

Awareness AND understanding of science guided by dialogue

Genetics as a case

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Abstract / Conclusion

- Distinction between mutual notions of science and mutual understanding of science gives way to;
- Dialogue as a good starting point for the development of mutual notions of science and mutual understanding of science and contributes to;
- Effective science communication in which dialogue on mutual notions has a conceptual goal and dialogue on mutual understanding has a functional goal.

Introduction / Research question

Dialogue as an inquiry into ideas [Littig, 2003] has become a buzzword within the field of science communication, and is often mentioned as a tool within the framework of awareness of science. In the 'classical' form of science communication - public understanding of science - dialogue seems less important. Is this restriction on the use of dialogue useful?

Research / Method

In our study on a model for effective science communication on predictive DNA diagnostics we compare theoretical developments in different fields of communication sciences to be used within the field of science communication [Van der Sanden and Meijman, 2004].

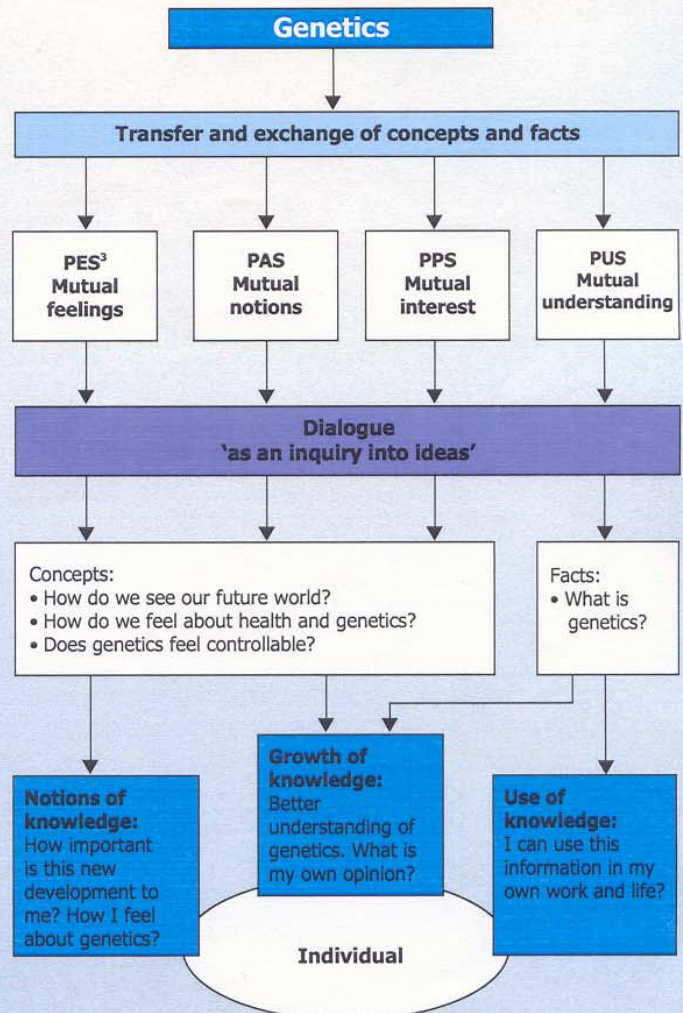
Preliminary results

We found that within the field of health communication, dialogue is successfully used as a tool for health promotion (compare to awareness of science, mvds) as well as for health education (compare to understanding of science, mvds) [Lee and Garvin, 2003]. We therefore propose the use of dialogue as a tool for all science communication modalities, for example:

- 1) a dialogue about concepts leading to mutual notions of science. A conceptual goal of dialogue
- 1) a dialogue about facts leading to mutual understanding of science. A functional goal of dialogue.

Discussion

Clear distinction of the use of dialogue is necessary for effective science communication. The appearance of a new term - such as dialogue - is in itself only then an improvement if the term expresses the distinction between communication on concepts and facts, which are both important to achieve science communication goals.



³ Public Engagement of Science (PES), Public Awareness of Science (PAS), Public Participation of Science (PPS), Public Understanding of Science (PUS).

Fig. 1: flowchart for science communication on genetics, in which dialogue plays a central role for all possible modalities.

References:

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