**File: T5.mp3  
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**Teacher (T5)**

START AUDIO

[Aside Conversation 00:00:00 – 00:00:02]

Interviewer: Okay so how many sessions did you do with Group Spinner?

T5: I did two sessions over the course of a week with regards to an ongoing [Soul 0:00:12] question which was do animals have rights?

Interviewer: The same question in both sessions?

T5: Yes, there were six sessions in total but I unfortunately haven’t finished it because as I mentioned to you today, we have got a very busy Soul booking room at the minute. So I have run out of time to finish it.

Interviewer: So that was with the same group each time?

T5: Same group, yes.

Interviewer: How many students are in that group, roughly?

T5: Circa 30.

Interviewer: What subject.

T5: It is [I Learning 0:00:39], I Learning, yes.

Interviewer: When you actually use the tool, when do you tag the behaviours and how do you tag them? How do you actually put it into practice?

T5: I tagged the behaviours on a fairly systematic basis. So I had 6 groups working with 3 to 4 to 5 students in each group. I did almost like, every 10 minute assessments on each group. Obviously I was watching the behaviours as often I could but I tended to walk round each group, ask them questions to generate some of the answers for things like outcome. So in terms of understanding what they are actually doing. Then making mini assessments, then creating each group profile as I went round and I did that every 10 minutes in the lesson. It was quite intensive actually because once you would start and you would go visiting 6 groups, it takes 5 minutes.

Then you would suddenly spend like 5 minutes and then I was doing it again. I did it in a systematic way as opposed to a haphazard, “Oh I’ve seen that, I’ll tag it.” Although I did do that occasionally, you know, if I saw something particularly outstanding linked to one of the criteria I did make a note of it.

Interviewer: Because of the tool you instigated some conversations about how they were behaving?

T5: Yes, just to try and give some evidence for some of those things really. Forgive me for not remembering the [Crosstalk 0:02:03]. Things like the ‘Working in the Soul’ I wanted to see what the outcomes were around how they were working and whether my perception of what they were doing, was it backed up with what they were actually learning. Because I think that is quite important really.

I am getting off the point a bit here but one of my concerns with Soul at the minute and it is a real concern in my own practice. I don’t know if it is the same with other Soul teachers – it would be interested to ask them – is that kids are turning it into a very didactic process where they get a question, they go on to a website, they have got a big chunk of paste, they put it in a PowerPoint and they think that when they read that PowerPoint that is the end of the matter. So they do five minutes of that and then they switch off.

So many of those questions I spent a lot of time stopping that and doing that really. I don’t think the ability to present using a resource like Word or PowerPoint is helpful for Soul.

Interviewer: It would be better if they had nothing? Just had to do it from..?

T5: Nothing I think. I am really beginning to think that way around saying to them, “You can have the internet obviously to find material but you need to discuss that material.” Then you have a basis of a conversation. But the problem with almost having… It becomes a crux, this PowerPoint is full of information that when you say, “What have you learnt?” They look at you, then turn and then just start reading random things off the internet. Which is I think is a waste of their time and my time.

Interviewer: Fair enough. When do you do the actual graph bit at the end? So this bit here, do you do that during the session?

T5: Yes, yes absolutely. I was doing it at the end of each of those systematic visits. So I would have a quick conversation with the group and then I would tag that and develop it as the lesson went on. I didn’t do all at the end. I adjusted it a band down – up and down – as I went through the lesson. Try and come up with a final position.

Interviewer: So it wasn’t just one final judgement at the end?

T5: No, this was a very… That is why it is quite exhausting actually. No, that is the wrong term – but it is quite intensive – was to be creating these graphs all the way through to… But I thought that was the best way to do it because the problem with an overall outcome is, as you know within Soul – some kids make dramatic progress but then they fall away and then they begin to progress again.

I was trying to capture that. Obviously you are left with a final graph that doesn’t necessarily show those changes once you save it. But it is useful for me to see, “Oh God, I was really pushing that axis, I’m dragging it down again to get you think about why that might be happening.”

Interviewer: Did you use the comparison and the average buttons – these ones..?

T5: No I didn’t, not at all, no I didn’t.

Interviewer: Okay. So did-

T5: Well actually I say I didn’t and I have forgotten now if I am honest but I certainly compared the graph because it overlays from the two lessons. So I could compare in that way but I didn’t compare it with… Just remind me what the average does again?

Interviewer: The average of all the groups in that session.

T5: No, I didn’t do that. I didn’t use that. No, I didn’t use that.

Interviewer: But you did look from session one to session two.

T5: Very much so, yes, very much so.

Interviewer: That is interesting – and, during the session while you were doing it?

T5: Yes.

Interviewer: Okay. You touched on this a bit – did the use of this prompt you to change how you were doing the Soul sessions or how you perceived them?

T5: Maybe, maybe a little bit more interaction around really probing to see whether outcomes, collaboration and working in Soul was happening as I thought it was. Because I wanted to evidence it with this. So, yes, I would argue in that sense it did. I still do that in a Soul where I wouldn’t use the Spinner Tool but I would just do it traditionally at the end where I would debrief the kids and ask them what they have done. Debriefs on how they have sort of used and the skills they have used.

But in this it was very much more focussed around individual groups and that was quite useful because it really allowed me to see something I already know. But really prove the point that there are huge differences in the effectiveness of collaboration within different groups, you know, you get some groups who really engage in it. Other groups that quite understandably find it much more difficult and don’t, as we saw when we did that Year Eight study.

Interviewer: So did you use it as self-reflection tool for yourself or a tool to recognise and evidence students development [Crosstalk 0:06:11]..?

T5: I would argue for primarily student development. But at the same time, there is that obvious ability to then reflect on what you have done, the quality of your question. How you might adapt Soul accordingly.

So, for example, I have just mentioned the one about stopping them using things like PowerPoint to present information, comes very much out of talking to kids in situations like this. Because for example many of the outcomes were very weak because they were reading me a load of nonsense that was just cut and paste and therefore that changes my pedagogical view which is that becomes something that we don’t want to see happening in Soul.

Interviewer: Would you use the evaluation tool to communicate certain points to students, or other teachers and parents or..?

T5: Yes, definitely. I think that is the real power of it. I didn’t do that because as I said I didn’t get through the lessons. But I think if I had got to lesson four, I would very much have been using that. I think that is perhaps it is biggest strength actually. Predictably I think that would be where many teachers would find it to be really useful, the idea that they have got an evidence base, to talk to individual groups or even whole groups and say, “On this particular skill we’re struggling, why is that? But on this area we’re doing really well, why is that?”

Do you know, I think that is where… Undoubtedly it is going to be its most important use.

Interviewer: Do you think that that is really just for a conversation with the students? Or, would you use it in conversation with other teachers or parents or management or whoever?

T5: I think with students, primarily. Because I think with Soul, I think that it is very much around. I don’t think it should become too process driven to say, “Right, kids in Souls – or even with discussions – they all do badly on this particular area.” Because if you do that, what is the aim of doing that? I think teachers would then try and come up with new strategies to affect that. Whereas within a Soul, I think you have got to be a bit careful that you are not overprescribing how they do it. I think, inevitably, if you have too much debriefing with teachers about, “Do you know what, none of them get good outcomes. Right, what are we going to do about that?”

Then that is suddenly away from what a Soul is inevitably aimed to do, does that make sense? So I think debriefing with the kids is the way forward.

Interviewer: Okay, so did you..? Obviously you said you had conversations with them and you didn’t get a chance to have the big..?

T5: Yes, I did have some sort of short conversations with groups about why do you think we are struggling with this? But it wasn’t very systematic in that sense.

Interviewer: Did you use the language of the tool and the indicators when you were doing that?

T5: No, I don’t think I did if I am honest. I used a general language that was informed by the indicators as opposed to saying, “We’re not producing good outcomes or we’re not working well in a Soul.” I don’t necessarily think I did that if I am honest.

Interviewer: So were the students aware of what you were doing?

T5: Yes, yes, very much, clearly told them ethically at the beginning what I was doing. Explaining that I was assessing them in terms of their learning behaviours as opposed to necessarily the content of what they were producing. I said that was also something we were looking at.

They found that – I don’t know how they found that really. I think they were less inclined to come and talk to me – which was interesting – because they thought I was busy, which I inevitably was. That is an interesting thing for anyone pushing this through whether it be you or the University. It is very similar to VEO. I think what you will find is you will find lots of frustration and barrier to it initially because it is quite intensive and I think lots of teachers it will put them off.

Certainly, my initial discussions with *tttt* – I think me and *tttt* have used it a bit, I think maybe *bbbb* has, every much the idea of, “Not really sure what the overall benefit of this is yet other than I’ve got my head in a bit of a mess with trying to work out what each group was doing.”

I think there needs to be, therefore, that understanding of what… It is the fact that the data becomes generated to allow that debrief later on to really talk to kids about the skills within that learning where it becomes useful. I think people have to be brave and get to that point. I didn’t get to that point but I could see how it would be useful.

Interviewer: Yes, how you would. Okay, which leads us on to then, so did you see a value in using this?

T5: Yes, as I have just summarised there really. I think it is quite intensive. I think as a teacher it does allow you to focus on those subdivisions within what kids are doing in Soul and really think about them. As I mentioned in a previous question, I think that does then maybe alter your pedagogy around what you do, what you ask kids to do.

As I say one thing that came out for me was something that I was suspecting anyway which is I think we need to ban that presentation, hard presentation methods. But I think, the crucial thing is what I would have done with it long-term around the data that is gathered. So then have a really powerful conversation with the kids.

Interviewer: Okay, that is [Crosstalk 0:11:03].

T5: I think I can have that conversation anyway if I am honest, when I debrief Souls but it may be would allow it to become a bit more structured which might be interesting.

Interviewer: Okay. Perhaps then is a useful tool for other people who struggle with those conversations?

T5: Yes, very much so. Because that debrief within Soul is the bit that some people I guess find quite difficult or don’t do it at all because they think it isn’t part of the Soul.

Interviewer: So you have hinted that it does add to your workload during the Soul in that it is intensive?

T5: Yes, yes I think so.

Interviewer: And so…

T5: But maybe that is just because of the way I did it – the systematic visiting of the six groups on a cyclical basis. It will be interesting to see if other teachers do it differently because if you just tagged on the end, based on your overall assumptions, it is not intensive at all.

Interviewer: Okay.

T5: Because I did it in quite a prescribed way.

Interviewer: But you have suggested that that probably is worth the effort over time but maybe you haven’t got to that stage?

T5: I think it is if you want to make comparison between groups, certainly. Which might be interesting if you are trying to motivate students, you know. I am not saying you would tell one group off because they haven’t done it as well. But it might be interesting. So you could do some really interesting peer analysis. What was it? What did you guys do that they didn’t? Can we identify that? Or, the other thing - while I remember – that they wander round the room looking at other groups don’t they? So it might be interesting to see how the group who haven’t done as particularly well, what do you see happening in Group A, B and C? Because my data shows those groups made the most progress around the techniques that need to go into it.

Interviewer: Okay. Would you say that it helped you to recognise any changes or any development in students’ learning?

T5: Yes very much so, very much so because of that idea of-

Interviewer: Do you think you would have missed those otherwise or..?

T5: I think I would have maybe missed the stages in that development because it doesn’t… By watching each group on a 10 minute cycle, I was able to use the spinner tool to show progress, then retract it. Which is quite interesting because I am not sure you would necessarily do that, would you? You would normally get an overall feeling for the direction of travel without seeing some of those barriers or red traffic lights or whatever you want to call them on the way. So it is very helpful for that.

Interviewer: Did you ask students to do any self-assessment? I am going to guess not because you only had two lessons.

T5: No I didn’t, none at all, no.

Interviewer: In terms of the actual tool itself, the axis and the indicators for each one, it is difficult because I know they are not just in your head particularly. But are there any that you think are missing or anything that you would have taken away or changed or..?

T5: That is a good question, it is a very good question. No, I don’t think so. I am never over convinced with the motivation and engagement one in that I can see that… I think that one is one that almost you can talk about anyway because it is the most obvious when you are watching groups of kids. But it is probably worth having there just to keep your eye focussed.

The working in the Soul is quite an interesting one. Some of the behaviours around working in Soul. The info seeking – no, I think they are all pretty much what you would expect to see in the Soul really. So I think they are very sensible and anymore I think it would get very, very confusing.

Interviewer: Yes, okay. So when you were watching you tagged – you used the plus and minus tags?

T5: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: Did you increase the number based on how well they did something or did you use it every time that you saw them doing that thing?

T5: Well that is the great, difficult bit around the sense of what do the numbers really represent, you know, one, two, three, four. You are almost playing a bit of a safe game. Because if you are using it over four or five times – I never gave them too much credit because it was like, “I’m going to get to four if I’m not careful and then where do they go to the next lesson,” or whatever the scale is. I can’t remember what the scale went up to, to be honest.

So there maybe is a little bit of work around that but then, I think, that is an inevitability that teachers have to use a bit of subjective judgement. Because if you start trying to categorise it into national curriculum levels for each of those axis, it is going to become an absolute nonsense. So, in that sense, I don’t think that matters too much. How often you give them credit is a good question as well. I think, inevitably, again it has to be very, very subjective.

I tended to do it when I was really struck by something as opposed to all the time. So if I really saw an amazing bit of conversation or a real good, “You do that, I’ll do that.” Then I gave them, I did – I went up one on the collaboration. But there was often I would walk round the groups and not do any acknowledgement on the graph sheet. I thought, “There’s nothing happening. Well, nothing’s changed since I was last there.” So I wasn’t tempted to keep pushing them up if that makes sense.

It had to be a bit of a wow moment on each of the five criteria for me to give them extra credit.

Interviewer: Yes, okay. So would you prefer then some kind of five star rating system or on/off thing?

T5: No, I think I have talked myself out of that. I think giving teachers that professional judgement – because, remember it is about the individual teacher isn’t it? We are not necessarily comparing data between teachers, you might do that but I think if you do that you do need a criteria system.

But if just want it to allow us to improve the conversations and learning for each teacher and that group of students, then you don’t need that.

Interviewer: When it came to using that information to do the diagram, the actual graph bit – how did you decide how those two things mapped together?

T5: What do you mean?

Interviewer: So how did you decide how far to put this up the [Crosstalk 0:16:21].

T5: Oh yes, a good question and very subjective. I tended never to go more than one at any particular phase. So if I saw something on outstanding and they are on one then they went to two – they never went to three. It was almost like that allowed me to say, “Right, okay, in that particular group…” If they got to a three, I saw three specific incidents on that that allowed me to push up but I wasn’t randomly just dragging to four because I thought, “Oh that’s brilliant, up to four.” I was trying to just go in increments of one. I think that allowed a bit of a comparison as well because inevitably some groups never got past nought on certain of the scales. That is absolutely fine, that is how they should be.

Some of the groups I thought motivation never really took off so they stayed at nought for that particular lesson and that is useful because… I think if you just give them false credit it becomes a bit of a waste of an exercise.

Interviewer: Yes, absolutely. So did you see it almost as a scale then in your head from 0 to 10 or whatever?

T5: Yes, absolutely, yes. But I recognise that scale was over six lessons because that is what I was originally planning to do as opposed to one lesson.

Interviewer: Yes, okay.

T5: I think that allows the graphs to become a bit more meaningful. Because if they got to six in lesson two, which to be fair lesson three overlays so you can see that they dropped back down. But I was trying to make it a bit more cumulative to show the different levels of progress over six lessons of each of the scales.

Because, inevitably, I hoped that there would be progress. But I didn’t want it to be really rapid. If it is rapid great but inevitably I don’t think it ever is. I think it does take a while for them to go and then gradually plateau and then maybe up again.

Interviewer: Yes, that up and down I think is part of what makes it interesting really. So when you… Were there any usability issues just in terms of the actual use of the tool?

T5: No it is a wonderful App. No, I think the practicality of the App is very helpful and very easy to use and I think it has been really well designed.

Interviewer: I will \_\_\_[0:18:11] he will be delighted.

T5: Yes, it is really good. Obviously, like all these things, you need a bit of time with it and maybe things come out but I think you remembered from the original planning meeting I had managed to set it up in a slightly less user-friendly way than he then advised me. Because I had jumped in and started before he had given us the tutorial. But it still worked for me and I am a… While I am not a technophile, I am not a natural user of technology and App technology but I thought that was really, fairly straightforward.

Interviewer: Okay, that is good. Just some finishing off, general questions then. So what did you like most about it? About using it?

T5: I think that ability to tag learning behaviours is its number one strength. The idea that you can physically drag a graph to create almost like a profile of what groups is doing is its number one strength.

Interviewer: Anything you didn’t like?

T5: Probably my own technique is the thing I liked least. The fact that I did try and do it very systematically and kept flying round six groups. I got a bit dizzy if I am honest doing it like that. I might think about not doing it in that way again. But it did probably allow a really specific analysis of each groups’ data.

Interviewer: Yes, I can see definite strengths in doing it that way. So any suggestions for improvement or anything you would change?

T5: No, not based on two lessons. I would be happy to offer further comment if I had used it more intensively. But certainly for a quick two lesson trial, I think it appears to be a very solid design.

Interviewer: Do you think you would continue to use it?

T5: Yes, absolutely. I think anything like that within a Soul is very helpful to allow better debrief. Personally, I could live without it because I think I can do that aspect of a Soul quite well as an experienced Soul Practitioner but I think for some teachers it will be invaluable in that they either don’t do that part of a Soul or they don’t know how to do it.

Interviewer: Yes. Would you worry – one of the things that people said when we first started talking to them about it was that they worried that it would be used as a way of judging their performance, you know, people should be making progress or, indeed, just the way [Crosstalk 0:20:14].

T5: No, I don’t think you would ever play at leadership level with it, I really don’t. I don’t think leadership teams need to see it. It is okay if they understand what it is for but I wouldn’t be using it as a way of assessing the performance of students in the Soul.

I think the way you assess the performance of them with outcomes, okay the outcome in terms of how well they have achieved in terms of many of the learning behaviours but the outcome is I would still be looking at summative data at the end of the key stage and saying, “How might Soul have contributed to that?” I just don’t think you can ever do that. I don’t think how you can ever use any sort of tool to say the outcomes in a Soul are a, b or c – unless you do a comparison, whereby you teach it in a traditional way. We mentioned this – didn’t we – when we did it. Then you do it in a Soul way, then in six months you do a test and you say, “Right, okay in the Soul – what can they recall from the Soul? What can they recall from a didactic thing? Looking at similar content.

That way might be a way you can do it. But I don’t think that ever would be a way of assessing summative outcomes with kids – I don’t think.

Interviewer: So would you worry that if you were… Saying you were being observed and you were using this and then they weren’t making much progress – the motivation and engagement one didn’t move – would that worry you in terms of the conversation you would have with the person observing?

T5: No because the observer doesn’t see that data, it is as simple as that. I don’t see how the… That is for you, that is for you and the kids to… It is a tool to allow you to improve pedagogy and debrief. It is not something that I would be asking… If I was an observer I wouldn’t even say, “What are you doing?” Or if you were, it wouldn’t be an expectation, “Please give me your data and I want to assess how well you did based on that data.” I don’t think it would ever be an issue.

I can see how people would think it would be an issue. But unless you have got a very sneaky performance management agenda that suddenly said, “Right, we’re going to start using the Spinner Tutorial to just teachers.” But if you are doing that then you might as well stop working with the school like that, I think.

Interviewer: Indeed. Okay, anything else at all?

T5: No, as I say I think it is a very good, whole, objective to try and create something that allows people to think about how they can debrief and assess learning behaviours in Soul. I think it is really good.

Interviewer: Excellent.

END AUDIO

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