**Observation #2 Second Year Lecture – Delivered by Senior Lecturer (Interview #3) (06.11.17 between 17:00-19:00) (University B)**

🡪 Fairly big room in a porta-cabin on campus, although not a lecture theatre. 24 students in total, sitting at long tables facing the walls of the rooms rather than the front; students have to turn to look at the lecturer or PowerPoint presentation. There is a large clock at the front of the room.

🡪 Constant beeping as the students all tap their attendance in electronically.

🡪 The lecturer stands at the front, slightly to the side of the PowerPoint presentation.

🡪 Once most students have arrived, the lecturer says “Okay hello everyone, I think we’ll begin” and the students stop talking amongst themselves.

🡪 A few students arrive late and the lecturer smiles and says, “Don’t worry, hello, come in!”

🡪 The lecturer uses the first 10 minutes to make announcements that aren’t to do with the lecture content. The lecturer tells the students about tutorials, emphasises three times that they are optional and the students should only sign up if they want one and if they’ve done enough preparatory work beforehand. The lecturer says they must bring a plan with a title, a text, three secondary sources and a sentence and some bullet points about the argument. The lecturer emphasises that the more work the student does beforehand, the more they will get out of the tutorial. The lecturer passes around a sign-up sheet for the tutorials.

🡪 The lecturer then talks about the interim evaluation, thanks the students for giving their thoughts and tells them how useful it was to read their comments. The lecturer then summarises what the students thought was good about the module and what suggestions they made to improve it; the students asked for more textual analysis of the poems and they also thought the reading was too heavy for a Monday evening and Tuesday morning and the lecturer tells the students that they will change that for the following year. In the meantime, the lecturer will try to make the reading load lighter by telling the students which reading to focus on if they can’t manage all of it. Some students wanted more group work, some wanted more pair work and some wanted more whole group discussion; the lecturer tells them that all of those elements will be incorporated as much as possible to keep everyone happy. The lecturer reminds the students that I am there to observe.

🡪 The lecture begins 10 minutes past the hour; the lecture is about a Romantic poet, his life and one of his major poems.

🡪 All students have a large anthology with them and majority of students are note-taking as the lecturer talks. Most students look down at their notebooks continuously and look up at the PowerPoint occasionally.

🡪 The lecturer asks the class to define a specific term attributed to poetry and one student answers fairly quickly starting her response with, “Is it…?” The lecturer elaborates on the answer and then asks the rest of the group, “Can we add to that?” Another student puts their hand up and the lecturer says, “Go ahead [student name]”, the lecturer responds to the student’s answer with “Absolutely. Yes, thank you for that [student name] and [student name]”.

🡪 Student relating to Interview #4 is sitting at the very back.

🡪 Some students have started staring into space or at the floor. One student is looking at her phone under the desk.

🡪 The lecturer is still standing at the front with paper relating to the content of the lecture, but they only glance at the notes occasionally. The lecture uses intonation and varies the volume of their voice to keep the students engaged; it is an easy lecture to listen to because the tone, pitch and volume of the voice delivering it is constantly changing.

🡪 The lecturer then moves the students on to looking at the text directly. The lecturer reads the first stanza aloud. Some students read the text at the same time and some look at the lecturer. The lecturer stops partway through to tell the students the page number that they are reading from because a lot of students are flicking through the book aimlessly.

🡪 The lecturer stops to explain or define words when they are unfamiliar due to the period.

🡪 The lecturer gesticulates greatly when talking but they are holding notes, the very large anthology and the projector clicker, so it appears a struggle.

🡪 Some students are looking at the clock and the lecture is 30 minutes in; some students have begun whispering to each other.

🡪 The lecturer is explaining what happens in every stanza of the poem in a way that the students can understand. Tells them which part they will be working on in the workshop part of the lecture.

🡪 The lecturer is very animated when talking, reaches a high volume when speaking.

🡪 One student gets up and leaves the room holding her phone; she walks straight past the lecturer. The lecturer does not acknowledge the student, carries on addressing the rest of the group.

🡪 The lecturer repeats their point a lot; they repeatedly say the same thing they’ve just said in exactly the same way.

🡪 The lecturer loses their place and there is a silence. The student opposite smiles at me awkwardly and apologetically. The rest of the students stare at the lecturer patiently.

🡪 The lecturer gives the students a 10 minute break halfway through; students start talking loudly to each other. Some students continue talking about the poet and his work using their own terminology, for example, “He’s a cocky little shit but you can’t help but love him” and “I’d be the girl who’d fall for him”. A number of students leave the room to have a cigarette.

🡪 The lecturer talks to me in the break and says how surprising the turnout was; this turnout is higher than it ever used to be, despite being between 5pm and 7pm on a Monday. The lecturer assumed students would not attend because it was quite late, but more students have attended than they used to on a Thursday morning at 9am. The lecturer says “5pm on a Monday must be a sweet spot for students”.

🡪 The students return and the lecturer tells them it is time to talk to each other in pairs and then they will present their findings to another pair. The lecturer assigns each pair one of two stanzas, looking at a particular character. The lecturer gives handouts to each pair.

🡪 The student opposite me says to her partner, “Oh I love Wordsworth, he’s got a little part of me”; the students are not studying Wordsworth in this class, but he is alluded to in the poem.

🡪 The students begin to discuss their stanzas and analyse using terminology familiar to them: “That’s so rude!” “Oh, that’s such a dig!” and “He’s talking dirty”.

🡪 The lecturer moves around the room talking to the different pairs, listening to what is being said. The lecturer comes to talk to the pair opposite and asks them if they need any help. The student says, “I’m just googling because I don’t know what a word means” and the lecturer responds with, “Good idea! If you ever don’t know a word, that’s what you should do”. The student then asks the lecturer if one of the poets alluded to ever responded to being referred to by this particular poet and the lecturer says yes they did. The student is very excited by this response and says, “Oh I love it! Just a bunch of academics and poets slagging each other off”; the same student laughs at the lecturer’s elaboration of what happened and says, “Drama! Just a bunch of bitchy girls aren’t they?”

🡪 A lot of laughter is coming from different pairs throughout the room.

🡪 The lecturer continues to move around the room and listen to certain groups, asks them questions. The lecturer leans on the table to the side of one of the groups so that everyone can see each other, the lecturer rests their head on their hand as they listen; they appear relaxed while talking.

🡪 There is a lot of laughter coming from a group of pairs at the back; the lecturer moves to them and asks what they are laughing at, there has been a misunderstanding of a word which led to a funny interpretation by one of the students.

🡪 The student opposite me is talking to her partner about one of the lines in the poem and after some confusion says, “I always misconstrue things at uni”.

🡪 The lecturer is talking to one pair at the back of the room and the student related to Interview #4 is listening to the what the lecturer is saying to the other group instead of talking to his partner.

🡪 The student opposite me is talking to her partner about getting marks back and she says, “I hate waiting three weeks. How long does it take to mark something? So annoying!”

🡪 The lecturer is leaning against the wall with a hand on the back of a student’s chair in between the two students she is talking to.

🡪 The lecturer is always referring to the anthology; they gesticulate a lot and use open body language when talking to students.

🡪 The lecturer leans in close to another pair of students and the student closest leans away slightly while turning her body away so that her arm is blocking her from the lecturer; the student looks the lecturer up and down when they are addressing the other student or looking at the text.

🡪 The students opposite me are getting animated talking to each other, they always write down what the other says or elaborate on what they’ve said.

🡪 The lecturer spends five minutes or so with each pair before moving on to another group.

🡪 The lecturer sits down next to a pair of students, the student sat next to the lecturer turns her body slightly away from the lecturer and towards the other student. The same student looks down at the book rather than at the lecturer as she speaks. The student on the other side looks intently at the lecturer as they talk.

🡪 The students opposite are using their own terminology again to explore the text: “He wants the V, but there’s a naivety about it”. The other student starts talking about another module she’s taking and she tells her partner to be glad she didn’t take it because it’s so dull. The partner starts talking about when she was at A-Level she wanted to use Dr Faustus in an essay but her teacher told her it would be too difficult for her to “hack it” and so she didn’t do it, but then she studied it later on and didn’t find it difficult to understand so she was annoyed for being lied to about how hard it was to comprehend.

🡪 The students are much more confident and less embarrassed talking to each other in pairs, they comfortably say “I don’t know” to their student partner and they will tell their partner an idea even if they aren’t sure it’s right.

🡪 The students have been working in pairs for 30 minutes.

🡪 The lecturer is still sitting with the same pair but now talking to the pair sat opposite.

🡪 The same group of pairs at the back of the room are laughing very loudly again so the lecturer moves to them and starts talking to one of the pairs; the other two pairs quieten down.

🡪 The students opposite are talking about another tutor, saying the tutor trails off a lot when talking about something and it’s hard to digest what they’re saying, but they are very intelligent and a lovely person, it’s just their delivery is sometimes off. The students start talking about another module and another tutor; it is a tutor they really like although they don’t know where they’re originally from because they have an accent. They start discussing another tutor, the tutor who has been at the university the longest according to Staff Interview #4, but they say they don’t like the way this tutor teaches because they find it boring and they don’t understand what they’re saying most of the time. They mention tutor relating to Interview #1 and say they can’t wait for that module because they love that tutor. They then talk about administrative problems and one student tells the other who to email, she mentions a particular academic, although the other student does mention the programme administrator’s name (that programme administrator left a few months ago though)

🡪 The students now have to move to sit with another pair of students and present what they’ve been discussing about their stanzas. Most of the students move as little as possible, some are outwardly happy that they only have to turn around in their seat.

🡪 The lecturer starts talking but some students are still talking so the lecturer stops and says, “Is everyone ready?” the students stop talking. The lecturer goes round listening to the groups as they talk to each other; the lecturer does not interject, just listens as they talk.

🡪 The students appear happy talking to each other, they laugh and look at each other directly as they speak, they gesticulate and keep an open body posture towards each other.

🡪 The lecturer says, “Well done” and taps one student on the shoulder before she leaves to talk to another group. The student from the other group in that foursome asks a lot of questions to the student who was praised by the lecturer. That group seem highly engaged.

🡪 The students still address each other even though the lecturer is stood over them listening and making notes; looks similar to the dynamic of a group interview whereby participants talk amongst themselves and pretend they are not being watched and examined.

🡪 One student leaves early and waves to the lecturer, the lecturer waves back and smiles, mouths “Bye!”.

🡪 There is only 10 minutes remaining but the students are still highly engaged, no signs of students packing up or going off topic.

🡪 The lecturer nods when the students say something good, even though the student isn’t looking at the lecturer. The lecturer then says “Yes, that’s right, well done” and the student carries on talking without acknowledging the praise.

🡪 A few groups have finished discussing the poem now; turned back to their desks and talking amongst themselves. The lecturer stops them all and praises them for the class, “Excellent work”. The lecturer then explains what they’ll be looking at in the seminar the next day and tells them what parts of the poem to focus on in preparation. Finishes with, “I’ll see you then, goodnight!”

🡪 Students pack up and begin to leave. One student asks the lecturer just as they are about to leave when they’ll get their essays back. The lecturer reminds the student that it’s 3 weeks from the deadline so it will be Monday. The student sighs in relief and says she was beginning to get anxious because she really wants to know how she did. She tells the lecturer that she really enjoyed this assignment and the lecturer says “Oh good, I’m glad to hear it”. Some of the remaining students stand around to listen to this conversation.