CONTENTS

4 - THE NAMES WE SHOULD GET TO KNOW
GEORGINA ANDREWS

8 - VISUAL REPRESENTATION
RICHARD KILROY

12 - DECOLONISING GLOBAL BRAND REPRESENTATION AND FASHION PRODUCTION
RUTH LAWRENSON

16 - TAKING ON THE FORUM - THEATRE AS A TOOL FOR DECOLONISATION
STEVE NORTH

24 - DECOLONISING EDUCATION THROUGH A ‘CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER’ PERSPECTIVE
JING WUO

30 - DIMENSIONS OF FEEDBACK
BENJAMIN MINCHELL
50 culturally diverse artists, outlined as a practical tool to encourage the deconolosation of knowledge.
“What we have or have not read (or viewed or heard) and what we have drawn from our ‘readings’ – as processes and/or contents – forms and positions us. Our experiences, our stories, constructs our learning and therefore our teaching approaches, and inform our values, ultimately shaping what we do as ‘responsible’ agents influencing and designing the ongoing educational environment and its curricula.” (Lumley, A, 2018)

To decolonise assessment, we need to decolonise our knowledge as educators. Within fine art a key element of this is who and what we choose to reference, something that, until recently, has been dominated by white European men. This domination is intensified by the lack of platforms and visibility of diversity in fine art generally and within curriculum, only 6.7% of all academic staff identified as BME, and women of colour represented just 1% of the artists in major collections across the US.

With an expanded and more diverse knowledge we can challenge the euro-centric ideals in education and assessment. Being conscious of the power within our words, we can bring decolonised referencing into the write ups of assessment briefs, LOs and aims, we can encourage the diverse viewpoints of our students, through formative feedback, and value cultural differences in how we assess.

last year a student asked me if I knew of any black fashion illustrators they could explore in their work. My answer was that sadly, I didn’t.

I also created a workshop exploring photography of models wearing various textures. My focus was on the garments and it didn’t occur to me that all the models were white.

Teaching fashion illustration over the years, it has become apparent that when starting with a white page, it can be more time consuming or less familiar to indicate skin tone or ethnicity; white paper and an outlined model are easily interpreted shorthand for white skin.

I have plenty of ethnically diverse and POC students who automatically draw white figures in their work. It is important that students can see themselves in their work, as we express ourselves creatively as a form of catharsism and as a way to be seen and understood.

the book 100 years of Fashion Illustration by Cally Blackman has 400 illustrations of fashion illustration from a 100 year period. 5 of these featured a figure with coloured skin.

We can’t decolonise history but we can look further afield to make sure we represent skin tone more in visuals going forward.

When illustrating a figure, at what point does the white paper not become shorthand for a white model?
DECOLONISING GLOBAL BRAND REPRESENTATION AND FASHION PRODUCTION

RUTH LAWRENSON

Assess students’ knowledge of fashion brands, manufacturers & industry production by encouraging a global prospective from developing nations to enhance the whole learning experience.

Create a learning environment of shared culture with positive depiction of brands from different countries. Encourage intercultural interactions and a sense of belonging for international students through sharing information peer to peer.

Positively celebrating & promoting cultural references within lifestyle brand depiction & representation that can be explored & discovered. Being introduced to positive aspects of global artisans working within a generative environment.

Highlight the growth in developing nations, move away from references to ‘The Third World’. Facilitate assessment tasks that promote exploration & discovery into developing nations that seek to embrace & preserve skills & craft, without undervaluing skilful artisans who are championed by activists seeking to employ progressive strategies that are globally insightful & inspiring.

left image: Ayush Kejriwal. Scottish whose values are driven by creativity, experimentation & cultural diversity.
Above: Fashion show in Kerala, India, showcasing Indian brand Malai.eco who produce a bio-material ‘leather’ out of coconut pulp & manufacture bags, shoes & accessories. Top Right: Skilled embroiderers working in a beautiful setting for the renowned block print designer, Brigitte Singh, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India. Bottom right: Block printer skilfully repairing a very unique intricate wooden print block for the renowned block print designer, Brigitte Singh, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India.
‘Theatre itself is not revolutionary: It is a rehearsal for the revolution’ - Augustus Boal

Forum Theatre is a powerful tool in a live context that can affect real change. Boal described using it as a way of ‘transforming our society.’ It can and should be used for that.
What is Forum Theatre? - The aim of forum theatre is to explore real practice scenarios in a way that empowers students to rehearse solutions and change the outcome of a scenario for the better. It is a form of interactive drama. Augustus Boal, a Brazilian street theatre maker and director (1985) has been mostly credited for the formation and development of forum theatre.

I was given the task of using Forum online in a staff training session in 2021. This was called after an incident with a lecturer giving feedback to a student which had gone badly and ended up with a student walking out and reporting the lecturer. This became to focus of a wider look at feedback and the power structures between lecturers and students. There were various versions of this but an example that came up in the context of decolonisation was the disparity between older white practitioner lecturers and younger black students particularly in relation to the use of references.

We took a case study of a black female Year BA student who was dismissed by her white Lecturer when she raised her concerns that the references used in her module were very white and contained mainly white men. The scenario was devised but not scripted and rehearsed with actors playing the roles of the student and lecturer. They performed live but broadcast online to the participants who were watching remotely.

The participants were all lecturers at university who give feedback in the form of assessment (formative and summative) written and verbal. For the purposes of Forum we used a fictional scenario of a 121 feedback session. The participants were given a brief introduction and then sent this in the chat (it was also screen shared).

3 different scenarios looking at a lecturer giving 121 feedback to a student which results in a bad outcome. We will asking you to come up with strategies and approaches that will help the lecturer re-run the scenario implementing your suggestions to change the outcome for both student and lecturer.

The basis for the scenarios is a 121 formative feedback session for Year 2 Acting & Performance students on the Social Realism module.

Case study 2 is between Simon (a senior Lecturer in Screen Acting) and Cassie (a black year 2 student). The scene was performed as follows;

We join the scenario towards the end of a 15 minute 121 session which has been going well....
David: So overall it’s been a really good term, you’ve worked well as part of your film making team and as you fed back, your confidence on camera has really grown through the term resulting in an accomplished and passionate performance in your final project. How did you find collaborating with your fellow students on the film making side?

Cassie: It could be challenging at times, but I found the process of learning how to work with people who maybe saw things in different way really useful, and I love collaboration as way of making work generally, so to do it with screen work was really useful.”

David: That’s great Cassie. So just as the final part of this feedback session, it would be really good to get some feedback from you on the module. What did you find useful, what will you take away, anything you would have liked to seen or do as part of it that wasn’t included?

Cassie: Actually, there was one thing. I have to say I did find the references used all a bit white centric /

David interrupts her.

David: White?

Cassie: Yes, I felt it would have been good to have included some black film makers, maybe directors who’ve used Social Realist tropes or influences in their own work, like Steve McQueen.

Again David interrupts her.

David: Yes of course, I get what you’re saying and we always look to use diverse range of influences as possible, but its also important that you understand the history of the genre and where its coming from and obviously people like Loach and Arnold are key to looking at British Social Realism.

Cassie: There are plenty of examples of non white film makers who’ve worked in this genre.

David: Yes, I do know the subject I’m teaching Cassie, I am aware of that.

Cassie looks down, clearly uncomfortable.

David: I mean of course I understand what you’re saying, we probably do need to look at the references in the handbook.

Cassie: Right.

There is an awkward silence as David is aware that he has shut her down.

David: I mean of course I understand what you’re saying, we probably do need to look at the references in the handbook.

Cassie (looks around): Actually I think Joel might be waiting to come in, we’re running a bit late?

David: Sure, ok well thanks Cassie, as I said, a really good term work.

Cassie (quietly): Thanks. Bye.

She leaves.
The participants are then sent to breakout rooms in groups of 5-7 and asked to discuss the following questions. They are told they have 15 mins and then they will be asked to re-direct the scene with the actors trying out their suggestions.

How should have David responded to Cassie’s feedback about the references? Can you script specific questions he could ask Cassie instead?

Facilitators go into each break out room and help pull out the learning. After 15 minutes the breakout rooms are closed and the scene is run again but with one person from each breakout room nominated as the director for a separate section. As soon as they hear or see something that should be changed they shout ‘CUT!’ and the scene is stopped. At that point the director suggests a line change and directs the actor to play the new line and return to running the scene by saying ‘ACTION!’ As soon as the Director hears another line which needs to be changed they shout ‘CUT’ and the actors gets the next piece of direction and so and so forth.

The next director takes up from the next section and continues suggesting the learning points from their break-out room. This continues until the scene is completely changed (for the better). At the end of the process the scene is run in full one more time with all the new lines and direction.

The final part of the learning is to ask ‘Cassie’ in character how she feels at the end of this version of the scene as oppose to the first time through. The actor playing her is told to react as honestly and truthfully as possible. This is where Forum Theatre can be truly transformative and powerful.
DECOLONISING EDUCATION THROUGH A ‘CULTURE OF ENCOUNTER’ PERSPECTIVE.

JING WUO
Bringing cultural diversity into the classroom is becoming increasingly important. Our students have the opportunity to be exposed to different ideas, traditions, crafts, techniques and voices from all around the world.

In an attempt to decolonise the classroom, traditional Japanese Shibori techniques (Indigo Dye) and Chinese Batik techniques are brought into the textile workshop. The aim is to give students’ opportunities in their learning to widen their circles of contact or experience.

Wax printing, also known as batik, is one of the three ancient Chinese handicraft methods of producing dyed, multi-colored textiles via a process which prevents the dye from reaching certain (chosen) parts of the fabric.

Decolonisation is a way of thinking that looks at how colonisation has shaped our ways of thinking, our education systems and our curricula. What are we missing if we do not consider truly global ideas, ideas that embrace the diversity of time and space?

Through arts and crafts, students learn to value and appreciate artefacts and images across different cultures and times. They learn to act and think like designers and artists, working intelligently and creatively. They also learn to preserve heritage through art. Much of the information we now have about people who lived millions of years ago comes entirely from the arts.

In an increasingly divided society, the ability to relate to peers with different backgrounds and cultures is invaluable. The decolonising approach to teaching and assessment enhances students’ ability to think critically, builds empathy and encourages students to think differently.

Assessment

• Using diversity of assessment methods to recognise and cultivate different skill sets
• Define learning outcomes in a way which allows students to engage in different ways with the material
• The assessment will recognise as an opportunity to develop skills as well as knowledge
• The assessment will purpose how students enter the learning environment socio-emotionally and culturally
"This is the oppressor's language yet I need it to talk to you."

- Adrienne Rich

DIMENSIONS OF FEEDBACK

BENJAMIN MINCHELL
Have you ever recorded a teaching session and listened back? If yes, what did you notice, other than the sound of your voice on recording sounds nothing like you in real life? How did you speak in that lecture? Were you clear, open and expressive? Were you aggressive, short tempered? Did you tell a joke? Did anyone laugh?

The use of language to communicate is key to any successful conversation. The highs and lows of a voice, the pronunciation of each syllable and each word that strings together a sentence, then a paragraph and then a two-hour lecture. It’s fascinating but there are issues.

Have you ever stopped to think that the language you speak is not fully inclusive, and in fact lacks in diversity and to many leaners can be seen as ‘the language of the oppressor’. This is a heavy weight for the English language. But speaking the ‘language of the oppressor’ is expected of all those who choose to study in the UK in Higher Education formats. It’s not just those students who are international either, but also those born in the UK. Someone’s background will determine how they view the language that is used in a classroom setting, the language you use to speak to them in, and write their feedback in assessment. But there is little you can do about this. You are one person, and problems on decolonising curriculum and assessment cannot be met by one person. Bell Hooks makes a good point in chapter 11 of their book Teaching to Transgress (1994), encouraging students to speak their native tongue, and for others to ‘learn in the silence’ comes with more work than anticipated. But there are things to think about.

The spoken and written words are elements of learning experience that every student will come to meet every single day. One place where language matters most is in feedback. Most tutors would say they supply feedback to students every day in every constructive conversation they have with each learner. Those quick five-minute catchups serve incredible justice to students as they maintain a steady pace and continue on the path towards their creative outcome. Then there are those moments in every course where ‘official feedback’ is given, during Formative and Summative assessment. These are the times where learners get to present their work and hear our thoughts or submit their work and read the reasons why we have graded their work the way we have. This is where they expect to be given feedback. Assessment is influenced by the Learning Outcomes and Aims of a module. We provide feedback on the work in progress and final outcomes that (if done well) meet the criteria of the learning outcomes.

Making feedback inclusive means that we tackle to problem on ‘decolonising assessment’. And relies on student engagement and understanding to be successful. David Carless and Naomi Winstone write about the topic of Feedback literacy in their 2020 article Teacher feedback literacy and its interplay with student feedback literacy. They promote three different ‘dimensions’ to teachers and the way they give feedback to their learners. These are the Design Dimension, Relational Dimension and the Pragmatic Dimension.

‘Within the [...] dimension(s), [...] teachers demonstrate trustworthiness and approachability to encourage students to initiate and continue dialogue [...]’ (Carless and Winstone: 2020,9).
dimensions mentioned above can be dissected into simple steps that you can take forward into your own practice.

Below are a summary of the dimensions and how you can adapt your current way of supplying feedback to all students that encourages students to be more engaged and allows you to adapt your language to become more inclusive.