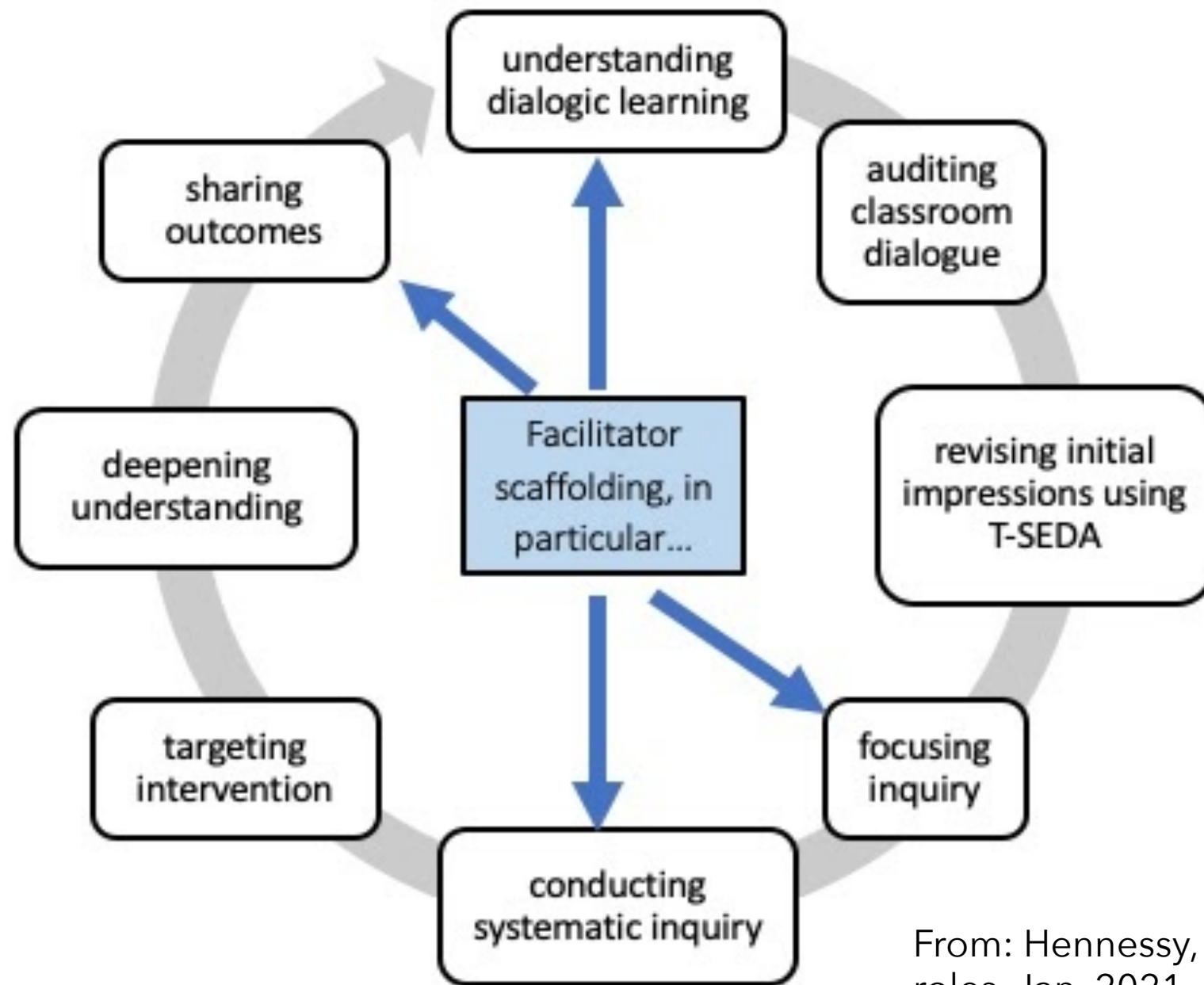
A facilitator has...

1. Familiarity with dialogic principles and practice, and enthusiasm about this approach
2. A willingness to continue developing their own practice and learn alongside their colleagues
3. Local knowledge and is responsive to requests
4. A plan for strategic and flexible support at different stages of their colleagues' inquiries

# Model of facilitation

Facilitators worked in different ways, but typically led their colleagues in:

- Selecting an inquiry focus
- Planning the activity or lesson
- Recording their data
- Interpreting the results
- Meeting regularly as a group for peer discussion



From: Hennessy, Sara. Dialogic inquiry facilitator roles. Jan. 2021. PowerPoint Presentation.

# Factors that contribute to successful facilitation

1. Familiarity with dialogic principles and practice

*"I think that once teachers realise the power of just changing the way you maybe ask questions, or changing the way that students ask questions, it could be really quite a wow moment."  
(Facilitator, T-SEDA IAA trial).*

2. Having clearly defined personal and professional motivations for facilitation.

### 3. Being strategic and flexible in planning support and 'scaffolding' for participants.

*Example of support from the trial:*

- *Explaining dialogic teaching*
- *Helping participants to make connections between their practice and the strategies and materials in T-SEDA*
- *Holding informal meetings to discuss doubts or questions about the materials*
- *Guiding participants to choose materials that would be most useful and completing some of these templates with them*
- *Supporting them in carrying out recordings*

*“One to equip teachers from a distance and let them work with something themselves so that they take it on board and they become fairly autonomous in how they handle that. But the second is to also give a structured framework whereby they can see a project develop over a bit of time, and in doing that you kind of have to have these set times factored into their work schedule, factored into the school timetable to support that to happen.” (Facilitator, T-SEDA IAA trial)*

# Challenges in facilitation

1. Managing the diverse needs, hopes and expectations of participants.
2. Contextualising and translating materials for local accessibility and needs.

*“Sharing adapted resources is really good for feeling a sense of shared ownership but first you need buy-in; the philosophy behind dialogic teaching is essential to creating long-term change. Rather than saying here are the tools, teachers want to see that the kids are building on something and so the change is happening.” (Facilitator, T-SEDA IAA trial)*

3. The limited time available for all involved.



# Thank you!

Scroll down to find the readings, activities and discussion forum topics for this week.

*The content of this presentation was derived from the findings from the T-SEDA IAA trial and the associated forthcoming publication with permission from the study leads.*

*Hennessy, S., Kershner, R., Calcagni, E. & Ahmed, F. (Forthcoming). Supporting practitioner-led inquiry into classroom dialogue with a research-informed professional learning resource: a design-based approach*