

Ideas on Education

>> Episode 1:

“Enhancing Learning
through Participation”

>> MaSHARE Co-Working
Space, 2nd Floor, MUIC



The event was led by Dr. Nigel Gould-Davies, a lecturer from the Social Science Division at MUIC.

The participating lecturers were grouped for the discussion where each participant voiced their opinions on how they define participation and also shared their personal experiences.

The talk was conducted in one segment with discussions on the following issues:

- *What is the definition of ‘Participation’?*
- *How can participation enhance learning and teaching?*
- *How can lecturers encourage participation in classroom?*

In education, participation usually means students speaking, which can be identified as simply answering questions or taking part in class discussions. When participation is a requirement, students prepare more, and this preparation actually increases their learning.

Participation is part of active learning which seems to be favored by most lecturers despite numerous arguments. Some lecturers were skeptical about the idea of defining ‘participation’ as speaking/discussion since in real setting,

students may not be making relevant contributions, may give non-verbal responses, may provide comments that make whole class in a daze rather than clarifying his/her understanding, or may speak only to earn participation credits. However, that doesn’t mean these contributions shouldn’t be taken into consideration.

In addition, some lecturers commented that the cultural aspect plays a big role in defining the meaning of participation. It was mentioned that the participation can come in the form of ‘silence’ as stated by a participant that some of her Thai students prefer sitting quietly and listen to lectures with full attention rather than raising their hands and asking questions as doing so might interrupt the class.

To sum up, most lecturers perceived a positive relationship between students’ participation and learning. They found it increases engagement, helps student retain and remember information, provide affirmation about what student has learned and deepens their understanding through hands-on learning opportunities.



A talk on ‘Enhancing Learning through Participation’ was hosted at MaSHARE room by Academic and Strategy Unit, the Office of Academic Affairs, MUIC.

The event was the first in the talk series organized as part of the Teaching & Learning Excellence Program. Its main aim was to provide a space where lecturers can voice their opinions and share their expertise with one another on educational issues to promote teaching and learning development.

