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Research in practice

ADAD5004

Word Count: 2254

This paper begins by looking in depth at three individual words, light, flow and dysgu (teach/learn). Each word has a significance to my personal field of glass painting and architectural glass. Looking in depth at these specific words will broaden the research and build on previous works which will lead in the direction of a question for an independent inquiry.

The first word being looked at is 'Light'. For a vast majority of people, light is seen as something that is taken for granted. It is seen as something that 'is' rather than something that can be 'used'. 'Daytime', as its light outside. However, many others such as scientists, philosophers and poets have interpreted sunlight in different ways

Few things are as inescapable in our day-to-day experience as light, and there are few places on earth where it is entirely extinguished. Nevertheless, it often slips by our conscious thought entirely unnoticed (Ponce, 2019).



Clarke, B (2018) *The Art of Light* Brian Clarke.co.uk [online]

Glass artists have been making this connection for many years. Brian Clarke mentions that light more than simply pass through his work. The light changes how the work is seen by its viewers. “*You see stained glass by the virtue of the passage of light through it, whereas you see a painting by the light reflected off it*” (Transillumination, 2010). It is through Clarke's experience with what he describes as his attempt to replicate the feeling received by a wondrous moment within the cast of magnificent sunlight through a summer window which

inspires all of his creations. However, his most recent works have been designed on screen frame. By displaying his work in this way, Clarke argues that this removes the art from its traditional foundation, making it more accessible to his audiences.



Woods, C. (2020) *Eclipse* chriswoods.co.uk [online].

Another artist Chris Woods (2020) describes light as her medium as oppose to the glass itself. She explains that her work connects a series of both “*high and low tech optical materials to harness patterns of light that suggest ephemeral glimpse moments in the natural world*” (Woods, 2020). This suggests that her works are created as a response to the environment where the work is placed and draws attention to the natural light already available within the space. Both artists reflect on how light can be used as a medium and a source of inspiration. Woods work uses light within the available space, meaning that her work is a direct response to the environment which the work is place. Counter to this, Clarke’s work has been fabricated in such a way that the work can be show in exhibitions across the country. Whist both methods are effective, Clarke’s work and its ability to be shown in any location emphasises both the importance two key things, bringing glass to people who might not have the chance to see in within the architectural space and highlighting the versatility of using light in any available space. Whilst both artists’ interpretative process are different, both artists agree light as a medium plays a significant role to their works and how they what their work to be perceived by an audience.

The second word being looked at in detail is 'Flow'. Whilst it can mean "*the steady and continuous movement of something/somebody in one direction*" (Oxford University Press, 2020) in its most literal sense, the second meaning of the word is an individual experiencing "a moment of flow often occur when you are engaged in an activity that you enjoy and in which you are quite skilled" (Cherry, 2019). It has also been described as being "In the zone" and is said to be one of the key factors to my people's success (Halo Neuroscience, 2017). Hungarian-American philosopher and educator Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's primary teachings encompass the philosophies of flow (Spencer, 2017). These teaching direct one to focus on what's important, to improve one's performance, rise to their own set challenge and maximise enjoyment and creativity (Ted, 2008). He also refers to a flow as a continuous and almost organic state where self-reflection is one of the most valuable aspect (Fight Mediocrity, 2015). Another author and keynote speaker who also focuses on flow is Steven Kotler, who talks at length with the impact of flow on everyday life and how it can be used for optimum performance (Mind Valley, 2019). In a separate interview, Kotler speaks to three athletes within their field, sharing their opinions on the flow experience. Travis rice, a competitive snowboarder said it was "The highest form of concentration I have ever experienced", whilst professional climber Dean Potter mentions that it aids him to, "Perceiving things much more clearly, more slowed down than normal". Whilst both these comments show the flow experience in arguably the most positive light, skateboarder Danny Way describes it as addictive, which is why he continually returns to the sport for the 'rush'. This suggests that there can be a negative effect and that the flow state of mind can be addictive.

The addictive nature of flow could be due to the physical changes in the brain which include a dopamine release, along with anandamide, norepinephrine, serotonin and endorphins (Brainbiz, 2018). Also, during the state of flow, it is believed that the brains prefrontal cortex has a reduction in activity (Dietrich, 2004). The prefrontal cortex "has been implicated in planning complex cognitive behavior, personality expression, decision making, and moderating social behaviour" (Dahlitz, 2017). This down regulation of frontal brain activity is referred to as "transient hyperfrontality" which is when a proportion of the frontal lobe shuts down, giving the focused thinking part of the brain time to rest. This allows other parts and functions to become more dominant (Hays, 2017). This is beneficial as the part of the brain that may over think an action or plan, has less power of self-agency and self-criticism.

A similar pattern of focus to flow, hyperfocus also implies increased or intense concentration on a specific task. However, hyperfocus is largely associated with Attention Deficit Disorder

(ADD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)(REF). Both hyperfocus and flow uses all of the persons attention to a specific task. However, unlike flow in which the person performing a task should be happy, hyperfocus can be associated with being stressed, with the focus not being on a required task. Speaking from personal experience, hyperfocus can begin at a subconscious level, where a person can feel as if they have no choice but be drawn into a task which is neither productive nor in fact wanted. In this sense, hyperfocus should not be mistaken for flow, particularly if the person in hyperfocus seems anxious or upset.

When working on a solo task, the flow state has many benefits such as task clarity. Contrastingly, when working as part of a group, flow state can slow down productivity, as it maybe that a person working on their own within the flow state, might not be inclusive as part of a group. The flow state is accessible to anyone who can use it. There are some common goals that can be achieved by using the flow state of mind flow can be an especial component of completing a task to its fullest. Some research argues that contrary to Csikszentmihalyi's teachings that the flow state of mind is continuous (as in apart of who a person is), it is more a state which a person can be while focusing on tasks. For example, Font (2016) conducted a case study which demonstrates that most people who can relate to the flow experience, only truly experience it during completing task, but not necessarily continuously. This adds to the argument that a flow state of mind is accessible to anyone as engaging tasks are presented, perhaps meaning that when given the good instructions and guidance that a flow state can be achievable.

Y gair olaf sydd yn cael ei drafod yn y cynnig yma yw dysgu. Byddaf yn edrych ar syt mae'r *Ciricwlwm Cymru 2020* (Llywodraeth Cymru, 2020) yn ddatblygi cynhyssion newydd sydd yn gofyn i ddysgwyr i feddwl nid yn uniog am beth mae nhw yn ddygu, on hefyd pam mae nhw yn ddysgu e.

Mae dysgu sylfaen fwyaf allweddol yn datblygiad ein bywydau. Ar wahan i eiriau teach a learn yn Saesneg, sydd un ddwy aeriau wahanol, in y Gymraeg mae'r ddwy yr un gair. Yn y Gymraeg, mae hyn yn arddangos cydamseriad gwyh, ac mae'r cydamseriad hyn yn nawr, yn fy marn i yn gael ei adnabod gan *Ciricwlwm Cymru 2020*. Tybiaf bod llywodraeth Cymru yn adnabod hyn, ac wedi rhoi y cydamseriad yma mewn i'r ciricwlwm Newydd, trwy cannolbwyntio ar yr agweddau "fwy soffistigedig o'r wybodaeth, syniadau a'r egwyddorion

allweddol ym mhob Maes” (Llywodraeth Gymru, 2020). Bydd *Ciricwlwm Cymru 2020* yn dod mewn i ymarfer yn mis Medi, 2022.

Bydd y ddealltwriaeth fwy soffistigedig hon yn galluogi dysgwyr i werthfawrogi sut mae eu dysgu’n cyfrannu tuag at y syniadau hyn a pham mae hyn yn bwysig, yn hytrach nag adalw ffeithiau digyswllt heb ddeall y cyd-destun. (Llywodraeth Gymru, 2020).

Dangosir ei bod mae'r ciricwlwm gymraeg yn ddangos diddordeb yn deall barn dyswyr, ac hefyd wrth eu hannog i feddwl pam eu bod yn cael y wybodaeth hon. Mae’r cynllawiau hefyd yn cynnig cefnogaeth am asesu ar draws y ciricwlwm, wrth cael ardborth o faint mae’r dysgwyr wedi dial, alle athrawon creu assessiadau sydd yn creu asesiad sy’n gynhwysol ar gyfer pob gallu, ond sydd hefyd yn canolbwyntio ar adeiladu a symud ymlaen i heriau eraill.

Dylid cefnogi’r cynnydd hwn gydag amrywiaeth o ddulliau asesu sy’n galluogi’r dysgwyr ac athrawon i ddeall ble mae’r dysgwyr wedi cyrraedd, a beth sydd angen iddyn nhw ei wneud nesaf. (Llywodraeth Gymru, 2020).

Dangosir yr uchod gwelir bod Cymru yn gwerthfawrogi barn ei dysgwyr. Yn 2017 yn yr erthygl gan *Educator Impact*, gwneaeth Leanne Martin trafod y pwysigrwyd am adborth i ddysgwyr gan athrawon.

Schools attempting to improve teacher quality or develop their staff without implementing a system for student feedback are ignoring one of the most powerful and effective tools available (Martin, 2017).

Dywedir Martin fod adborth dygwyr yn un o'r offer mwyaf pwerus ac effeithiol sydd ar gael. Cafwyd astudiaethau hefyd sy'n cadarnhau bod hyn yn wir. Cafwyd astudiaethau sy'n cadarnhau bod hyn yn wir. Gall adborth dysgwyr hefyd lywio datblygiadau yn y dyfodol ym maes addysgu neu ddatblygu cwricwlwm (Belch & Law, 2015). Gan edrych ar yr amlinelliad am y ciricwlwm Newydd yng Nghymru (Llywodraeth Gymru, 2020), alle ni gweld bod dysgwyr yn dysgu wrth athrawon, ond hefyd mae gan athrawon y cyfle i ddysgu wrth eu dysgwyr. Ac wrth gwrs gall hyn, yn fy marn i, datblygu i’n myfyrwyr a darlithwyr ôl 16 ac hefyd dygwyr ifanc. Ac hefyd, trwy gofyn i'r myfyrwyr i meddwl am eu dysgu, dylent fod â dealltwriaeth fwy, a mwy glir o'r wybodaeth sy'n cael ei difetha. Tryw wneud hyn, all dysgwyr gael math o hunan-asiantaeth, sef y dysgwyr yn adnabo ei bod mae nhw yn wneud penderfyniadau ei hyn, “I am the one who is generating an action”. Gellir hefyd fod eich sefydlogrwydd fel person ar wahân; eich gallu chi yw bod yn sefydlog yn seicolegol, ond eto'n wydn neu'n hyblyg, yn

wyneb gwrthdaro neu newid (Sato, 2005). Yn fy marn i, mae'n bwysig i ddysgwyr gydnabod eu synnwyr o gyfrifoldeb yn eu canlyniadau dysgu.

Gwella addysg yw ein cenhadaeth genedlaethol. Does dim yn fwy hanfodol na bod pob plentyn a pherson ifanc yn caffael addysg ac yn cael mynediad cyflawn at *y profiadau, yr wybodaeth a'r sgiliau* y mae eu hangen arnyn nhw ym myd gwaith, ar gyfer dysgu gydol oes ac er mwyn bod yn ddinasyddion gweithredol. (Llywodraeth Cymru, 2020)

Ddangosir hwn bod y ciricwlwm Newydd yn Gymru yn gofyn i'r dysgwyr ganolbwyntio ar eu dyfodol a'i ystyried pa sgiliau a fyddau nhw yn esiau ir dyfodol ar ôl ysgol. hyn yn dangos bod gan ddysgwyr syniad o hunan-asantiaeth a roddir iddynt wrth iddynt ddatblygu trwy gydol eu hamser yn yr ysgol.

Looking in depth at the three above, have given me time to assess different aspects of glass painting to consider for an independent inquiry. I find it very interesting think of light as a medium. Whether it is watching traces of dust dance in the sunlight or admiring beautiful beams of brilliant casts through a stained-glass window, I have always been drawn to light. Using the artists influence on their opinions on how light influences their work, I intend to look in depth at how this can be shown and taught at a younger age. I would also propose whether a person would need an in-depth knowledge and great skills to engage with 'the flow'. As highlighted above, it is a common belief that a person must already have a strong command of a skill to gain the level of enjoyment associated with flow. I would argue that may not be the case. From personal experience, I have found the I have had the same sensation from practicing and learning, becoming heavily focused and losing many hours in developing a craft. This may be achievable in others by coordinating a joint effort between the learner and the tutor in creating a teaching method which benefits both, with the emphasis on making the teaching of glass painting both fun and engaging, learning and personal development should be equal to both parties.

In light of this, my proposal question for an independent inquiry is "Can using the flow experience help develop teaching practice in teaching glass/light?"

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Appendix

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