

Using a Mantle of the Expert Approach to Build Professional Expertise in Interior Design

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Research Question

What are first year tertiary interior design students' perceptions of the impact of a Mantle of the Expert approach on their capacity to work with a real client?

- What is the impact on their feelings of self-efficacy?
- What is the impact on their perceptions of their competence in the process of working with a client?
- What is the impact on their perceptions of the quality of their work?
- To what extent does using Mantle of the Expert help to develop students' sense of belonging to a Community of Practice?

Abstract

This dissertation reports on an action research study undertaken with a group of first year tertiary interior design students. The research study concerns a teaching initiative that aimed to scaffold students into working with a real client. The main strategy used in this process was Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert. The initiative was based on the premise that Mantle of the Expert could help build self-efficacy for working with a real client. The findings of the study suggest that there were successes gained, particularly around the acquisition of key practical competencies. However, the ways in which some of the students engaged with their peers during client roleplaying in the early stages of the project did not prepare them completely for the demands of negotiating with a real client. The limited self-efficacy demonstrated by some of the students in negotiating with their real client indicates that they were still in the early stages of developing their professional identity. The results of this study will lead to refinements of the initiative in order to enhance student readiness to work with a real client and promote a closer alignment between academic learning and professional competency.

Keywords: *Mantle of the Expert, Scaffolding, Community of Practice, Self-efficacy, industry preparedness*

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Table of Contents

Research Question.....	i
Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Contents	iii
List of Figures and Illustrations:.....	v
Chapter one: Introduction	1
The position of the researcher within this research	1
Explanation of course (Diploma, Interior Design)	3
Explanation of module (Interior Design Studies 1)	4
Assessment outline.....	4
Chapter two: Literature review.....	6
Communities of Practice	6
Social Learning Theory.....	7
Mantle of the Expert	10
Inquiry-based Learning.....	12
Expert Framing	15
Drama for Learning.....	16
Planning a MOTE teaching and learning initiative.....	17
Self-efficacy	19
Literature review conclusion.....	21
Chapter three: Methodology.....	22
Action Research	22
Interpretivist paradigm.....	23
Ethical concerns	26
Data Collection Methods.....	27
Data analysis method	27
Chapter four: Method	29
Day one – building belief	29
Assignment 1 (drama-based assignment).....	32
Assignment 2 (real client)	35

Chapter five: Findings.....	37
Self-efficacy survey results	38
Semi-structured interview results.....	39
The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of their self-efficacy when working with a client	40
The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of their competence to work with a client.....	46
The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of the quality of their work	49
Participant perceptions of belonging to a Community of Practice	51
Unanticipated findings	54
Summary	60
Chapter Six: Discussion of findings.....	61
Chapter seven: Conclusion	68
Recommendations	68
Summary	70
Reference list.....	72
Appendix A: Participant information sheet.....	76
Appendix B: Consent form for participants.....	77
Appendix C: Interview question guidelines	79
Appendix D: Ethics approval - University of Waikato.....	80
Appendix E: Ethics approval - Waikato Institute of Technology	81
Appendix F: Module descriptor, Interior Design Studies	82
Appendix G: Assignment one project brief	85
Appendix H: Assignment one commission letter.....	87
Appendix I: Assignment two project brief	88
Appendix J: Assignment two commission letter	89
Appendix K: Graduate Profile, Diploma in Interior Design.....	90
Appendix L: Weekly synopsis of the teaching and learning initiative	91

List of Figures and Illustrations:

Fig.1 Learning outcomes of assignment one	4
Fig.2 Learning outcomes of assignment two	5
Fig.4 Learning Through Direct Experience.....	7
Fig.3 Learning Through Modelling.....	7
Fig.5 Components of a social theory of learning (Wenger, 1999, p. 5)	8
Fig.6 Dimensions of a Community of Practice (Wenger, 1999, p. 73)	9
Fig.7: 'As-if' vs. 'As-is' (Edmiston, 2003, p. 3)	10
Fig.8 The three pedagogical structures of Mantle of the Expert (Aitken, 2013, p. 36)	12
Fig.9 Suggestion of inquiry-based learning process (Fraser et al., 2012, p. 34)	13
Fig.9 Suggestion of inquiry-based learning process for interior design education.....	14
Fig.10 Visual illustration of components of recommended elements of MOTE (Aitken, 2013)	18
Fig.11 The difference between efficacy expectations and outcome expectations (Bandura, 1977a, p.193)	19
Fig.12 Low self-efficacy expectations can lead to fear and lack of participation	20
Fig.13 High self-efficacy expectations lead to fearless participation in activities	20
Fig.14 MOTE offers a safe opportunity to practise behaviours for which there is low self-efficacy	20
Fig.15 The continuous cycle of action research between practice, research and sharing findings, adapted from McNiff (2010, pp. 33-35).	22
Fig.16 3 different ways of understanding/ interpreting one single action .	24
Fig.17 the process of interpreting an action is a multi-layered process ...	24
Fig.18 The researcher must negotiate meaning with participants through being open, participative and conversational.	25
Fig.19 An example of the creation of a company value	29
Fig.20 Dramatic presentations by the students demonstrate the scope of work of a working designer	30

Fig. 21 Assignment one timeline	32
Fig. 22 Assignment two timeline.....	35
Table 1: Self-efficacy survey results.....	38
Fig.23 Self-efficacy scenario one	41
Fig.24 A person's efficacy expectations affect their behaviours/actions (Bandura, 1977a, p.193)	42
Fig.25 Self-efficacy scenario two.....	43
Fig.26 Additional rehearsal may break through the barriers of fears and lack of competency before Efficacy expectations can rise	44
Fig.27 Self-efficacy scenario three	45
Fig.28 Category 1 - Drama-based practice in assignment one led to competent communication out of role in assignment two	47
Fig.29 Category 2 - Assignment one led to the acquisition of useful design skills for assignment two, the drama element was not the most important part	47
Fig.30 Category 3 - It was difficult to engage in the drama for assignment one, meaning that I useful skills for assignment two were missed	48
Fig.31 Dimensions of a Community of Practice (Wenger, 1999, p. 73) ...	51
Fig.32 Mutual Engagement can lead to the building of strong, supportive relationships	51
Fig.33 Joint engagement can lead to something that equals more than the individual parts	52
Fig.34 A shared repertoire is important in a Community of Practice	53

Chapter one: Introduction

The contemporary higher education literature demonstrates a preoccupation with the debate about the relationship between higher education and graduates' competence to contribute to the workplace and society. The need to prepare work-ready graduates is particularly pressing in vocationally-orientated programmes and educators need to identify pedagogies that will enable learners to apply their knowledge and skills in an informed and professional way. Equally important is the need for students to learn in a way that initiates them into the ways of thinking and inquiry that are unique to the discipline and builds their sense of self-belief about their capacity to contribute to their discipline community.

These are the challenges that confront me as an interior design educator and in this study, I use Action Research (AR) to examine the effectiveness of using the drama-based pedagogy, Mantle of the Expert (MOTE) to initiate students into the design community and build their sense of personal efficacy about their competence to participate in this Community of Practice (COP).

The position of the researcher within this research

My commitment to help my students see themselves as real designers has evolved in part from my personal history and education in design. When I first entered the workplace as a designer, following the completion of a Bachelor of Design, my self-efficacy was low. I did not feel confident in assuring people that my design suggestions would work for them, and, in retrospect, I did not believe that I was a real designer yet. I believe that my doubts about my position as a designer came from a lack of authenticity in my design education. My position in the academic COP felt secure, but not my position in the professional COP. In my undergraduate classes, we regularly stood up in front of our classmates and invited guests to present in a professional manner 'as-if' we were presenting to a real client. This created difficulty for me as a learner, because I could never relax into it or understand exactly how I could present to a client who was not present.

At the end of each of the projects I felt that I had a greater skill level, stronger relationships with my classmates, but I did not feel any closer to being initiated into a professional COP. My perceived lack of connection between classroom and industry practice in my own education motivated me to seek out a method of teaching that would bridge that gap. In my professional practice as a designer, I gradually developed my ability to present my ideas confidently, and to work with clients to achieve their goals. When reflecting upon my strategies in working with clients, I noted the use of drama as a tool for presenting effectively to clients. It became clear to me that the strengths that I developed owed much to my dramatic creation of myself as a character. Through characterisation, I was able to construct myself as a more confident, easy-going version of myself who could have a laugh with someone and simultaneously maintain social and professional boundaries.

I regularly observed my own students struggling with many of the same challenges that I experienced in my design education. I recognised their difficulty in conceptualising themselves as designers within the classroom setting but I felt unsure of how to change this thinking. In January 2014 I encountered Dorothy Heathcote's MOTE approach at a course in teaching through MOTE with Dr. Viv Aitken and Dr. Brian Edmiston, two well-known academics in the area of MOTE. The acknowledgement of the presence of two worlds at play in MOTE excited me immensely. One world is the world of "as-is" in which the students are learning/presenting in a classroom in Hamilton, New Zealand. The other is the world of "as-if" in which they can be anything and anywhere that they want to be through drama. This was the point when I recognised my own experimentation with character as a practicing designer. The aim of teaching through MOTE is that once students participate in the drama, they begin to feel excited by the possibilities offered within the "as-if" world, and see themselves as more than just members of the classroom COP, but also of the professional COP.

Throughout 2014, I experimented with many aspects of MOTE in the first and second year interior design modules that I teach at the Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec). Through my experiments, I found that many of the elements were easy to implement, although I did have some difficulty implementing drama conventions without a personal background in drama education. For this research study, I deliberately and purposefully built a teaching initiative for 2015 based on the principles expounded in MOTE. Through this teaching initiative, I aimed to determine the extent of its effectiveness in preparing students to work with a real client. Specifically, my research question is:

How effectively can a Mantle of the Expert approach in course teaching prepare Interior Design students for working with a real client?

This study can make a useful contribution to the literature on teaching interior design and can contribute to the more general debate about preparing students for the workplace. Currently, there is little higher education literature around the teaching of Interior Design and I hope that my trial with this unique method will be valuable to other academics in the field. Beyond this specific context, a MOTE approach potentially provides one strategy for the complex task of initiating all students into a particular COP and bridging the worlds of academia and practice. Finally, while MOTE is a recognised teaching tool, the available literature in relation to tertiary education is slight. Much of the work done thus far is practitioner-based reflection at a primary school level.

In these ways, I am hopeful that this study can make a significant contribution to the development of tertiary pedagogies that can equip students with the competence and the sense of personal efficacy to perform well in the workplace.

Explanation of course (Diploma, Interior Design)

The Diploma of Interior Design at Wintec is a two-year diploma level course taught to NZQA level 6. I have included the graduate profile as appendix K. The course has two foci, residential design in year one, and

commercial design in year two. The students come from multiple backgrounds, ranging from students who have come straight from high school with experience in design-based subjects, to adult students who may never have had any formal training, but are likely to have some previous practical experience.

Explanation of module (Interior Design Studies 1)

The paper that this research study focuses on, in which I will be implementing a MOTE approach is Interior Design Studies 1. This is a compulsory module for first year students enrolled in the Interior Design Diploma at Wintec. In this module students have the opportunity to complete design projects using the skills they learn in any of the modules they participate in throughout their diploma. Within Wintec, modules are equipped with a module descriptor that includes a set of defined learning outcomes and assignment details that are firmly set in place. The tutor does not write these learning outcomes. I have attached a copy of the 2015 Module Descriptor associated with this module as appendix F. Interior Design Studies 1 is a full year module, with four assignments throughout the year. For this research study I will focus on Assignment one, which is worth 15% of the year's mark, and Assignment two, which is worth 30% of the year's mark.

Assessment outline

As illustrated in Fig. 1, for assignment one, there are two key learning outcomes: the ability to work through the design process and to create industry-standard documentation. The assignment also fulfils the requirement for the students to participate in graded

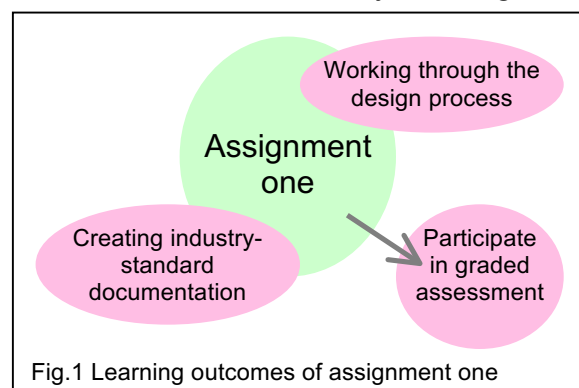


Fig.1 Learning outcomes of assignment one

assessment, as stipulated in the module descriptor. The teaching and learning experiences to attain these outcomes will be based on a MOTE approach, incorporating Expert Framing, Inquiry-based Learning and

Drama for Learning as students are guided through the process of working with a drama-based client who has a fictional apartment.

For assignment two the students will be provided with a real client, and framed as expert interior designers who have already experienced professional success in assignment one. To meet the learning outcomes illustrated in Fig. 2, students will be required to create a residential design proposal with

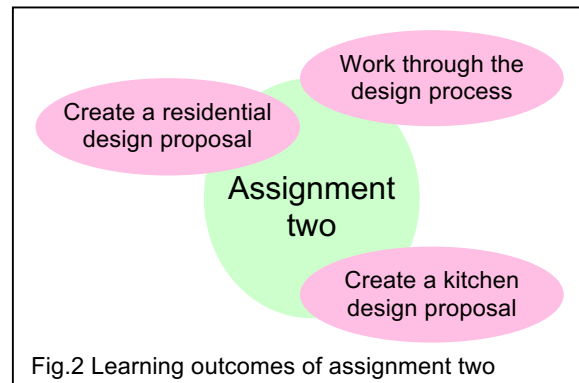


Fig.2 Learning outcomes of assignment two

a strong focus on the kitchen design. The real client is an individual who approached Wintec to have students develop a design proposal for their renovation project on a beachfront apartment in Mount Maunganui. The client was open to the possibility of having some student work featured in the final apartment design, despite already having employed an architect to develop a plan for the project.

The teaching and learning innovation that will take place over the first two assignments of the Interior Design Studies module will test the ability of the student group to work in an industry-based environment after being scaffolded through a design process that involves communicating with a client in a safe, drama-based environment for assignment one. The data that comes out of this study will be used to examine students' perceptions of self-efficacy throughout the process.

Chapter two: Literature review

Central to this research study are a number of core teaching and learning theories that I will discuss in detail below. Particularly pertinent to the study is the theory of COP. The teaching initiative draws on the premise that MOTE can be a valuable tool in building communities of practice. Sayers (2011) argues for a strong connection between MOTE and COP, stating that the concept of a collective 'frame', negotiated learning, and the innovative relationships between teacher and learners that exist in MOTE, could reasonably be considered a COP (2011, p. 5). Building on this strong association between COP and MOTE, I will begin by discussing the components of COP. I will then discuss the core elements of MOTE and their use in developing and strengthening a COP. In keeping with the iterative approach of action research, my interest is in student perceptions of how well the first assignment that employed a MOTE approach prepared them to work in a professional environment for assignment two. In examining students' perceptions of their preparedness, I will focus on their feelings of self-efficacy. Correspondingly, in this literature review, I also examine the construct of self-efficacy.

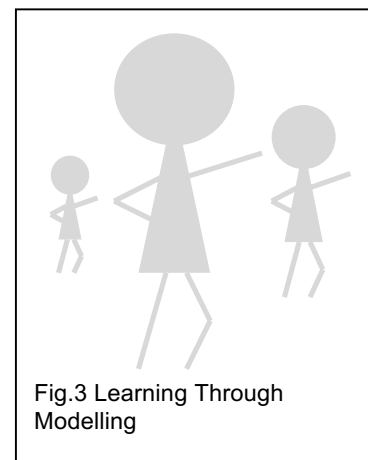
Communities of Practice

Lave & Wenger's Communities of Practice (COP) not only provides a strong philosophical underpinning for the approach taken in this teaching and learning initiative, but also an important benchmark for evaluating participants' feedback on their experience of the learning initiative. Wenger (1999) discusses learning as a social activity, stating that we all belong to different Communities of Practice, be they clubs, teams or workplaces. He discusses the rich learning that can take place within these communities, and argues that a classroom should be treated as a community in the same way as these other social groupings, rather than a remote place of learning separate from the rest of the world (Wenger, 1999, p. 73). Wenger's notion of COP provides an integrating conceptual framework for designing learning spaces that bridge classroom learning and practice. I have chosen to use Wenger's theory as an underpinning philosophy

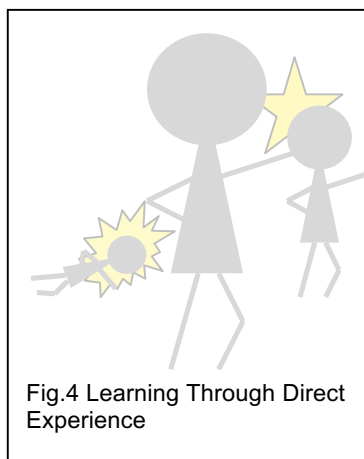
because it corresponds to my view of the classroom as a space for induction into the interior design profession. All aspects of the teaching approach that is the focus of this research study are planned to give students direct experiential knowledge of the processes and procedures involved in interior design practice. In Wenger's terms, the design profession can be seen as the COP into which I hope to initiate the students.

Social Learning Theory

Central to the understanding and philosophy of a COP is a social theory of learning. Bandura (1977b) states that Social Learning Theory is made up of a number of different elements, one of those is Learning Through Modelling, and the other is Learning Through Direct Experience. In explaining Learning Through Modelling (as illustrated in Fig.3), Bandura states that in developing who we are as people, we observe the behaviours of those around us and then we embody those behaviours.



Through this embodiment we gain understanding of, appreciation for and learning through the experience of being like those people. For example, without using Learning Through

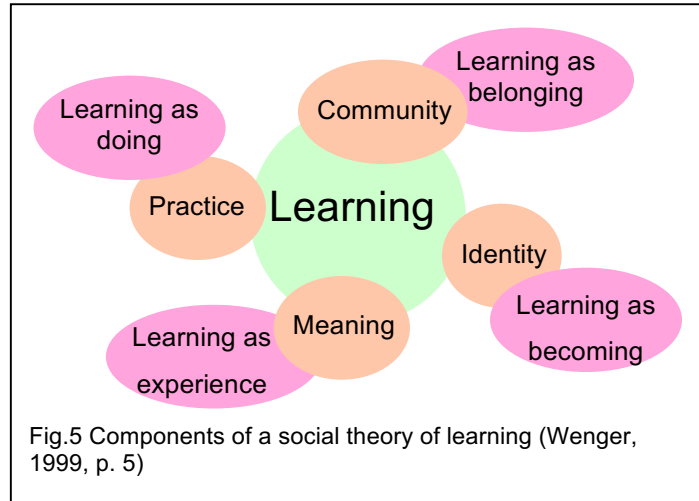


Modelling as children, we would not learn to speak (Bandura, 1977b, p. 5). Bandura also discusses the use of Direct Experience (as illustrated in Fig.4), stating that we learn by taking part in actions, then deal with the consequences thereafter, whether they be good or bad (1977b, p. 3). I believe that these two elements of a social learning theory are the first building blocks to achieving a strong

professional COP in the design classroom. In my teaching and learning initiative I aim to include Learning Through Modelling by having regular visits from design professionals into the classroom, class visits to design showrooms and telling stories from my time in industry. I also aim to

emphasise Learning Through Direct Experience by giving students multiple opportunities for authentic tasks to do in class and as part of assessment structures that allow them the opportunity to experience success or failure quickly and learn from those experiences.

Wenger (1999) adds to Bandura's conception by proposing the social theory of learning that is shown visually in Fig. 5. The figure demonstrates the understanding that learning is made up of the interaction of the following elements:



- Building personal **meaning** out of our experiences
- Putting our theories into **practice**
- Building social configurations/ **communities** around our practice
- Working to discover who we are/ our personal **identity** through our experiences

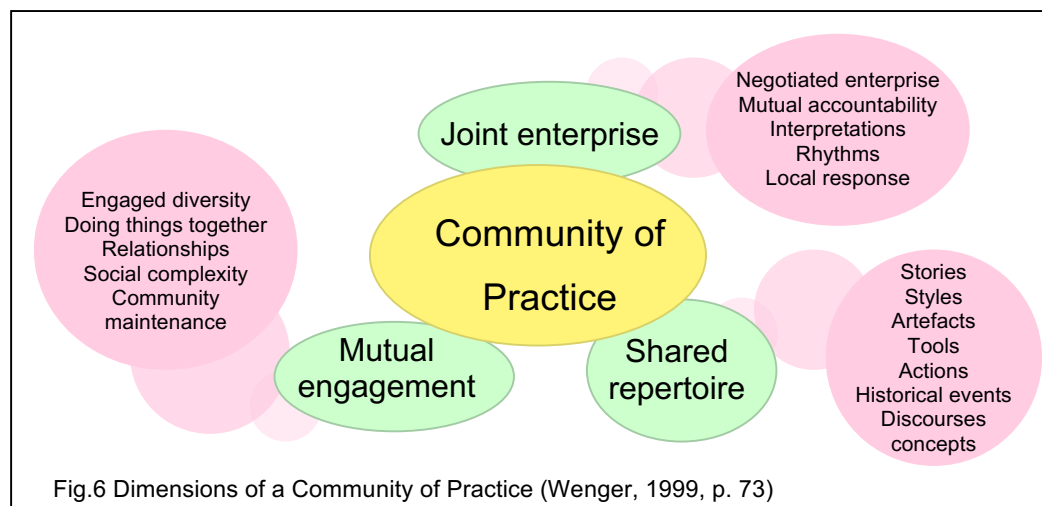
Wenger states that it is through the combination of the social interactions illustrated in Fig.5 that we learn. The quotation that I include below demonstrates the importance of connection, and the way that these connections can lead to practice.

*Being alive as human beings means that we are constantly **engaged** in the pursuit of enterprises of all kinds, from ensuring our physical survival to seeking the most lofty pleasures. As we define these enterprises and **engage** in their pursuit **together**, we **interact** with each other and with the world and we tune our relations with each other and with the world accordingly. In other words, we learn (Wenger, 1999, p. 45).*

I have highlighted a number of key words in the quotation above that emphasise both connection and relationship. In designing a COP in the classroom, these connections are core elements and the key words listed above provide terms to look out for in the participant feedback on the initiative.

Over time, this collective learning results in practices that reflect both the pursuit of our enterprises and the attendant social relations. These practices are thus the property of a kind of community created over time by the sustained pursuit of a shared enterprise. It makes sense, therefore, to call these kinds of communities of practice (Wenger, 1999, p. 45).

This second part of the quote emphasises the common pursuit of a shared enterprise, the practice of the community. This highlights that in designing a COP in the classroom, it is important to ensure that a space is provided wherein students can work toward a common enterprise. Wenger (1999) discusses three key elements that make up a COP. They are Mutual Engagement, Joint Enterprise and Shared Repertoire, as demonstrated in Fig. 6. Mutual Engagement doesn't necessarily involve working in a team,



or even necessarily being in the same geographical location, it is about participating in similar activities. Joint Enterprise is about a community working together toward a particular goal or output, and the complexities around individual participation and responsibility within this. Shared Repertoire is the sharing of experiences within the community, streamlining processes through a shared language and methodology. I aim to implement the core components demonstrated in Fig. 6 throughout

the design of this teaching initiative through the use of a MOTE approach, which I will discuss in greater detail in the MOTE section of this literature review. A **Joint Enterprise** is created through the creation of a company in which the students are employed as designers. **Mutual Engagement** is created through the use of a strong set of company values created on day one of the module. A **Shared Repertoire** is created through the introduction of students to the industry into which they are being inducted through class visits and industry critiques, discussed above as Learning Through Modelling. In the methods section I will further demonstrate the ways in which assignment one aims to help transition the students into the design community and replicate the components of Wenger's model.

Mantle of the Expert

As discussed above, Wenger's model of COP aligns well with the core theoretical framework that has shaped the design of this initiative: Dorothy Heathcote's Mantle of the Expert (MOTE), a drama-based educational theory. Through MOTE the aim is to give my students an experience that allows them insight into their professional identity as designers. The imagined world of the drama provides the first community in which students are invited to develop their professional identity, just as I did when already participating in industry. The student experience within the imagined world offers a space that allows them the learning opportunity to develop and gain insight into the Joint Enterprise, the Shared Repertoire, and the Mutual Engagement that create the COP. Edmiston (2003, p. 4) stresses the use of COP in a MOTE context,

stating that students bring a wealth of information from their community context from the 'as-is' world into their experiments in their learning in the 'as-if' world in the classroom (as illustrated in Fig.7). Below I have

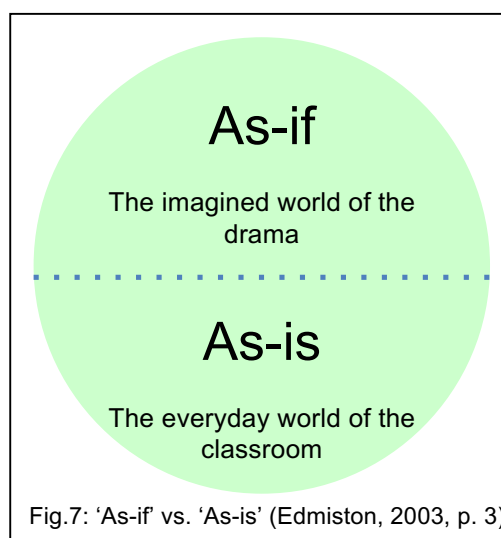


Fig.7: 'As-if' vs. 'As-is' (Edmiston, 2003, p. 3)

provided a quote from Edmiston in which he outlines an example of how a COP can be created through the use of MOTE through the use of a piece of practice-based reflection after the implementation of a MOTE experience set around space travel:

...pretending to space walk, put on spacesuits, and explore the outside of the spaceship in teams for possible problems were the activities that began to create a community of astronauts (Edmiston, 2003, p. 5).

The early stage of the space-based drama as explained above demonstrates the early stage of the MOTE and the COP. The participants are growing their collective understanding of the field that they are entering.

As a whole group we identified urgent problems: the oxygen supplies were lower than expected, tiles on the exterior of the fuselage were damaged, and the radio antenna was damaged (Edmiston, 2003, p. 5).

As demonstrated above, students are guided from having fun in the drama and building their collective understanding of the field in the early stages, into the tension of the drama. It is the introduction of this tension, in this case damage to the spaceship that gives purpose to the drama. It is at this stage when the students start to identify potential problems that play can seamlessly turn into work.

The participants worked together in small groups to develop plans, write notes, and present their ideas to the whole group. The group as a whole and in small groups repeatedly negotiated and agreed on imagined shared events (Edmiston, 2003, p. 5).

Demonstrated above is the provision within a MOTE for students to work collaboratively through problems, pooling their knowledge and starting to build a COP within the classroom. This concept is expanded below:

At a later time people could have explored, for example, how to divide up the remaining oxygen fairly, how to support one another, and how to execute a rescue mission. All these activities, whether or not they were fictional, were building community and the beginnings of a shared frame

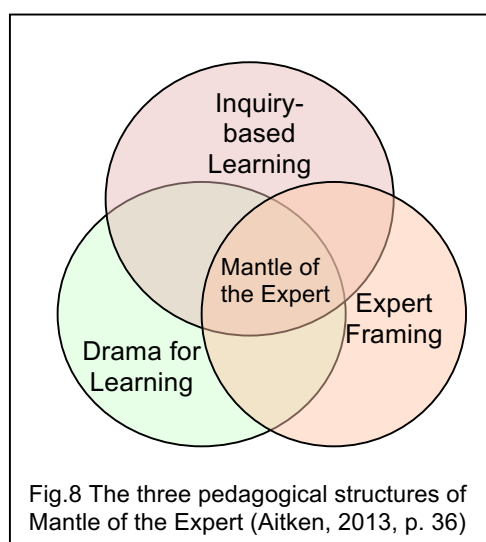
of trust, safety, collaboration, respect, and democracy (Edmiston, 2003, p. 5).

The example above of a space-based MOTE from Edmiston (2003) demonstrates the implicit existence of a COP within any implementation of a MOTE teaching and learning experience, through the use of a Joint Enterprise (fixing the ship), Shared Repertoire (learning in the small groups about what they need to fix the ship) and Mutual Engagement (working together as small groups and a whole class group to fix the spaceship).

As demonstrated in the example above, a MOTE approach puts students at the centre of their learning, with each student playing an important role within a fictionally constructed company, working together toward an equally fictional commission

(Heathcote & Bolton, 1994). In the context of a tertiary interior design classroom this involves the creation of a design company. Each student will be framed as a practising interior designer employed by the company. For assignment one, students will be given the ability through the use of Drama for Learning to switch regularly between the role of

designer and client. According to Aitken (2013), it is necessary for teachers planning to teach using a MOTE approach to be knowledgeable in and ready to use a combination of Inquiry-based Learning, Expert Framing and Drama for Learning in their teaching (see Fig. 8). I will explain each of these aspects in the discussion that follows.



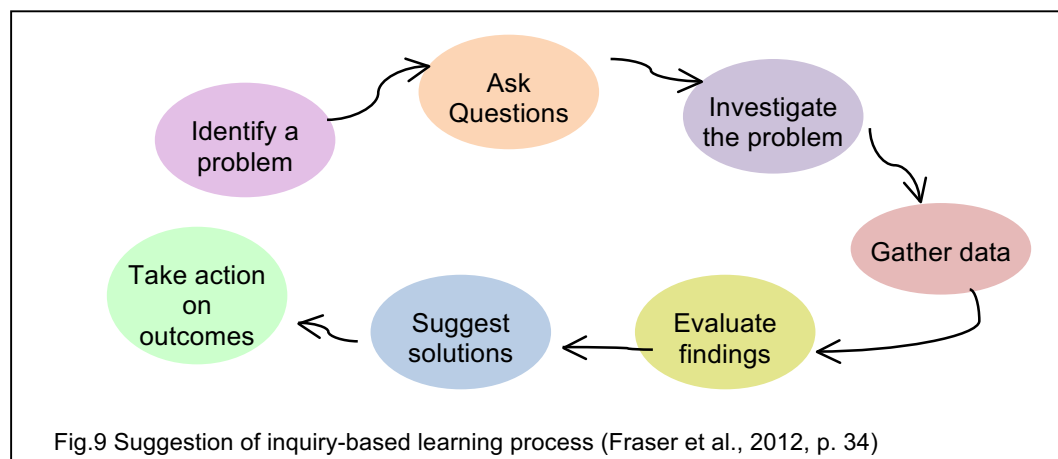
Inquiry-based Learning

Bearing in mind all the qualities of learning within a COP or a mantle, genuine negotiation and enquiry are at the heart of the interactions (Sayers, 2011, p. 27).

The above quote demonstrates the importance of giving power to students within a COP and MOTE-based approach, the power to negotiate the way they learn and the power to investigate their learning on their own terms. Inquiry-based learning is a student-centred and problem-based approach to teaching and learning. The term inquiry also communicates a high level of open-endedness and problem solving which is apt as preparation for future work. This is opposed to a traditional classroom approach where the teacher is at the centre of the learning handing out information to the students. Correspondingly, this traditional approach does not enable students to grapple with problems and complexity that are inherent in professional and community engagement.

*One of the greatest challenges for the classroom teacher who wants to use COP or enquiry based learning, is the demand for a **relaxed and open relationship** between teacher and learners so that **negotiated learning** can take place (Sayers, 2011, p. 27).*

The word negotiation in the quote above is particularly important in a design context, as a key skill for a designer is the negotiation of ideas alongside clients throughout the design process. In order to achieve the relaxed and open relationship that lead to the negotiated learning discussed in the quote above, it is necessary for the teacher to be seen as

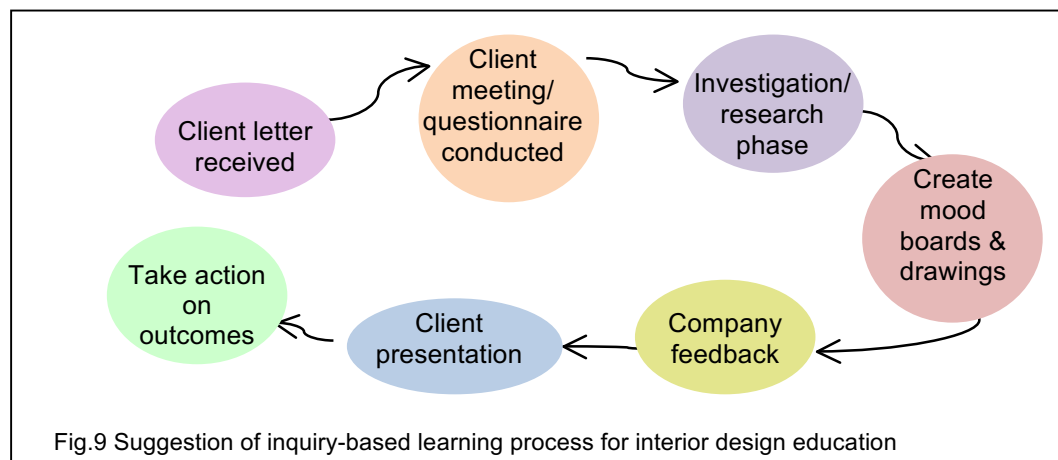


a facilitator of learning. The facilitator of learning poses questions for students to find their own answers, allowing students to discover learning in their own way (Spronken-Smith & Walker, 2010). Fig.9 illustrates a process of students being led through an inquiry-based approach to

education as discussed by Fraser, Aitken, Whyte and Price (2012). Fraser et al (2012) suggest that this process is not necessarily linear in practice, with many of the stages re-visited throughout the learning process. In the case of a MOTE approach, the commission and the client will lead the student inquiry, as described in the quote below:

Unlike open-ended inquiry, where the teacher will support the student to explore directions of interest, in Mantle of the Expert the inquiry is bounded by the terms of the commission from the client. The commission letter serves as a contract requesting a particular service or outcome. It focuses the inquiry towards a process of working out how to achieve the request. Importantly, the fact that the commission exists in an imaginary context means that the actual outcomes can be adjusted or renegotiated along the way. (Fraser et al., 2012, p. 34)

The above quote demonstrates the importance of the commission letter from the client in the inquiry-based learning process within MOTE. Within an interior design context (as illustrated in Fig.9), the letter that students



will receive from their client at the start of the project should outline the initial **problem** for them to start examining, while giving them space to prepare **questions** for their client. They will then begin the **investigation**/research phase of the design process, looking into the areas of interest to their specific client based on the answers to their questions. Throughout this process they will **gather data** from their research by putting together mood boards, material selections and drawings. They will then **evaluate their findings** within the company structure, before **suggesting their solutions** in a presentation to their

client. It is important that the students are allowed two points of presentation to their client, in order to give them the chance for the final stage of the Inquiry-based Learning process, **Taking action on outcomes**. Giving students the chance to do this, then re-present their work to the client allows the opportunity for not only Inquiry-based Learning, but also Learning by Direct Experience.

Expert Framing

Like inquiry-based learning, Expert Framing is also a student-centred approach where the teacher is in the role of facilitator of learning, and the students are framed not only as inquirers, but also qualified experts in their field (Aitken, 2013). The quote below examines an example of a MOTE-based approach in which students were expert framed as museum curators:

*Suddenly the purpose, the **belief in the work**, and who was really in charge fell into place. The brainstorming about museums took on a new shine, and **ideas began to flow – rich, complex, creative ideas** that had absolutely nothing to do with me, but had everything to do with the kids' instant acceptance of themselves as knowledgeable, valuable, capable, and responsible. They were now going to be experts and suddenly they wanted their museum to be perfect (Housum-Stevens, 1998, p. 21).*

The quote above is from an article by Housum-Stevens in relation to her teaching practice. She was having difficulty with her students engaging with their classwork, until she discovered a MOTE approach. Once she had expert-framed her students within their roles, she finally found the engagement level that she had been striving so hard to find for many years. Some key terms are particularly relevant to my own study. The word belief matches my aim to develop students' self-efficacy. The generation of a creative flow of ideas mirrors the kind of creative energy that I would be hoping to simulate in design students. I believe that expert framing my students as practicing interior designers will help them feel like adults, rather than talking down to them in any way. Building student belief that they are experts requires first building belief in the fictional company

they are working within, and is assisted by the use of Drama for Learning (Aitken, 2013), a concept I will explore below.

Drama for Learning

At the core of MOTE is Drama for Learning. Andersen (2004) discusses Drama for Learning as a student-centred approach to teaching and learning that does not involve creating a stage show with actors and an audience. Instead it consists of a constant shifting of improvised roles in the classroom; in this way, the process emulates the complexity and uncertainty of work and involvement in society. The shifting of roles gives students the opportunity to comprehend further the needs of the person they are in role as within the structure of the drama and corresponds to the shifting and continually evolving nature of work and social relationships. Drama gives students the opportunity to try things out in the 'as-if' (see Fig.7) world that they may not otherwise have the chance to try in the 'as-is' world (Andersen, 2004);(Edmiston, 2003). Drama for Learning also provides a means to balance both the support and challenge that educational theorist Baxter Magolda (2010) argues are essential for student ownership of their learning. Learning through drama offers a way of scaffolding students into their future roles without losing the important peer feedback and support of the classroom environment (Harland, 2003).

The opportunity for rehearsal offered through drama for learning can provide for students a socially constructed environment to test out the ways in which they will respond in certain situations and a supportive space to reflect on these reactions. Terret (2013) discusses an example of a MOTE-based teaching and learning initiative in a UK primary school that uses the prompt of a young boy going missing in order to build student empathy around issues of gender identity in the classroom. In this example, students shift between roles as police officers, reporters, and parents. In the final stages of the teaching and learning initiative the students are all dressed up and acting out scenes from fashion magazines found by the missing boy's dad. The crescendo of this MOTE occurs when tension is introduced to the drama. The students are having fun, dressing up and dancing to Madonna when the music suddenly stops and the father

enters and says 'you are not my son'. The students immediately rush to defend the boy, demonstrating their newfound empathy with someone who held a different identity to them:

... the impulse for creating The Boy In The Dress Project was really about trying to offer a pedagogical space for the children to be able to hold in their minds that Dennis could be any one of them in the classroom, so that they could start to transcend the binary values and dare to step outside of the heteronormative matrix if they chose to, without fear of recrimination (Terret, 2013, p. 194).

The example of The Boy in The Dress demonstrates the empathy that can be created through the use of Drama for Learning. Professional interior designers require high levels of empathy, as on a daily basis they enter the homes or businesses of at least one client, and need to demonstrate a high level of understanding for and acceptance of the unique needs of each client. Due to the need to develop empathy as a key element of being an interior designer, assignment one includes opportunities for students to shift constantly between roles as interior designers and as clients. The opportunities for students to play both designer and client, offers students the opportunity to have/be in role as clients who are from different cultures, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical ability, occupation, living arrangements and levels of wealth.

Planning a MOTE teaching and learning initiative

In addition to providing a theoretical framework, adopting a MOTE approach also offers specific strategies. Aitken recommends an in-depth planning strategy for teachers that I will have illustrated in Fig.10 and explained below (Aitken, 2013, pp. 40–41):

1. **Fictional Context** – there must be an agreement within the classroom to operate within a fictional context, using your imagination to elevate what you are actually seeing/doing.
2. **Company** – there must be the creation of a collaborative company with shared experiences, goals and values.

-
- Imagination needed
- Student out of role
- Fictional context agreed on
- Reflection in and out of role
- Curriculum framed as professional tasks
- Tension introduced
- Drama conventions
- Company formed
- Commission received
- Professional in role
- Powerful repositioning
- Client proposes commission

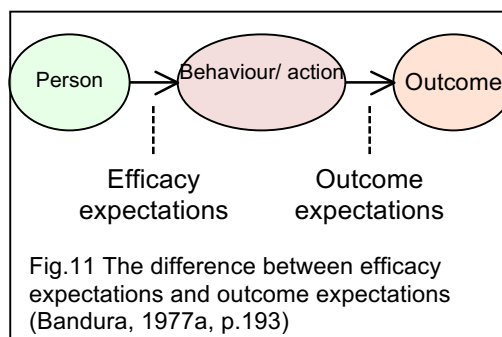
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6. **Curriculum framed as professional tasks** – the curriculum is authentic in that all tasks relate directly to the needs of the commission and the client
7. **Powerful repositioning** – students within the company are not positioned as themselves who may never have had a design commission before, but as people who have already had success as a collaborative team within the company before.
8. **Drama-for-learning conventions** – Dramatic conventions are used throughout the process to allow students the opportunity to play in other roles within the commission, in order to build empathy and see other perspectives.
9. **Tensions** – through the use of drama, obstacles will come along in order to keep complexity in the learning process, as in the reality of the processes being explored.
10. **Reflection** – there will be multiple moments provided, both in and out of the drama that give students the opportunity to reflect on their learning and allow the learning to be cemented.

Self-efficacy

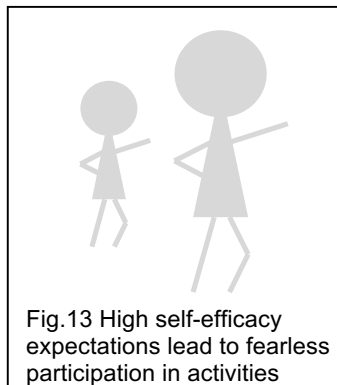
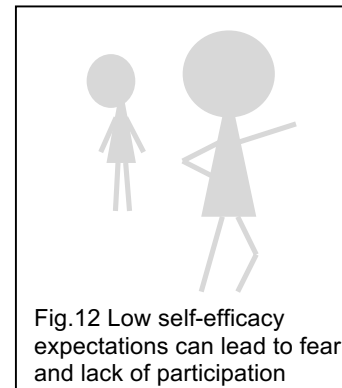
In addition to building a COP, employing MOTE and inviting students to practise in an ‘as-if’ world can also help them build their feelings of self-efficacy.

Bandura (1977a) states that self-efficacy is the perception of individuals as to what they believe they can achieve. According to Bandura, this perception affects individuals’ ability to move forward into a behaviour or action, as explained in the quote below, and shown visually in Fig. 11.



*People fear and tend to avoid **threatening** situations they believe exceed their coping skills, whereas they get involved in activities and behave assuredly when they judge themselves capable of handling situations that would otherwise be **intimidating** (Bandura, 1977a, p. 193).*

This quote demonstrates the role that fears play for an individual when they enter any situation that asks them to assess their capability levels, as expressed in the strong words ‘threatening’ and ‘intimidating’. Bandura’s use of these words indicates the intensity of the negative emotions that can be engendered. In Fig.12 and Fig.13 I have

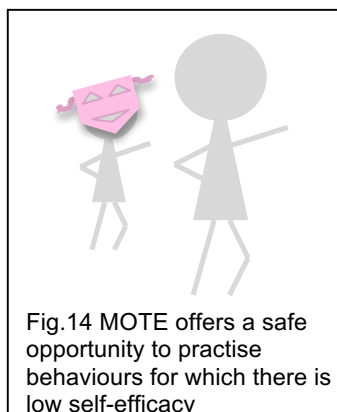


illustrated the effect of high and low efficacy expectations through the example of dance. This example can be seen regularly in nightclubs with many individuals propping themselves up on a bar rather than joining the dance floor. In an interior design context, student self-efficacy expectations are often low in the area of drawing. This is particularly relevant for the adult

students who have not had previous design education. On the other side of this, the younger students who have not had a lot of work experience find that their self-efficacy expectations are low when working with clients.

Not only can perceived self-efficacy have directive influence on choice of activities and settings, it can affect coping efforts once they are initiated (Bandura, 1977a, p. 193).

This quote demonstrates the impact that the early self-efficacy expectations held by students may have on the way they move forward



into their learning activities. As demonstrated in Fig.14, a deliberate MOTE approach gives students a safe opportunity within an ‘as-if’ environment to practise behaviours they may otherwise have been too fearful to try. It is through practising these actions and behaviours that students will enhance their feelings of self-efficacy and outcome expectations. This

relationship between perceived efficacy expectations and behaviours

thereafter render it important when assessing the findings of this study to investigate participant efficacy levels at different stages of a project.

Literature review conclusion

This review offers a theoretical framework for setting up my teaching initiative and offers benchmarks for evaluating its success. It has also been noted that while MOTE has been examined at a primary school level, there is a significant gap in its application in the tertiary sector. The teaching initiative in this study examines the effort to set up a design community of practice and through a MOTE approach, initiate students into this COP. Drawing on Bandura's ideas of self-efficacy, the study aims to test out the ability of MOTE to enhance students' sense of self-efficacy and correspondingly their willingness to engage in the learning experience.

Chapter three: Methodology

This chapter sets out the methodology that underpins the teaching initiative that is the focus of this research study. The research follows an Action Research model that I will explain below.

Action Research

This research study began as a teaching and learning initiative that was designed to use a more thorough process of implementing a systematic and deliberate MOTE approach to teaching and learning than I had used on previous occasions in my interior design studies classroom.

Correspondingly, in order to give rigour to my choice of initiative, I decided to conduct the investigation as a piece of action research. An Action Research approach enables me to enquire systematically into the value of the initiative and modify and plan for future initiatives. Action Research is usually conducted by a practitioner who is interested in finding ways of improving their practice through research and implementing their research findings in their practice (McNiff, 2010). Using action research allows me

as the researcher to conduct this study alongside rather than on the group who are directly affected by the research (Cousin, 2009) and be responsive to their needs. Inherent in action research is that the practitioner researcher will then share their findings with their wider practitioner community, using their concrete experience to create new knowledge and improve their area of practice (Ortrun, 1992, p. 11). In

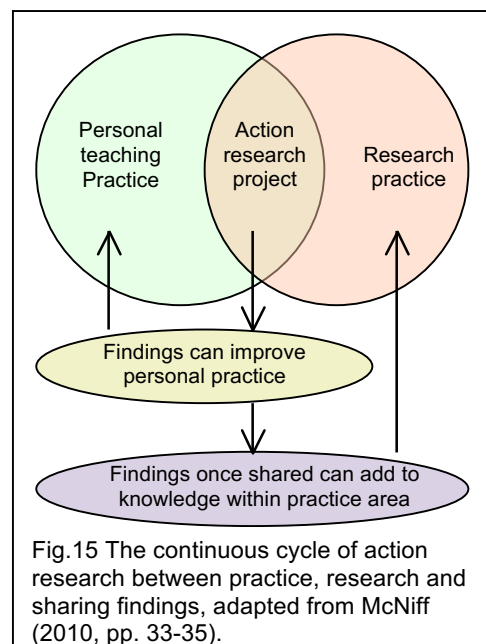


fig.15 I have illustrated my understanding of action research as the method for this research study. The use of Action Research in a tertiary interior design environment allows the creation of new data that can enrich the area of enquiry surrounding the use of MOTE in a tertiary environment, where there is currently little discussion. The data collected from this investigation will also enrich the area of interior design education where

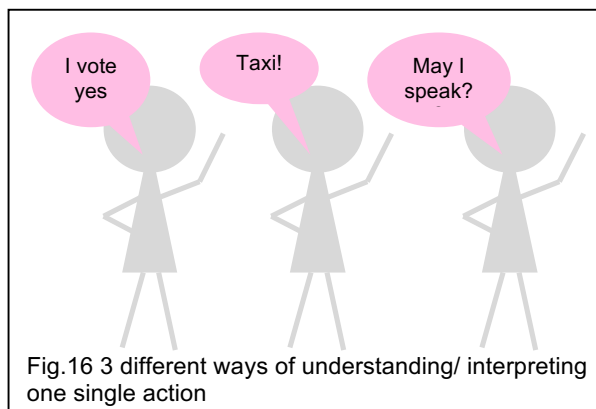
again there is currently very little peer reviewed literature. I believe this could be the start of something very exciting for interior design education.

As discussed by Creswell (2008), although popular in education, there are also many critics of Action Research, who claim that the applied, rather than a more scientific conduct of the research means that it is an informal process conducted by informal researchers. I disagree with this sentiment, as I believe that Action Research entails all the rigour of a Case Study, while also allowing the researcher the ability to respond to the needs of the participants throughout the research. A Case Study is a research style that looks intensively into a particular occurrence with the aim of gaining further understanding of the meaning for those involved, and generally takes place after an event has occurred (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006; Yin, 2009). My adoption of Action Research over a Case Study is in main part due to the interpretivist paradigm through which I view my research, as described in the subsequent section. Seeing the world through an interpretivist paradigm would make it difficult for me to conduct my research in a way that didn't involve the high levels of collaboration, application and sharing afforded by action research (Creswell, 2008).

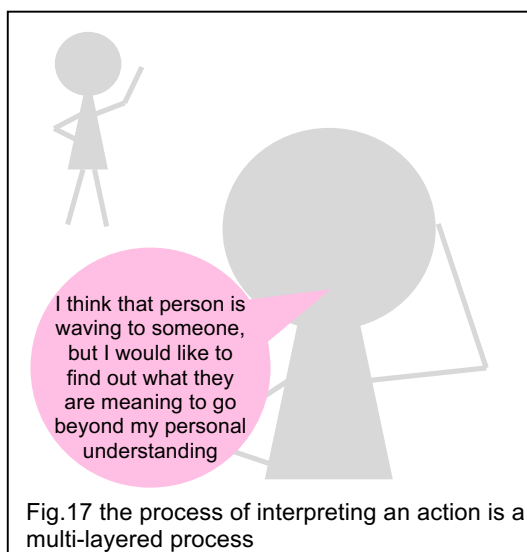
Interpretivist paradigm

Integral to evaluating the effects of my teaching and learning initiative is finding out how students experienced their learning in this process. This is particularly important in a study in which my main concern was to find out how students felt about their efficacy in the design initiative. The main source of data is the perceptions that participants hold of their experience. This interest in the perceptions that students have of their learning and achievement levels, leads me to adopt a constructivist and interpretivist paradigm for my research. An Interpretivist paradigm states that real-life situations are not clearly defined, that human experience is characterised by ambiguity, uncertainty and dilemma (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011; Wignall, 1998), it is this complexity and these feelings that I aim to capture in my research. An Interpretivist paradigm accepts that there are many different ways of understanding/interpreting a single action, as illustrated

in Fig.16. According to Denzin & Lincoln (2000), it is the role of the researcher to witness an action, acknowledge their understanding (by recognising their own biases and historical/cultural lens) without allowing these to overpower their interpretation of the



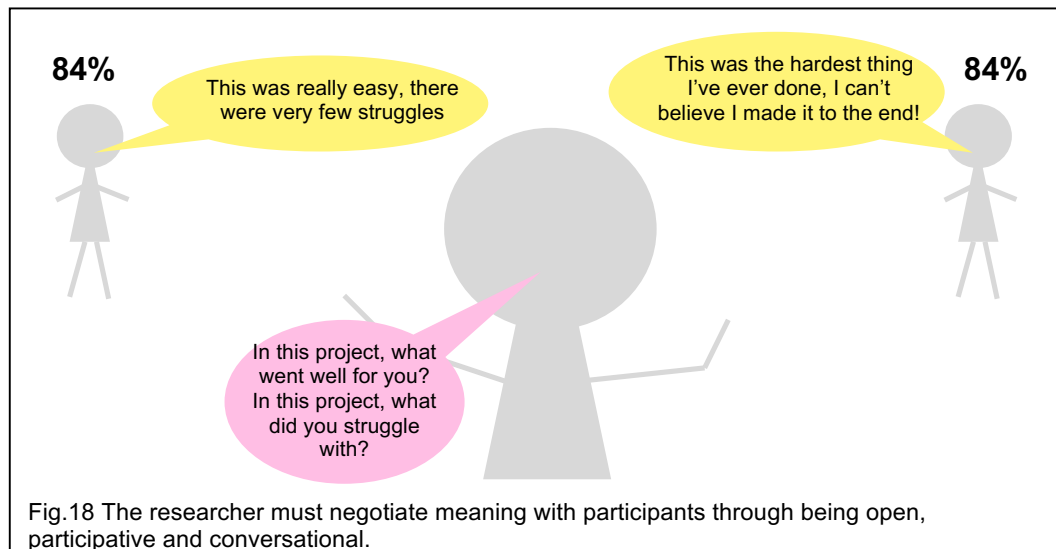
action, then begin to question what they are seeing through further observations or conversations. Some examples of these types of questions are illustrated in Fig.17, wherein the researcher tries to get to the core of the meaning behind actions/words. The researcher may need to ask some of the following questions in interpreting an action: What are the intentions behind the action? What are the meanings behind these



intentions? If there are words, what is the meaning behind those words? A Postitivist paradigm is in direct contrast to an Interpretivist paradigm in that it states that there is a single truth that can be identified behind a particular object or action (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2005). In the context of tertiary design education, a

Positivist researcher could gauge the achievement levels of students through their assignment grades; however through an Interpretivist paradigm lens, the interest of the researcher lies more in student perceptions of their competency levels, feelings of self-efficacy and work output. My interest in student perceptions of their achievement is due to an acknowledgement of the many other contributing factors involved in the achievement of that grade. As an example of the differences in student perceptions, recently I had two students achieve the same result for an assignment. When prompted, one of them spoke about the great

obstacles they had to overcome to get to the point of completion; the other student spoke simply about the project coming quickly and easily to them. Had I just looked at the work and the grades these students achieved I would only have seen the similarities in the achievements gained, and not the differences that existed in their self-perceptions. It is the differences rather than the similarities that give me the more exciting insight into their beliefs of their achievement levels, as illustrated in Fig. 18.



My key research question delves into the perceptions the participants hold of the impact of a MOTE approach on their capacity to work with a real client for projects as a part of their interior design diploma. The kind of data gathered throughout the investigation that is needed to answer this question will be direct answers from participants. These answers will give clues to the beliefs and experiences of their perceptions of the effects of the practice assignment (assignment one) on their ability to work with a real client (assignment two).

As I am approaching this research from an Interpretivist paradigm, I acknowledge that my participants will add to the questions beyond my expectations of their responses. Their answers will lead to new understandings of the topic and new considerations about the impact of working through a MOTE experience and working with a real client for an interior design project by building upon the questions. Their answers may also shed light on any gaps in the teaching and learning experience that

could inform subsequent teaching in my continued action research. One answer I would expect to hear is that participants felt more prepared to work with clients due to their experiences with drama-based clients. I do, however have a hunch that some participants may have found that they were still not fully prepared because working with a client can be a very different experience to working with a drama-based client. Due to the paradigm I have adopted, I am ready to hear this and interested in any surprises I encounter through the course of my research.

Ethical concerns

In order to undertake this research project, it was necessary to apply for ethics approval from the ethics committees at the University of Waikato and Wintec. As part of the application, I answered many questions regarding safety, anonymity and confidentiality of participants in this study. I also included an information sheet for participants and an informed consent form to be filled in by participants; I have included these as appendices A and B. After making minor changes to my ethics application for the University of Waikato, and meetings with my manager, head of school and Dean at Wintec, I received ethics approval from both institutions. I have attached the ethics approval letters from both institutions as appendices D and E. In my ethics application I raised some important concerns involved in this project; the first is that as a teacher I am in a position of power and persuasion over the students, especially as I am in charge of grading their projects. Because of this power relationship, it is of the utmost importance that the lack of persuasion to be a participant in the study is stressed and that students understand that it is entirely voluntary to be a participant in this research. Participants in this investigation will also be made aware that there is no payment or other direct benefit for participating. All students in the class, not just the participants will need to be made aware that there will be no punishment for not participating and that they can withdraw at any time up to the point when they have confirmed the transcripts of their final interviews. All students in the class will also need to be made aware that a senior member of staff will moderate all grades in order to ensure validity of the marking process.

Data Collection Methods

I will use a combination of qualitative and quantitative data within this investigation in order to allow for triangulation of data, thus adding to the validity of the data collected (Mathison, 1988). I will source quantitative data through the use of self-administered online surveys based on self-efficacy scales (Bandura, 2006). I will also source many forms of qualitative data including client satisfaction forms, teacher reflections and data from semi-structured interviews. The semi-structured interviews will be held at the end of the second project after results have been moderated and marks have been returned to students. Semi-structured interviewing involves an incomplete script; the interviewer may have prepared some questions, or a basic sketch map of the territory to be explored, while retaining the freedom to explore it as deemed necessary (Menter, Elliot, Hulme, Lewin, & Lowden, 2011, p. 131). Semi-structured interviewing works well in this action research context, where the data received will go on to create new forms of practice in the next iteration of the teaching. A semi-structured interview also works well within an Interpretivist paradigm as it allows the interviewer to delve further into the thoughts and perceptions of the participants. Based on the outcome of the online survey, I will customise a short set of prompts that will form the basis of semi-structured interviews with the students at the end of the project. Going into the interview with this list of focused prompts will help keep track of the data that is gathered, while still allowing the opportunity to delve further into answers given by the students (Myers & Newman, 2007). To get the most impartial results from the interviews, I will ask someone who does not have a relationship with the students and who will not be part of the grading process of their assignments to conduct and transcribe the interviews.

Data analysis method

I analysed my data using thematic analysis, a method that seeks to identify themes within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). There are many different models of thematic analysis; I used a six-step model identified by Braun and Clarke (2006) that I will outline below:

Step one: Become familiar with the data by reading and rereading

Step two: Start to generate initial codes

Step three: Search for additional themes below the surface of the text

Step four: Review the themes you have identified for their validity

Step five: Define and name themes

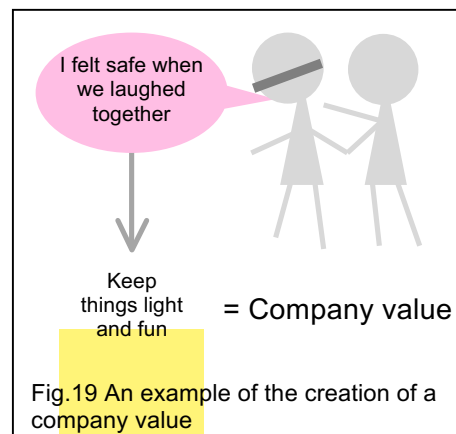
Step six: Produce the report on the themes

Chapter four: Method

In this section, I will outline the design of the teaching and learning initiative at the centre of this research study. In planning the design of the teaching initiative, it is important to start by creating a strong COP. In the initiative I incorporate the three core components of a COP, a Joint Enterprise, a Shared Repertoire and Mutual Engagement. The creation of the three core components of a COP will be formed in accordance with a deliberate and systematic MOTE experience for assignment one, and will continue into assignment two where the students will work with a real client. I have made the decision to centre the teaching and learning activities around the framework of the first two assignments as this will support the MOTE approach and create an intentional model of Assessment for Learning. Birembaum, Breuer, Cascallar, Dochy, Dori, Ridgway and Nickmans (2006) suggest that an increase in authenticity can be aided by the use of Assessment for Learning, also known as integrated assessment. This is a method of embedding assessment into the learning curriculum that generally mirrors real life situations. They suggest that increasing the authenticity of assessment tasks can aid in developing problem-solving skills, and allow for students to receive multiple forms of feedback throughout the process from many different sources during class time (2006). I have attached a short weekly synopsis of each lesson as Appendix L.

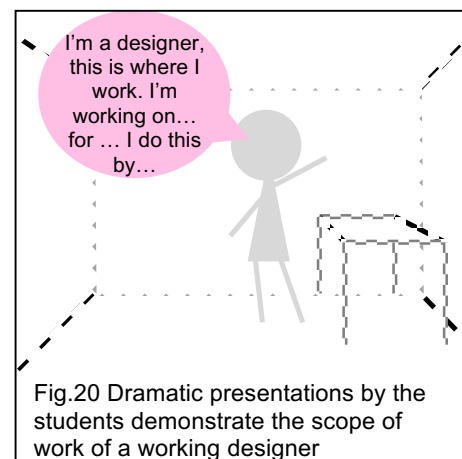
Day one – building belief

Day one of the module is arguably one of the most important days in the creation of a MOTE, as it is dedicated to building student belief in the company, themselves as designers and the use of Drama within the classroom. We start by playing with the boundaries of the **fictional context** of the classroom. Fifteen



minutes into the first class, students are tasked to take one another on a blind walk through an 'amazing space' of their invention, their first foray into the 'as-if' world. The leading student will instruct their partner to touch and feel the amazing textures and pieces that exist in that space, and then they will swap places. The blind walk activity takes students out of their comfort zone, and it is in finding safety within the blind walk that they start to break down their needs within the classroom community. As illustrated in Fig.19 students are asked to decide on the one thing that made them most safe when they were moving through the blind walk, discuss this quickly with each member of the class and then compose one succinct statement to capture these elements on the board. This activity leads to the first stage of the creation of a COP, the creation of a **Joint Enterprise** through a set of agreed **company** values.

Before the company framework is introduced to students, it is important that the students explore the scope of what the company might do. The next activity involves small groups brainstorming the 'who, what, when, why, where, how' of an interior designer. Once the brainstorming is complete the small groups are tasked to put this into an entertaining show for the class, as illustrated in Fig. 20. This task begins to demonstrate to the students the expertise that they already hold, as each of the shows reveal a clear understanding of the scope of work of a designer, even employing industry language. The success of this activity illustrates how necessary the use of Drama-for-Learning is as the first step toward Expert Framing.



Following on from the students' shows, they return to see me freeze-framed in role as a stressed client, surrounded by messily arranged magazines and product samples. I allow time for the students to giggle and to discuss what they are looking at, occasionally slotting in and out of

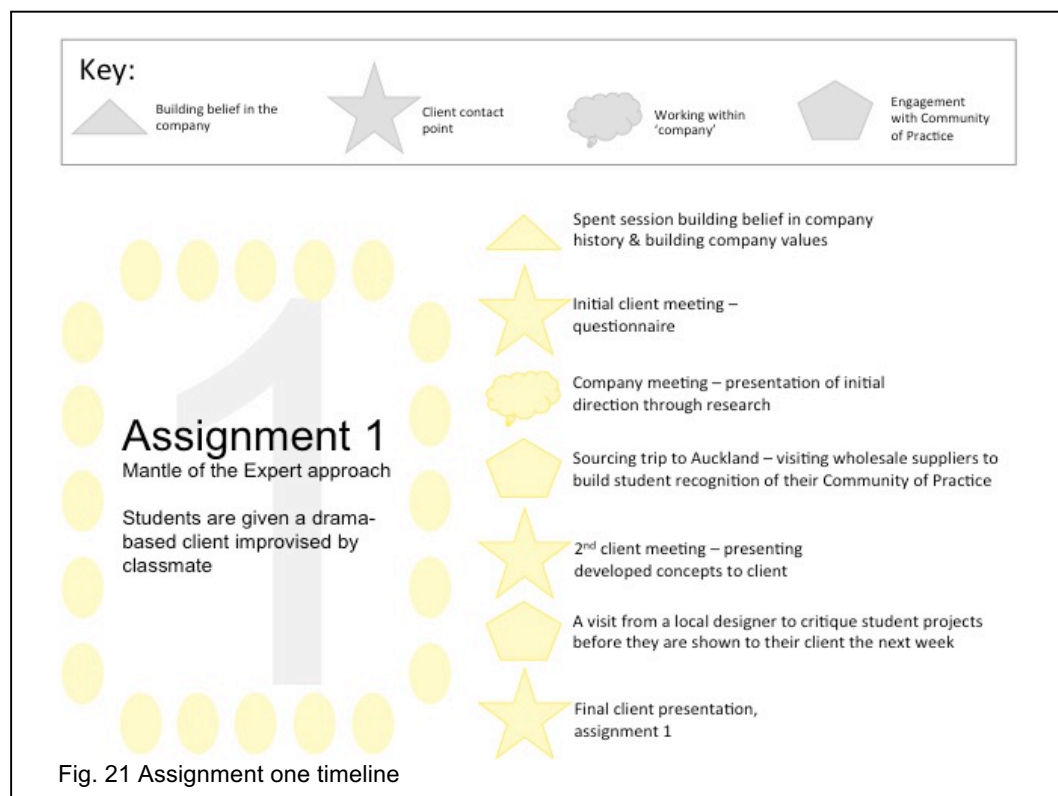
role to **reflect** with the students and ask them what they are looking at. Their explanations generally start with descriptions in the 'as-is' like a young designer sitting at a table at the first moment of reflection, to more adventurous guesses in the 'as-if' like a client who has no idea what they are doing. This finally leads to me in role on an imagined phone looking happier. The students recognise immediately that I am on the phone to a designer who is going to help me. Following this the students go away on a break, and when they come back the first board room meeting is set up, with a board room table set up in the middle of their space for them to gather around. I sit separately and start making a ringing sound, mimicking a phone to my ear. The students generally become quite uncomfortable and giggly until eventually one of them also mimics a phone, saying 'hello?'. The conversation starts with me asking if this is the design company based in Garden Place (the address of the classroom), to which they say that it is, and I move on to say that I'm the client with the beach house that they designed (from the freeze-frame exercise), and that I've just had my first party and everyone was raving about the amazing interiors, and in role I thank the company for the great job they did. This is a fun activity, and the students generally are still quite giggly, so I capitalise on this and come over to the table and ask them to congratulate themselves as a successful design company with a massive round of applause! This dispels any remaining awkwardness, as we move into reflecting on how it feels to have a successful job already completed. I ask the students to think of one thing that they see as the most important value that made them work as a successful company. They share these with one another, before writing them up on the board. We then discuss the list of values we created earlier, and note that we have created two lists, one is a list of the values we hold within the company and the other is a list of values by which we want to be seen by the outside world, generally the two lists are near identical, containing words like 'laughter', 'fun', 'respect difference'.

At the end of the first day, small groups of students are given boards of work by previous students and 10 minutes to prepare presentations of the

work as if it has come from within their company. This final exercise of the first day gives them the opportunity to work within their company, demonstrating the values that they have just made collaboratively, and expert framing them as their agreed on definition of practicing designers.

Assignment 1 (drama-based assignment)

After spending the whole first session of this module on building belief in the idea of and approaches within this module, assignment 1 is introduced in week 2. There are three parts to this assignment (Appendix G) that I will outline below. The timeline of assignment one is illustrated in Fig.21:



Part 1:

In part one of the assignment, students are taken through the first few stages of the Inquiry-based learning process, in which they receive the problem, ask questions and start to investigate the problem. In week two of the module, students receive a letter from HR with some blank areas (Appendix H). The blank spaces in the letter will be filled with words randomly drawn from a set of cups including: client name, occupation, who they live with, and three general mood-related words that give an initial idea of what the client would like to create in their home. They also receive a floor plan and 3D drawing of the empty apartment. Once the students

understand what they are about to undertake, tension is introduced when the announcement comes that their client will arrive in 15 minutes, and they need to come up with a list of questions to ask them to complete their individual project briefs. The students then create a client questionnaire, which they use to interview their client. Drama for Learning is used in this classroom activity, as the students will be put in groups of three to act as client for each other. While one student is in role as designer, the other two have the choice of whether they are the primary client or the person/animal that the client lives with (if their client lives alone, then the second student is encouraged to become an important piece of furniture that the client would like included in their scheme). The results of this interview then lead students to the creation of their client brief (starting from a provided template) and visual research into their client needs (using Pinterest.com as an online pin board to capture their visual research). After one week, students present this back to the class framed as an office full of designers (their client will be asked to 'stay home' for this presentation) for peer feedback.

Part 2:

The second part of the assignment leads students through the next stages of an inquiry-based approach by having them gather data, evaluate findings and suggest solutions to their client. Students are required to edit their visual research by creating a digital mood board and a sketchbook in which they test out their ideas for floor plan layout and furnishings. This information will be presented at an interim client meeting in an informal setting where the designer shows the client their ideas for the project and receives feedback from the client. At the end of this process, clients will be asked to complete a client satisfaction form that will be given to the student in a post-drama reflection in the world of 'as-is' for discussion.

Part 3:

The third and final part of the proposed assessment moves into the final cycle of an Inquiry-learning process, taking action. Students are required to formalise their ideas for the project based on the client feedback from

their previous meeting by creating a formal presentation that includes drawings and selected imagery to show their design direction. They will present this on a large screen to a panel made up of their classmates, their client, in role, myself and another member of the teaching staff as well as a practicing designer from industry. After each presentation they will receive feedback from the members of the audience. It is important that students attend these presentations in order for them to take part in the more cognitively demanding practice of giving feedback, rather than just receiving it (Nicol, 2010). Introducing a presentation of this scope at this early stage of the drama should work to set the tone of professionalism expected for the rest of the two years of the diploma.

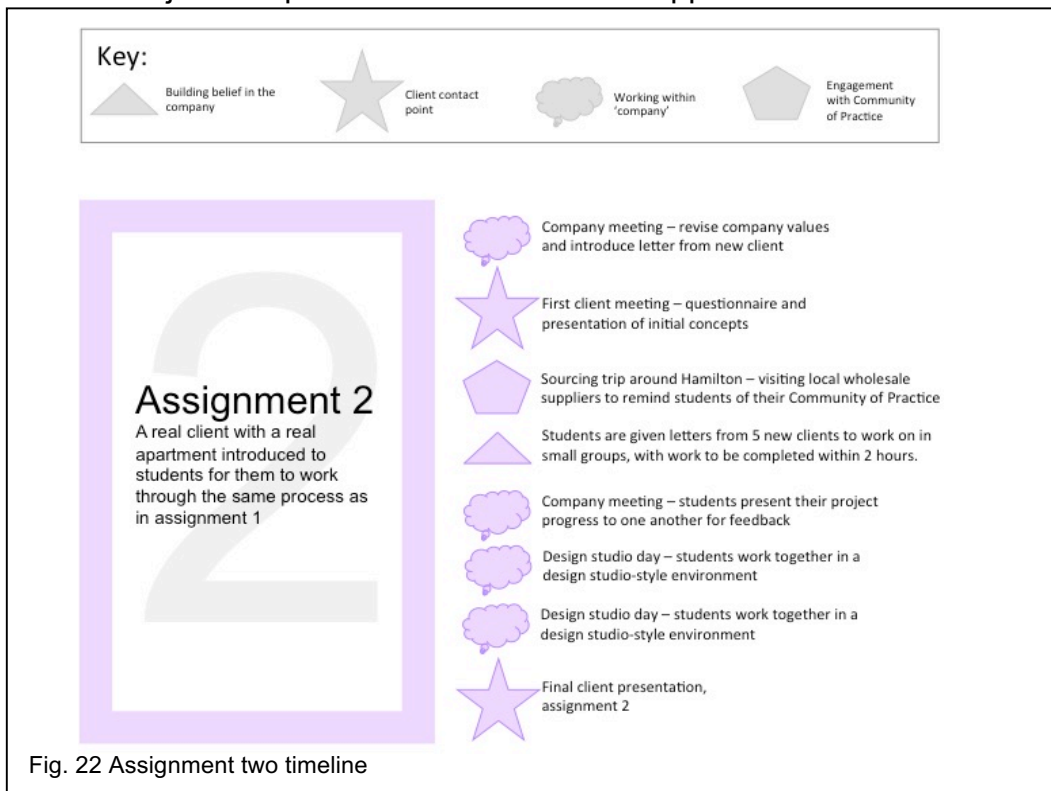
Assignment 1, general information:

Over the course of this assignment, time will be provided in class to work in a studio environment. The time spent in class on their assignment gives a chance for feedback from their tutor, and for the students to work together and give peer feedback throughout the project. Carless discusses the importance of timely feedback in his writing as a prompt for student engagement in their work and action moving forward (2007). Nicol adds to this stressing the importance of students building understanding of what is required by them through a combination of regular feedback on their progress, while still empowering them to develop ownership over their own learning (2009, p. 6). After each of the three parts of the assessment, copies of the marking schedule will be provided to each student for them to self-assess. Students will be provided with the cues 'what went well?' and 'what did you learn that you can move forward with?'. These open-ended questions allow students the chance to reflect on both their learning and the assessment criteria as they go, leading to a high level of assessment literacy in the student group. Assessment literacy is an important area for students to develop as it helps them to understand what is required of them, how they can meet these requirements and learn to judge their work against pre-set requirements (Smith, Worsfold, Davies, Fisher, & McPhail, 2013). This approach also allows a more holistic approach to assessing where some power is returned to the student as

importance is returned to the perceptions that students hold of their own work, rather than them seeing the only important opinion being that of the teacher (Boud, 1995). Assessment literacy will be a particularly useful skill as they move forward into assignment two, which is a less guided assessment process than assignment one. Each part of the assessment will be handed out after the previous part has been completed, in order for the students to concentrate on each valuable and equally important part of the design process, without rushing forward to the end of the project too quickly.

Assignment 2 (real client)

Assignment two has a simpler structure than assignment one, with less formal moments of assessment throughout the project. In assignment two there are just two points of client contact as opposed to three in



assignment one, and there is only one point at which their work is formally assessed. This gives students the opportunity to develop their own working process, as although there are specified moments on the timeline at which different elements should be completed (Fig.22), there is room to accommodate individual student needs. This reduction in a more formal structure is in line with the testing of whether assignment one prepared

students to work within the construct of a professional project.

Chapter five: Findings

The aim of this research study was to examine the perceptions of a group of first year tertiary interior design students on the impact of a Mantle of the Expert approach to learning on their capacity to work with a real client. As an action researcher and the teacher of this class, I implemented a project taught through MOTE that segued into the students' work with a real client. To this end, I rewrote the assignments and implemented new lesson plans in order to try to improve the quality of the work presented by the students.

My personal observations and evaluations of student work indicated to me that the initiative had good outcomes. Many of the presentations for assignment one were better than presentations from first year students at the end of their first year in the past, let alone the end of their first term. By the end of assignment two, it was clear that the quality of work in a first year class had never reached this level before, even at the end of the year. Much of the student work was of a level higher than some of the second year students were creating at that point in time. This improvement in student performance was very satisfying, but in order to answer my research question, I needed to ascertain students' thoughts and perceptions about the impact of the initiative on their work with a real client.

I used two evaluative tools to probe students' perceptions of the effect of assignment one on their work with a real client. The first tool was a self-efficacy survey. The second tool was a semi-structured interview with voluntary participants. An independent interviewer facilitated the interviews with a set of prompts in order to find out from participants about the impact of the initiative on their feelings of self-efficacy, their competence in the process of working with a client and the quality of their work. The interviewer also worked to discover from participants to what extent using MOTE helped them develop their sense of belonging to a COP. I will begin by outlining the results from the self-efficacy survey, followed by findings

from the semi-structured interviews. After thematic analysis of the verbatim transcripts, I organised my findings in relation to my research sub-headings. In addition, I added some other unanticipated patterns that I identified in the interview transcripts. In the discussion chapter, I will explore my findings, relating them to the areas of literature set out in the literature review. I will also relate my findings to planning for future iterations of this module.

Self-efficacy survey results

The questions in this survey prompted the seven research participants to explore their perceptions of the impact of assignment one on their experience of meeting their client for assignment two. The results of this survey are in table 1:

	Agree (4-5)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (1-2)	Mean	Median
When I first met my client for assignment 2:					
I felt comfortable to meet my client and introduce myself	6	1	0	4.3	4
I felt comfortable showing my client my work	5	1	1	3.7	4
I felt comfortable asking my client questions	6	0	1	3.7	4
I was able to put my client at ease	4	2	1	3.7	4
I felt like I was in control of the meeting	4	1	2	3.4	4
I believe that my experiences in assignment 1:					
improved my comfort level with my client	6	1	0	4.1	4
improved my confidence to show my work to my client	6	0	1	4.3	5
improved my confidence to ask questions of my client	6	1	0	4.1	4
improved my ability to put my client at ease	4	2	1	3.7	4
improved my ability to control the meeting	5	1	1	4	4
In general:					
I believe that my meeting with a drama-based client for assignment 1 was helpful when faced with a real client for assignment 2	5	1	1	4.3	5

Table 1: Self-efficacy survey results

The questions asked in the survey shown above centred on student perceptions of their confidence to work with a real client, and how well assessment one scaffolded them into this experience. The first thing to recognise when analysing these results is the strong bias toward the positive, indicating a positive response from the majority of students and

pointing toward a good outcome for the initiative. The positive response is indicated by 74% of answers to the prompts that are either in agreement or strong agreement with the statement. There is also an indication in the data that participants had very different perceptions of the same experience, with 14% of the participants answering neutral to the prompts, and 12% in either disagreement or strong disagreement with the prompts.

The statement that prompted the greatest number of disagreements was “I felt like I was in control of the meeting”. The direction was still toward the positive, with four of the seven students either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Despite the skew toward the positive, it is not surprising that this was the most problematic area for students, as feeling in control of a client meeting requires a high level of confidence and can be difficult for even a senior designer. There is one less answer in strong disagreement when asked about the impact of assignment one on their ability to feel in control the meeting with their client. The difference here indicates that there is one participant who, despite lacking overall confidence about being in control of the meeting, felt that assignment one made them feel more confident than they would have been through that experience.

The prompt that had the most students in strong agreement was the final question that asked students whether assignment one was helpful when faced with a real client. Five out of the seven participants strongly agreed, while one was neutral and one disagreed. In my view, this was a highly successful teaching and learning initiative, and the survey results point to an agreement from the students. It is important, however to delve further into why two of the participants did not agree with the statement to obtain richer insights into students’ perceptions and to capture some of their more nuanced responses.

Semi-structured interview results

I note that in order to protect the anonymity of the participants, there was no correlation or way of knowing which respondent gave which answer to the prompts in the self-efficacy survey. As there is no identifiable

correlation between the survey results and the results from the interviews, I discuss the key themes that emerged from the process of thematic analysis under the following headings, based on the research sub-questions:

- The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of their self-efficacy when working with a client
- The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of their competence to work with a client
- The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of the quality of their work
- Participant perceptions of belonging to a Community of Practice

Additionally, I will document three unanticipated themes that emerged from the interviews:

- Benefits/ limitations of Inquiry-based Learning
- Questions of creativity
- Authenticity of the client?
- Contextual factors

The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of their self-efficacy when working with a client

Through my thematic analysis of the interview data, I identified three different broad categories of responses from participants. In category 1, are three students who affirmed that the first assignment prepared them well for working with a real client. The second category, also made up of three participants, were less positive about the impact of assignment one on their feelings of self-efficacy, but recognised that there were other factors at work as well. The second category includes one of the participants whose responses also fit into category one, as this participant demonstrated distinct changes of attitude toward their self-efficacy throughout the interview. The third category, comprising of two students, said that assignment one did not increase their self-efficacy in relation to working with a real client, but this was because they believed that they already had prior experience that gave them the required skills and proficiency for this work.

Category one: Assignment one enhanced feelings of self-efficacy for working with a real client:

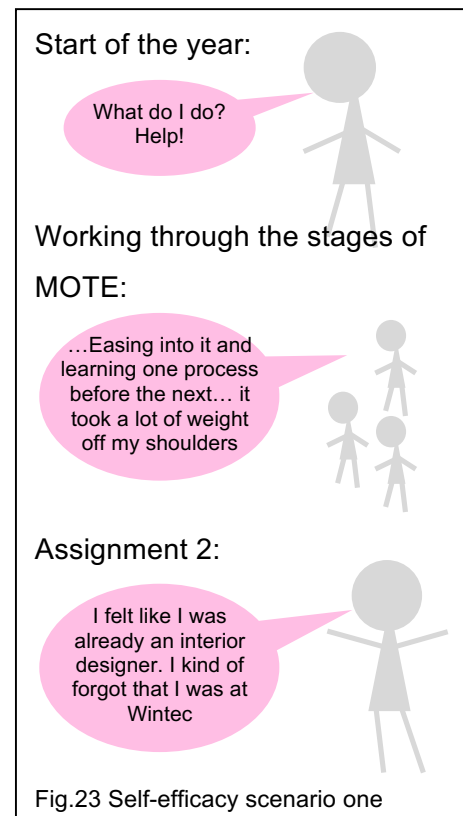
There are three students in this category. As illustrated in Fig.23, each of the students demonstrate a positive relationship between their experiences in assignment one and the confidence that they felt about their ability to work with a real client for assignment two. Participant one describes that when they entered the course, they would be unsure of what to do if they had been put into a professional situation, but now that they have been through the process of assignment one and two, they're nearly ready to go:

I think at this point if I was to get hired by an interior designer, I'd say "Partner me up with someone for a week and then I'm good to go"... whereas at the start of the year if someone was to put me in an interior design company I'd be going "what do I do? Help!" - Participant 1

The vocabulary used by participant 1 is illuminating. In the word "Help!" he/she recalls a state of profound apprehension at the start of the course. By contrast, the phrase "good to go" suggests a calm confidence that the student has acquired through the learning process. A second statement by participant one that recalls his/her perceptions after her introduction to the client shows how the student has blended completely into her identity as a designer:

(When working with my client for assignment two) I felt like I was already an interior designer. So didn't feel like, I kind of forgot that I was at Wintec - Participant 1

Participant 1's perceptions here demonstrate that they have become adept at shifting between the world of 'as-is' and the world of 'as-if', and that they had a high level of self-efficacy expectations upon meeting their client.



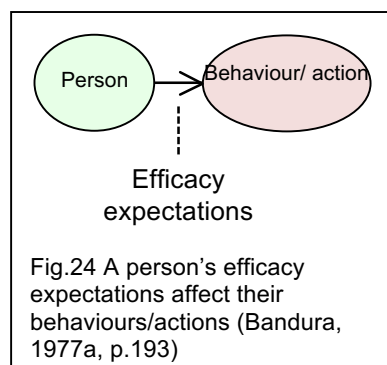
Participant 5 expresses a similar sentiment, discussing the effect that the systematic learning process had:

I think I like the way we did it at Wintec, which was easing into it and learning one process before the next and it was like, yeah, it definitely like, took a lot of like weight off my shoulders - Participant 5

The strong language used by this participant helps us to imagine a physical experience of relief as the burden of uncertainty is lifted.

The intensity of the initial fear and uncertainty that was alleviated by going through the process of assignment one is evident in the words “freaked out” used by participant 6, stating that they would have felt freaked out if they had a real client straight away:

If I didn't have that experience I think I would have freaked out a lot more - Participant 6



Demonstrated in the quotes above are a number of feelings around Efficacy expectations (see fig.24) when the students first entered the course. The feeling of need to say ‘help’, that there is a weight on your shoulders, or being freaked out is symptomatic of low self-efficacy. Both participant five and participant six state that

the process of being eased into the design process showed them that their actions within the project could exceed their efficacy expectations, giving them the confidence to move into assignment two more confidently.

Category 2: I felt I had mastered important skills but my personal lack of confidence made me struggle with assignment two:

In this category, illustrated in Fig.25, the students demonstrate that they have acquired knowledge of the specifics of the process that is involved in an interior design project. For example, participant 2 discusses how they have gained skills that help them to work with their real client:

... when we were doing assignment one, I didn't know anything like about how to create a space and how you do the décor and all that, but in assignment two I learned from assignment one - Participant 2

Gaining these skills was clearly important to this student, as evidenced through the strength of their statement “I didn’t know anything” in reference to assignment one. However, this student did not feel that after assignment one they were ready to work in a professional environment, as evidenced through what they went on to say later in their interview:

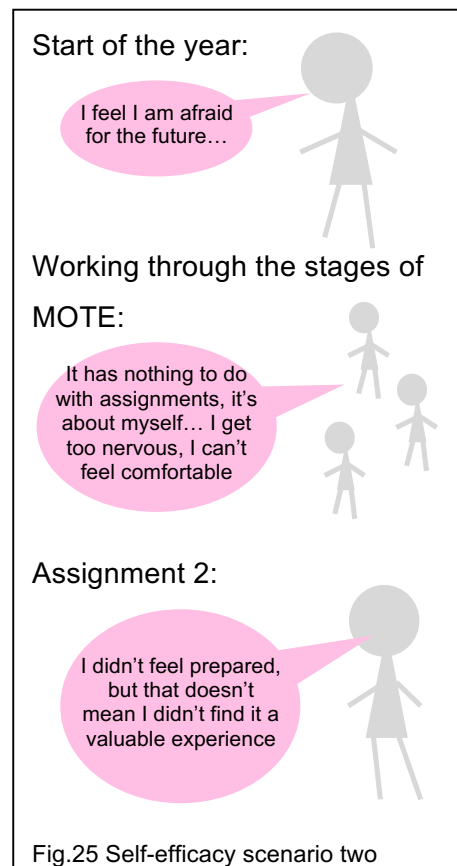
I think that it has nothing to do with like assignments, it's about myself... I get too nervous; I can't feel comfortable... - Participant 2

The statement above demonstrates the lack of self-efficacy that exists for this student, and that there was very little that the assignments could have done to make this any easier. As examined further in the quote below, participant 2 knew what they needed to do for the project and did the work, but that did not mean that they felt confident in the professional context while doing so.

I know what she wanted (for assignment 2) so it was a lot easier (than assignment 1) - Participant 2

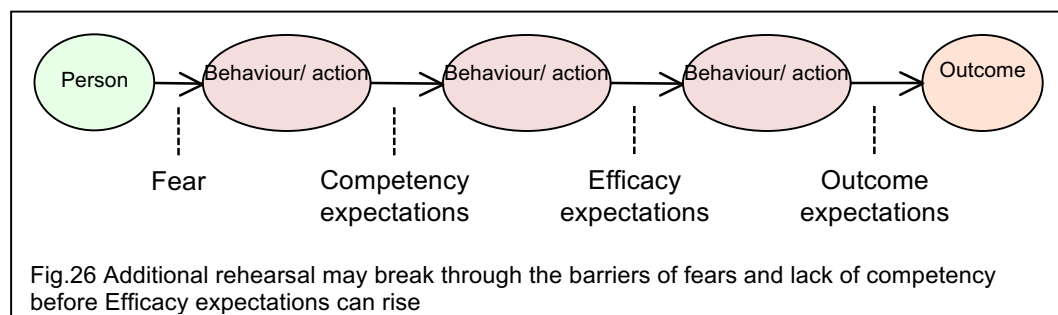
The responses offered by Participant 2 demonstrate traits shared by the other participants in this category, for whom assignment one was seen as a useful preparation for assignment two in relation to specific competencies, without allaying their fears. While they recognised that they gained some useful competencies, they did not feel emotionally ready for the task. Participant 3 illustrates the tenor of this category of responses, discussing their fear for what is coming when they enter the real world and have to work with real clients.

Yeah, like because sometimes I feel I am always afraid for the future... Like to see real clients... you always wonder how it's going to be... I feel that, I don't know like in general, I thought that it was useful to have



assignment one first, because it was the same kind of work... But I don't know if I felt like really confident after it - Participant 3

Participant 3's comments suggest strong feelings of fear. The choice of the word "useful" is interesting because it indicates that the participant recognises he/she had learned practical competencies. However, the word "useful" also indicates limited gains, especially when contrasted with the intensity of the statement "I feel I am always afraid for the future". This quote demonstrates an attitude of fear toward the future. When prompted by the interviewer, the student recognised that this is a fear led by their lack of experience in putting behaviours into action, and that more practice would be useful. This student felt that more practice before going into a situation with a real client would allow this student the chance to work through their fears, leading to higher efficacy expectations and outcome expectations, as illustrated in Fig.26. Assignment one equipped this student with the skills required in order to complete the project for their



real client, but did not improve their confidence level when faced with a real client. Participant five makes a similar distinction between usefulness and emotional readiness, stating that while assignment one was a valuable experience for them, they still didn't feel completely prepared to work with a real client.

I didn't feel prepared like, but that doesn't mean, I didn't find it, like, a valuable experience - Participant 5

As in the case of participant 3, participant 5 is stating here that the skills gained in assignment one prepared them to complete assignment two to a level where it was a valuable experience, but that they did not have a sense of personal confidence to work in a professional context yet. As in the final two quotes from participant 2, in which he/she states that despite All of these comments collected from participants 2, 3 and 5 indicate that it

may be possible for someone to perform with competence without possessing a high degree of self-efficacy.

Category three: I was already confident and didn't need assignment one to prepare me to work with a real client:

The two students who fit into this category, as illustrated in Fig.27, demonstrate high self-efficacy at the start of the course. Both students reported on their readiness to work with a real client from day one of the course because of past work experience. Correspondingly, they believed that they did not need MOTE to improve their confidence to work with a real client. Participant 1, for example, commented on feeling more ready to work with a real client than he/she perceived other students to be:

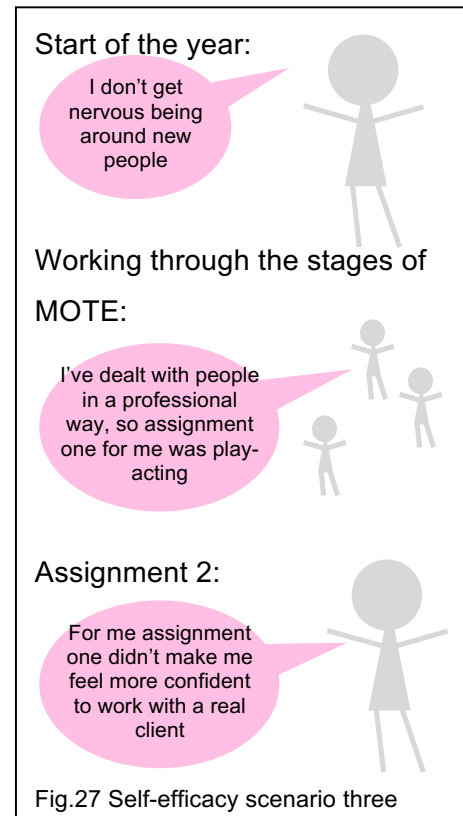
A few of my other classmates were a bit nervous, which is

understandable, but I work with people so I don't get nervous being around new people. - Participant 1

This comment highlights that some students with prior work experience may perceive that MOTE is less necessary for them, while recognising the benefits for students who have not previously worked in a professional environment. Some students' perception that rehearsal was not necessary for them is particularly evident when it comes to practicing social and communication skills, as expounded upon by participant seven below:

I know people and I've dealt with people in a professional way, so, assignment one for me was, um, the play-acting... I could um, manipulate that quite easily - Participant 7

Participant 7, as in the case of participant 1 recognises their own proficiency in communicating with people in a professional environment. In the quote above, this participant calls the drama elements of assignment



one 'play-acting', and states the ease with which they could manipulate their client (classmate in role). This implies a lack of engagement when the task is seen as a step down from the usual professional activities that this student would perform. This participant's use of the word "manipulate", rather than a word such as "negotiate", suggests that for someone with prior professional experience, MOTE may even be potentially counterproductive as he/she chose deliberately not to enter into the spirit of the drama. This is highlighted in the following quote wherein participant 7 states that they do not believe that assignment one improved their levels of confidence in working with a real client:

I think no, no, for me it didn't (make me feel more confident) - Participant 7

Demonstrated through the quotes above is something that is potentially quite likely to appear when teaching through MOTE in a tertiary environment, that many students will enter the course with previous professional experience that outweighs the drama-based experience. Also demonstrated is that this can affect the student's level of engagement in the project, as they may feel it is a step backward for them.

The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of their competence to work with a client

Analysis of students' comments in the interviews again indicated three categories of responses to this area of investigation. The first category of response includes two students who state that assignment one prepared them to communicate competently with their real client. The second category comprises of three students who state that assignment one gave them the design skills required to complete assignment two. In the third category is one student who states that their lack of engagement in assignment one led to a lack in competence to work with a real client. I will explore each of these three categories below:

Category 1: Assignment one gave me the communication skills I needed to work with my client

There are two students in category 1, who confirmed that the use of MOTE prepared them to communicate competently with a real client. Participant 1 recounts her feelings of professionalism when giving the final presentation to the real client.

I just felt professional, I felt really confident in my presentation - Participant 1

The professionalism gained through the process of assignment one has led participant one to feel a confidence in their competency, as shown in the quote below, wherein participant two discusses their feelings of shyness and how they overcame this:

I was really shy to ask... my client what she wants and like from the first assignment I learned like how to talk to them - Participant 2

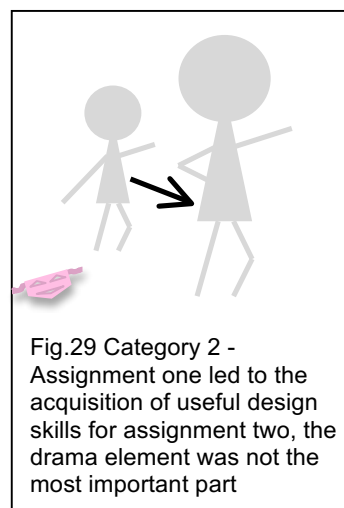
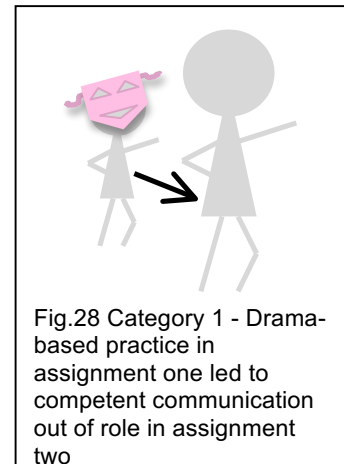
The quotes above discuss how the feeling of professionalism, and the practice provided through the MOTE led to these students feeling more confident in talking to and presenting their ideas to clients.

Category 2: Assignment one gave me the specific design skills I needed to work with my client

The three participants whose responses fall into this category focussed primarily on the specific design skills that they gained through assignment one that prepared them for assignment two. For example, Participant 7 mentions the benefits of learning about the steps in the design process and the sequencing of these steps.

There was totally (benefit in assignment 1) because that gave you, this is what we need to come up with, the mood board and then we need to come up with the designs... - Participant 7

The steps recalled here by participant seven mirror the stages of assignment one. As discussed in the previous section, Participant 7 already had professional experience in communicating with real clients,



therefore for this student, gaining specific skills was more important than role-playing with a drama-based client. Participant 6 also focuses explicitly on the value of the skills acquired through assignment one:

I think assignment one was pretty good actually because it had all the skills that we needed to learn - Participant 6

In some instances, students reported that they learnt a combination of communication competencies and the specific skills that are required in the design process. This was the case for participant 4:

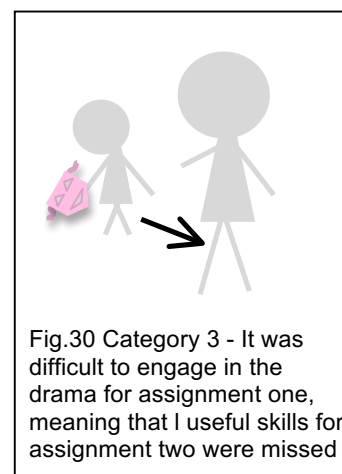
I definitely think... presenting – learning and practicing how to present throughout assignment two and even in... some of the other classes really helped, and I think... learning how to talk to clients, learning how to interact with them and asking them questions about (what) they want was helpful, like setting up a questionnaire - Participant 4

The quote above links the first two categories, which are the two most important areas to explore around the idea of competence when working with a real client, specific design skills and communication skills. There were specific design skills integrated into the assessment structure of assignment one, making them easy to come by for students. Communication skills were harder to have students fully engage in for assignment one, as discussed in category 3.

Category 3: Didn't take assignment 1 seriously, so felt they were lacking competence when moving into working with a real client

The response I explore in this category acknowledges an element of detachment or lack of seriousness about the first assignment. This detachment seemed to make engaging with a real client more challenging. Below participant 5 discusses their lack of engagement in working with the drama-based client, and how this affected their ability to be more prepared for the real client for assignment two:

Maybe if like I took the previous one more seriously, not that I didn't take it seriously at all, but in terms of client meeting treating them more like an



actual client (laughter)... Then maybe I would have felt more prepared -

Participant 5

The laughter that follows the discussion of the treatment of the drama-based client demonstrates this student's struggle with entering the 'as-if' world. In order to take their drama-based client seriously, the ability to switch between the worlds of 'as-is' and 'as-if' worlds is important, as it helps the students to fully engage with their client, whether they be a real client or a drama-based client. As demonstrated in the quote above, this student felt that despite trying their best, this was not a well-developed skill, and they missed learning as a result.

The impact of MOTE on student perceptions of the quality of their work

Participants' responses about their perceptions of the quality of their work fell into three broad categories. The two participants in category 1 were delighted with the quality of the work that they produced. The one participant in category 2 expressed the view that their outcomes for assignment two were better than they had expected of themselves. In the third category were three participants who felt that their final work was fine as opposed to excellent. I will explore each of these three categories below:

Category 1: Mine was great!

In this category are two students who discuss the high level of work that they created for their real client. Below participant 7 talks about their feeling that their assignment was the best in the class, despite their skill levels being quite low at the beginning of the course.

I thought mine was best!!... And I can't even draw a stick figure, and so...

I thought it was amazing that I got that far - Participant 7

It was interesting to hear participant 7 compare themselves to others in the class when looking to quantify praise for their own project. Participant 5 also compares their work to the other classmates, stating that it was only after seeing others work that they decided that theirs was great.

I was happy with my work and because of that, I was confident showing (client's name)... Seeing it against other people's work, it's like, ok, no,

(own name) you should be really proud of what you've done - Participant 5

It was great to see these students making the decision that their work was great, particularly when they compared it to the work of others in the class.

Category 2: Mine was better than I expected from myself

Participant 1 discusses that they consider their work to be at a better level than they believe it should have been at that point (half-way through the first year of study):

Looking back, I'm like it was actually a level, it was a better level than I should have been at that point - Participant 1

This is an exciting observation, as it demonstrates that this student is not only comparing themselves to their classmates, but also to the work of students in the second year of the diploma and to industry standards too.

Category 3: Mine was fine

The three participants in this category discussed the quality of their work in relation to other internal sources or feedback from the client.

I know what she wanted and I was like about 75% sure that she would like it - Participant 2

While the estimate of 75% indicates a degree of uncertainty about the quality of the work, this participant is relatively confident about her work in relation to the client's wishes. Evaluating performance in relation to client expectations is an important attribute for a designer to develop. Participant 6 indicates feelings of personal satisfaction and feelings of reinforcement from client feedback:

I liked my presentation though... and I got good feedback for it, which was good - Participant 6

Again, it was great to see participant 6 trying to appeal to their client, and listening to the feedback received. The response of participant 4 shows a less positive interpretation of accommodating client needs, with the phrase 'ticking all the boxes' indicating a somewhat mechanistic perspective of quality appraisal.

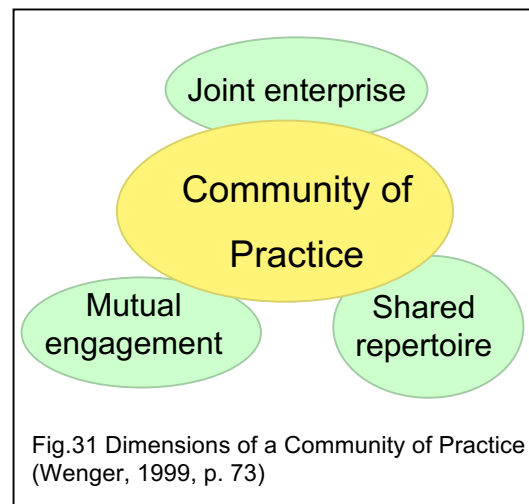
I definitely felt like I had like ticked all the boxes, it's just a matter of getting it across and seeing if I did a good job or not (laughter) -

Participant 4

The statement above and the laughter that follows it demonstrates a lower sense of confidence in the work than participant 2 or participant 6, as it shows that they were also working to not only please their client, but also to satisfy the marking schedule by ticking the boxes. Similar to participant 5, when it came to taking the drama-based client seriously, the statement above shows the struggle that this student had in seeing their work outside of the 'as-is' world of the classroom in which their final assessment took place, and did not judge their work by any other standards.

Participant perceptions of belonging to a Community of Practice

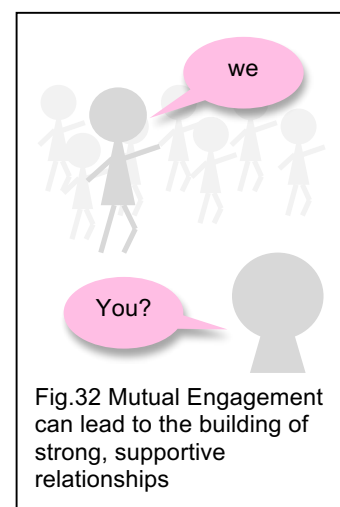
In this section I have grouped participants' responses into the three categories that are the three dimensions in Wenger's model of a Community of Practice (1999), as represented



in Fig.31. Before presenting these results, I acknowledge that the three categories have overlapping characteristics.

Category 1: Mutual Engagement

According to Wenger's model, Mutual Engagement involves people participating in similar activities together and building relationships (1999). In the case of this research study, two students acknowledge Mutual Engagement in their experience. Participant one has demonstrated signs of Mutual Engagement by answering almost



every question with a 'we' answer, as demonstrated in their answer to the question below:

*Q: Can you tell me a little bit about **your** experience taking Sean's paper and what it involved?* - Interviewer

*A: So basically with that **we** used skills that **we** acquired in all the other classes and kind of put them together, so **we** learned like, he threw us in there, **we** met a client. Before **we** met a client, we did our own activities where **we** were each other's clients, so **we were always working with someone**.... I thought it was really good* - Participant 1

Participant 1 is demonstrating their thoughtfulness for their classmates, and concludes their interview with:

We were all pretty thrilled with like how far we had come - Participant 1

The constant use of 'we' instead of 'I' demonstrates that this student has built strong relationships through the course of the paper. It was clear that participant 1 never saw their study as an individual endeavour, but as a collective engagement. Similar to participant 1, participant 2 discusses presenting to her classmates as being easier than to an external client in the quote below:

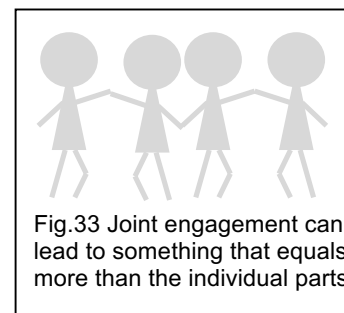
But you don't get like real nervous with your classmates... (When meeting the client) I was still nervous, but it's like a different level - Participant 2

This quote demonstrates that this student suffers from nerves, but shows that the mutual engagement in the classroom has led to a feeling of comfort within the classroom community.

Category 2: Joint enterprise

In Wenger's model, Joint Enterprise involves a community working together toward a particular goal or output, and the complexities around individual participation and responsibility within this (1999). Two students

acknowledged the presence of Joint Enterprise in their interviews, and in the quote below Participant one discusses staying behind to get work done for assignment two at the last minute, after leaving a lot of work until the end of the project:



There was three of us and we stayed until about six... it was quite good because it showed you kind of like woke up - Participant 1

Working together on a joint enterprise helped this student to realise what they were working toward, and helped them to get their work completed. Participant three discusses below not only representing themselves in their work, but also their wider community:

But yeah, also we wanted to have a like, give a good impression (for our client) And for WinTec and everything - Participant 3

Participant three demonstrates above that they see the joint enterprise as a strong element in the classroom, evident in their use of 'we'. Participant three was very clear that the classroom community should make a good impression on the client for the sake of not only themselves, but WinTec too.

Category 3: shared repertoire

In Wenger's model, Shared Repertoire involves the sharing of experiences within the community, streamlining processes through a shared language and methodology (1999). The comments below show that two of the

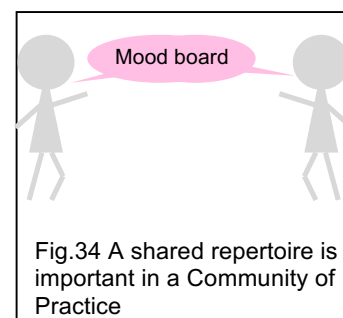


Fig.34 A shared repertoire is important in a Community of Practice

participants were developing an awareness of the norms and language of being a designer. For example, participant 4 says:

You can't just sit behind the computer; you have to actually interact with people - Participant 4

Participant 4 has demonstrated Learning through Modelling through talking to people in industry and watching them work throughout the semester. Participant 5 goes further by using the language and working process of a designer in critiquing her own client interview process:

I came in with my mood board on my laptop and then just my sketchbook and... I expected it just to fall into place cos sometimes that just happens, but it didn't and so... I started off by showing my mood board and then I was sort of "oh, I don't know what to do next" so I was showing some things in my sketch book but she doesn't, she wouldn't understand... and so it was just learning oh I need to show it in a way - Participant 5

This quote from Participant 5 highlights a strong design-based repertoire, evidenced by their easy knowledge of what they needed to show their client as a designer. The difficulty that this student had in the interview has damaged their position in the classroom community of practice, demonstrated in the quote below:

Everybody came out of the interview being like "it was really good, like she is really nice" and I came out like, "Oh"... I felt really just uncomfortable about the whole thing, and like, I'm kind of the person who that like sticks to those things and find it hard to like move past that -

Participant 5

This response from participant 5 illustrates that they see themselves as being outside of the rest of the group, Using the terms 'everybody' versus 'I'. This is a very isolating and uncomfortable place to be, and as stated by this student, this feeling of being on the outside can be very difficult to move past. Despite having a strong shared repertoire, this kind of experience could separate a student from working in a joint enterprise/ mutual engagement, separating them from the Community of Practice.

Unanticipated findings

In addition to shedding light on the research questions posed at the start of this inquiry, there were other themes that emerged from participants' responses. These additional themes are helpful in addressing the main research question: What are first year tertiary interior design students' perceptions of the impact of a Mantle of the Expert approach on their capacity to work with a real client? This group of responses also opens up further issues to consider in designing and implementing future iterations of this initiative.

Benefits/limitations of Inquiry-based Learning

Although this area of investigation was not directly one of the research questions, three of the students noticed and explicitly commented on elements related to Inquiry-based Learning, one of the core elements of MOTE and an important part of their learning process. Participant 1 discusses being "thrown in at deep end" for assignment two, and having to learn to swim:

Looking back, like I was really impressed how we first did it like we were thrown in at the deep end and we had really good results from it... because we had already (been through the design process once), we had a basic concept of how it worked. And so we were basically able to develop our own skills furthermore, so that worked really well -

Participant 1

Participant 1 states that due to the skills gained and the recognition of design process in assignment one, using an Inquiry-based approach for assignment two was a natural progression. Participant 5 goes further to compare the Inquiry-based process to “going in reverse”, giving the big picture a go before you’ve learned all the little pieces, then going back and seeing which of the little pieces you needed:

I can see the method in Sean's teaching, as in he sort of puts us into a real situation having clients and stuff and before we've maybe been taught all the you know, all the little things and then now, this semester (after assignment one and two are completed), we are going back and sort of learning those things but with the perspective, knowing how we will put them, because we've already done it... Maybe if we'd learnt them first, they would have less meaning... learning something when you've already had that experience is so much more valuable, cos you can like, really understand it... it is sort of like going in reverse, but like, it's sort of like there's two steps and he's taken the first step and put it second, but it is still the gradual process of working up to the ultimate, like, it's still in the right order - Participant 5

This interview took place after assignment one and two were complete, and the students had already started assignment three. Assignment three examines the building blocks of design, and students participate in an assignment that asks them to engage with and name design elements and colour schemes. Due to the Inquiry-based Learning process being so firmly in place with this group, students engaged with the design elements instinctively, making the teaching of the elements far easier than in previous iterations of this paper. My approach was to continue the Inquiry-based approach, introduce students to the core themes, and have them discover the design elements for themselves. To hear Participant 5 trust this process by calling it the ‘right order’, and acknowledge the inquiry-based method is very exciting.

Questions of creativity

The comments in this section touch on one of the core dilemmas of a contemporary interior designer, the balance of your personal creativity with the needs of your client. There are two types of response to this, in the comments of three of the participants there is an indication that they did not recognise the potential for them to negotiate with their client and include elements of their own creativity into the project. The other two responses show participants who are willing to work together with the client to create something exciting and new for both client and designer. Participant 4 describes a feeling of free rein to be creative in assignment one that was missing for assignment two:

Rather than with a fake client, we could just add things in, whereas it had to be like, this is what she wants, so you have to do it this way... I think (I could have been a bit) more creative. I did a better job (for assignment one) but again that was like because we had free rein - Participant 4

Participant 4 demonstrates a frustration with their client, stating that they 'had' to do something in a particular way, meaning that their project was not creative enough, and that it was not up to the same level as what they created for assignment one. It is clear that for some of these participants, they are struggling to get past the idea that their personal creativity will be negatively influenced by the stylistic needs of the client. A lack of understanding of the potential for negotiation between client and designer is also present in the response from Participant 2 below:

I think (assignment 2) was easier than assignment 1 to be honest, cos we didn't have to do so much... and she already know what she wanted -

Participant 2

Assignment two had a greater expectation of workload, but this participant found it easier because they felt that the client already knew what she wanted, and could just give it to her without putting any of themselves into it. The lack of participation in the project meant that they were just filling in a checklist as a personal shopper for the client, and a draughtsperson for the design company not a designer. This is a common misconception in young designers working in industry, and is also clear in the response from participant 6 below:

I didn't really love my design as much as I loved my design in assignment one... I think I just made it too simple... but in assignment two everything else was better, in every way, like presenting, the brief, the questionnaire
- Participant 6

Participant 6 believes that their skills had improved for assignment two, but that their design was not as exciting. Again, this is a very important thing for this student to notice and reflect on, as the lack of love implies a lack of personal input as a designer. On the other side of the argument is participant 1, who believes that their design process was enriched by their client:

I really enjoyed that before we met her, I had an idea of what I was going to do in my head and then once I met her, that idea completely changed and to begin with I really liked my idea and I didn't want to change any of it, I didn't want to alter any of it and then afterwards, I realised that actually I preferred her ideas better because it was something I hadn't explored before. So yea, I think I liked that I was finding out things about myself at the same time, that I didn't know, whilst we were doing the project – Participant 1

This is a very exciting progression for this student from a belief that their own way of doing the project was the most valid, to a belief that their ideas could be even better when working with their client. That they found out things about themselves through this process is the most exciting finding that could have happened. Participant 7 shows a very strong concept of the process of how to work with and alongside your client:

(Client name) was good because you can't sway her, you have to listen, you have to pay attention and figure out... how you can work with what you want, and what she wants and make that work – Participant 7

Participants 1 and 7 are the two students who stated in their interviews that they were already confident enough to work with a real client at the start of the course because of their past experience working with people, and this is clear from their responses to this question of creativity. Both have proven through their knowledge of the negotiation of creativity between themselves and their client that they are ready for this challenge, where others still need additional experience in this skill.

Authenticity of the real client?

In examining the impact of assignment one on working with a real client, most participants indicated a mistrust of the authenticity of the real client and the process. Five of the students still saw the work with the client as a practice run. Participant 5 recognises this, and expands below:

The one we have just done is quite like almost pretend, even though she is real, so it's like... a good practice - Participant 5

In many ways, this is an important noticing for this student, as it means that they are keeping themselves safe through the process without becoming overwhelmed. As explored in sections above, participant 7 felt ready to work with a real client due to their past work experience, but still indicate a hesitance toward the client below:

I really liked working with (client name), it was nice to have a umm, real person, cos then you get a real, um, cos the... project that we did before, we interviewed students - Participant 7

It is interesting that despite participant 7 talking about the real client as a real client, and being very ready for this process, that they still stumbled before each time they called her a real client. This makes it clear that they did enjoy the process of working with a real person on a real project, but that they did not entirely see them as a real client. Participant 2 indicates the same level of hesitance, stating that the process was very much LIKE working with a real client:

It was like, actually working on a real client - Participant 2

The quote above from participant 2 demonstrates that they treated the client as a real client in the 'as if' world, with the knowledge that they were not her real designer in the 'as-is' world. This was particularly evident in the response of participant 4 to the client's interior designer being present at the final presentation:

We had (our client's) interior designer there, like her actual interior designer, so that was scary cos she was actually like a professional (laughter). But yeah, it was nice cos they said they were actually gonna steal a few of my ideas and stuff - Participant 4

The positive response received here helped to build this student's concept of the real client, despite using the word 'actual' to describe the client's interior designer. In the case of participant 6, however, when they saw the

final plan developed by their client's interior designer, it led to disappointment, as the likelihood of any of their ideas being used diminished greatly.

But I think the only thing that I was a bit funny about was that they'd

already made the designs so I was like (that's a bit stink) - Participant 6

It is clear from this statement that participant 6 was highly engaged in their project, and that this was a great disappointment to them. This is a situation to avoid in future, as this situation could lead to a knock-back in a student's engagement level.

Contextual factors

The final theme to emerge from the interviews is the effect of other modules running alongside this module on the effectiveness of this teaching and learning initiative. Three students made comments throughout their interviews stating that due to broader factors within the course, this teaching and learning initiative did not reach its potential. Interior Design Studies takes place alongside other skill-based modules such as Drawing for Interior Design, Communication Strategies and Construction design. Interior Design Studies is a project-based paper that pulls together the learning from all other modules, as noted by participant 1:

Design studies is for me is like bringing it all together and using what we have learned in the other classes and putting it in a presentation -

Participant 1

Participant 1 goes on to critique the structure of the other modules that run alongside Interior Design Studies that they feel may not have encouraged the same level of professionalism:

There were other (modules within the diploma) that it would have been good to have that like you know that push to be a bit more professional in a way that, like deadlines were met - Participant 1

Participant 1 believes that this meant that students weren't allowed the opportunity to practice operating in a professional way all of the time. Participant 5 goes on to discuss their struggle with the client meeting and states that Communications Strategies should have covered these skills and given the opportunity to practice more:

(struggled with meeting the client because) when we meet clients like we have to introduce ourselves, like, little things like that... maybe that was something, cos we had a class called communications... Something that we were meant to learn in that class - Participant 5

The quote above demonstrates the frustration of students in a generalist paper such as Interior Design Studies, wherein the focus is not on teaching core skills such as drawings, communication strategies, construction, CAD, product specification etc. The focus is on the design, and the other skills need to be developed elsewhere, and if they are not then the students who do not gain these skills spend the rest of the time in Interior Design Studies trying to catch up. Participant 4 expands on this feeling below, about the communication strategies module:

If we've like been told, I think it would be nice if we were told like a correct way of presenting, so we were not so informal... but we did in another class, we learned a little bit of presentation skills as well - Participant 4

Participant 4 demonstrates once again, as in the previous quotes that they feel their communication skills were lacking in this assignment. This led to a lack of formality and professionalism that would have had a great impact on their feelings of self-efficacy.

Summary

In my findings, I have outlined the results from a combination of quantitative data sourced through a self-efficacy survey and qualitative data sourced through a series of seven semi-structured interviews. The quantitative data showed that, through a MOTE approach to assignment one, the majority of students gained a higher level of self-efficacy and competence to work with a real client in assignment two. The qualitative data gave a greater insight into this data, with students highlighting issues that ranged from a lack of participation in the drama-based client negotiation to a lack of experience in client communication. I will be interpreting and discussing these results in the next chapter in relation to the research highlighted in my literature review.

Chapter Six: Discussion of findings

In the previous chapter, I documented the findings of my study in relation to my research question and associated sub-questions. Key themes were identified in relation to my research question and the sub-questions, the literature and my practice. The discussion is organised in relation to the sub-questions and the other themes that emerged from the interviews but were not anticipated. While some of the responses overlap a number of categories, these sub-sections are retained in the interest of clarity.

(i) What was the impact of the MOTE initiative on students' feelings of self-efficacy?

The feedback around feelings of competence as a result of the MOTE initiative provided some of the most revealing data of the study. According to Bandura (1977a), perceived self-efficacy helps learners to move forward and cope in situations that may otherwise have been felt as intimidating. The use of MOTE and the attempt to build a COP was designed to create a social learning space that would enhance learners' feelings of self-efficacy.

The findings from the self-efficacy survey were positive in this regard, with five out of seven students affirming that working with a drama-based client for assignment one was helpful when faced with a real client for assignment two. However, the interviews offer a deeper insight into the feelings students had about their competence. The feelings reported here were very mixed. There were those students who used language that suggested a progression from feelings of near terror to calm confidence about the future. The statements of these students provide evidence of a growth in self-efficacy. However, some students indicated that although they had acquired valuable skills that helped them to meet the requirements, their self-perception had not changed. For example, one student felt able to manage because "it was the same kind of work", but

noted “I don’t know if I felt, like, really confident after”. A comment like this is unexpected. It suggests that it may be possible for people to perform a task competently without developing an associated growth in self-belief. At the other end of the spectrum, there were learners who had confidence in their abilities because of prior professional experiences. These students felt that the opportunities for practice offered through the MOTE initiative were not necessary for them and so did not fully engage with the spirit of the ‘as-if’ world. Both categories of response relate to the individual histories that the learners brought into the classroom. These are difficult to manage, especially when they involve emotional elements and feelings about the self.

As an educator, these aspects of the findings remind me that even a very well-planned and implemented educational initiative may not be able to reach or change certain individual and social histories that learners bring with them. In the journey from the ‘as-if’ to the ‘as-is’ world, it is important to acknowledge that not everyone will enter the imagined world or let it support and develop them in the ways in which I had hoped. Like any teaching initiative, there are limits to how a MOTE experience can change the attitudes and habits accumulated over a lifetime, particularly for adult learners. In terms of future initiatives, one way in which to increase the likelihood of some change in self-perception is to spend more deliberate time explicitly exploring the starting point for each learner.

(ii) What is the impact on students’ perceptions of their competence in the process of working with a real client?

As was noted in the discussion of self-efficacy, not all students felt that their experience gained through MOTE made them feel better about themselves in relation to working with a real client. In understanding this part of the feedback, it is worth noticing the participants’ language choices in their comments. For example, participant 3 noted that “it was useful to have assignment one first, because it was the same kind of work”. The word useful here implies a limit to possibilities, with an emphasis on practical application. Similarly, participant 5 commented that “I didn’t feel prepared, but that doesn’t mean, I didn’t find it, like, a valuable

experience". This statement demonstrates a clear distinction between performance value and personal feelings. Other language choices of participants reinforce this theme of learning specific competencies that prepared for performance. Words used include "all the skills that we needed", "this is what we need", "helpful, like setting up a questionnaire". In summary, the first assignment was a successful initiative for all students in terms of the acquisition of useful competencies for the students. As indicated in relation to the topic of self-efficacy, for some students, the trial run provided by the first assignment also had an influence on how they felt about themselves. However, for others, the preparation was more about the knowledge of and ability to practise particular skills. In relation to my goals, I was hoping for a broader feeling of improvement in professional and personal wellbeing, but it is still satisfying to see that the initiative enabled task-preparedness for all the participants.

(iii) What are students' perceptions of the quality of their work?

Participants' feedback about the quality of their work restores some balance to the impression that the gains from the initiative were less comprehensive than I had hoped. While not all the participants articulated that assignment one had improved their confidence in relation to working with a real client, all the participants expressed satisfaction to differing degrees about the quality of the products that they produced. For four out of seven, their work appeared to surpass their expectations, using words like "amazing", "happy", "proud", "better level than I expected", "liked my presentation". Only one participant's language illustrated a functional approach to their work, noting that he/she had "ticked all the boxes". It could be argued that the MOTE experience helped to bring these students to a level of satisfaction with their performance which included personal satisfaction as well as pleasure in performance. It may be worth reconsidering what an educator may look for as indicators of enhanced feelings of self-efficacy.

For future iterations of the initiative, one strategy may be to ask students to assess their feelings of self-efficacy about working with a real client at

the start of the teaching year as well as after assignment one and then during the period of working with the client.

(iv) To what extent does using Mantle of the Expert help to develop students' sense of belonging to a Community of Practice?

Wenger's theory of COP was chosen as an educational model which fitted well with the beliefs and strategies of MOTE. Both sets of ideas emphasise collaboration, negotiation of meaning, and a common enterprise. Educators informed by MOTE and the theory of COP try to minimise distinctions between classroom learning and professional practice and the learning space is conceptualised as an initiation into a professional community of practice. MOTE provides students with an opportunity to live 'as-if' they were professionals and aims to help students to begin the long journey towards professional identity by giving them the opportunity to try on and experiment with the Mantle of the Expert. Wenger identifies the three dimensions of a Community of Practice as: joint enterprise, mutual engagement and shared repertoire. Participants' feedback was examined to see if there were signs that any of these dimensions were present.

There were indicators that some participants were developing feelings of being involved in the making of a new collective identity. Thus it was noted that one participant consistently used the word 'we' when explaining the various phases of the learning to the interviewer. Another participant mentioned a group of students who stayed late to work together, while another said "we wanted... to give a good impression" suggesting a sense of collective responsibility. Some participants described themselves as assuming a professional designer identity by the end of the second assignment. However, not all students showed the same commitment to the joint enterprise. For example, one participant noted that she could have taken assignment one more seriously, while another used the dismissive term of "play-acting".

As an educator, these mixed results were highly informative. MOTE shares similarities with other educational initiatives such as peer learning

or team work that are underpinned by philosophies of learning in community and negotiation of ideas. All learning spaces of this nature require participants to enter the specific community and work within its rules and norms. However, the choice to collaborate is an individual one and participants may enter or withdraw as they wish. This freedom is in keeping with the principles of equality that underpin collaborative learning environments. As educators, we can create the space for participants to forge a professional identity, but we cannot compel them to enter this space.

(v) What were students' perceptions of an inquiry-based learning approach?

This was not one of the research sub-questions, but it was favourably commented on by participants without being directly solicited by the interviewer. As inquiry-based learning is one of the significant components of a MOTE approach, this feedback is worth exploring. Students' positive response to this aspect of their learning is also valuable at a time when educators are encouraging flipped learning approaches and challenging traditional transmission models. Inquiry-based learning emphasises inquiry as a starting point for the learning process (Spronken-Smith & Walker, 2010). In the specific inquiry model of MOTE, the inquiry is focussed by the requirements of the client that learners receive as a commission.

In the interviews, one participant commented on the beneficial learning that came from being "thrown in at the deep end", while another spoke of the effectiveness of "going in reverse". This participant also noted the richness of the learning that was developed through direct experience.

(vi) Renegotiating understanding of creativity

As with the previous section, this was not one of the research sub-questions, but a theme that emerged from the interview data. Three out of the seven respondents held the belief that their creativity was diminished by the presence of a real client. One of the students who believed that their creativity was constrained stated "this is what she wants, so you have

to do it this way... I think (I could have been a bit) more creative”, this is indicative of a belief, in this student, that creativity is an inherent quality that can only exist when it comes from one source – the designer. This attitude is in contrast to two of the seven participants, who believe that their creativity was enhanced by the presence of the client. One such participant discussed the process of having her own idea for the project, then meeting the client and changing her idea as a result; “I didn’t want to alter any of it and then afterwards, I realised that actually I preferred her ideas better because it was something I hadn’t explored before”. This attitude demonstrates a rich learning experience for this student, one where they not only had the opportunity to generate their own ideas, but to collaborate with the ideas of another individual, ultimately enriching their experience. The feedback of this student indicates an understanding that the co-creation process can enhance creativity.

In future iterations, it will be important to encourage this concept of collaboration with students, so that they do not believe that they have to completely compromise their own ideas for those of the client, and that they recognise the strength of working with others to further build their own identity and creativity as a designer. It is important that students build an understanding that creativity is a dynamic concept that evolves in the process of collaboration.

(vii) The complex relationship between “as-if” and “as-is” worlds

The next unexpected finding that emerged from the data, was around the complex relationship between the ‘as-if’ and the ‘as-is’ worlds. Five out of seven students perceived the ‘real’ client as a construct of the ‘as-if’ world, only dissimilar to the drama-based client because she was a person who existed in the ‘as-is’ world outside the classroom setting. One participant acknowledged this collision between the ‘as-is’ and ‘as-if’ world that existed with the ‘real’ client, stating that “it was nice to have a, umm, real person”. This quote demonstrated the overall opinion that was shared by the students, that it was nice to have a real person answer their questions, because then the answers were all genuine, but the hesitation before saying ‘real person’ is indicative of the students’ acknowledgement that

this was in fact a project that was not actually real because “they’d already made the designs”.

This raises an important question about whether or not you can call the real client a ‘real client’, unless they are actually operating in the ‘as-is’ world. Currently, the projects with ‘real’ clients still operate in safe environments where there is a very limited possibility of student work making it to built form. This safe environment is a great place for students to practice in, and it must be made clear to students that this is the case. If students are informed of the unlikelihood of their projects being built, then it will avoid potential student disengagement further into the project.

(viii) Contextual factors

Another unexpected finding was the effect that the separation of skills into different modules had on students. It meant that there were elements of student learning that were not achieved. One student commented that they were missing skills in the area of client communications, while acknowledging that perhaps these skills should have been covered in another paper “maybe that was something... we were meant to learn in (communications) class”.

This raises many questions for me about the current model of tertiary education, wherein different skills are divided into different papers. This compartmentalised way of teaching does not acknowledge that in order to carry out professional tasks in an industry setting, one must be able to call upon all their skills, rather than focusing on just one at a time. There is a strong trend in many tertiary environments to move to a more inter-disciplinary model. I believe that if tertiary education moved to a more integrated model, the teaching of MOTE would be able to flourish.

Currently, it is difficult to create an effective ‘as if’ world in an environment in which learning experiences are divided into such artificial categories. In the short term, as an educator working within this structure, I need to forge clear relationships with other associated modules in the future, in order to strengthen the effectiveness of MOTE.

Chapter seven: Conclusion

This research study began two years ago when I was introduced to a theory of teaching called Mantle of the Expert. What started as an interest in using drama-based methods in the classroom quickly developed into a passionate belief that this model of teaching and learning could bridge the gap between study and professional practice. My interest in bridging this gap stemmed from my personal experiences when entering the design industry after completing my design degree. I found that, despite having a great set of skills, and being a part of a wonderful educational Community of Practice, I did not feel that I had been initiated into a professional COP. After early trials with MOTE in my teaching, one year ago I designed a systematic and deliberate teaching and learning initiative to apply and test my theory. This initiative involved first year interior design students participating first in a project taught through MOTE, that then scaffolded them into working with a real client in their second project. The findings from these two consecutive assignments have formed the basis for this Action Research study. Alongside teaching this module, the element of research inherent in this project provided a strength to my resolve, and the findings will help to inform future iterations of this initiative. Having been through this process, I am determined to continue using the elements inherent in MOTE, including COP. Through the process of this research study, I have found that there are many areas of opportunity that I could concentrate on, and I am currently moving forward with changes to these in my teaching. These proposed changes are outlined in the recommendations section below:

Recommendations

(i) The nature of creativity

This was an unexpected finding in the data, that many students believed they could be more creative when working with a drama-based client than they could when working with a 'real' client. This highlights an important finding for future iterations of this initiative, that some students perceive

creativity as an individual and intrinsic quality. It is important that students are given the opportunity to comprehend that a real client does not only see them as a repository of particular design-based skills, but as a creative individual that they would like to collaborate with to create a great result. I believe that this perception can be improved through building design identity and exploring understanding of creativity with students. My recommendation is that this becomes a central part of the course learning for the Communications Strategies module in the future.

(ii) Building design identity in students

Many students believed that they gained a high level of skills that are particular to the interior design industry through this initiative. The skills acquired allowed these students to competently complete a design proposal for their real client, although this was not accompanied by a corresponding improvement in self-belief in all instances. Another area that impeded the building of design identity, as discussed in the previous section, was the students who believed that their creativity levels were impeded when working with a real client. These limited or immature notions of what it means to be a designer and the nature of creativity demonstrate a low level of understanding of their identity as designers. In future iterations of this project I would like to spend more time with students explicitly discussing the concept of creativity and what this means in the context of the design profession. More time spent acknowledging this design identity will hopefully lead to students seeing the client and designer relationship as a potentially collaborative one.

(iii) The element of play vs. real

One of the difficulties for students around creativity and design identity appeared to be that creativity existed less for them when working within a professional, rather than a constructed environment. The constructed environment is seen more as play, but as soon as the project moved into a professional environment, the majority of students saw themselves as having a well-honed set of skills, but lost some of their ability to play and have fun within the project. In future iterations of this initiative, it is important that I encourage students to inject an element of play into their

real projects. This will help students understand that although they are working in a professional environment, it is the elements of play that inform their creativity and their identity as a designer. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that play and creativity are inevitably constrained by working within a formal educational environment.

(iv) Measuring self-efficacy

In this research study, there were multiple different levels of self-efficacy that existed within the group of participants. There were participants who stated that they were ready to work with a real client from day one, and there were also participants who never felt ready to work with a real client. In order to properly understand these differing levels and to accommodate them in the teaching and learning process, it is important that for future iterations of this study, students are given more regular self-efficacy surveys to respond to. Regular check-in points will enrich the data, particularly when sourced at the beginning, middle and end of the project. Data provided from regular feedback would give a better picture of improvements, stagnation or decline in student self-efficacy levels throughout the project. At the same time, as noted in the discussion, the complex nature of self-efficacy, and the external and internal histories that shape it, mean that it is not something that I can fully control.

Summary

At the end of this research study, I still feel that I can move forward with the same passion that I held for MOTE in tertiary design education. As I write this, I am three weeks into initiating a new group of students into a MOTE-based project that has been informed by my findings. As a result of this study, I have felt an enhanced wakefulness and vigilance to introduce prompts at key moments to draw out conversations in the early stages of the project, particularly around creativity and design identity.

This research study has given me the opportunity to be a researcher alongside my teaching practice, which has been an absolute privilege. My role as researcher alongside being a teacher led me to amazing findings that went far beyond my previous understandings of achievement levels. It

is my opinion that if all teaching included a strong element of research into teaching methodology and student perception of learning, the educational landscape could be enhanced considerably.

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Appendix A: Participant information sheet

By becoming involved in this research project there are a few things you need to know:

You have the right to not be involved in this research. This will not affect your participation in the assignment in any way.

You will be given the right to view and approve the word-processed transcript of your interview.

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime up until two weeks after you have approved your interview transcript. This will not affect your participation in the assignment in any way.

Your right to anonymity will be respected, and although anything that happens in class may be recorded, the online survey and interview will reach the researcher without any names or identifying information attached to them.

Every effort will be made to ensure impartiality of the researcher as your teacher, including full moderation of teaching and assessing at all stages of the project by a senior member of staff.

Your confidentiality will be respected throughout this process, and your name will never be recorded in any of the data, or in the final pieces of writing. You will be referred to as Participant X. All research data will be word-processed and will be kept on a password-protected computer. While every effort will be made to ensure confidentiality, this cannot be guaranteed.

If a dispute arises, the researcher should be contacted in the first instance and should there be no resolution, then the supervisor may be contacted. Details are below:

Researcher: Sean Dunne – sean.dunne@wintec.ac.nz

Supervisor: Dorothy Spiller – Dorothy@waikato.ac.nz

The researcher will hold the copyright of any scholarly publications produced from the research.

The participants will own their own raw data and the researcher will own the dissertation and any scholarly publications and/or presentations that arise from it.

If you ever have any questions, or you do not understand any of the words or concepts involved in the consenting process, you should feel free to contact the researcher at any time.

The results of this research will be presented to other members of the educational research community and will go towards improving design education through further understanding of the effects of the teaching methods involved. Participants will be advised via e-mail of ways they might access outcomes from the study upon its completion

The Faculty of Education Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato approved this proposal on the 15th April 2015. This is a Committee whose task it is to make sure that research participants are protected from harm.

Appendix B: Consent form for participants

This informed consent form is for year 1 students undertaking the interior design studies module. The piece of research you are being invited to participate in relates to the use of a client from outside the institute.

Researcher: Sean Dunne

Qualification undertaken: Master of Education

Institute: University of Waikato

Project: Using a Mantle of the Expert approach to build professional expertise in Interior Design

Certificate of Consent:

I have been invited to participate in research about the effects of learning through the use of an outside client in interior design and the effect learning through the use of drama for learning had on your self-efficacy in dealing with an outside client.

Please tick to indicate you consent to the following

I have read and I understand the Participant Information provided in the letter.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I have read and I understand the Participant Information provided in the information sheet.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I have been given sufficient time to consider whether or not to participate in this study.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the research.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with the answers I have been given regarding the study and I have a copy of this consent form and information sheet.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without this affecting my participation in the assignment in any way.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I understand that my participation in this study is confidential and that no material, which could identify me personally, will be used in any reports on this study.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I know who to contact if I have any questions about the study in general.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I understand my responsibilities as a study participant.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
I wish to receive a summary of the results from the study.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Participant Consent form (continued):

Declaration by participant:

I hereby consent to take part in this study.

Participant's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Declaration by member of research team:

I have given a verbal explanation of the research project to the participant, and have answered the participant's questions about it.

I believe that the participant understands the study and has given informed consent to participate.

Researcher's name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix C: Interview question guidelines

Research questions as a guideline:

What are first year tertiary interior design students' perceptions of the impact of a Mantle of the Expert approach on their capacity to work with a real client?

- What is the impact on their feelings of self-efficacy?
- What is the impact on their competence in the process of working with a client?
- What is the impact on the student perceptions of the quality of their work?
- To what extent does using Mantle of the Expert help to develop students' sense of belonging to a Community of Practice?

Additional questions if conversation halts:

- Can you share with me how confident you felt about working with a real client
were there any specific areas that you felt especially confident about because of the work you had done in assignment 1?
- Were there areas about which you did not feel confident about? How could assignment 1 have helped you more in these areas?
- Perceptions of competence during the process of working with the client
- What parts felt easy? How do you think the previous assignment helped you with these parts?
- What challenges did you experience during the process? What could be done in assignment 1 to help you prepare better for these challenges?
- Impact?
- What parts of your work did you feel best about?
- How did trying things out before in assignment 1 help you to do this well?

Appendix D: Ethics approval - University of Waikato

Dean's Office
Faculty of Education
Te Kura Toi Tangata
The University of Waikato
Private Bag 3105
Hamilton, New Zealand

Phone +64 7 838 4500
www.waikato.ac.nz



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

MEMORANDUM

To: Sean Dunne

cc: Dorothy Spiller
Dr Karen Barbour

From: Associate Professor Garry Falloon
Chairperson (Acting), Research Ethics Committee

Date: 1 May 2015

Subject: Supervised Postgraduate Research – Application for Ethical Approval (EDU027/15)

Thank you for submitting the amendments to your application for ethical approval for the research project:

Using a Mantle of the Expert approach to build professional expertise in Interior Design

I am pleased to advise that your application has received approval.

Please note that researchers are asked to consult with the Faculty's Research Ethics Committee in the first instance if any changes to the approved research design are proposed.

The Committee wishes you all the best with your research.


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Garry Falloon'.

Associate Professor Garry Falloon
Chairperson (Acting)
Research Ethics Committee

Appendix E: Ethics approval - Waikato Institute of Technology

Application for ethics approval from Wintec (continued):

Researcher to complete this section (If you are not sure whose signature you need please contact the Research Office)

I have read the researcher's request to conduct Research on the School of Media Arts Students and am satisfied that the School will not be disrupted as a result of the proposed research being undertaken.	
Head of School/Manager	Margi Moore
Signature	
Date:	8-5-2015

Once you have completed the two sections above please forward to the Research Office. Research@wintec.ac.nz or phone 07 834 8800 ext 8460. Wintec staff and students need to submit this application with their ethics application. People external to Wintec need to attach evidence that they have ethics approval from their institution (e.g. a copy of the ethics approval letter).

The Research Office will obtain the following signatures and then send you a copy of the completed document, after which you can begin to collect your data.

Wintec Research Approval	
Research Director	
Signature	
Date	12/5/2015

Authorisation on behalf of Waikato Institute of Technology	
Title	Dean
Signature	
Date	15/5/15

Appendix F: Module descriptor, Interior Design Studies

BMID550 INTERIOR DESIGN STUDIES 1

Level: 5

EFTS Factor: 0.2500

Credit Value: 30

Amended: Sean Dunne 2014

Pre-requisites: Nil

Co-requisites: BMID551 Drawing for Interior Design

Learning Hours:

Directed Hours: 120

Self-Directed Hours: 180

Total Student Learning Hours: 300

1 AIM

The aim of this module is to provide students with the knowledge and skills required to understand the relationships between the physical, social and psychological features of various built environments as they relate to the practice of residential and small scale interior design. This includes an understanding of interior design elements, principles and conventions, and the technical subject areas of colour theory, ergonomics, materials and services, combined with sustainability issues.

2 LEARNING OUTCOMES AND PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

On successful completion of this module students will have the knowledge and skills required to:

2.1 Use a process which advances the structured and reflective refinement of a design problem

- identify the problems and issues set in the course brief
- complete self-directed research and reflect upon working processes
- demonstrate the structured resolution of a process through the generation, regeneration, manipulation, and refinement of ideas
- discuss with peers and tutors the individual working process adopted
- show evidence of independent and interdependent processes for working

2.2 Formulate schematic design proposals and mood boards

- explore design concepts generated through two-dimensional and three-dimensional sketch drawing
- create mood boards featuring visual imagery of design inspirations referencing a chosen design direction as an initial design approach to a project
- write and undertake a client questionnaire aimed at documenting the clients requirements for the interior design project

2.3 Apply design principles and processes in the resolution of design briefs for residential kitchen and bathroom projects

- interpret and follow a design brief: develop concepts through research, exploration and spatial analysis
- Apply ergonomic principles and their role in facilitating healthy, safe design solutions within the context of a residential kitchen or bathroom interior space

- select and specify appropriate products, materials and finishes for a residential kitchen design project

2.6 Develop an integrated interior design solution for a residential or small scale interior project

- explore the relationships between various textures, colours, materials, furniture and lighting
- experiment with the concepts of balance and proportion to create a range of illusions/visual impressions within an interior space
- explore the relationship between visual and tactile interior elements
- show the ability to use colour effectively in residential and small scale interior projects
- apply and develop the skills to create a specific mood, atmosphere or theme required for a specific interior space

2.7 Explain how eco-sustainable products, services, and practices relate to residential and small scale interior design projects

- undertake self-directed research into the area of eco-sustainability as it relates to the design of residential and small scale interior projects
- select appropriate eco-sustainable products and services for inclusion in the design of residential and small scale interiors projects

2.8 Comprehend the process of a graded assignment

- employ a vocabulary for describing work
- write objectives
- actively participate in group and class critiques
- consider and reflect upon self and peer design processes and decisions
- participate in ongoing formative assessment
- consider, discuss, and document self and peer performances for graded assessment

3. CONTENT

The vocabulary of interior design:

3.1 Research

Design trends
Design forecasting
Precedent studies

3.2 Design

Residential design concepts
Bathrooms
Kitchens
Eco-sustainable design

3.3 Specifications

Finishes
Furniture & fittings
Lighting

3.4 Conventions of practice

Visual communication
Written communication
Verbal communication
Design communication
Sustainable practice

4. TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

This module centres on a problem-based learning approach requiring investigation by the student and supported by course content in lectures, tutorials, guest lecturer presentations and field trips.

The module is undertaken in a studio environment where the course content is directly related to the content of other courses in integrated problem-based projects.

Tutor/s will:

- Establish themes and issues for analysis and discussion
- Construct models for analysis and discussion of texts, visual works, precedent studies
- Prescribe structure for working through stages of a project
- Negotiate topic, workload, and the form of the presentation with students
- Prescribe exercises to develop drawn, written and oral presentation skills
- Facilitate student's progress through structured exercises and supervision of regular self-assessment

Students will:

- Participate in dialogue and identify relevant themes from lectures and readings
- Develop their understanding of issues explored in texts and visual works
- Identify areas of interest that form the basis of an area of research, a design project or presentation
- Participate in collaborative critiques

Grade assessment performed by peers, tutor(s) and guest critics

5. ASSESSMENT

To pass this module, students must pass all assessments and accumulate an overall mark of no less than 50%.

Assessment	Type	Weighting
Assessment 1		15%
Assessment 2		30%
Assessment 3		20%
Assessment 4		35%

6. SPECIFIC TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Required Text:

An extended reading list will be supplied by the tutor at commencement of the course. This will be updated annually.

Note:

- 1) Attendance requirements of the School of Media Arts must be observed.
- 2) If you wish to be assessed in Te Reo Māori, please inform staff at the beginning of the module so that processes can be put in place to manage this in a timely fashion.

Appendix G: Assignment one project brief

This assignment tests the following learning outcomes from the module descriptor: 2.1, 2.2 & 2.8

BRIEF:

Our company has been appointed the official designers for a new apartment complex being transformed from an old factory, with beautiful river views right here in Hamilton city.

The apartment building has the same number of apartments as the number of designers in the company, so you will each be appointed a client.

You will each be provided with a floor plan and an opportunity to meet with your client in the early stages of the project.

PART ONE:

Part one is allocated 25 of the total points

You will have a chance to create a questionnaire for your client, based on their basic profile – you will then have a chance to meet with them, and based on their answers to your questions, you will create a design brief and a pinterest board for your research into the needs of your client.

You will present this at a company meeting for feedback from your colleagues.

PART TWO:

Part two is allocated 35 of the total points

Based on the design brief you wrote and your initial research, you will begin to create a design proposal for your client's home, which will form the basis of an interim client meeting.

To do this you will follow these steps:

- o Sketch book

o Digital mood presentation - depicting the mood, direction and early concepts of the space planning of your client's apartment.
You will present this to your client and they will fill in a client satisfaction form.

PART THREE:

Part 3 is the final part of assignment 1, and is allocated 40 marks.

Your client is returning to see your final proposal for their project.

To do this you will create a digital presentation that will contain a finalised floor plan, 3D sketches of the main living spaces of the apartment, some key furniture & material choices (eg. Fabrics, flooring, paint colours etc.)

o Remember the following:

You will present to your client and your colleagues for feedback.

Appendix H: Assignment one commission letter

Dear

As a company we have been selected as the in-house designer for a large-scale factory conversion into new Riverview apartments currently being proposed here in Hamilton city.

In order to make best use of our large, diverse team we have decided to allocate one designer to each of the 13 apartments being built.

You have been appointed the following client:

Name *1.....

Occupation *2.....

Lives with *3.....

Before you meet with them, they asked me to let you know that they really like interiors which are *4..... With a touch of *4..... and *4.....

You will find a floor plan attached to this letter – this building is unique in that although each apartment is the same size and shape, they can have a completely different interior layout from the others in the building, so what you design will depend entirely on your client brief.

You will be allocated time to meet with your client to discuss their requirements, so it would be good to think of questions you would like to ask of them now.

I have asked Sean Dunne to oversee your work on this project and to go over any further details regarding the way we as a company will operate within a project this large.

Thank you,

Scott Gameplay

Manager of HR

Appendix I: Assignment two project brief

This assignment tests the following learning outcomes from the module descriptor: 2.3 & 2.4

BRIEF:

Your client, (client name) has recently purchased an apartment in Mount Maunganui and she has asked for you come up with an interior concept for her. She is particularly keen for you to go in to detail with the kitchen design.

The apartment can be taken back to a basic open floor plan – so the decision of where the kitchen will be is up to you.

WORK REQUIREMENT:

You will each have a chance to have a 7 minute meeting with (client name) 1-on-1 in week 2 of the project, in which you can ask questions and show her some imagery. From this you will create the following:

1. design brief – in the form of an e-mail to your client outlining your aims for the project:
2. design drawings – floor plan, kitchen elevations, 3D drawings of the design proposal
3. visual diary – pinterest board & sketchbook
4. client presentation – formal digital presentation showing mood board, drawings, material & furniture selections (including supplier information)

Appendix J: Assignment two commission letter

Dear designers,

We have recently been approached by a new client who has asked us to put forward a range of different options for an apartment she has recently purchased in Mount Maunganui.

Our client's name is (name). She and her husband (name) are currently located in Auckland and will be re-locating to this apartment full time over the next few years. It will need a guest room and allocation for space for (name) and (name) to work from home.

The reason (name) has asked for 12 different options is that although she has a fair idea of the kind of direction she would like to go in, she would like to hear from some fresh new design voices! She's a shoe enthusiast and has brought us a range of different art-based designer shoes that could offer springboards to some really exciting design proposals. You will each be provided with a photo of the designer shoe that you will be working with as your inspiration.

You have each been provided with a floor plan - you will put forward your individual proposals for a new layout, and you will go into detail for the kitchen design.

Due to time and accessibility constraints, we will not have an opportunity to visit the apartment over the course of this project, but you will have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with (client name) next week, so it would be a good idea for you to start thinking of questions and putting together some mood imagery to go through with her before then.

You will be work closely with Sean Dunne for this project, and he will provide you with the more in-depth requirements of the way in which you will present your final ideas.

Thank you,
Scott Gameplay
Manager of HR

Appendix K: Graduate Profile, Diploma in Interior Design

A graduate of the Diploma in Interior Design (Level 6) will have acquired specialised knowledge and skills in interior design and will have:

- The ability to think critically, and to apply skills and knowledge to professional practice in the interior design industry.
- A range of strategies for researching and using information in an interior design context.
- Developed the interpersonal attributes and skills in co-operation, collaboration and participation necessary for careers in interior design.
- Developed an understanding of the social, economic, cultural and political environments in which interior design activities are undertaken.
- The ability to anticipate and respond to emerging changes in the interior design domain.
- An understanding of and the ability to respond to the expectations of professional practice in the interior design industry.

Appendix L: Weekly synopsis of the teaching and learning initiative

Week1:

As described in more detail in the Method section, we played drama games related to interior design in order to build a fictional design company with strong group values. At the end of the day in small groups, the students presented the work of past students to build their understanding of expectations and their skills in peer assessment and feedback. This was a difficult day as the students were very quiet and unresponsive, they did however manage to take on all tasks and complete to a high standard.

Week 2:

The students presented personal mood boards to the group that showed visually who they were and what they valued. They then received the brief for assignment 1, including their client profile and started writing questions. A core element of MOTE is the drama convention of a central tension – I achieved this by informing the students that their client was just fifteen minutes away and they must be ready for them! They raced through their questionnaires, receiving peer feedback from the students around them as they did. I told them that drama would form a part of their process, put them in their groups and they started to get to know their clients. This exercise was very funny, and the tension in the room started to dissipate. For the final hour of the class, students worked on writing the design brief for their project and gathering visual research on Pinterest.com, receiving formative feedback from their peers and their teacher as they did.

Week 3:

This week the students presented their findings in Pinterest.com to their classmates, framed as a company meeting to which clients were not

invited. After each student presented their Pinterest board to the group the group were encouraged to ask questions or comment on what they had seen. All students had the opportunity to give at least two pieces of feedback. Following this presentation they were given a blank copy of the marking rubric, and asked to grade themselves and answer the questions – ‘what went well?’ & “what did I learn through this process?” This was great as it led to lots of lively class discussion about things the students had forgotten to do, and led to them making decisions about what they would do differently in future. Students then received the brief for the next stage of the project (mood board + sketch book of ideas), and spent the final hour of class working on these, gaining formative feedback as they went.

Week 4:

This week the students took a class trip to Auckland for a design inspiration/ product sourcing trip – this led to lots of opportunities for formative feedback while the students worked on sketches for their projects, and for the students to experience an authentic part of contemporary design practice – getting out and seeing products/ finding inspiration.

Week 5:

This week students presented to their clients and received feedback via a client satisfaction form. These presentations were funny and relaxed, but the language the students were using was professional, accurate and the work they showed was of a high level – the value that they were showing their clients was unlike anything I had seen before at this stage of a project. The students were then given another opportunity to self-assess, it was clear between this and the last time they had had this opportunity that they had a much better appreciation of what was expected of them for this part of the assignment, despite the much higher complexity of the requirements. The students then received the brief for the third part of their assignment, and immediately asked very insightful, interesting questions displaying that their assessment literacy was much higher than in part one.

Students then had time to work on their assignments in class, again receiving formative feedback from peers and their teacher.

Week 6:

This week a guest lecturer came in from industry to give formative feedback to each of the students while they worked in a studio environment. This was an exciting day, as each of the students had a breakthrough on their projects, and the studio environment was clearly working well because for the first time, the students interacted without any prompts to do so. The environment was more relaxed and productive than it had been before.

Week 7:

This week was the final week of assignment one, and the final student presentation. The students came in 30 minutes early to prepare their presentations, and a senior member of teaching staff and the same industry guest from week 6 came along to give feedback after each of the presentations. Many of the presentations were better than many I had seen at the end of a first year class and the level of care, attention and professionalism that each student had imbued in their presentation was incredibly impressive. The clients gave great feedback to their designers after the presentation, as did the rest of the class and the guests at the presentation. In their self-assessments the students gave themselves very precise and accurate feedback, and were very confident in the grades they felt they had achieved, which were in the most part accurate, if not a little harsh. We reflected on the process and did a visualisation activity where we closed our eyes and imagined the clients arriving home, putting down their coat, making themselves a cup of tea, sitting down somewhere, then we wished them luck, said goodbye to them and closed the door.

Week 8:

We begin by talking about what the students had been up to over the two-week break, and then introduced assignment 2 to the students through a slideshow containing visual information about the project like a site plan,

some imagery from the client and a brief. Students started working in whatever way they deemed appropriate, based on their experiences from assignment one. I wandered around and talked to students individually about their work process, giving them helpful hints as I went.

Week 9:

This was the client interview day. I arrived to set up the classroom half an hour before class (an hour before the client is due to arrive) and already 8 of the 12 students were in class. By 8.15 (class starts at 8.30) all students had arrived and were ready for their client interviews. Students came into the room one at a time to meet with the client and myself, while the rest of the class is in the next room working on their assignments. The interviews went really well and the client came out at the end of them to say a few final words to the students as a group. I learned that the students had been sharing their findings with each other after each interview, which indicated to me that a great COP was in action.

Week 10:

Today was a full-day class taken by a local kitchen designer, Michael Tolmay, who took students around Hamilton to visit his kitchen design studio and other local suppliers to help with their projects.

Week 11:

Today we took a break from working on our client's project for the first half of the class. Students in groups of three received a new client's requirements to complete a quick spatial planning exercise and furniture/materials specification activity. The quick turnaround of this project was due to a feeling of exhaustion I felt coming from the students around working so heavily on one client. We spent the last 90 minutes of class back in a studio environment to work on applying their learning in the quick exercise to the project they were working on for their client.

Week 12:

This class was framed similarly to the Pinterest presentation or 'company meeting' from assignment 1, where the students informally presented to each other their progress for their assignments and received feedback. This took the first two hours of class, leaving the final two hours for working on their feedback in a studio environment.

Week 13:

This was a pure design studio class, for students to work on their assignments with each other and me there for feedback. It was highly productive for the students, with them frequently commenting on how much they were achieving.

Week 14:

This was another design studio class, this time with a focus on putting together their final presentations, and with the possibility of having to 'make do' with what they had done. For a designer the potential of not meeting their perfect ideals is an important lesson to learn.

Week 15:

This was the final presentation day, again the students came in early and prepared, they were well dressed and presented their projects very well. They were respectful to the client and their work was of an extremely exciting level. After the presentation, they reflected beautifully on their own presentations and gave great feedback to one another, again demonstrating how close their community of practice had become.