

Exploring the effect of mapping student learning in the assessment process, in a kinesiology class, using the Teaching for Understanding framework

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ABSTRACT: This study followed a part-time, first year kinesiology class in a private college in 2015/2016. One of the aims of the study was to investigate how we could use the Teaching for Understanding (TfU) framework to map student learning.

Achieving and improving students' understanding is an underlying SoTL principle and ultimately, it is this understanding that teachers strive for in their classrooms. TfU emphasises the performance view of understanding which Perkins (1998, p. 40) defined as "the ability to think and act flexibly with what one knows." This ability to perform aligns well with kinesiology which is a skills based discipline.

We collected qualitative data of classroom assessment techniques, a semi structured interview and self, peer and teacher feedback. The analysis showed that TfU provided a language which enabled us to map student learning over four levels – naïve, novice, apprentice or master.

This poster summarises the study and shows the findings of how students built knowledge in one kinesiology treatment, the Touch for Health Five Element Balance. It shows that most students' understandings were at novice level as they carried out the treatment mechanically while some students demonstrated apprentice level of understanding as they engaged fluidly with the treatment and the client. Students identified the importance of consistent practice as a key driver to improving their understanding.

Both student and teacher patterns of behaviour and thinking were transformed during this study as the teacher involved the students more in the peer assessment process. This was achieved by a change from the usual oral self-assessment to written self and peer feedback. As a result the students became more engaged, gave meaningful feedback, took ownership of the results and made improvement suggestions. This small change from oral to written assessment improved the quality of the student feedback as they gave more careful consideration to their written comments.

Future studies could investigate knowledge, purpose and form dimensions of TfU and examine learning through different stages of performances from introductory to culminating.

The study concluded that using TfU to map student learning is effective in improving student engagement in the assessment process.

REFERENCES

Perkins, D. (1998). What is Understanding? In M.S. Wiske (ed.) Teaching for Understanding: Linking Research with Practice. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.