

Performativity and Affectivity: Lesson Observations in England's Further Education Colleges

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Abstract

Teaching and learning observations (TLOs) are used in educational environments worldwide to measure and improve quality and support professional development. TLOs can be positive, for teachers who enjoy opportunities to 'perform' their craft and/or engage in professional dialogue. However, if this crucial, collaborative developmental element is missing, a TLO becomes intrinsically evaluative in nature and creates complex emotions – within and beyond the classroom. For some teachers, affective reactions to perceived managerial intrusion into their professional space has a negative impact on them, and in turn, their students' learning.

International research on TLOs has focused on schools or universities. My research centres specifically on England's Further Education colleges (FE). Through Interpretive Interactionism, I investigate the different expectations, relationships and identities of teachers and (mis)conceptions of 'authenticity' in TLOs. Teaching involves our unique (dis)embodied 'performativity' (Butler, 2004) or 'emotional practice' which is interpreted and judged by others (Denzin, 1989). Using the concept of 'aesthetic labour' (Witz, et al., 2003), I argue that rather than promoting positive transformation through reflection, TLOs promote a rejection of emotional 'genuineness' that causes anxiety through a fracturing of personal and professional identities.

Improving the effectiveness of TLOs should perhaps encompass explicit dialogue about the affectivity involved in the process?

3 Keywords: Further Education, performativity, emotional labour

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Introduction

Teaching and learning observations (TLOs) are used in educational environments worldwide to measure and improve quality and support professional development. An important part of the TLO process is being reflective – a concept that is debated, both in value and definition (for example see Cornford, 2002). In this context, reflective teaching or 'reflexivity' can be defined as that which emerged from Schön's (1983) reflective model for health professionals and is commonly used in teacher education materials in the United Kingdom. I explain below aspects of reflexivity in TLOs and emotional experiences of the lecturers involved. When a TLO holds a dual purpose of assessment for quality control measures *and* support for professional development, tensions inevitably result (Lawson, 2011; Shortland, 2004). Importantly, assessment procedures are perceived by many individuals as stressful and thus reflexivity in these situations may be difficult (Page, 2011). Reasons for this perceived anxiety are attributed to an incompatibility in the role of the observer, which carries an inherent power-relationship (O'Leary, 2011). Others argue that for pre-service teachers in particular, individuals hold different expectations about the purpose of TLO feedback (Copland, 2010).

This research focuses on the experiences of in-service teachers in Further Education colleges (FE) in England, where often TLOs are intrinsically evaluative in nature. This means emotions surrounding TLOs run deep – within and beyond the classroom (Cockburn, 2005). TLOs can be positive, for teachers who enjoy the opportunity to 'perform' their craft and/or participate in professional dialogue with the constructive support of a mentor. However, for some, affective reactions to perceived managerial intrusion into their professional space can have a negative impact upon them, and in turn, their students' learning (Allen, 2002). The metaphorical significance of the body of the observer within the learning environment provides a useful parallel to better understand the presence of my own biography in the motives, methods and value of my research, my reflective teaching practice (Letherby, 2003) and that of my participants' narratives (West, 1996).

International research on TLOs has focused on schools or universities and/or TLOs as part of initial teacher training (ITT) (e.g. Hammersley-Fletcher and Orsmond, 2005; Perryman, 2009; Copland, 2010). However, the unique history and context of teaching and learning in FE now provides grounds for a renewed, specific focus on the 'performativity' of these managerial practices (Randle and Brady, 1997; Whitehead, 2005). Because of the fundamental reflexivity involved in TLOs, it is crucial that my research incorporates and values FE teachers' views including my own personal experiences as an FE teacher. This is because previously, research into the emotional aspects of teaching and learning have tended to focus either around the promotion of a more psychologically humanistic teaching style or the emotional needs of the student, rather than the teacher (see for example, Nias, 1996).

A plethora of research suggests that teaching and learning are undoubtedly emotional experiences (Field & Leicester, 2000; Gardner, 2005), and research suggests (for example) a positive emotional atmosphere can lead to enhanced cognitive processes

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(Gardner, 1991; Knowles, 1985). Teaching in FE is essentially about relationships: between students and staff, students and students and staff-room interactions and others (James and Biesta, 2007). An Interpretive Interactionist approach is therefore used here because it is grounded in the (emotional) lives of everyday experiences (Denzin, 1984). The lives of lecturers are often situated in the emotional atmosphere of TLOs, which as I explain below, frequently move between the inner, 'feelingful self' and embodied, corporeal aspects of teaching and learning.

Emergent themes from this study supports existing research that suggests lecturers' perceptions of their 'genuine and authentic' teaching, together with personal values and beliefs (something I call 'personal ideology', explained fully below), forms a central motivation for many teachers (for example, see Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In contrast, to use Hochschild's (1983) model, TLOs arguably promote 'surface acting' that rejects this perception of what Heidegger (1927/62) termed emotional 'genuineness', in favour of a performance perceived as meeting the needs of the observer. This commodification of innate but embodied 'performativity' has been termed 'aesthetic labour' (Witz, et al., 2003) and is argued to offer a transformation to individuals in terms of creating new meanings of our identities (Witz et al, 2003). However, in the findings reported here, for some lecturers, this performativity causes anxiety and stress which is arguably due to the conflict between what is required to be embodied and the individual's personal ideology. Some individuals appear to resist the pressure to 'perform', whilst others have an ambivalence or resilience that allows them to overcome this innate conflict. In view of this, in conclusion, I suggest improving the effectiveness of TLOs may mean a deeper examination of the complex emotions involved in TLOs and a reflective sharing or 'emotional intersubjectivity' of these reflections between all participants (Benjamin, 1988; Denzin, 1984).

Methodology

A small-scale pilot study was conducted, through the use of an online questionnaire¹ which produced some quantitative and qualitative data. The pilot study aimed to uncover what TLO policies existed in FE, and what lecturers' experiences were. The short questionnaire consisted of 14 closed questions², and two open-ended questions that allowed for general comments about the respondents' attitudes towards TLOs. The questionnaire was sent via email to a randomly-generated selection of seventy-five FE lecturers from a confidential database of University and Colleges Union (UCU) members³. The response rate to the questionnaires was low; eighteen were completed. However the replies hinted at issues to follow-up in the qualitative interviews. For example, thirteen of the eighteen respondents thought that the main aim of the TLO was for 'college quality

¹ Using the popular and free 'Surveygizmo' facility: www.surveygizmo.com (no identifiable data was requested or collected).

² For example, one question asked: 'In general, how much advance notice of a TLO are you provided with?' - followed by a multiple-choice answer option.

³ Whilst I acknowledge that UCU members may present a biased view of TLO procedures, I felt the advantages of obtaining information on the policies and views of FE lecturers from a wide variety of institutions nationwide outweighed the potential weakness at this preliminary stage of investigation. I am grateful to UCU for their assistance with this initial part of the research.

control purposes' as opposed to a 'formative, personal development objective'. As explained above, research has suggested that this issue is the main source of tension in a TLO (Copland, 2010; Cornford, 2002; O'Leary, 2011).

Emotions are complex, fluid and deeply personal aspects of our lives; it simply would not have done justice to the topic area, or been respectful of the participants, if quantitative data was the sole source of enquiry. With this in mind, my research methodology is logically situated in an approach sensitive to these individuals and their needs; something quantitative methods arguably cannot offer (Silverman, 2001). For this reason, in-depth, semi-structured, biographical interviews with FE staff were used to uncover their lived emotional experiences of TLOs⁴. Importantly, this method links my research topic and its underlying epistemology in the experiences and views of my participants and myself (Wright Mills, 1959). Recording individuals' stories, analysing these and putting the common and diverging themes at the centre of the research is argued as the most effective way of creating new meanings (Wolcott, 1994). This is in stark contrast to the perceived 'dehumanising' TLO policies described by some of my participants (explained below).

My qualitative interviews involved a sample of seven lecturers and seven managers recruited mainly through 'convenience sampling' (Cohen and Manion, 1994). The participants were mainly professional contacts and/or colleagues of friends who volunteered to take-part in my research based in FE institutions based in South East or Central England. It could be argued that this method (rather than using, for example a 'random' sample) could produce a biased account when participants' dialogue consists of what they thought I wanted to hear (rather than their own views) (Bryman, 2001). However, when sharing potentially emotional experiences it is impossible to remain entirely detached from the process. I had built up rapport with some of the participants and my knowledge and familiarity of their experiences provided a depth to the narratives that produced rich data (Silverman, 2001) or 'thick description' (Denzin, 1989). My informal approach provided interviewees with a rare opportunity to speak openly about their experiences of TLOs. In my view, the benefits of my approach - for the individuals concerned and the research as a whole - outweighed any disadvantages.

Teaching & Learning Observations in Further Education: the context

By understanding the affectivity around TLOs in FE, we may be able to understand the differences between those teachers who apparently seem to 'comply' with the needs of the observation procedures, compared to those who feel unable to 'perform' - for example, when asked generally about their experiences of TLOs, these contrasting comments emerged from the open questions in the pilot study questionnaire:

- *"I know how to tick all their stupid boxes..."*

⁴ Some participants were interviewed more than once, amounting to two or more hours of narrative data for each of fourteen participants.

- *"I use the same lesson-plan I always do when I'm observed – it works like a dream"*

In contrast to:

- *"it was that grumpy sod. I was sweating like a pig and couldn't be myself. It was awful"*
- *"I haven't slept for weeks preparing for this TLO. I'm just too exhausted to teach..."*

Are these two apparently contradictory perspectives illustrative of inherent differences in teaching styles?⁵ The pressure from government targets and economic forces, that has led TLOs in FE to appear more 'objective' to its Senior Management Teams (SMTs), has led sometimes to enforced non-negotiable, judgemental 'pass or fail' criteria. Furthermore, partly as a result of the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) report *"How Colleges Improve"* (2008) the quantitative grading system of 1 – 4 (grade 1 being the highest attainable, defined as '*Outstanding*' and 4 being the lowest and termed 'unsatisfactory') became contradictory. This was because the grade depicting '*Satisfactory*' (a grade '3') was deemed "*unsatisfactory*" (Ofsted, 2008) when it was stated that '*satisfactory wasn't good enough*' (Ofsted, 2008:13). The grade '*Satisfactory*' has since been renamed '*Requires Improvement*' (Ofsted, 2012), illustrating Ofsted's power to simultaneously define and inspect standards (O'Leary, 2011). There is therefore an intrinsic, but in my view unnecessary tension between assessment and reflection in TLOs. Over the past few years, attempts have been made to amalgamate and simplify time-consuming observations. Observers' forms are often therefore reduced to a set of tick-boxes that may indicate abstract concepts like asking the observer to specify when '*learning is happening*' (Ofsted, 2009). These difficulties were identified by this participant:

"...they want 'evidence of learning'. Evidence of learning - what they do in class and then there's always the issue – [...] the students who don't take part – the students who don't ask questions. The idea that every one hour session, everybody should show some evidence of learning – well it's not real life is it?" (Brian⁶, interview July 2011, original emphasis)

For the observer, there may be an unspoken pressure in a TLO to find some aspect of potential weakness in order to articulate the progress or development objective of the session or the department as a whole. Because of this, arbitrary power may be delivered through decisions that may be perceived to be irrational (O'Leary, 2012; Page, 2011). For example, in my research, a lecturer described how he was 'down-graded' when the observer decided that the temperature of the classroom was too cold for the students to

⁵ International comparisons can be drawn between these views and other post-compulsory sectors. For example, in research by Lee and Yin (2011) teachers' approaches to the policies of curriculum change are described as 'cynical performers' or 'drifting followers', perhaps indicating that there are differing levels of acting involved (Goffman, 1959).

⁶ The names of the participants have been changed to protect their identities.

be comfortable⁷. This was despite the fact that the teacher had petitioned for the heating to be turned-on prior to the beginning of the lesson (9am) which due to cost implications had apparently been refused. In another teacher's observation paperwork, a down-grade was attributed to the room being 'too small' for the amount of students in the class. However, upon further investigation it was found that the classroom in question was the largest room available on the campus and that the numbers of students in a class was outside the control of the teacher⁸.

Reflexivity in Teaching and Learning Observations

Reflection is about teachers creating their own meanings within their professional discourse (Boud, 1999:123) and also maintaining control of criticisms and information (McMahon et al., 2007). But this is difficult to obtain without the observer playing the role of 'mentor'. Because of the fundamental emotive nature of teaching and learning, TLOs should be focused on sharing 'best practice'⁹ and developing an individual's professional skills (Ofsted, 2009). But there are dangers of intellectualising reflection (Boud, 1999), even if it is explicitly worded, there needs to be recognition alongside this that reflection is not entirely cognitive; often it is intuitive, emotions being intrinsic to it (Boud, 1999:125; Butler, 2004). With this in mind, it is disappointing that despite the concept of reflection benefitting from three decades of development in various disciplines, for some of the participants in my research, the environment which encourages effective self-reflection appears largely absent. This is because assessment during a TLO can be defined as performance at its best, when reflection is about discovering and exploring. Put simply, assessment is a celebration of certainty, whereas reflection is founded in doubt and experimentation (Schön, 1991). Learners are therefore undoubtedly being disadvantaged during TLOs when innovation and risk-taking are put on hold for the benefit of performance management criteria (Whitehead, 2005; O'Leary, 2012).

To use Cockburn's (2005) example of Maynard and Furlong's (1996) models of mentoring, the observer could use the 'reflective' model (as opposed to the 'competence' model), which brings equality to the experience; promoting a deeper level of personal reflexivity for *all* parties or 'intersubjectivity' (Butler, 2004; Denzin, 1984). However, if being observed during teaching is not focused on self-development, it is likely the 'performance' will not be reflected back by the (subjective) views of an observer. Likewise, for me as a researcher, are the narratives from my participants to be viewed as 'genuine' to me, my readers or the participants themselves? Or is a 'communion' between researcher and participant contrived or invalid (Letherby, 2003)? In both situations there may be a conflict between the teacher's (researcher's) personal ethos ('authenticity') and the perception of what is required to be seen as 'authentic' by the observer (participant) (Ashman, 2008). The wider philosophical issues this raises are outside the scope of this paper.

⁷ From the narrative of 'Jim' interviewed May 2011

⁸ From the narrative of 'Alex' interviewed Dec 2011.

⁹ The debate around who defines 'best practice', why and how, remains outside the scope of this article (see Coffield and Edward, 2009).

Performance and Conflict

Teaching in FE has highlighted to me the complex anxieties that teachers cope with, combining their emotion work (Hochschild, 1983) with the conflicts and shifting boundaries of their roles (Shilling, 2004). To what extent is the TLO a true performance compared to a 'snapshot' of an individual teacher's level of competence? If a TLO (for some teachers at least) is a 'performance' of skills, is this the same as, or in contrast to, a perceived 'genuineness' or 'authenticity' in the classroom (Frego, 2006)? Is this 'authenticity' fluid in nature and open itself to interpretation (Linstead, 1994)? In preparing for a TLO, some teachers describe choosing a lesson-plan that has 'worked before' then acting-out a (repeated) part, or becoming a '*talking head*' (McWilliam, 1996; O'Leary, 2012). It could be argued then, that the stress involved in a TLO described by some participants, may result in (or be a result of) a conflict between the teacher's self-concept and their self-identity, leading to fractured or 'liquid' selves (Bauman, 2000). Indeed, it has been argued that the potential for emotional (di)stress is at its height when 'deep acting' is in dissonance with 'real' feelings (Denzin, 1984; Hochschild, 1983). Butler (2004) argues this struggle between selves may lead to a risk of destruction, which is in contrast to the transformational new meanings created by the 'deep acting' of aesthetic labour described by Witz, et al., (2003).

Arguably then, a TLO delivers a conflict between what is 'expected' and an individual's teaching ethos (Ashman, 2008). If so, it follows that during an observation, teachers may be submissive to the needs of the observer's tick-boxes, fundamentally altering classroom dynamics by transforming innate skills of freely given (managed) emotions into 'inauthentic', superficial ones (Hughes, 2005). Indeed, because of this, research into TLOs has described them as 'contrived' implying they are of little value to SMTs (O'Leary, 2011).

But teachers are not passive; teaching and learning is an active, emotional process (Ashman, 2008) founded on many factors, past and present that make us who we are (Denzin 1984:91; James and Biesta, 2007). Emotions and reasons for emotionality are fluid processes and our understanding and reflection of these emotions is founded on changing social interactions, whether outwardly spoken or not:

"...but she [the observer] sat there looked...frowning... you know, with this real frowny, stern expression on her face....and I thought, why are you sitting there like that? That's making me feel *really* uncomfortable. So I just sort of felt I was just *losing* it, because I *couldn't be myself* with this woman with this stern, frowny expression on her face". (Interview with Anna, July 2011, original emphasis)

Anna described her conscious awareness of the fact she felt her 'genuine' (teaching) self was absent during the observation, indicating that the experience was simultaneously a lived and also an 'out-of-body' emotion (Denzin, 1984). Anna had awareness that she was 'losing it' and that she felt uncomfortable because of the (unspoken) actions of the observer. At the same time, she felt unable to do anything to change her embodied actions to correct the situation in the classroom, because of the impact of the bodily presence of the observer on her body and the environment of the classroom.

Likewise, for Alex when she described a lesson observation which did not go well for her:

“...so the reason why they were messing about [was] because they knew they were shit at it, and they were just trying to cover it up really and messing about for the sake of it. And because I'd shown them up probably, by saying, you know, “No, that isn't correct”, and you know, *because I was a bit nervous, I was a bit too angry with them*. But they really pissed the whole thing up the wall for me. And Sally (observer) was there and she was very unforgiving as well. So it was terrible, I thought *I've lost it here*, I'm gonna get a 'three'...” (Alex, Interview Dec, 2011, my emphasis).

Again, this quote illustrates Alex's outward identity of her 'body-for-others' (Denzin, 1984) or the 'performativity' of her teaching (Butler, 2004) and her conscious awareness of her emotional body that (per)forms her teaching identity which was 'losing control' of the situation. For example, she acknowledges that both during the lived emotion and afterwards, on *reflection* of her lived emotion, her behaviour was a result of her being “*too angry with them*” (her students). It is unclear from Alex's reference to the observer - 'Sally' - whether the observer was aware of the potential impact these emotions may have had on the classroom interactions she was witnessing. The emotional consequences on Alex of the critical feedback from the observer, after the lesson is evidenced here:

“...but when I got that 'three', I was absolutely, erm, devastated and I cried uncontrollably...and I had to go home. [...] I just went in the toilet and I just think it was, er, it was, I think it was working so very hard and then I knew it would be a humungous amount of extra work that I'd have to do, right smack in the middle of other things to do and I didn't need it...” (Alex, Dec 2011)

As I have illustrated above, the potential impact of TLO outcomes can be severe if they are linked to competency issues, for instance when staff appraisals bring risks of disciplinary procedures. The unintended consequences of this authoritarian approach means many teachers endure not only internal, emotional stress but also embodied, physical ill-health including symptoms such as, raised blood-pressure, insomnia, hair-loss and vomiting. Often, this is not because of any lack of competence, preparation or paperwork, but due to the artificial environment that a TLO itself creates (UCU, 2010).

“...People were throwing-up. And being ill. And like me crashing the car...because I was thinking about that (the observation). You know, it's still a huge amount of pressure, an unnecessary amount of pressure and its unfair, being judged on your whole performance on fifty minutes once a year. It's just ridiculous.” (Interview with Alex, Dec 2011).

For Alex, there was a feeling even in the anticipation of the emotion. She felt the physical emotion in her body. In Denzin's words, for her 'the emotion was not just part of her consciousness, it was a part of *her*' [...] this feeling of the self or the ego in the feeling' (Denzin, 1984:73 original emphasis). Indeed, the social interactions that surround these

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emotions (for example in the staff-room) often have an impact in themselves, as I describe below.

However, in contrast to these stories, another teacher, Brian described his observation experience in language that expressed a detachment from these emotional issues:

“...and I found her (the observer) quite supportive. I think it's how it's done. I would say some of the observations have been supportive and developmental, but a teacher, you know, it's a two-way thing. You've got to listen to them. I think some teachers are very bad at taking on any criticism aren't they, and they will blame everybody except themselves, and I think you've got to be prepared to listen and be prepared to look at your, you know, your strengths and your weaknesses.”
(Brian, interview July 2011)

This reflective comment from Brian conveys his positive experience of observations in general (although later in this same interview he goes on to describe a negative experience). For him, the body of the observer seemed to have little relevance to his emotional experiences within the lessons environment, either inwardly or on his body-for-others or in the interactions which determined how a lesson progressed. It is worth noting the significance of potential gender differences within this issue (Butler, 2004) (although there is no space here to discuss these).

Emotions in teaching and learning: being 'genuine'

As Nias (1996) points out, teachers' frequent use of deeply emotive language to describe their professional lives, is not often associated with the average workplace, for example: “*passion*”, “*dangerously stressed*”, “*profoundly disturbing*”, “*great joy*” etc. and this is perhaps even more emphasised in FE. FE's diverse student population, mainly adolescent or young adult learners and often community-oriented location (both geographically and culturally) create unique emotional elements compared to other English educational sectors (see for example Gleeson et al., 2005; James and Biesta, 2007). Controlling and channelling these emotional energies inevitably influence teachers' work, and their self-concept (Colley, 2006).

From my perspective, there are two main aspects which make an FE teacher's work so emotional. Firstly, a teacher's personal ethos and sense of self is shaped by personal educational and vocational experiences which in turn impacts upon their relationships with students and others. Teaching is a creative art, or 'craft' created by and around our personal biography and ideology (Wragg, 1999). There is also a collective sense of self that is developed in spaces like the staff-room where colleagues often support (or conflict against) each other through many emotional experiences. Controlling and channelling these emotional energies inevitably has both a positive and negative influence on the teachers' work, and their self-concept (Nias, 1996), as can be seen in this quote:

“...everyone else got a 'two' or a 'one' and the embarrassment, the *mortification* of being a coordinator...and getting a 'three' is just disgusting. I've hated every

second of it. And I know that 98% of people there feel really badly for me, and really feel for me, but it's just that 2% who are laughing up their sleeves and really pleased I got a 'three'. It's kind of a, you know, 'I got one on you'." (Alex Interview 2, Dec 2011) original emphasis

For Alex, the perceived negative grade (a 'grade 3 – ironically at that stage defined as 'Satisfactory') carried a stigma attached to her competence as a teacher, which after her initial observation made it difficult for her to face colleagues in the staff-room. The pressure she felt was exaggerated because of her role and the hierarchy within the department. The label had deeper meanings not only for the 'snapshot' of that specific lesson, but her whole self-identity and self-concept as a highly qualified, experienced and popular teacher. This supports recent findings by O'Leary (2011) who argues TLOs are often ineffective because of their punitive approach.

Secondly, in my experience, (and confirmed by researchers such as Colley, 2006; Nias, 1996) teachers often view their role as a 'carer': they are in close contact with individuals whose progress in the world is their responsibility and understandably they are passionate about *their* students, *their* skills and often *their* institution. The use of the word "their" is important – there is a territorial aspect to the teachers' domain – one that is historically part of a perceived deprofessionalisation in FE (Gleeson et al., 2005) and is increasingly being threatened by external factors such as SMTs and Ofsted policies and targets. The compassion and fulfilment found in teaching, are illustrated in comments such as these below:

"a teacher is someone who can help the students. It's a bit like being on the top of a staircase with the students at the bottom looking up and you're at the top looking down....somehow you've got to get down to their level by reaching them somewhere in the middle. It's difficult. It's not easy. It's about *working hard* at building some rapport with them so that they can respect you." (Jim, interviewed Oct 2011. Original emphasis)

"And the concepts that I come out with – they're on them straight away, and they come back with further information and it's a real exchange of ideas. [...] Completely different relationship. They respect me as well." (Alex, Interview Dec 2011).

This 'emotional practice' was a common theme within the narratives. There was an overriding sense of the innate caring nature present and positive optimism in their descriptions of their 'emotional practice' which undoubtedly forms a fundamental part of these teachers' personal ideologies. For example:

"I still find teaching, apart from when it's doing my head in, fun, enjoyable, I think I have...I think I understand the range of different students much better than I did. [...] comes out of seeing them develop, in a different way than it used to. [...] A student said to me the other day – which really thrilled me – 'you *get* us'. You know, I thought: Wow! That's really amazing I '*get* them!" (Anna, Interview July 2011, original emphasis)

Perhaps elements that contribute to successful learning and an 'outstanding' lesson - however that may be defined - involve a better understanding of our 'emotional practice' which importantly for teachers seems strongly linked to elements of emotional intelligence and self-esteem (Allen, 2002; Goleman, 1995; Mortiboys, 2005). If effective TLOs are about promoting 'best practice' and professional development, teachers should be encouraged to take risks in a supportive environment. Educational researchers have promoted the benefits for *students* of a more humanistic atmosphere of mutual respect in the classroom which incorporates the context of backgrounds and emotional needs (see Black and Wilam 1998). Furthermore, Progressivists argue that creativity and play are fundamental during teaching and learning and research into improved learning experiences in FE seek to promote more innovation, improvisation and instinctive impulse (Harari, 2005). Surely teachers (who are also learning) equally deserve the respect our students gain? However, rather than supporting and developing better quality teaching and learning, it appears that by its very nature, for some lecturers, a TLO seeks through performativity to confine or ignore the intrinsic emotionality and so prevent risk-taking (Whitehead, 2005). Indeed, my research suggests that current policies surrounding TLOs are having a serious negative impact on the physical and emotional health of FE lecturers. As teachers we are inherently well-practiced at controlling our emotions (Nias, 1996), or being 'emotional managers' (Hochschild, 1983), so therefore awareness should be raised of the importance of encouraging strategies that promote a better understanding of the emotionality of TLOs. In particular, a professional dialogue should be encouraged about the performativity created within the embodied experience of TLOs. Crucially, aspects that contribute to an 'outstanding' lesson may involve tapping into elements of teachers' 'emotional practice' and promoting a better understanding of this aesthetic labour (Witz, et al., 2003).

Conclusions

The strategies required for reflection in effective teaching and learning are often not built-in to our everyday teaching practice; it is an individualistic, private matter, often only entered-into in our own personal time and space. This is in contrast to many other professions where creative skills are nurtured and developed. Imagine, for example, a ballet dancer: commonly any dance studio will include a wall of mirrors around the barre, in order that self-correction can continually take place. Likewise, the musician; in many cases, posture has a direct impact on the tone or timbre of an instrument's note (or voice), which, even if not picked-up by the player (singer), will certainly be at odds with any accompanist's part. Sportsmen too have a 'mirror' with which to strive to perfect their play: the digital video recording. Like the musician's reflection and repetition, it allows for indefinite rewind, pause and playback of crucial strategies that the individual and others may learn from. But as Candy et al in Boud (1999) describe, it seems that it is mainly only in ITT through, for example 'micro-teaching' sessions that this attempt at informal, un-judgemental and reflective learning for a teacher takes place. It seems that time constraints and other pressures may prevent these 'tried-and-tested' strategies from being re-produced for in-service teachers willing to reflect on their teaching practice - either individually or as a group.

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Some colleges' SMTs have recognised the potential benefits of an increased awareness in the affectivity of their TLO procedures and have drawn on more creative strategies (O'Leary, 2013). However, without this radical change on a national scale, the potential for loss is great; for the individual teacher, this loss can be manifested as loss of status, in professional and personal relationships, in self-confidence, reputation and autonomy. For some individuals, their motivation and commitment to teaching can dramatically change as a result of a negative observation experience which could potentially result in a loss for the students (and the institution) of experienced, qualified and conscientious staff.

Reflecting on the above, it is important to constantly question our realities that Bourdieu (1991) argues are socially constructed. As educationalists, we cannot assume that there is an intrinsic, innate understanding of the objectives and affectivity involved in TLOs and teaching and learning generally. Without this being explicitly articulated between teachers and their peers and embedded into teachers' and management training, managers may be unaware of the potential pitfalls of TLOs. This is especially relevant as FE lecturers for many reasons may feel disempowered by the process and therefore unable to speak-up about their experiences and feelings (O'Leary, 2013). Indeed, Ofsted themselves confirm that some teachers admit to feeling they are working in a 'culture of fear' (Gleeson et al., 2005; Ofsted, 2008).

On an institutional level, management risk de-professionalising FE lecturers by reducing them to automatons required to 'perform' when instructed (Ball, 2005; Whitehead, 2005). This is a dehumanising experience that, as I have described above, conflicts with many teachers' personal ideology and is unhealthy for organisations as a whole. The embodied feelings described above should be shared with others because these experiences 'furnish the foundations for socially shared feelings' and promote a more collaborative approach (Denzin, 1984:119). Only through openly sharing this emotionality can we learn from reflecting on our emotional practice of teaching. Even when personal ideologies differ greatly between observer and teacher, it could be argued the opportunity for discovery is at its greatest. Conflicting perspectives could be a missed opportunity for innovative teaching and learning strategies (Linstead, 1994). Things beyond articulation need exploration together and meanings of 'authenticity' can be debated through humanistic intersubjectivity (Boud, 1999; Denzin, 1984).

From a more personal perspective, as a teacher and researcher, I firmly believe it is our responsibility to bring together relevant theories and research that can throw some light on the intricacies of TLOs. It is time to make use of strategies such as individualisation and differentiation that, although now second-nature within teaching, need to be brought into day-to-day practice within the arena of *teachers'* professional development. As with our students, it is impossible to encourage teachers' reflexivity without reference and sensitivity to our emotions, attitudes, values and beliefs. Put aside the difficulties of measurements and arguments about the accuracy of qualitative vs quantitative methods of teaching competencies. Any attempts to 'capture' 'genuineness' in teaching become meaningless without the engagement with, and value of, the individuals' concerned and the context of lived emotional experiences.

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