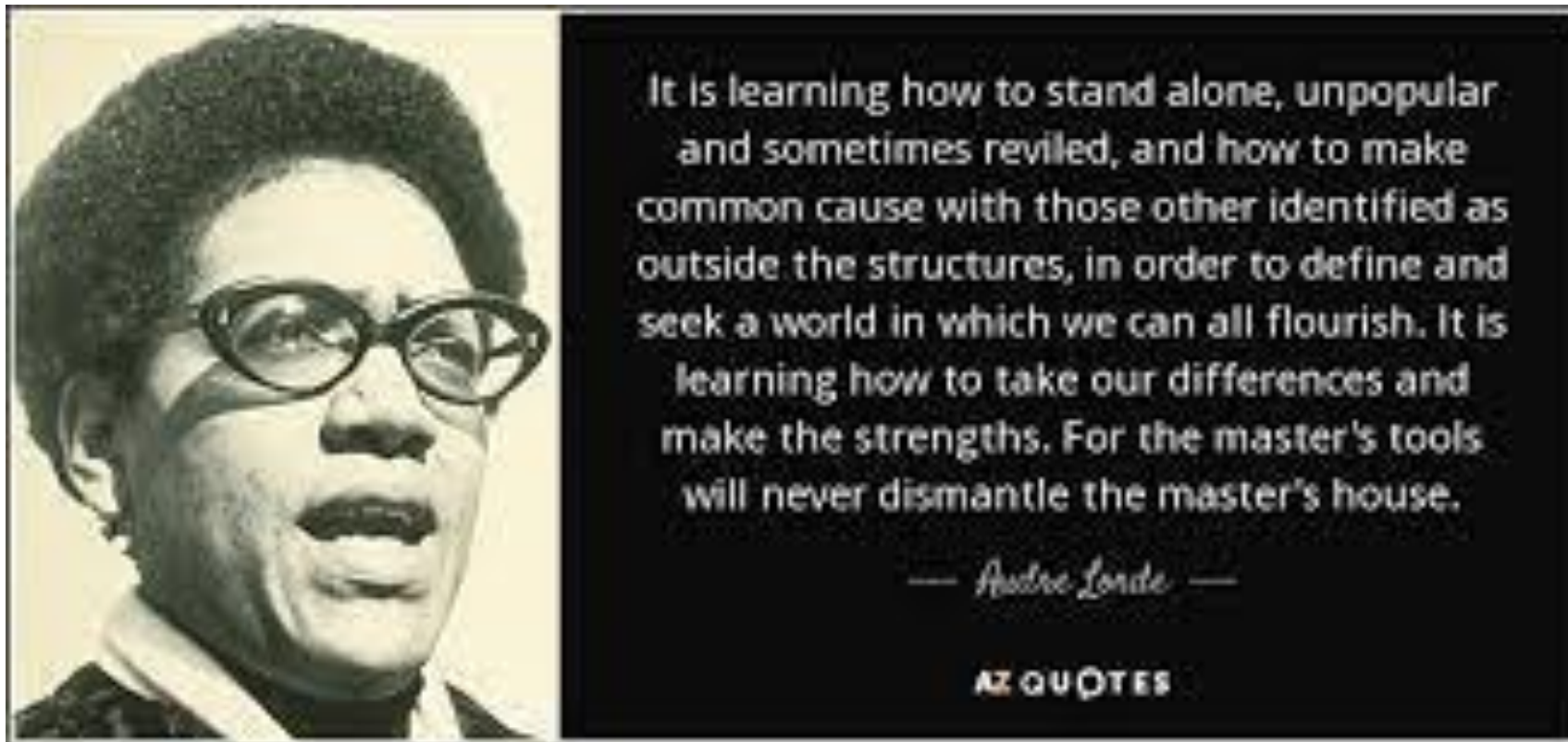


The Master's House:

can an individual assessment type be
designed to raise critical consciousness of
assessment as a social structure?

Dr Jayne Pearson



An apology to Audre Lord

Assessment as a social structure

- Assessment is a social structure that creates and sustains certain ideologies (Gunn et al, 2015; Bearman, 2019).
- *Alienation* “the external character of work for the worker is shown by the fact that it is not his (sic) own work but work for someone else...a direct consequence is [...]that man (sic) is alienated from other men” (Marx 1844, p.124-127).

vs

- *Agency*: “powers of ongoing reflexive monitoring of both self and society, which enables this subject to make commitments in a genuine act of solidarity” (Archer, 2007, p.295).
- “when students see their own learning process as entirely their own responsibility rather than seeing it as a product of the society in which they are learning. They explore themselves but not the world that conditions them” (Torrance, 2015, p.9)

Preparatory courses

The main medium of English for Academic Purposes delivery for international students (transitioning to academic discourse communities -Gourlay, 2009)

First contact with writing in the academy

Short courses of 5-12 weeks (usually summer)

Assessment: often limited to research essay and a timed-writing exam

In-house assessments “benchmarked” to IELTS for purposes of admissions

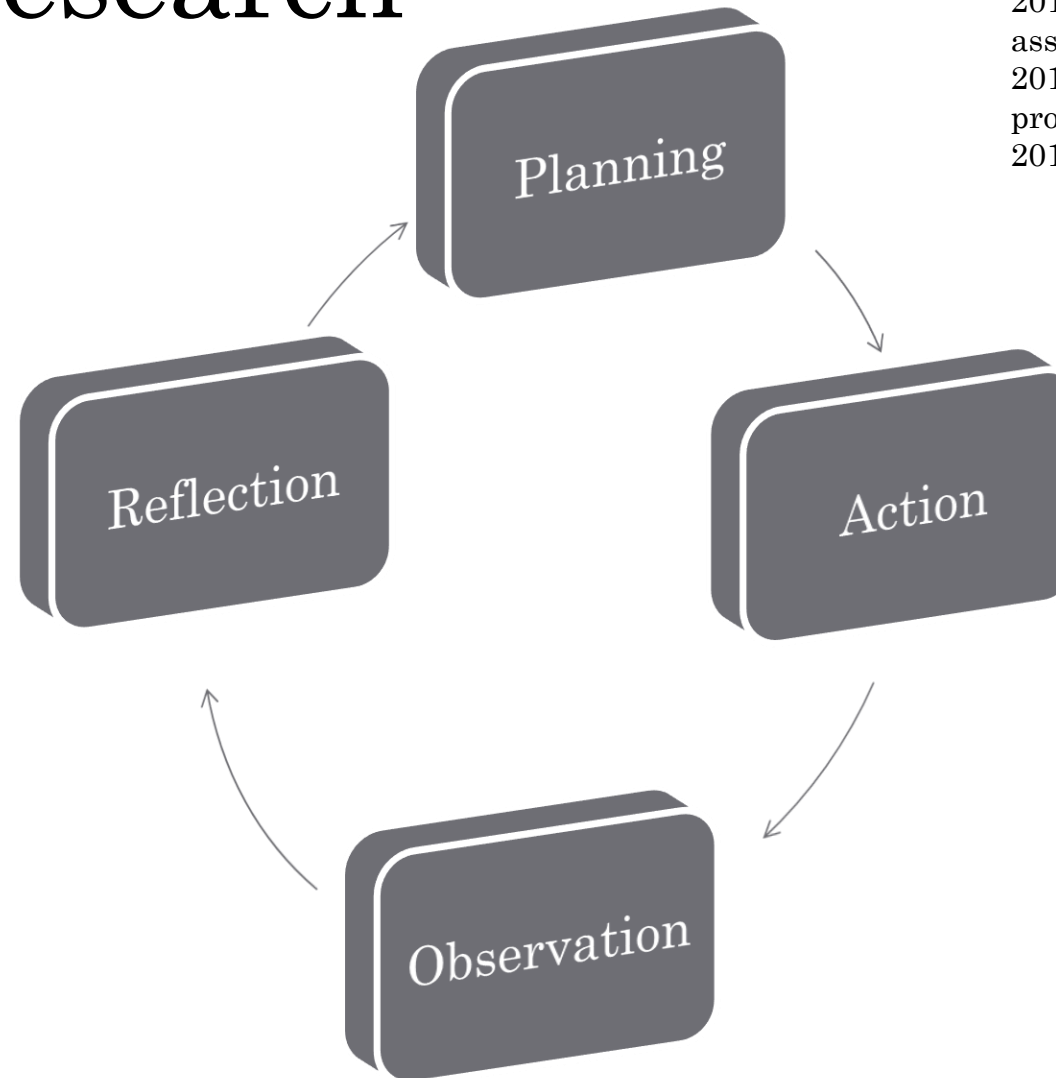
The processfolio

- ❖ Students depict their journey to produce ONE written assignment through a coherent collection of artefacts;
- ❖ Artefacts can include resources, notes, drafts AND their feedback (anything can be an artefact);
- ❖ Justify choice of artefacts in an introduction and reflect not only on their contribution to their learning, but also on the assessment context;
- ❖ Not graded! Peer, self and tutor feedback on the way they depict their journey to become writers, not their journey itself.

Action research

2013-2015 reflecting on
the challenges and
benefits

2013 investigating the impact of current
assessment practice
2014 planning the implementation of
processfolio assessment
2015 refining the processfolio



2013: analysing interviews
2014 Mixed Methods: (14
ss)interview analysis; processfolio
analysis; interaction analysis of
Moodle forums; self and tutor
grade comparisons
2015 narrative case studies of 9 ss
using processfolios and interviews

2013 gathering students'
experiences through
interviews (6 students);
2014 implementing the
assessment 1.0 with one
class
2015 implementing
version 2.0 with a 3
classes and 3 teachers

Findings

recognition of assessment as a site of struggle

I think postgraduate (study) is not just summarising, I have to find something new. But the main task was to finish that essay (David).

Assessment is like a black dog chasing me (Echo).

I can't settle in this city because I might be excluded any time I fail my exam (Kai).

self-efficacy

- *I noticed from the folio feedback that I didn't put my note-taking in the folio. I think it's the most important problem because in the last essay I got some problem about plagiarism. It may be because I didn't note-taking clearly so it leads to the plagiarism. So this time I noticed that and I did the note-taking (Amanda).*
- *At first when I do an essay I mixed everything together [...] I got lost in the process. But when I record what I have done I know what I'm going to do next (Damo).*
- *The folio is a witness to the progress I've made (Joyce).*
- *I have to learn to pick good and bad advice (Patti).*
- *Harry thought my essay might not be controversial enough and if you disagree with the theory it will be easier to achieve critical thinking. But the sources I found mainly help the validity of the theory...it's dangerous. I should have chosen an easier one. (Kai)*

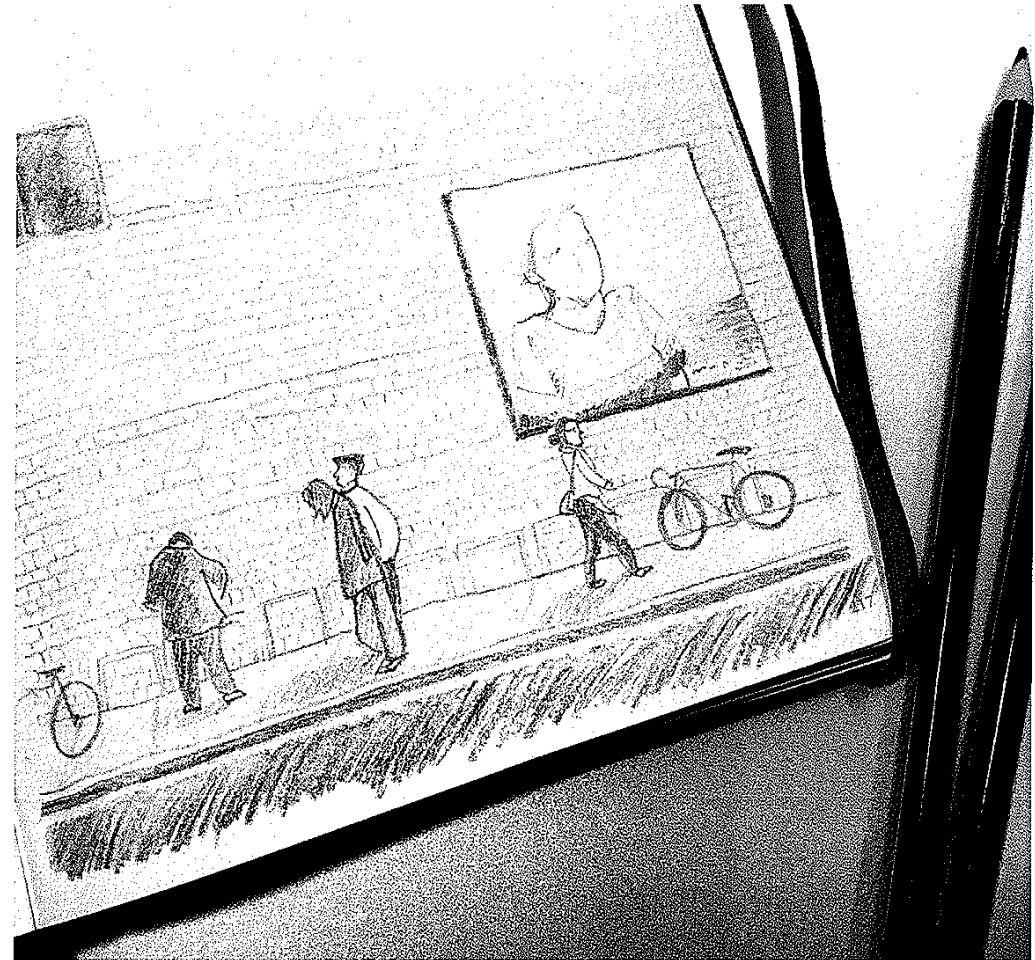
from competition to collaboration

- *When I communicate with others I feel energetic but when I sit down and write things alone, I feel stressful (Jessie).*
- *At the beginning I was a bit confused and even angry. My final assessment will be evaluated by my tutor so if I don't have agreement with her, how can I get a good mark? But as the essay went on I appreciate much more about it... I can keep the communication with her (Rebecca).*
- *At first we are not comfortable but [after time] we are familiar and we put our problems straight [to each other] (Amanda).*

subverting assessment

- *Why can't I pretend I love everything, just choose one topic – that way you don't put your emotion into it and it's like a machine and it might be easier? But I think that's a waste of time. I think the pain is part of the experience (Kai).*
- *Before, we rewrite homework not for us, not make more knowledge or learn more things, but to get a good grade from teacher. I was afraid of the grade before...here I feel in peace (Li).*
- *Echo:*

2.b. drawing and wandering gave me more time to think about what I want to put in the essay.



Translating the Processfolio to a course in Dentistry

- Clinical Humanities ethos- pedagogy of care;
- A longer time period- 5 years;
- Assessment as a means to explore and contest practices throughout their degree programme, to find meaning in the journey;
- Depict their journey from becoming to belonging through reflexivity to 'flourish' as an oral health care professional with all that entails;
- Criteria and grading– GDC outcomes and must be graded;
- From Reflection to Reflexivity.

Reflection vs Reflexivity

- The reflective zombie -De la Croix and Veen (2018)
- *“I’m afraid I can’t tell the truth about myself if I have to submit....”* –Andy (student)
- *“I know what I need to improve. Maybe I didn’t write it but I know”* –Chi (student)
- Compliance and Docility - the dangers of reflection that does not allow one to separate oneself from one’s work- one’s sense of self becomes something to be judged.

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