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Voicing Fashion – Concept Trial: a pilot for student-run podcast

Action Research Project Unit
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BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Working Context

I'm a Lecturer and Unit Leader within the Leadership & Management programme at FBS, responsible for planning, creating, and delivering unit content.

Designing new units with a focus on diversifying formats and delivery methods to foster inclusivity.



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Challenges Identified

Curricular resources at UAL predominantly rely on lectures, standardised formats, and reading lists.

Extracurricular recommendations like films, podcasts, or documentaries often mean additional costs or reliance on normative interpretations.

This approach restricts accessibility, autonomy, and may widen socio-economic gaps between students.



BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Key Insight from Previous Practice

In the past unit "Inclusive Practice," I explored standardisation issues and designed an intervention to enhance inclusivity in teaching and learning.

Proposed a student-led podcast series where panels of students, academics, and industry guests discuss and interpret curriculum content, brainstorm implications for industry and society, and share diverse perspectives.

The intervention emphasised decentralised and de-hierarchised learning to promote agency and inclusivity, while assessing student preferences and the format's effectiveness for future implementation.



THE INTERVENTION



Inspired by the Voicing Fashion podcast project.

Tested the concept through intra-curricular, non-recorded symposiums as part of workshop sessions. These mock discussions allowed students to engage in content preparation, develop personal viewpoints, collaborate, and share ideas.

Piloted a student-run session where students designed, planned, and delivered their own sessions based on a tutor-provided brief.



THE INTERVENTION

Key Features of the Pilot

- Students worked in groups, adopting diverse roles such as researchers, planners, presenters, or support staff.
- End-to-end ownership of content preparation and delivery.
- Roles tailored to accommodate a variety of student strengths and preferences.

By placing students at the centre of the learning process, this intervention prioritises inclusivity through critical engagement, participatory learning, and the acknowledgment of diverse perspectives.

It challenges traditional, hierarchical teaching models, empowering students to take ownership of their learning while fostering collaboration and a sense of belonging.

THE INTERVENTION

Timeline



THEORY & FRAMEWORKS

Freire's (1968) Pedagogy of the Oppressed: Advocates for transforming hierarchical, teacher-centred models into empowering, dialogical learning processes.

Student-Centred Learning (Weimer, 2013): Shifts focus from instructor-led to student-driven content.

Brookfield's (2017) Four Lenses Framework: Employs self-reflection, student perspectives, colleague feedback, and literature insights to critique and enhance teaching practices.

Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978): Emphasises active participation and collaboration in learning processes.

Crenshaw's (1991) Intersectionality: Recognises and addresses overlapping forms of marginalisation, emphasising the value of individual perspectives beyond social categories.



REFLECTION ON METHODS

Mixed methods, primarily
qualitative

24 participants, representing
different cultural and
academic backgrounds.

Reflexive Approach

Survey Methodology

Structured survey with a mix of closed and open-ended questions.
Distributed after the session to allow students to reflect.
Trends and thematic analysis.

Researcher Observations

Participant and non-participant observation. Pattern analysis.

Triangulation

In order to validate the findings by comparing the survey and observation.



REFLECTION ON METHODS

Strengths

- Using both surveys and observations gave me a richer, more rounded view of the session.
- Observations provided real-time insights that a survey alone wouldn't have captured.
- The methods were student-focused, prioritising their voices and experiences.

Limitations

- Self-Reporting Bias: Students might have given socially desirable answers in the survey.
- Sample Size: With only 24 participants, the findings might not apply to a larger cohort.
- Researcher Interpretation: My dual role as observer and tutor means my perspective might have influenced how I interpreted events.



PROJECT FINDINGS

- 1. The student-led format fosters active participation and engagement, though initial hesitancy may require intervention from facilitators.**
 - Most students appeared engaged, actively discussing and referencing course materials, though some initially hesitated.
 - Over 80% of students found the session engaging, with high levels of participation reported.
- 2. The format effectively promotes inclusivity and diversity of thought.**
 - Discussions reflected a variety of perspectives, enriched by students' cultural and academic diversity.
 - 87% of students agreed that the format encouraged diverse perspectives and ideas.
- 3. Group dynamics significantly affect success. Clear role definitions and facilitation could mitigate uneven participation and time issues.**
 - Some groups struggled with uneven participation and time constraints, while others operated seamlessly.
 - 72% of students mentioned facing some challenges in group coordination and time management.



PROJECT FINDINGS

4. The format successfully deepens understanding by encouraging the practical application of theoretical knowledge.

- Students frequently referred to relevant theories and applied them to practical examples during discussions and presentations.
- 90% of students felt the session enhanced their understanding of key theories and concepts.

5. The format effectively builds confidence over time, particularly for students initially hesitant to contribute.

- Nervous students gained confidence as they contributed and received encouragement, culminating in assured presentations.
- 75% of students reported feeling more confident in articulating their ideas after the session.

6. Interest in a student-led podcast exists but requires clearer structure, roles, and perceived value to attract broader participation.

- A small, enthusiastic group showed clear interest in the podcast concept, while others were curious but hesitant.
- 33% of students expressed interest in extending the format into a student-led podcast.



PROJECT FINDINGS

7. The collaborative nature of the format encourages peer-to-peer learning and reinforces key concepts effectively.

- Peer-led discussions and feedback exchanges deepened understanding and fostered mutual respect among students.
- 84% of students felt they learned from peer feedback and collaborative discussions.

8. Preparation is critical to success, underscoring the need for clear instructions and pre-session resources.

- Well-prepared groups demonstrated more cohesion and confidence, while underprepared groups relied on facilitator guidance.
- Students who prepared for the session reported higher levels of confidence and satisfaction.

9. The format nurtures creativity, suggesting potential for even greater innovation in future iterations.

- Groups used creative methods like visual aids and role-playing, making presentations more engaging and memorable.
- Students appreciated the freedom to be creative, with many citing it as a highlight of the session.





Thank you!

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