

Wasted formative assessment

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What is the problem?

- ▶ In many teaching seminars created for students training to be primary school teachers, lecturers will have a dominant preference for organizing the learning. This usually allows the students to sit in grouped tables, around four to six in number, and be presented with large sheets of A3 or A2 paper on which to record notes, or engage in thought-sharing/mind-mapping activities.

What do I observe?

- ▶ My area of interest lies in three points:
- ▶ 1) The students assume the dominance of the learning environment (classroom). They will assume the existing seating arrangement - even though they are taught that the organization of a primary classroom is not fixed and should be fluid to maximise learning.
- ▶ 2) Students will sit in patterns. They will highly likely sit in the same spaces and/or with the same peers. They are encouraged to move around but invariably are uncomfortable in doing so.
- ▶ 3) When students are encouraged to write thoughts/ideas/strategies or anything pertaining to the learning, they will do so. That, however, is where the engagement ends. The large sheets of paper are left at the end of a session; they are not photographed (on the ubiquitous iphone) and they are not used to complement other noted material.

What is the underlying theory?

- ▶ *The pacification of knowers and what is to be known; when knowledge is reduced to rigid directives and demand little else from the knower than acquiescence, both the knower and knowledge are repressed. Conformity in its adherence to the dictates of social convention, privileges routinized behaviour over critical action. Education when dominated by the discourse and discursive practices of conformity, scripts a mechanistic training. (Britzman, 1991, p. 29).*

The University of Greenwich angle

- ▶ Academic and Student Experience Strategy 2018-2022 plan as
- ▶ B. Assessment for success and development
- ▶ 2) We will enable students to maximise their potential through assessment accompanied by high quality, timely and forward-looking feedback.

What I might do

- ▶ To choose an identity that will increase the search for knowledge by co-operating with others. How? This calls for a reflection on individualism
- ▶ For the large sheets of paper wastage lecturers need to encourage incorporating it into generic feedback and students to reference in their note taking or directed activity how their thoughts were initially conceptualised (like an audit trail)
- ▶ a process of considering 'critical action' and how all aspects of learning whether tutor led or student led or even mediated as a compromise can improve the student's outcome.