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The Reflexive Classroom: Authentic, Creative Pedagogic Praxis (0150)
Programme number: K12.2
Research Domain: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to investigate the development of praxis as a teacher in higher education through the adoption of authentic creative pedagogy which led to the building of the reflexive classroom;

'The fusion of authentic, artistic and creative pedagogy, where a range of practices including learning technologies are used to enhance the reflexive and reflective mind-sets of the users'.

Within the reflexive classroom a 'toolkit' has been developed which adopts creative pedagogic practices designed to give the users the ability to be more reflexive.

The transferability of the reflexive provocateur toolkit within the reflexive classroom is primarily within Business education and the toolkit has been tested with students at the University of Sunderland and disseminated to both internal and external communities of practice. This workshop will present examples of the use of these practices and the potential transferability for other subject disciplines.

Key words: reflexive classroom; reflexive provocateur toolkit; Business Education; praxis

Outline of Workshop

The purpose of this workshop is to present the Reflexive Classroom which has been developed building on the work of Ryan (2007) and http://teacherscpd.wordpress.com/innovation/ where they discussed the use of blogging for reflexivity. The Reflexive classroom which has been developed by the author is the final stages of research informed teaching where the fusion of artistic imagination (Winter *et al.,* 1999) and creative innovative pedagogical practices using learning technologies (for example MAHARA) has led to the development of a e-based classroom for enhancing and developing reflexivity in the users. The emergence of the arts based pedagogical practices is embedded within the spirituality in teaching school (See Hunt, 2006a; 2006b; 2007; 2009a, 2009b; 2010; West, 2010; McIntosh, 2008; 2010; Schwabenland, 2009; Mitchell and Hall,

2009; Steinnes, 2008). This has led to the development of an e-based classroom using MAHARA, the reflexive classroom.

The building of the reflexive classroom has been conducted through the use of a hermeneutic spiral through the deconstruction and reconstruction through four cycles of the research. This has allowed for the testing and re-evaluation of a range of creative pedagogic practices which attempts to instil in students the ability to think creatively (Jeffrey and Craft, 2004). The emergence of an artistic creative pedagogy has been considered within qualitative research to be a pathway for understanding self (see Watson, 2009). This research has been informed by the works of Ellis (2000; 2004; 2007) and Ellis and Bochner (2000) where auto-ethnographic methodology is a way where knowledge can be constructed about self. This has been further developed using poetics (lyrics, poetry and proverbs) as metaphors to express reflexivity supporting the work of Hunt (2006; 2010) and McIntosh (2008; 2010). These metaphors allow the students to develop a deeper understanding about self with particularly reference to emerging professional voice and identity. The pedagogic practices have been collated under a 'toolkit' where guides (written and video) are use to support the students within the classroom.

Within this classroom the researcher has been able to develop a range of creative and artistic approaches to learning, teaching and assessment including; the design of toolkits (for example as a replacement for a Postgraduate dissertation); the design of games (for example, as a part of a final year HRM module); the development of reflexive e-storyboards (for example as a part of the placement year offering).

This workshop will focus on one example of creative pedagogy by presenting the grounded analysis from students who completed a year two module called 'Contemporary Developments in HR'. The assessment for this module required the students to select two of the contemporary issues discussed during the module and design an artefact (a video or podcast supported by a poster or a brochure) to exhibit to a group of future HR professionals. Within this workshop the researcher will present examples of the completed students' assessments and include video interviews with a number of the designers of the artefacts to give their voice about the use of this approach.

The central premise of the reflexive classroom is the transferability of the practices for a range of users including teaching, learning and assessment innovators; employability champions; reflective and reflexive facilitators. This e-based classroom allows the users to use a range of 'tools' which have been developed as a part of the reflexive provocateur toolkit (Armstrong, 2011; 2012).

At present the transferability of the classroom has focused on Business Education, however the 'tools' develop can be transferred to all academic disciplines. This workshop will present the reflections of the researcher on the potential for the transferability of the reflexive classroom to a range of activities including employability through developing students and future graduates reflective and reflexive mindsets.

Finally through the learning technology MAHARA the facilitation of the student's learning journey which gives them the space, time and support to develop their understanding of self (Armstrong, 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; Karp, 2013) as a transformative learning path of self-discovery (Mezirow, 1991; 1995; 1997).

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