Responsibility and Accountability in Adult Education – the unequal siblings

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“The qualifications of a teacher rest on his knowledge of the world and his being able to teach about the world, but his authority comes from his accepting responsibility for it.”

(Hannah Arendt, 1958)
accountability and responsibility - definitions
accountability
responsibility
state of being accountable for something

responsibility
state of being accountable for something

state of being responsible for something
accountability

money

economy

responsibility

talk

communication
educational contexts: accountability
educational accountability:

Linking educational situations with the state of being accountable for something.
E.g. fulfill given criteria concerning quality (usually quantitative), content, results,...

examples

scholarship ~ examination grade (Jacob 2009)

payment of professionals ~ students performance (ibd.)
risks and side effects

risc of misuse for “symbolic policies” (Arnold, Pätzold 2004)

general vulnerability for corruption (Campbell 1976)

particular empirical findings on “high stakes testing” ( Jacob 2009)
educational contexts:
responsibility
educational responsibility:

**negotiate** and **assign** responsibility as a means of managing teaching and learning

examples

- learning contracts (Knowles 1975)
- learning counselling (Pätzold 2004)
summary and consequences
But... isn’t it the same?

- process control
  - ecomonical focus
  - beaurocratic attribution
  - monetary consequences

- process design
  - communicative focus
  - interpersonal attribution
  - social consequences

attaching something to somebody by an observer
consequences for professionals

• Don’t mix design and control.
• Avoid rethorics of self-responsibility.
• Use both as categories of reflection.

[Diagram]

demand for control

demand for design

accountability

responsibility
selected references: